

Search & Governance Committee

6 November 2026

Members Adrien Ong (Chair); Phillip Kerle; Carole Kitching; Karen Redhead

Attendees Owen Rees (Director of Governance)

1 Apologies

There were none.

2 Declarations of interest

There were none.

3 Minutes

***Resolved*, That the minutes of the meetings held on 22 May 2025 be approved as correct records.**

4 Matters arising

There were none.

5 Appointment to Audit and Curriculum & Quality Chair roles following interviews on the 5th November 2025

The Director of Governance reported the outcomes of the interviews, and the recommendation made by the panels (with Carole Kitching, Phillip Kerle, Adrien Ong, Laura Gladstone and Sarah Benjamin).

The Committee discussed induction and support for the new governors and agreed that this was a positive outcome to the process.

Resolved, that the following appointments be recommended to the Board, subject to acceptance of offer and completion of DBS and reference checks:

- the appointment of Kunal Parkash as Chair of the Audit Committee;
- the appointment of Jane Makwe as a governor and member of the Audit Committee; and
- the appointment of **Redacted** as a governor and Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee.

ACTION: Circulate a Written Resolution to the Board, recommending the above, subject to successful DBS and references. (Director of Governance).

6 Membership and Attendance 2024-25

The Director of Governance introduced the report which set out governor attendance during the 2024-25 year and an update on the membership of the Governing Body following the appointments covered in part 5.

Attendance

Overall attendance remained slightly below but broadly in line with the average for further education colleges. The attendance of governors with less than 75% attendance and the reasons for this were discussed. The Committee was satisfied that, where attendance was below target, there was good reason for this.

The Committee discussed the use of hybrid meetings for the Board. It was agreed that, with committee meetings being virtual, virtual attendance at the Board should remain by exception only, given the lower quality of hybrid meetings and the need for regular in-person interaction between the Board.

Membership

The Committee reviewed the remaining vacancies on the Board (4) pending the appointments set out above.

The Committee reviewed areas in which the Board's skills mix could be improved. It agreed that the following were priorities in recruiting to the 4 vacancies:

- Estates (with an accent on development to complement Chris Taylor's experience)
- Organisational Development and Culture
- A governor with a role in skills or similar from a larger employer (e.g. NHS, Heathrow)
- A qualified accountant to join the Finance & General Purposes Committee, while recognising that the Committee had existing financial expertise
- An individual capable and willing to act as Safeguarding Governor

ACTIONS Discuss with Chris Taylor what type of skills additional Estates recruitment should target(Carole Kitching)

Contact Jonathan Roe to seek any potential recommendations for the above (CEO & Principal)

Progress recruitment based on the above (Director of Governance)

Chris Taylor

The Director of Governance noted that Chris Taylor's term was due to come to an end on 13 December 2025. He reported that, in light of his strong attendance and

commitment to the College and based on the continued relevance of his skills, his reappointment was recommended.

Resolved, that the Board be recommended to reappoint Chris Taylor for a four-year term from 13 December 2025.

7 Governance Improvement Action Plan Review

The Director of Governance introduced the revised Action Plan. The Committee agreed the recommendations made for closure in respect of actions 3, 5 and 7.

However, the Committee asked to retain action 11, in respect of the provision of an illustrative "operating model" of income and expenditure, noting that this would be of particular relevance for new governors. Further, in respect of action 12, the Committee agreed to amend the wording of the action to focus it on leveraging the skills and connections of governors for the benefit of the College, its staff and students.

Resolved, that the revised Governance Improvement Action Plan be agreed, subject to the retention of Action 11 and the rewording of Action 12 as set out above.

8 Development Session 22 January 2026 Programme

The Director of Governance introduced the outline programme for the development session on 22 January 2026. The programme included a presentation from Julian Gravatt, Deputy CEO of the Association of Colleges, on the further education landscape, and a briefing on Sustainability from the College Lead, with an emphasis on the Board's role. He noted that there were plans for an additional session in May. The Committee supported the programme outline.

The Committee discussed preparation for and the output from the session with Julian Gravatt. It was noted that there were key changes for the sector, arising from the Post-16 White Paper and the Curriculum and Assessment Review, and a need for the Board, post-intervention, to orient itself to the wider external context. Key themes coming forward included system reform, collaboration and opportunity/inclusion. The CEO & Principal noted that a Curriculum Transformation Plan for the College would be developed, given the scale of change coming forward.

The Committee agreed that governors should have a preparatory written briefing to make the context and purpose clear, maximising the output of the session and the planned discussion afterwards.

ACTION Coordinate a preparatory briefing note to be included with the programme ahead of the Development Session. (Director of Governance)

9 Matters relating to the Governance Professional

The Director of Governance introduced the report, which set out the arrangements made for the independence and development of the Governance Professional for their annual review. He noted that he had been in post since July 2025, meaning that the report did not review the position prior to that date.

Resolved, the Committee was satisfied with the arrangements for the independence of the Governance Professional and with the CPD programme in place.

10 2026-27 External Review of Governance – Timeline

The Director of Governance introduced the report, which set out a proposal and timeline for the selection of the organisation or individual conducting the next external review of governance. The Corporation must have its next review in 2026-27, and it was considered advisable to begin planning this early. In respect of the timing, the Committee supported aiming for the autumn term of the 26-27 year, as this would be one year after the appointment of the Director of Governance and the Chair of the Corporation.

The Committee discussed the focus of the review, potential reviewers and the merits of continuity against freshness.

Resolved, that the process and timeline for the external board review be recommended to the Corporation for approval at its meeting on 9 December, with the appointment of the reviewer to be delegated to the Committee.

11 Terms of Reference

The Director of Governance introduced the report, which set out a revised Committee Terms of Reference. All Committee Terms of Reference were being reviewed, with the committee's Terms of Reference last reviewed in December 2024.

Resolved, to recommend that the revised Terms of Reference be approved by the Board.

12 Cycle of Business 2025=26

The Director of Governance introduced the report, which set out the proposed Cycle of Business for the year.

Resolved, to recommend to the Board that the Cycle of Business be adopted.

13 Any other business

There was none.

14 Assessment of Meeting

The Committee assessed the meeting, noting that discussions had been good and purposeful, to a well-planned agenda, with the results from governor interviews a positive start to the meeting.

15 Next meeting

3rd February 2026

Meeting concluded at 18.44pm