

Board

Final

9 December 2025

Members Carole Kitching (Chair); Mohammed Elias Ali; Maddalaine Ansell; Sarah Benjamin; Phillip Kerle; Kunal Parkash; Laura Gladstone, Jane Makwe; Karen Redhead (in part), Anuska Shantilal; Chris Taylor.

Attendees Maxine Deslandes (Deputy Chief Operating Officer); Matt Fawcett (Deputy Principal, Planning, Partnership and Projects); Anil Nagpal (Chief Operating Officer); Sabeena Shah (Assistant Principal (Quality, Safeguarding and Learner Experience); James Taylor (Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality)); Owen Rees (Director of Governance).

Redacted from online publication

10 Minute Insight - Service Industries

Denise Charles, Head of Service Industries, presented on the curriculum areas covered by the department, discussing the number and profile of learners, progression of those learners, key achievements and risks and issues. The Board asked questions regarding funding within the College, supplies, national funding rates and income from services provided by students.

1 Attendance

Apologies had been received from Alfie Heaps, Cecilia Harvey and Shawez Mir.

2 Declarations of interest

Phillip Kerle declared that he was a director of Capital Talent Box Limited.

3 Membership Update

The Chair noted that the candidate recommended for the Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee role had withdrawn their candidacy. A further recruitment exercise would now be undertaken. The Board agreed to vary the Terms of Reference for the Curriculum & Quality Committee to allow the Chair of the Corporation to chair the 27 January meeting of the Committee, with a view to a permanent Chair being appointed for the Summer Term meeting.

The Chair also noted that the Search & Governance Committee had identified skills areas that would be prioritised in recruitment. These were:

- Estates (with an accent on development).
- 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.

Governors were asked to contact the Director of Governance (DoG) if they were aware of potential candidates in these areas or if they were interested in becoming Safeguarding Governor.

Resolved, The Board agreed:

- 1. To reappoint Chris Taylor as a Governor and Member of the Corporation for a four-year term from 13 December 2025;**
- 2. To approve the appointment of Jane Makwe as a Governor and Member of the Corporation for a four-year term;**
- 3. To appoint Jane Makwe to the Audit Committee; and**
- 4. To appoint Kunal Parkash as Chair of the Audit Committee.**

Resolved, that the Terms of Reference of the Curriculum & Quality Committee be varied to allow the Chair of the Corporation to chair the meeting on 27th January 2026.

4 Minutes and Matters Arising

Resolved, That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2025 be approved as a correct record, subject to Sabeena Shah being shown as present.

5 Matters Arising and Actions Log

The next 10-minute insight would be focused on SEND.

Resolved, That the Action Log be noted.

6 Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2024-25

The Chair of the Audit Committee introduced the report, which set out the work of the Audit Committee during the 2024-25 financial year.

It summarised the annual internal audit report and the business of the Committee through the year. It summarised the recommendations from internal audits that were conducted and the external audit findings.

The report provided assurance to the Board from the Audit Committee that the Committee was satisfied with the committee's opinion on the adequacy and

effectiveness of the college's assurance arrangements, assurance over subcontracting, framework of governance, risk management and control processes for the effective and efficient use of resources, solvency, and the safeguarding of assets.

No significant issues were identified during the year or in the audit process by the Committee.

The Board recorded its thanks to Racheal Fisher for her work as Chair of the Audit Committee.

7 Capital Talent Box Limited Accounts 2024-25

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) introduced the accounts of Capital Talent Box (CTB) Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of the College. CTB undertook recruitment services on behalf of the College. CTB had operated at break even, and the accounts of CTB had been absorbed within the main accounts. The accounts had been reviewed and agreed by the Directors of Capital Talent Box Limited.

8 Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024-25, including Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire and Post Audit Report

The COO introduced the annual accounts and associated papers. These had already been reviewed by the joint meeting of the Audit and Finance & General Purposes Committee. He noted that the accounts showed an operating surplus of £273k. The College had retained its 'Good' financial health rating for a fourth consecutive year, with a score of 220; this had risen from 50 six years previously. The Board congratulated the CEO and COO for the progress made.

He noted that the audit had gone smoothly, with two minor recommendations made by the auditor, one in relation to registers of interests and the other in relation to cancelled invoices. The Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire had been reviewed and recommended by the Audit Committee.

Resolved, that the following documents be approved and signed by the Chair and Accounting Officer:

- 1) Annual Report and Financial Statements**
- 2) Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire**
- 3) Letter of Representation**

8.1 Annual Statement on Senior Post Holder Remuneration 2024-25

The Director of Governance introduced the Annual Statement on Senior Post Holder Remuneration. The statement set out the College's policy on remuneration for Senior Post Holders, and how the Remuneration Committee

had carried out its duties during the year. It would be published on the College's website.

Resolved, that the statement be agreed for publication.

9 Chair's Update

(Karen Redhead arrived at the start of this item)

The Chair noted that she had been unable to meet with all Board members yet but would be making arrangements to do so in the near future. The Director of Governance would assist with making arrangements.

Anuska Shantilal updated governors on the autumn meeting of the Association of Colleges (AoC) Student Governor Network, which she had attended. She reported that the session had concentrated on strengthening student voice and engagement. The next meeting of the network was in January.

Elias Ali reported on the annual AoC Student Governor Summit, which he had attended. The Summit took place in conjunction with the AoC Conference, with additional networking and workshop opportunities to meet with other student governors. He noted external speakers as one area in which the College could extend its offer, noting that the visit of the local MP had been valuable. The Chair encouraged governors to use their networks to suggest useful speakers.

ACTION Arrange one-to-ones with all governors (Chair/Director of Governance)

10 Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan 2025-26

The Deputy Principal (Curriculum and Quality) introduced the report. The Self-Assessment Report (SAR) had previously been considered at the Validation meeting and at the Curriculum & Quality Committee and was in line with the Ofsted outcomes from the inspection in June 2025. The Quality Improvement Plan addressed the areas for development identified in the SAR and would be updated through the year.

The Board discussed the changes to the Ofsted framework, and how these would affect the SAR in future years.

A Governor asked how the College was addressing Behaviour and Attitudes which was assessed as Required Improvement in the SAR. The DP (C & Q) noted that this related to the need to address the behaviour of some younger male learners, particularly in informal spaces. The focus was on changing group mentality and ensuring that there were suitable activities.

Governors asked about negative mental health and feelings of disenfranchisement amongst male learners. The DP (C & Q) noted the need for all

learners to be imbued with resilience, and for support with identifying next steps. He noted that the College had been one of only 6 to receive funding as a Mental Health trailblazer. The Assistant Principal (Quality, Safeguarding and Learner Experience) outlined how the project worked, including the types of learner who were the target and the types of support they would receive.

Resolved, that the Self-Assessment Report be endorsed.

11 Operational Plan 2025-26 Progress Update

The Deputy Principal (Planning, Partnerships and Projects) introduced the update, which set out progress against the Operational Plan. He noted that the report fell early in the year, with 80% of actions on the plan not yet due for completion.

A governor asked how actions carried over from the previous year were tracked in the new plan. The CEO noted that this was outlined in the cover report with the original plan submitted to the Board in October. Within the plan, some actions were multi-year in nature, in line with the Strategic Plan.

A governor asked about appraisals. The CEO reported that this had been identified as an area for development, with this confirmed by an internal audit undertaken of the area. Progress had not been as strong as hoped due to capacity issues; however, the current manual processes were expected to be replaced by July 2026.

A governor asked what flexible learning was. The DP (PPP) reported that this was the term used for the learners who were undertaking their courses through distance or blended learning. The CEO noted that this was to reflect the need to make courses more easily available to local learners as well as distance learners outside London. The Board noted that the model adopted for flexible learning, with the planned reduction of outsourcing, created risks in relation to delivery and quality, which should be carefully monitored by the Board.

A governor asked about the College's use of AI, noting that assessment of learners was one area that AI excelled in. The CEO noted that this was an area of increasing focus for the College. The Board agreed that it would be a useful subject of focus at a future meeting.

ACTION Schedule item on AI development within the College (Director of Governance)

The Board discussed how progress towards actions that were not yet due for delivery was tracked and reported. The CEO noted that the plan was reviewed at each Exec Team meeting and closely monitored. The Board discussed the colours used to indicate the status of actions, the sequencing of the tables and the supporting narrative reporting.

ACTION Review reporting format of Operational Plan (CEO)

12 Funding Report

The Deputy Principal (Curriculum and Quality) introduced the report, which set out learner numbers. The numbers in the report were broadly in line with those in the R04 return, which would be reflected in the College's funding allocations. The report showed that the number of 16-18 learners was up by 301 on the same time the previous year, with positive numbers for adult learners at the time of reporting.

A governor asked whether there would be in year financial assistance. The DP (C & Q) reported that there were indications that additional learners would be funded on a 1/3rd basis by the DfE, but this was not confirmed. This would be confirmed early in the New Year, with funding received in March; the larger impact would be on the College's 26-27 allocation.

13 Management Accounts & Confirmation of Going Concern

The Deputy Chief Operating Officer (DCOO) introduced the management accounts, which covered the period to September. The forecast surplus was for £405k, with the operating surplus at £252k. Forecast income was £164k above budget, while pay was £33k below and non-pay £199k above. The accounts also presented tracking of bids, which showed that a total of £1,288k had been secured against a target of £800k. The cash position was positive, with an indicative grade of Outstanding at the end of the financial period.

The COO confirmed that the College was a going concern. The Board discussed whether, considering the improved financial position, it should still assess the going concern position at each meeting. The Board agreed that, in line with good practice, it would review this twice per year, with a mid-year review as well as the consideration in December.

The October management accounts had been prepared and would be circulated to governors.

ACTION Review the Schedule of Business to include mid-year review of going concern status (Director of Governance)

14 CEO's Report

The CEO presented her report. She noted that, with the exit from intervention, she would be increasingly externally focused to aid the College's development

Estates Strategy

The CEO noted that she would be covering the Estates Strategy on her report. She noted that the Briefing Session with Peter Marsh and Ann Sutcliffe of Peter Marsh Consulting had taken place since the last meeting. She noted that the recording of the session was available from Team Engine.

Confidential discussion

Election as Chair of London Region of Association of Colleges (AoC)

The CEO reported that she had been elected to the Board of the AoC, as the representative from the London region. She noted that this meant that she would be chairing the London Principals Group and representing the further education sector on a number of external boards, including the GLA Partnership Board. She noted that this role would be part of the focus on the College increasing its external focus.

National and London policy developments

The CEO's report outlined three major publications affecting the College, the Post 16 Education and Skills White Paper, the Curriculum and Assessment Review and the Mayor of London's Inclusive Talent Strategy. She noted that Julian Gravatt's presentation at the development session on 22 January would cover national reform in more detail.

Budget

The CEO noted that there were no major new announcements in the budget, with the 16-19 funding increase previously announced. She noted that the adult rate remained frozen, which had had and would continue to have a significant impact on the College's budget; it would also affect the ambitions of the GLA as set out in the Inclusive Talent Strategy. The AoC had launched a campaign - Adult Learning Pays - aimed at securing an increase in adult rate.

Adult Inclusive Provider of the Year

The Board congratulated the CEO and the staff on receiving the GLA Adult Inclusive Provider of the Year.

15 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2024-25

The DP (C& Q) presented the report, which set out how the College discharged its duties in meeting equality and diversity legislation. It had previously been presented and discussed by the Curriculum & Quality Committee.

**Resolved, that the EDI Annual Report be approved and agreed for publication.
(Director of Governance)**

16 Grievance Policy for Senior Post Holders

The DoG presented the report, which set out a revised policy for grievances involving Senior Post Holders. The policy was based on model policies created by the AoC and on the College's policies for all staff. The policy had been reviewed and recommended by the Remuneration Committee.

Resolved, that the Grievance Policy for Senior Post Holders be agreed.

17 External Governance Review 2026-27

The DoG presented the report, which set out proposed arrangements for the external review of governance due in 2026-27. The review was proposed to take place in the Autumn Term.

Resolved, that the outline timing and process for the review be agreed, and that the appointment of the reviewer be delegated to the Search & Governance Committee.

18 Minutes of the Search & Governance Committee 6 November 2025

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes, noting that the items considered had been covered elsewhere on the agenda.

19 Minutes of the Remuneration Committee 6 November 2025

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes, noting that the items considered had been covered elsewhere on the agenda.

20 Minutes of the Audit Committee 20 November 2025

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes, noting that some items considered had been covered elsewhere on the agenda. He noted that the Committee had also discussed the Annual Health & Safety Report, which did not identify any major variation or any cause for concern. The Committee had reviewed the Risk Register and would be undertaking a deep dive on the register at its next meeting. Finally, TIAA had replaced Scrutton Bland as Internal Auditor, and it was hoped that this would assist in faster closure of recommendations.

21 Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee 20 November 2025

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes, noting that the items considered had been covered elsewhere on the agenda.

22 Minutes of the Curriculum & Quality Committee 25 November 2025

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes, noting that some of the items considered had been covered elsewhere on the agenda. She noted that the Committee had also received updates on higher education, stakeholder

engagement and learner achievements. She noted that learner achievements at 16-19 was up 2%, while adult achievement had fallen.

23 Cycle of Business (Search & Governance and Remuneration Committees)

The DoG presented the report, which set out the cycles of business for the two committees for the remainder of the year. They had been considered and recommended at the meetings of the Committees on 4 November.

Resolved, that the 2025-26 Cycles of Business for the Search & Governance and Remuneration Committee be agreed.

24 Terms of Reference (Search & Governance and Remuneration Committees)

The DoG presented the report, which set out the terms of reference for the two committees. They had been considered and recommended at the meetings of the committees on 4 November.

Resolved, that the Terms of Reference for the Search & Governance and Remuneration Committee be agreed.

25 Any other business

The DoG noted that there would be a development session on 19 May as well as 22 January. There would also be a written resolution circulated to the Board ahead of the next meeting.

26 Confidential Items – Remuneration Committee Confidential Minutes

The staff, staff governors and student governors left for this item.

27 Next meeting 24 March 2026