Ealing,
Hammersmith
& West London College

Board *Final*

26 June 2026

Members Carole Kitching (Chair); Maddalaine Ansell; Nick Backstrom; Sarah Benjamin; Sheila Fraser-Whyte; Cecilia Harvey; Phillip Kerle; Adrien Ong; Kunal Parkash; Laura Gladstone, Jane Makwe; Karen Redhead.

Attendees Crystal Blackwood (Chief People Officer); Maxine Deslandes (Chief Finance Officer); Matt Fawcett (Deputy Principal, Planning, Projects & Partnerships); Anil Nagpal (Chief Operating Officer); James Taylor (Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality)); Owen Rees (Director of Governance).

Redacted from online publication

1 Attendance

Apologies had been received from Suzanne Lyne and Shawez Mir.

2 Declarations of interest

Phillip Kerle and Karen Redhead declared that they were directors of Capital Talent Box Limited.

3 Minutes and Matters Arising

Resolved, That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2026 be approved as a true and correct record.

4 Matters Arising and Actions Log

The actions in the log had been completed.

***Resolved*, That the Action Log be noted.**

5 Chair's Update

The Chair reported on recent student engagement events. She noted that events had been held at Southall and Ealing Campuses (with Construction and Creative and Media students respectively), and that both had been valuable. Learners had been very positive about the College, particularly in relation to their lecturers and other staff. Careers advice had been mentioned in all three engagement events as an area for potential improvement, with the importance students placed on discipline and behaviour a theme at Hammersmith.

Laura Gladstone had attended the launch of the Unseen Autism short film and noted that this was an inspiring and uplifting experience and the film itself

powerful. The CEO & Principal concurred and noted the work of Disun Majekodunmi in arranging for the film and in his other work with Foundation learners, including the poetry distributed at the last meeting.

ACTION Distribute the Unseen Autism short film to governors (Director of Governance)

ACTION Distribute details of the Student and Staff Awards to governors (Director of Governance)

6 CEO's Report

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) introduced her report, noting that it focused on her external activity and the impact of this on the College. She outlined recent events hosted by the College, including the Sub-Regional Collaboration Event held with other west London colleges, universities and other partners, and a DfE Awayday focused on workforce reform, with the College presenting for 45 minutes as part of the day. The College had also hosted the Deputy FE Commissioner, who had attended part of the Governor Development Session in May, and received a visit from the Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth and his senior colleagues.

In response to a question from a governor, the CEO noted that the visit from the Deputy Mayor had enabled the College to highlight key priorities, including the redevelopment of the Hammersmith & Fulham campus, the position in relation to non-devolved funding, ESOL funding and the College's work on Retail Skills. There had been positive feedback from the Deputy Mayor.

In response to a follow-up question on how governors could impact the College's reputation externally, the CEO confirmed that the College had undertaken to the Search & Governance Committee to produce a key summary of College business and priorities for governors to use to promote the College when networking.

The CEO also noted that Disun Majekodunmi had been awarded the Silver Pearson Teaching Award for his work with Foundation Learners, including the Unseen documentary discussed earlier. The Board congratulated him on this achievement.

ACTION Prepare and circulate a summary of key College business and priorities for governors' external engagement activities. (CEO & Principal and Director of Governance)

7 Operational Plan Update

The Deputy Principal (Planning, Projects & Partnerships) introduced the report, which set out progress against the year's Operational Plan up to the end of May 2026. He noted that the progress made was shown in Table 1 of the report, including the actions which had been delayed.

A governor asked how the actions in the plan related to the outcomes in the staff survey, noting digital as an area in which staff satisfaction was low. The CEO noted that investment in IT had primarily been in the College's IT infrastructure, which may have affected perceptions; IT and Estates remained a priority for investment and this was reflected in the survey outcomes. The Chair of the

Corporation noted that there would be a refresh of the Strategy and new Operational Plan in the autumn which would triangulate with survey data.

A governor asked about the timescales for the Commercial Strategy, which was overdue. The DP (PPP) noted that this had been completed in draft and was subject to review. In response to a follow up question regarding the strategy and its impact on commercial income, the CEO & Principal outlined the arrangements in place to ensure that commercial income was closely monitored and that targets set were realistic, taking into account the College's wider operating context. The COO noted that part of the work was to ensure that the income was accurately recognised. The Board noticed this as the greatest area of risk in the management accounts presented elsewhere on the agenda.

8 Funding Report

The Deputy Principal (Curriculum and Quality) (DP (C&Q)) introduced the report, which set out the position in the College's ILR at R10. The position was positive in respect of 16-19 and adult achievement, with the College having exceeded its 16-19 allocation and being on track to meet or exceed its targets in all other areas.

Governors asked questions regarding the DfE funding tolerance and whether this was expected to be met. The DP (C&Q) confirmed that it was. Governors also asked about the fall in the number of Learner Loans and Apprenticeships. The DP (C&Q) noted that the former were being superseded by Free Courses for Jobs, but increasing the number of apprenticeships remained a priority. Governors also asked about funding for over-delivery of GLA funded courses, with the DP (C&Q) confirming that there were no funds for this.

9 Management Accounts

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) introduced the management accounts, which covered the period to the end of May 2026, with the April Management Accounts presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee. He noted that while overall income and pay were up on the budgeted figures, shortfalls in commercial income had driven a reduction in the forecast surplus. The capital expenditure programme was on track, and Financial Health remained good.

A governor asked about the plan to address the issues and the sensitivity of the forecast to change. The COO acknowledged that there were risks, and that careful monitoring and a programme of mitigation was in place to address the issues.

The Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee noted that there was a case for discussing the College's use of cash, to ensure that any available cash was invested. The COO noted that the cash position would shift downwards but this could be reviewed at year end.

ACTION Review cash management in 2026-27 (Finance & General Purposes Committee)

A governor raised the question of staffing costs. The COO reported that these were considered to be sustainable and around 60%.

10 Staff Survey

The Chief People Officer (CPO) introduced the report, which set out the outcome of the annual staff survey. The survey was broadly in line with or above the previous year's. The results of the survey were being fed back to staff via the summer term staff forum sessions on each campus. One response which had declined was the percentage of staff reporting feeling physically safe, driven by a fall at Hammersmith. She noted that there were external factors underpinning this, but it was being reviewed.

Governors asked about the response rate to the survey. The CPO confirmed that this was in line with the previous year, and the College was happy with the quantity of responses received. The CEO & Principal noted that some dissatisfaction was inevitable, given that a proportion of members of staff who were subject to disciplinary or performance action at any given time.

Governors also asked about the percentage of staff reporting unacceptable behaviour from other staff. The CPO noted that this was being discussed at staff forums and an area that would continue to be monitored and investigated.

11 Governance Self-Assessment and Chair's Survey Outcomes

The Chair of the Search & Governance Committee introduced the report, which set out the outcome of the annual self-assessment survey. He noted that the survey gave a useful insight into the Board's position and confirmed his view that the Board had a strong range of talent and skills. One area in which the Board would be addressing technology and AI, with a twilight session to be arranged for governors in the new academic year.

The Chair of the Corporation noted the importance of the exercise, with the external governance review due in the autumn. She noted that the survey would include different questions each year, as with the questions about technology, and open text fields as used in the survey.

The Chair of the Corporation also presented the results of her performance review survey, noting that the comments were particularly helpful. A governor noted that, with respect to participation in meetings, they felt that this was more challenging at Board, given the breadth of business and the number of governors but was strong at committee meetings.

ACTION Arrange governor development session on the College's use of AI. (Director of Governance)

12 Financial Plan (CFFR)

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) presented the item, which set out the draft financial plan. He noted that it was a three-year plan, going up to 2028 and had previously been considered by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) outlined the key assumptions used in creating the plan, including in relation to inflation and allocations from the DfE.

A governor asked about the Earnings Before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Amortization (EBITDA). The COO noted that it was slightly below the 6% benchmark set by the FE Commissioner; while trending in the right direction, it would require monitoring.

Resolved, That the Financial Plan be agreed.

13 Accountability Statement

The Deputy Principal (Planning, Projects & Partnerships) introduced the report, which set out the draft Accountability Statement. The Chair of the Corporation noted that the draft statement had been reviewed by a group of governors from the Curriculum & Quality Committee prior to submission. The Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee confirmed that the areas discussed at that meeting had been incorporated in the draft statement and she was happy to recommend it to the Board.

Resolved, That the Accountability Statement be approved for submission to the Department for Education.

14 Proposed Subcontracting Arrangements

The Deputy Principal (Planning, Projects & Partnerships) introduced the report, which set out the proposed subcontracting in 2026-27. In line with the current year, this was to Rhythm Studio only.

In response to a question from governors, the DP (PPP) confirmed that there was flexibility to extend subcontracting should circumstances require it, subject to the relevant approvals. Governors asked further questions regarding progression within the Rhythm Studio and how this was dealt with within the cap.

Resolved, That the policy and proposed arrangements for subcontracting for 25-26, as set out in the report, be approved.

15 Risk Management Policy

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) introduced the report, which set out the revised Risk Management Policy, which had been reviewed by the Audit Committee.

Governors raised the review date for the policy, asking if this should be brought forward. The COO noted that policy review was undertaken whenever needed and could be brought forward if required.

Governors raised the risk scoring matrix and risk appetite statement, and whether this was standard for the FE sector. The COO reported that the format was the usual one for the sector. The Chair of the Audit Committee noted that the Committee planned to deep dive the risks on the register at a future meeting. He also suggested that he meet with the COO to review the risk scoring matrix and risk appetite statement and for the Audit Committee to discuss further at its next meeting.

ACTION The Chair of Audit Committee and COO to meet ahead of next Audit Committee to discuss the risk scoring matrix and appetite statement (Chair of Audit and COO)

Resolved, That the Risk Management Policy be approved and adopted.

16 Senior Postholder Remuneration Code

The Director of Governance introduced the report, which had previously been considered by the Search & Governance Committee. The Corporation was

required to adopt the Code as a condition of adopting the FE Code of Good Governance, with the Code and its accompanying guidance on an apply or explain basis.

Resolved, That the revised Senior Postholder Remuneration Code be adopted.

17 **Minutes of the Curriculum & Quality Committee 27 January 2026**

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes, noting that some of the items considered had been covered elsewhere on the agenda. Items discussed included Marketing and Recruitment, the updated QIP, Learner Voice, Predicted Outcomes and Curriculum Planning. Attendance had emerged as an area for focus, with the headline figure below target, while Learner Voice had identified a dip in the number of students reporting awareness of Prevent; the Committee had discussed how these issues were being addressed.

The Committee had also discussed Curriculum Planning, the College's plans for transition to the qualifications framework and the transition statement.

18 **Minutes of the Search & Governance Committee 3 February 2026**

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes, noting that some of the items considered had been covered elsewhere on the agenda. He noted that other key items discussed included the role of, and support for, the student governor, the Governance Improvement Plan, and the feedback from the Development Session on May 19th. The Committee had also received the results of the annual Skills Audit, which had shown good capability while highlighting key areas for training and development. Recruitment to vacancies was ongoing, with succession planning for the Vice Chair and Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee ongoing.

19 **Minutes of the Remuneration Committee 3 February 2026**

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes. He noted that all items had been considered elsewhere on the agenda.

20 **Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee 17 March 2026**

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes. In addition to the items considered elsewhere on the agenda, the Committee had received a Sustainability Update, following on from the presentation to the January Development Session. The College was on track to achieve Emerging Status under the EAUC Climate Action Roadmap.

The Committee had also agreed the Financial Regulations and Fees & Refund Policy, as delegated by the Corporation under the Committee Terms of Reference.

21 **Minutes of the Audit Committee 19 March 2026**

The Chair of the Committee updated on the meeting, noting that certain items considered had been covered elsewhere on the agenda. He noted that the meeting had not been quorate and he would be meeting with the Chair of

Corporation and Director of Governance to discuss ways to ensure that this was not repeated.

The governors present had received an update from Buzzacott on the Audit Plan, had reviewed the latest iteration of the Risk Register and reviewed the Health & Safety Update.

The Committee had also had a focus on internal audit, with TIAA reporting on their first year as the College's internal auditor. Two assignments were also reported, in respect of Commercial Income Reporting and Operational Planning, with both receiving substantial assurance. TIAA's feedback on the control environment and culture within the College had been positive.

22 Assessment of Meeting

The Board agreed that the meeting had functioned well, despite being moved online, with strong lines of questioning on the majority of items.

23 Any Other Business

The Chair of the Corporation thanked the Board for their support and work during the year.

24 Confidential Items – Confidential Minutes of the Board 19 March 2026, Confidential Minutes

Covered in the confidential minutes.

25 Next meeting

6 October 2026 at 5.30pm