



THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION

Held at Slough & Langley College on Wednesday, 10 December 2025

PRESENT:	Jo Croft	<i>Corporation Chair</i>
	Riley Campisi-Dignan	<i>Student Governor FE</i>
	Jacob Clay	<i>Academic Staff Governor Sixth Form</i>
	Louise Fellows	<i>Governor</i>
	Sam Foley	<i>Governor</i>
	Nathan Garat	<i>Governor</i>
	Anthony Haines	<i>Governor</i>
	Rob Lewis	<i>Senior Independent Governor</i>
	Sam Marshall-Davies	<i>Governor</i>
	Gillian May	<i>Group Principal & CEO</i>
	Antonia Spinks	<i>Governor</i>
	Signe Sutherland (<i>online</i>)	<i>Corporation Vice-Chair</i>
	Sarah Waller	<i>Academic Staff Governor FE</i>
	Alison Wheatley	<i>Support Staff Governor</i>
APOLOGIES:	Kerry Blandin	<i>Governor</i>
	Paul Britton	<i>Governor</i>
	Ketija Oyeniran	<i>Student Governor Sixth-Form</i>
	Ian Thomson	<i>Governor</i>
IN ATTENDANCE:	Gary Dixon	<i>Principal FE (elect)</i>
	Anne Entwistle	<i>Principal FE (outgoing)</i>
	Lucy Gill	<i>Group Finance Director</i>
	Karen Griffiths	<i>Acting Deputy Group Principal</i>
	Sinead O'Donoghue	<i>Principal Sixth Form</i>
	Tracy Reeve	<i>Group Director of Governance</i>

PART I

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	The meeting started at 5.00pm	
1.	<u>Health & Safety Housekeeping</u> The Chair (JC) welcomed everyone to Slough and Langley College. JC welcomed Gary Dixon (GD) to his first Corporation meeting at WFCG as Principal FE elect. The meeting noted that GD had been working with the outgoing FE Principal (AE) over the last four weeks.	
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies had been received as detailed above.	
3.	<u>AOB</u> There was no urgent other business notified.	
4.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> There were no declarations of interest.	

5. **Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 8 October 2025**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 October 2025, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as a true record and would be taken as signed by the Chair.

All Members were agreed.

- Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 8 October 2025

The Group Director of Governance presented a report which updated the meeting on the current status of 'matters arising'. All matters were included on the agenda or completed.

The update was NOTED

It was noted that there were no other matters arising.

6. **Staff Governors' Report**

Each of the Staff Governors gave the meeting a short verbal update.

JC gave the meeting an update on what was happening at Windsor College. The Sixth Form Colleges were busy with student UCAS applications: 77 were completed at Windsor and 167 at Strode's. A Level assessments were underway and work was being done to look at student outcome forecasts using the ALPs system; this measured student predicted outcomes versus targets grades i.e was looking at added value. The Colleges were getting ready for the January mock exams and BTEC controlled assessments. Student Winter Fairs had been held at both colleges with charity involvement. It had been a busy term.

SW confirmed that a number of similar charity events had happened at BCA in the run up to Christmas including Christmas Fairs and Santa Fun Runs. The ALFIE Choir had sung at Cliveden. There had also been a charity initiative for Christmas tree recycling which would benefit the Alexander Devine Children's Hospice; BCA was working with a local tree surgeon on this project. Work Skills week had recently taken place with one student securing a placement at the Olivier Theatre. SW highlighted the Remembrance Parade which had taken place at BCA; this had been a moving and extremely well organised event attended by all BCA staff and students. There had also been an anti-bullying week and the 'Stand out for Autism' bus had visited campus.

AW highlighted the activity that had taken place during the term at Slough and Langley College. Parents Evening had gone well. The Christmas Fair was planned for week commencing 15 December. Other charity events had included one organised by the engineering and plumbing teams. Mock interviews were held for Travel and Tourism students when some ex-college alumni who were now working for British Airways revisited the college. Collaboration with Higher Education partners continued with Level 3 students attending the University of West London for a seminar. Students had also visited Bucks New University and the HE Graduation Ceremony for HE students 2024-25 had been held at Twickenham facilitated by the University of West London. AW reminded the meeting that the ESOL department had been nominated for an Association of College (AoC) Beacon Award; assessors would be visiting Slough and Langley College on Tuesday 16 December to look at the provision.

The Chair (JC) thanked the staff governors for their input and asserted the value of Staff Voice for the Corporation.

The Staff Governor Feedback was NOTED

7. **Student Feedback**

FE Student Governor (RCD) presented an update for the meeting. Recent student activity had included Santa Fun runs at BCA and a really successful remembrance parade held in November 2025. The first student reps meeting of the year had taken place with a focus on working towards a greener BCA. There was also a Student Fair taking place on December 16th December. Additional activities were also now taking place including a new X Box club involving foundation students.

The Chair (JC) asked for any recent feedback from the wider student population and any areas of concern. RCD confirmed that current requests included additional vape sheds and new computers. The meeting was reminded that new lease agreements for additional computers were currently being looked at. One further issue at BCA was people walking their dogs through campus but it was noted that this was not avoidable when people were adhering to permitted footpaths.

The Student Governor Feedback was NOTED

8. **CEO/ Group Principal's Update**

The CEO (GM) presented an update on the Group's position with respect to financial performance, funding delivery, quality, workforce and compliance. It highlights areas of positive progress, alongside matters requiring continued oversight, specifically a recent breach of the Managing Public Money (MPM) rules and the trade union dispute. The report also outlined the actions being taken to ensure stability and maintain progress against the Group's strategic plan.

The meeting was pleased to note that the financial end of year 2024-25 was as forecast with a positive EBITDA at £3.126m which was at the FEC benchmark of 5%. The financial health grade was confirmed as 'good' and the DfE loan covenant was met. The good enrolment 2025-26 would provide positive lagged funding for 2026-27.

The meeting discussed the recent breach of Managing Public Money (MPM) rules. Governors noted that following the College's retrospective request for approval of a £23,282 special severance payment which exceeded the MPM rules on three-times monthly salary, the Department for Education had now confirmed that approval could not be granted. This transaction had to be recorded as irregular expenditure, and this had been captured in the year-end financial statements. The DfE had asked the College to confirm steps taken to prevent recurrence, including strengthened governance checks, a mandatory DfE-approval stage for any future cases, refresher training for HR/Finance and Governing Body oversight of proposed special severance cases. GM confirmed that a formal response had been submitted, confirming that this was an isolated case and outlining the strengthened internal controls now in place.

GM highlighted the ongoing dispute with UCU balloted members in relation to the national pay claim of 10% which the group was unable to meet. The independent scrutineer had confirmed a valid ballot result, with 89.06% voting in favour of strike action on a turnout of 57.66%. The union has now notified the College of intended dates for industrial action (14,15,16 January 2026). GM assured the meeting that preparations were underway within curriculum and operations teams to mitigate any impact on students. Governors were assured that the College continued to engage constructively with the trade unions.

The CEO & Group Principal's update was NOTED and RECEIVED.

ITEMS FOR DECISION/ APPROVAL

9. **POLICIES FOR APPROVAL**

The Group Director of Governance presented a number of policies for approval all of which had been considered in detail at the relevant committees and were being recommended for approval.

9.1 ***Instrument & articles:*** These were presented for biennial review and had been updated to comply with the 20th edition Eversheds template and guidance from the DfE in relation to the voting rights of student governors. This was being recommended for approval by Strategy Governance & Search Committee.

9.2 ***Standing Orders:*** Presented for biennial review these had been updated to reflect good practice guidelines. They were now more comprehensive and included: a Statement of Governance; a Schedule of Delegation, a Public Value Statement, a Policy on the independence of the Group Director of Governance and a guidance note in relation to online meetings. This was being recommended for approval by Strategy Governance & Search Committee.

- 9.3 WFCG Finance Regulations: The Group Finance Director confirmed that these had been amended but would require additional amendment in spring 2026 to align with a new WFCG Procurement Policy which was currently being written. Governors (RL) cited a number of typographical anomalies and errors in this document which would be corrected before publishing. This was being recommended for approval by Resources Committee.
- 9.4 Reserves Policy: This was being recommended for approval by Resources Committee.
- 9.5 Whistleblowing Policy: This has been updated to reflect good practice on sexual harassment. This was being recommended for approval by Resources Committee.
- 9.6 Conflicts of Interest Policy: This was being recommended for approval by Resources Committee.
- 9.7 Anti-fraud & corruption Policy: This was being recommended for approval by Resources Committee.

All of the above policies were APPROVED subject to several typographical errors highlighted.

ACTION:

- i. Correct any numbering, typographical and format errors highlighted in policies before publication.**
- ii. Refine Finance Regulations to align with the new Procurement Policy (spring 2026).**

10.

TWFCG: External Audit Management Report & 2024/25 Financial Statements

➤ **Financial Statements 2024/25**

The Group Finance Director (LG) presented the draft financial statements 2024-25 and thanked Senior Independent Governor (RL) for his review for typos and consistency. The meeting noted that the narrative was in line with the accepted format for FE colleges and had been drafted with input from the wider SLT. Members were pleased to note that the current financial position presented for FY25 was operationally at break-even with a small operational surplus. The meeting agreed that a return to a positive cash position was essential to the going concern and future viability of the college group. LG highlighted the improved I&E position which was showing a £1.29m surplus; this 'hocky-stick' recovery was predicated on growth in revenue. The meeting agreed that the cash position from operations and the cash inflow of £3m supported the 'going concern' judgement for the next 12 months.

The meeting noted that the Local Government pension Scheme (LGPS) had moved to be an asset during 2024-25 but FRS102 only allowed recognition of a pension asset if there was evidence of a realisable refund or reduction in future contributions. As there was no likelihood of either happening, the advice from actuaries (Barnett Waddingham) had been to keep this at a break-even position.

Prior-year adjustment: LG explained the detail of the recent historical accounting error that had been discovered by MHA during the external audit relating to an inconsistent treatment of deferred capital grants and the related depreciation. A review of historic capital grants for Strode's College and East Berks College (EBC) had identified misalignment between grant income recognition and depreciation of related assets. The errors related to grant receipts from 2004 to 2009 for EBC and prior to the 2017 merger for Strode's, where income had been recognised faster than the associated assets had been depreciated. This had been discussed in detail at the recent Resources Committee and Audit Committee meetings. LG confirmed that in total, £1.659m needed to be reinstated to the WFCG balance sheet as a long-term liability, reducing opening reserves as at 1 August 2024 by the same amount. Governors were assured that the impact on the current year (FY25) was a reduction of deferred capital grants of £0.154m for both grant adjustments; there would be no impact on the cash position or financial health for FY25 which would remain at 'good'. In FY26 there would be a reduction of £0.229m to capital grant revenue prior to any new grants being recognised. The proposed

accounting amendment was considered and approved as recommended by the Audit Committee.

LG also highlighted that there was also a reference in the narrative to the accounts to reflect the breach of Managing Public Money rules discovered by MHA during the external audit. This had occurred with a severance payment paid to a junior member of staff in July 2025; as highlighted in the CEO's report.

The Governors sought clarity around the 'related party transactions' on page 186 and LG confirmed that this related to the Governors' declared interests. LG informed the meeting that this was the first time that the statutory accounts had been prepared in-house by the WFCG Finance Team (rather than asking the external audit firm to do this) which had saved circa £10k. She thanked the Group Management Accountant (WS) for her input to this.

The Board APPROVED the:

- i) reinstatement of £1.659m of previously recognised capital grant income to the balance sheet as a long-term liability, reflecting the corrections required for grant receipts for EBC in the period to 2004 to 2009 and for Strode's prior to 2017.***
- ii) revised amortisation schedules for both the Strode's and EBC capital grants to ensure that grant income was recognised over the remaining useful lives of the related assets, thereby addressing audit findings and restoring alignment with accounting standards.***

The WFCG Financial Statements 2024-25 were APPROVED and would be signed by the Chair and CEO (Chief Accounting Officer).

(All Members were agreed.)

ACTION: The signed WFCG Financial Statements 2024-25 would be submitted to the ESFA by the deadline of 31 December 2025.

➤ **Audit Findings Report (MHA)**

The meeting noted the audit findings report which had been received from MHA; this had been presented by the auditors at the recent Audit Committee meeting (detailed minutes of this meeting were included in the papers for the Board meeting). It was noted that the external auditors from MHA Audit LLP had been positive about the way the audit was handled by the finance team and the good communications between the auditors and the finance team.

The meeting noted the Executive Summary and the key audit risks that had been flagged during the audit planning; no additional risks had been identified during the audit. The level of materiality had been set at £1.005m at the planning stage but had now been updated to £1.042m based on the actual figures. The meeting was pleased to note that no adjusting misstatements had been noted. However, the prior period error of £1.659m was noted.

A number of control recommendations had been raised in three key areas:

Testing of ILRs: No new issues had been identified but an error in relation to source document checks identified in the 2023-24 audit was still not fully actioned (grade B recommendation) .

Regularity audit findings (two grade A recommendations): The severance payment which exceeded three-times salary was included here and the regularity opinion would have to be qualified with very specific wording to reflect the MPM breach.

There was also a tender awarded for work on the Alms Houses at Strode's – above the £375,000 threshold – which had not been approved in final format by the Corporation.

Key Financial Controls: Some contracts for lettings had not been signed and there were instances of lettings with no formal contract in place (grade B recommendation).

Capital Expenditure and Fixed Asset Register: (grade A recommendation) The meeting noted this important recommendation on the annual review of the Fixed Asset Register and the requisite tightening of descriptors; the recommendation flagging the need to tighten controls on disposals was also noted.

There had also been three advisory recommendations:

- **Formal Reserves Policy:** This was accepted and a draft WFCG Reserves Policy had been approved by Resources Committee on 25 November (for Board approval 10.12.25).
- **Employee Mileage:** Fully accepted and now monitored automatically through iTrent HR system. LG confirmed that the system was working well as one employee had already claimed more than 10,000 miles so the payment had reduced to 25p a mile.
- **Conflict of Interest Policy:** a draft policy was being presented for Board approval.

- **Going Concern Judgement**

The meeting noted a report which gave governors assurance around the going concern judgement for WFCG. LG reminded the meeting that this judgement had to cover a twelve-month period from the date of signing of the accounts (to 10 December 2026) and evidence had to be provided to MHA to support this judgement. The meeting agreed that as detailed in the paper the key financial aspects supported the judgement that WFCG was a 'going concern'. These included:

- **Financial Position:** FY25 ended with a £6.816m cash balance and loan repayments had been met. The cash balance included £2.295m held as 'yet to be spent' capital grants. The meeting commended the 'hockey-stick' recovery achieved in-year and the actual position being in line with the College Financial Forecasting return (CFFR) as submitted in July 2024.
- **Covenant:** The loan covenant had been met at 31 July 2025 and reported to DfE as compliant.
- **Improved Outlook:** FY26 had started well, with enrolments exceeding budget, stable cash levels and positive EBITDA projected.
- **Future Stability:** Financial controls and forecasting supported WFCG's status as a going concern. The college was moving steadily towards the FE Commissioner benchmark of 40 days cash.

LG confirmed that the auditors had reviewed WFCG's College Financial Forecasting Return (CFFR which was submitted in July 2025. This had not assumed any growth 2025-26 and WFCG had seen additional learner numbers; the auditors were happy with this prudent position.

The Chair asked for thanks to be passed on to the external auditors at MHA and all of the Finance Team at WFCG for their work on the external audit.

Members RECEIVED the Audit Findings Report from MHA and SUPPORTED the going concern judgement for WFCG to 31 December 2027.

(All Members were agreed.)

- **Letter of Representation**

The meeting considered the Letter of Representation and LG confirmed that this was a standard letter but had additional clauses to reflect the following:

- Regularity – special severance payment breaching MPM rules.
- LGPS – implementation of an asset ceiling.
- The detailed prior year adjustment (depreciation versus release of capital grants at Stroder's).

The Letter of Representation was APPROVED and would be signed by the Chair and the CEO.

(All Members were agreed.)

- **Regularity self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ)**

The meeting was reminded that the Regularity Audit report from MHA was within the Audit Findings Report. The meeting noted and considered the draft Regularity Audit Self-Assessment questionnaire 2024-25 which had been completed by the Exec Team. This detailed report was noted as a useful source of assurance for Governors and a clear reminder of the necessary 'checks and balances' that should be in place. The template included the

MPM breach on severance pay as discussed earlier in the meeting.

The Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2024-25 for WFCG was NOTED and RECEIVED.

➤ ***Annual Report of the Audit Committees 2024-25***

The Group Director of Governance (TR) presented the Annual Audit Committee Report 2024/25 which was being presented by the Audit Committee. The meeting was reminded that the purpose of this report was to provide assurance to the Corporation from the Audit Committee on the adequacy and effectiveness of controls and risk mitigation in place. Governors noted that the Annual Audit Committee Report was a mandatory requirement within the College Financial Handbook; TR highlighted that this annual audit committee report would be submitted to the DfE to accompany the WFCG financial statements. TR also highlighted the paragraph under 2.7 Regularity Audit which referenced the Managing Public Money breach and the resulting qualified regularity audit opinion. The report also included an appendix which detailed an assessment of the performance of WFCG's internal and external auditors.

The Chair of the Audit Committee (AH) confirmed that as stated in the report the Audit Committee were satisfied with the college's assurance arrangements. The external audit process had gone well and was a positive end to a successful year. The relationships with internal and external auditors were now strong and producing good results. It had become apparent to Audit Committee that procurement needed to be a focus for the management and there was a need to strengthen resources allocated to this area. GM confirmed that this was now the case as specialist procurement help was now being sourced via external specialists. AH cited the ongoing importance of ensuring that there was no further breach of MPM rules.

The meeting RECEIVED the Annual Report of the WFCG Audit Committee.

11.

GOVERNANCE SUMMARY REPORT

11.1

Board Membership

The Director of Governance (TR) presented a paper which detailed the Members of the Corporation with cessation dates and sub-committee membership. Governors were reminded that the current Board membership of WFCG was determined at 19 members; and there was currently one vacancy. However, as considered earlier in the meeting the proposal was to increase this number to accommodate some new governors; this would be considered by the Board in January 2026 alongside membership recommendations. It was noted that the current Audit Committee Chair (Tony Haines) was coming to the end of his short third term of office. TR brought a proposal to the SG&S Committee to reappointment Tony Haines as a Governor and Chair of Audit Committee for a one-year extended term of office.

[AH did not take part in this subsequent discussion or vote.]

Anthony Haines (AH): The meeting noted that Tony Haines' current two-year term of office would end in December 2025. TR informed the meeting that the Strategy Governance & Search Committee were recommending that the Corporation should extend AH's 'exceptional' third term of office from two years to three years. The meeting agreed that AH's specialist knowledge as an employee of the DfE and detailed funding knowledge had been especially useful for the Board and the Exec management team at the college over the last few years. AH's input and challenge as the Chair of Audit Committee was also especially valuable. GM confirmed that she was especially keen to maintain AH's specialist skill set on the Board for the next year. TR confirmed that AH had provisionally agreed to stay on as a governor and Chair of Audit Committee but he had informed her that he may not be able to complete another full year.

The meeting APPROVED the recommendation that Anthony Haines be re-appointed as a Board Member of TWFCG for a one-year period until 31 December 2026.

(All Members were agreed – AH did not vote on this matter.)

The meeting NOTED that AH may need to step away from his role at WFCG before December 2026.

Jeremy Spooner (JS): The meeting noted that JS had resigned from his role as co-opted governor on the Quality & Curriculum Committee with immediate effect. JS was still hugely supportive of WFCG but his circumstances necessitated him stepping away at the current

time. The meeting commended his input to BCA pre-merger and his role as a co-opted governor since the August 2022 merger.

11.2 ***The meeting THANKED Jeremy Spooner for his governance work at WFCG.***
Recruitment of external governors – Peridot Partners

Governors were reminded that the WFCG Board had approved the use of Peridot Partners to run an external recruitment campaign for up to three independent governors for WFCG (agreed at Board meeting on 8 October 2025). TR confirmed that the campaign had gone live on Monday 27 October and closed to applications on 1 December 2025. There had been 17 high quality applicants shortlisted by Peridot which were reviewed on Monday 8 December by the selection panel. Interviews were planned for 16 December at Slough & Langley College. The interview panel - convened from the membership of Strategy Governance and Search Committee – would interview seven candidates on 16 December and would see the final three shortlisted candidates on 9 January 2026. TR and the Chair (JC) confirmed that the quality of applicants had been excellent and recommendations for membership would be brought to the Board in January 2026 after the final interviews were completed.

The meeting NOTED the positive progress on the recruitment of governors.

ACTION: Extraordinary Board meeting to be convened in January 2026 to consider the appointment of new governors and a revision to the determined number of the Board.

TR

11.3 ***Use of the College Seal***

The meeting noted that there had been no use of the WFCG seal since reported to the last Corporation meeting in October 2025.

The nil return for use of the WFCG seal was NOTED.

11.4 ***Governance self-assessment 2024-25 and action plan 2025-26***

The Group Director of Governance (TR) presented a report which updated the committee on the review and self-assessment of governance that had been undertaken for 2024-25. TR was also seeking approval from the Corporation on the suggested priorities for governance improvement in 2025-26.

Members noted that the Governance Action Plan 2025/26 was based on feedback and findings from an internal self-assessment as well the Chair's 1:1 online meetings with all individual governors (summer 2025). The meeting noted the perceived strengths and areas for improvement highlighted during the Chair's meetings with governors. The meeting took the three detailed appendices as read which outlined the additional elements of self-assessment undertaken by the Director of Governance for 2024/25:

- Review of progress against governance action plan 2024-25.
- Bourneville checklist. (For background information; this had been reviewed by WFCG Audit Committee in September 2025.)
- Assessment and action plan against the HMT Managing Public Money Guidelines resulting from reclassification of college into the public sector. (For background information - reviewed by Audit Committee September 2025).

The meeting discussed the suggested Governance Development Plan 2025/26 and the seven suggested components:

- i) **Succession Planning** for future Board and sub-committee membership to ensure that the Board improved its EDI composition and maintains the correct balance of skills and experience. TR highlighted the ongoing recruitment of new external governors being facilitated by Peridot Partners.
- ii) **Senior Postholder recruitment** (CEO and Group Principal): the Board was recruiting a replacement for Gillian May who would be leaving WFCG at the end of May 2026. The meeting discussed the recruitment process which had been agreed at the extraordinary Board meeting held on 12 November. TR confirmed that the membership of the selection committee – after asking all governors - would be finalised within the next few days. In terms of good practice, the interview panel would include an 'independent' member to provide a perspective external to WFCG (this would be discussed further in the Part II confidential meeting).

- iii) Improved **information (rather than data)** to all sub-committees and Board meetings to enable governors to focus on key areas of strength and weakness. TR assured the meeting that the governors' data dashboard which started to be developed in 2024-25 would be taken forward.
- iv) To develop and maximise the input of the Mirror Board at TWFCG to improve the diversity of perspectives and views considered by the Board. This would include the establishment of an Employee Representative Board (ERB) across the group (to be discussed later in the meeting). Governors asserted the importance of ensuring that feedback from the ERB and Mirror Board reached the governors. The meeting noted that governors should be invited to attend Mirror Board meetings moving forward (only one or two at each meeting).
- v) Further development of the **Governor Link Programme** to encourage better engagement from Governors. TR highlighted the recent guidance to the executive to try and make Link meetings more meaningful with a focus on existing student meetings e.g. student council and student conference. RL also cited the importance of giving link governors sufficient notice of meeting dates.
- vi) Ongoing **support and mentoring for WFCG student governors and staff governors**.
- vii) Continue to review and refine **WFCG constitutional documents and governance policies** to align with best practice.

The meeting NOTED progress against the Governance Action Plan 2024/25.

The meeting APPROVED the Governance Improvement Plan 2025/26 as presented.

(All Members were agreed.)

12.

Risk Register

The CEO and Group Principal (GM) presented the updated Strategic Risk Register and Assurance Framework for WFCG 2025/26. This had been updated since considered at the last Board meeting. Governors discussed the highest scoring risks and the updated narrative explaining current risk scores, mitigation and assurance levels.

- Risk 1 Failure to meet budget forecast (risk score reduced to 16 'amber'): Acute risk linked to financial health; the upwards pressure on pay was still a very real concern. GM reminded the meeting that lagged funding, increased funding rates, additional adult and apprenticeship income and tight control of costs had returned the College to a positive EBITDA and financial health in 2024/25. The pay costs as a percentage of income were still above the 68% target at 70% for FY25 but had shown improvement since the prior year. The possibility of sensitivity in relation to industrial relations and pay disputes was noted.
- Risk 2 IT Failure with loss of data for staff or students (risk score remains at 16 'amber'): Governors were reminded that capital continued to be ringfenced during 2025/26 for essential IT improvements. The systems upgrades (in IT, HR and Finance) to increase efficiency and resilience had been discussed at recent committee meetings and were now being actioned as a priority.
- Risk 3 Uncertainty and risks associated with emerging national curriculum reforms (risk score remains at 9 'green'): This key 'acute' risk was being well managed and senior staff continued to be engaged in advisory groups linked to reform. The T level roll out across WFCG was now confirmed and costed with a clear curriculum plan in place. Senior Staff were working to evaluate future strategies in light of the recently published White Paper and government guidance and sector updates were being closely monitored. The CEO informed the meeting that Strategy Governance & Search Committee had asked the CEO to put together a presentation on the White Paper so that WFCG governors could understand the strategic impact and possible changes to the governance role moving forward. GM confirmed that this would be presented to the Corporation in spring 2026.
- Risk 4 Loss of vehicular access to Slough & Langley (S&L) campus (risk score remains at 12 'amber'): The meeting noted this risk which recently emerged but noted that mitigations were now in place.

- Risk 5 Uncertainty and risks associated with devolution of the Adult Skills Fund (ASF) and future funding arrangements (risk score remains at 12 'amber'): The meeting was reminded that a growth in the ASF allocation of 10% had been confirmed for 2025-26.
- Risk 6 External Safeguarding Risks (risk score remains at 12 'amber'): The meeting was assured that the Executive Team continued to work with all relevant agencies in relation to any safeguarding incidents.
- Risk 7 Poor student outcome data in some curriculum areas results in a challenge to the Good Ofsted rating and the resulting impact on quality and reputation (risk score increased from 8 'green' to 12 'amber'): The CEO confirmed that this continued to be a focus for management to ensure consistency across the four campuses. The increased risk score was predicated on a dip in achievement for apprenticeships to 51% (against a national benchmark of 60%). GM confirmed that the college had self-reported this dip in achievement for Apprenticeships to the DFE and were now working with a specialist from the FE Commissioner's Team. The intervention work and action plan had been discussed in detail at the recent Quality & Curriculum Committee (25.11.25).

The meeting NOTED and APPROVED the updated WFCG Risk Register.

(All Members were AGREED.)

➤ Funding Update 2025/26:

Governors noted a report which confirmed that the college was meeting or exceeding all elements of its DfE and Adult Skills Budget for 2025/26. The meeting noted the progress against the detailed targets in the strategic plan for the following aspects of funding:

Apprenticeships funding was ahead of the prior year by £84k.

Adult Skills Fund (ASF) was currently generating £200k more than this time last year.

Adult Skills Fund (Free Courses for Jobs) was currently projecting to finish the year on £99,294 against an allocation of £59,233.

Greater London Authority (GLA) was currently £203k ahead on this time last year.

DfE 16-18 learner numbers were currently 4760 compared to the 2024-25 R04 figure of 4674. If at R04 the Colleges learner count is 4760, the growth amount for the year would be 10 learners; this would be used in the allocation calculation for 2026-27. On the basis of this profile WFCG would not be eligible for additional in year growth funding but would receive the growth in lagged funding in 2026-27.

T-Levels There were 127 T-level learners in November 2025 compared to 52 at the same time last year. However, this was still short of the 268 learners allocated; if this picture did not change the DFE clawback (based on 127 T level learners) would be £202K. GM confirmed that this had been accrued for in the budget and management accounts.

Tailored Learning currently had 350 enrolments against an allocation of £398,088 compared to the same point last year of 333 enrolments against an allocation of £336,698.

Members NOTED the funding update.

13. **College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2024/25**

The Deputy Group Principal (KG) presented this report to the meeting. KG highlighted that although the new Ofsted Framework was now known the SAR had been graded on the old framework (due to the late availability of the new grading criteria). However, the mid-year review of the Quality Improvement Plan would be based on the new criteria. Governors were reminded that the grading criteria for the new framework were tougher and, in many cases, 'good' would now be assessed as 'expected'. KG did not disagree with the objective of this tougher new approach to facilitate quality improvement. Governors (AS) asserted the need for management to be aware of the impact of the new Ofsted framework on staff morale. AS asked KG to consider the use of the word 'consistent' in the SAR as under the new framework this would mean 100% in place. The meeting agreed that there were potential risks around staff morale in relation to the new framework and reputational damage. KG informed the meeting that Ofsted had stated that context would always be taken into account but the new format reports published to date had little engagement on context. AS appreciated the importance of context but affirmed that the SLT needed to be worried about consistency rather

than variability. Governors (RL) asked whether staff morale might be helped by setting smaller achievable milestones through the improvement journey. AS reminded the meeting of ensuring that staff and the college were sufficiently well resourced to achieve.

KG informed the meeting that the recent robust self-assessment process – including Quality Review Boards with each curriculum area - concluded that WFCG remained a Good provider with Outstanding features, robust safeguarding culture, high achievement in many areas, and strong employer engagement.

However, to secure a future Outstanding judgement, governors should monitor the following five critical watch areas:

1. Apprenticeship achievement and attendance
2. Sixth Form high-grade performance and ALPS scores
3. Attendance in key FE areas (ESOL, Construction, Hair & Beauty)
4. Functional Skills performance
5. Consistency of quality assurance and digital platform usage

Strengths to Celebrate were noted as:

- Outstanding HE and strong Adult and Community provision
- Excellent employer engagement and sector alignment
- Improving retention and significant gains for High Needs learners
- Strong personal development and safeguarding impact
- High satisfaction and robust progression pathways

The whole college headline performance dashboard was noted:

Area	Performance	National Benchmark	RAG
Attendance	83–86%	90%	Amber
Retention	87–95%	89.7%	Amber
Achievement (16–18)	82–89%	82.8%	Green
Achievement (19+)	84–97%	84.4%	Green
High Grades L3	36–41%	36%	Green
Destinations	88–92%	86%	Green
Apprenticeship Achievement	51%	60%	Red
HE Achievement	97%	88%	Green
Adult Achievement	82%	88%	Green

➤ **KEY STRENGTHS ACROSS WFCG**

a. High achievement in core FE and Sixth Form provision

- BCA achievement 89.5%, with strong progress across 12 of 13 curriculum areas.
- Sixth Form: Level 3 pass rates remain strong at 95.8%, BTEC pass rate 97.5%, and high grades rising in several subjects.

b. Outstanding Higher Education

HE achievement at 97%, retention at 100% in most programmes, NSS performance significantly above national averages.

c. Adult Education continues to grow with good outcomes

- Adult ESOL achievement is above national benchmarks; enrolments increased by 140%.
- Community Learning achievement 97% with learner satisfaction 96%.

d. Good personal development and safeguarding culture

- 98% of Sixth Form students feel safe.
- Over 1,000 students engaged in Safeguarding and Wellbeing Weeks at FE.
- Behaviour remains good across all campuses with very few exclusions.

e. **High-quality, industry-relevant curriculum**

- Significant employer involvement is reported across all provisions. (e.g., Microsoft Data Centre Academy, NHS, BIGGA, engineering and construction partners).
- Work placements continue to increase: 73,889 hours completed at BCA, 32,526 hours at Langley.

f. **Good culture of inclusion and high performance for High Needs learners**

- BCA: EHCP achievement 93.5%, outperforming peers by 3%.
- Slough & Langley (S&L): EHCP achievement 87.9%, improving by 5.7%.

➤ **KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND RISK**

a. **Apprenticeships – Requires Improvement (Grade 3)**

- Achievement rates remain too low in key standards
- FS Maths & English underperformance limits EPA readiness.
- Attendance and employer engagement vary significantly by standard.
- Digital platform and ILP usage inconsistent.

Governance Risk: The scale of apprenticeship underperformance remains the single biggest risk to the whole-college judgement.

b. **FE – Attendance below KPI and varies by subject**

- BCA attendance: 89.4% (close to KPI).
- Slough & Langley: 83.5% (below KPI of 90%).
- Persistent gaps remain in Construction, Hair & Beauty, ESOL.

Impact: Attendance inconsistencies continue to depress achievement in several areas.

c. **Sixth Form – Achievement variation and high-grade decline**

- ALPS shows 77% of subjects performing below an ALPS 5.
- A-level high grades (A*-C) declined from 61.7% → 59%.
- GCSE Maths at Windsor dropped to 25.3%, below national average.

Risk: Declining value-added and GCSE variation impact Sixth Form competitiveness.

d. **Functional Skills – Underperformance across Adult and Apprenticeships**

- FS success rates remain below benchmark, especially for apprentices.
- Online model (EQUALS) underperforms compared with face-to-face delivery.

e. **Quality Assurance – Inconsistent in some areas**

- Sixth Form: inconsistency in curriculum innovation, tracking and assessment follow-up.
- Apprenticeships: QA processes not embedded and too slow in parts.

➤ **The key STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2025-26 were NOTED as:**

i. **Raise Achievement and High Grades (FE & Sixth Form)**

- Reduce number of ALPS <5 subjects; return pass rate to **≥95% target**.
- Targeted intervention for GCSE Maths at Windsor.

- ii. **Deliver Apprenticeship Improvement Plan at Pace**
 - Improve achievement to national benchmark by July 2026.
 - Improve FS delivery, attendance, employer engagement and early intervention.
- iii. **Improve Attendance to 90% Across All Provisions**
 - Attendance escalation pathway; weekly reports; improved parental and employer engagement.
- iv. **Strengthen Assessment, Tracking & Digital Consistency**
 - Standardised ILP usage; compulsory ALPS Connect training; half-termly data reviews.
 - Improve digital learning platform usage across all departments.
- v. **Enhance Work Placement & Employer Engagement**
 - Full implementation of placement tracker; expand employer network across L2 & L3.
- vi. **Strengthen Personal Development & Wellbeing**
 - Improve consistency of tutorial and PD across FE, Sixth Form and Apprenticeships.
 - Expand wellbeing offer and visibility of support teams in some provisions

The detailed Quality Improvement Plans for FE and Sixth Form were noted; they reflected the areas for improvement detailed above.

Sixth Form: Principal Sixth Form SO'D asserted the focus that the sixth form would be placing on improving high grades. Work to take this forward would include modelling with teachers and students and more learning walks to raise classroom expectations. Training on the ALPs system was also taking place so that teachers made better use of this system to get students to understand exceeding their target grades. The GCSE English at Strode's and GCSE maths at Windsor also needed improvement.

SO'D confirmed that other areas of focus for sixth form would be:

- More work would be undertaken on industry placements across the sixth form.
- Keep momentum on punctuality going.
- Attendance drives in areas where it was needed.
- A focus on Personal development with particular focus on employability and skills for moves to HE.
- More robust tracking of data – trying to centralise and ensure consistency of data reporting.

Further Education (FE): Principal FE (AE) confirmed that the SAR and the Quality Improvement Plan has been written collaboratively by the curriculum leadership team across the two FE colleges. She confirmed that there was much more consistency between BCA and S&L Colleges now. Other points discussed included:

- The strong student focus demonstrated by curriculum staff at the recent Quality Review Boards; teachers knew and understood their learners and were giving them the necessary tools to succeed.
- Attendance at Slough & Langley was not where it should be at 83.5%. This would be a focus moving forward. On a positive note the attendance 'gap' between main programmes and GCSE English and maths had narrowed.
- Achievement for EHCP learners was strong
- Four departments at Slough and Langley had achievement above 90% but the overall achievement had dipped from the prior year. Part of this was due to a fall in ESOL retention (from 87% to 77%). ESOL staff were looking at behaviour management for some students especially the unaccompanied asylum seekers.
- Progress had been made with GCSE English and maths results which were now upper quartile. This was very positive as students were still resistant to having to study English and maths. Student Governor (RCD) informed the meeting that feedback at the recent student reps conference had confirmed that quite a few students now felt more confident to continue with English and maths.

The Principal FE elect (GD) talked the meeting through the FE quality improvement action plan (QIP) for 2025-26. He highlighted that in order to reflect the new Ofsted framework inclusion would be a key factor for the year. GD highlighted the new 'Risk Of NEET Indicator' (RONI) report which was discussed in detail at the recent Quality & Curriculum committee. This would help teaching staff to flag any students at risk. Another focus for 2025-26 would be to ensure that quality processes were aligned across the two FE colleges.

Governors (SMD) sought clarity on how the QIPs led to a resourcing plan across the four colleges when a number of key priorities for improvement were identified. SMD also sought additional detail on how that was communicated to governors. GM confirmed that the now well-developed College curriculum planning process at WFCG allowed people and budgets to be allocated in a formulaic fashion. GM reminded the meeting that the curriculum planning process was regularly shared with Quality & Curriculum Committee and came as a report to the Board in the summer meeting. GM highlighted that much of the ring-fenced, deliberate investment e.g. for curriculum specific equipment or buildings was external. Recent examples had been where capital funding had been received for T levels as well as LSIP funding. Also, the anatamage table being used by HE learners. The College was always looking for opportunities to bid for any external funding; a current example was for a construction centre at Slough & Langley College. The Deputy Group Principal confirmed that fortnightly meetings were held to review progress against QIP action plans which went down to departmental level.

The WFCG College SAR 2023/24 and QIP 2024/25 were APPROVED.

(All Members were agreed.)

ACTION: WFCG self-assessment paperwork to be uploaded to the DfE portal by 31 December 2025.

14. **Finance Directorate Report**

The Group Finance Director (LG) presented the Finance Directorate report.

➤ **Management Accounts October 2026**

LG presented the first quarter management accounts for 2025-26 for information and assurance. The meeting was pleased to note that the results for Quarter 1 FY26 indicated ongoing improvement to the group's operating performance; which had been supported by lagged funding from the 16-19 student growth in the previous year. The October 2025 results showed a small operating surplus of £0.464m and this was on track to make a forecast year-end surplus of £0.326m (0.58% of turnover). LG confirmed that the cash balance held at 31 October was £8.631m, which was £1.354m greater than budget due to the phasing of capital payments and timing of large curriculum payments such as exam fees. Governors were assured that cash days at 31 October 2025 was 58 days (40 days when excluding ring-fenced capital grants not yet spent) which was above or meeting the revised sector minimum benchmark of 40 days. LG confirmed that cash continued to be closely monitored.

The meeting was pleased to note that payroll for Q1 FY26 was also being controlled in line with budget. Planned pay increases had been made in the current year and back dated to 1st September 2025 but there continued to be a very clear focus on ensuring no creep in staff costs; all new or replacement posts were only approved after consideration by the Exec Team at their weekly meetings. The meeting was also assured that all non-pay costs continued to be well controlled. Income for the first quarter was slightly ahead of budget - £14.131m (£0.162m favourable) - with the first quarter performance tracking ahead of the prior year for High Needs and Higher Education, all other income streams remained on budget.

The meeting was pleased to note that the financial health score for the quarter was 260 and 'outstanding'; this was 20 points ahead of the budgeted score.

The meeting noted the following summary of performance and took the detailed management accounts as read.

Key Performance Indicator	Quarter 1	Budget
EBITDA	£1,444 k	£4.4m year end
EBTITDA % of revenue	10.49%	9.62%
Cash balance	£8,631 k	£7,277 k

Cash days	58 days	
Income	£14,131 k	£13,969 k
Pay costs	£9,431 k	£9,314 k
Pay as % of income	66.52%	65.72%

The Management Accounts to October 2025 were NOTED and RECEIVED.

➤ **Annual ESFA Letter confirming Financial Health Grade for TWFCG**

The meeting noted the letter from the ESFA dated 4 November 2025 which acknowledged the submission of the College's CFFR (College Financial Forecasting Return). This confirmed the college's assessment of financial health as Good for 2024/25 and Outstanding for 2025/26. The meeting commended the useful financial dashboard that accompanied the letter and cited the sector benchmarking as being particularly valuable for governors' assurance.

The letter from the ESFA confirming the financial health 2024/25 and forecast financial health 2025/26 was NOTED and RECEIVED.

15. **Annual Health & Safety 2024/25**

The Corporation meeting noted an annual report provided by the Director of Health & Safety and Transport which included details of Health and Safety (H&S) Management at BCA, Incident Reporting, Training, Policy & Procedure, and Insurance Inspection and internal audit. The detailed report was taken as read but the meeting commended the detail provided for their assurance which demonstrated that H&S was well managed across WFCG. KG highlighted that all four colleges were now running regular 'shelter-in-place' drills as well as fire drills. The meeting noted that there had been no RIDDOR reportable accidents during the year.

Student governor (RCD) asked whether there was a legal ban on under-18s vaping but it was noted that it was illegal for people to sell vapes to under-18s but vaping itself was not illegal under 18.

The Health and Safety Report 2024-25 was NOTED and RECEIVED.

16. **Safeguarding Report**

The Principal FE (AE) - who was also one of the College Safeguarding leads - presented the Safeguarding Report which provided a comprehensive overview of safeguarding across the college group. The report highlighted the key challenges and initiatives undertaken to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the WFCG community. The report also contained detailed data on safeguarding as well as mental health and well-being. The report confirmed that the WFCG had continued to demonstrate a strong commitment to safeguarding and the well-being of students.

AE highlighted the difference in demographics and diversity across the four college sites. Due to its location, the contextual safeguarding concerns at Slough and Langley College were significantly more complex and higher risk. The meeting was assured that the college continued to work closely with Thames Valley Police (TVP) and Slough Safer Partnership to deliver education and support to the students and ensure that the college was involved in all local initiatives to tackle serious crime and exploitation in the community.

AE reminded the meeting that CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) was now used by all four WFCG sites for recording concerns. This has allowed year on year trends to be recorded with more accuracy. The meeting was assured that the Windsor Forest Colleges Group (WFCG) demonstrated a robust and comprehensive approach to statutory compliance, safety preparedness, and student wellbeing. The college Safeguarding Strategy integrated national campaigns, proactive security planning, structured student education, and extensive staff development, all underpinned by positive and high-confidence student feedback. The meeting noted that the College Group had implemented robust systems and processes to meet the needs of students, with dedicated safeguarding, bursary, and additional learning support teams.

Governors were assured that WFCG was not only meeting its statutory duties but was also embedding a proactive, safety-conscious culture across its sites.

The meeting noted that the executive summary for the academic year 2025/26 year-to-date which included the following key statistics:

- Mental Health is the most reported category across all four sites, mirroring the national trend of increasing mental health challenges among young people.
 - Mental Health (Anxiety, Self-Harm, Suicidal Thoughts) - 313
 - Referrals to the group's internal counselling service - 148
- A total of 128 safeguarding concerns were recorded, resulting in 22 referrals to external organisations (12 to Children's Social Care) .
- Predominant Concerns:
 - Child-on-Child Abuse - 50
 - Domestic Abuse - 10
 - Suicide Attempts - 10
 - Emotional/Verbal Abuse - 9
- There were 70 Children Looked After (CLA) and 50 Care Leavers studying at WFCG – the majority of which were due to the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) - 33 of which are at Slough & Langley.
- Significant work was undertaken to ensure that the student safeguarding tutorials linked to the safeguarding data and local risks.
- Student feedback indicated that they felt safe at college and knew who to talk to if they had any issues.

As a result of identifying the above key trends, training for staff had included relational practice, domestic violence and a Mental Health & Wellbeing Forum delivered by CALM. The meeting was assured that overall, the College Group remains committed to supporting the well-being and safety of its students in the face of ongoing challenges.

Link Governor for Safeguarding (AS) informed the meeting that she had met with the Safeguarding Team on Friday 5 December. As informed the meeting that one of her observations which she gave to the team was that there appeared to be missed opportunities for collaboration across the group. However, AS believed that there was evidence of a lot of good strategic input, and strong partnerships with external agencies. She also thought the CPOMS system was good. The college use of counselling was very positive. AS highlighted the data which demonstrated that the majority of students felt safe but this was less strong when they were in the wider community outside Slough & Langley College. AS informed the meeting that the safeguarding team were well trained and that the strong Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL provided strong support for the team. AS asked the meeting for any input on aspects of safeguarding that they would like her to triangulate at her next link visit. The Chair and other governors thanked AS for this useful update.

The meeting NOTED and RECEIVED the Safeguarding Report.

ACTION: Governors to pass any questions for next safeguarding link visit to AS.

All

17. **Annual Complaints Report**

The CEO and Group Principal (GM) presented the annual complaints report for WFCG 2024/25 which had been prepared by the College Data Protection Officer (YHM). Governors were reminded that the College strategic priorities placed a high priority on the management of learners' experience, in particular learner satisfaction and its likely impact on the teaching and learning experience. The College therefore regarded complaints to be one of the key elements of the learner voice.

The meeting noted that there was a increase in the number of complaints but this was due to a change in reporting which now ensured that all complaints – across all four campuses - were accurately recorded. Of the 65 complaints received, 24 were upheld – 13 curriculum related and others in customer service and exams. The main areas of concern had been course management (14), student support (22) and teaching & learning (14). The meeting

was assured that complaints were being dealt with in a timely and effective manner although 15 complaints had only been resolved outside the 10-day target window due to complicating factors and external involvement. The meeting noted the data split by campus; the FE Colleges had the highest number of complaints but this reflected learner numbers. The EDI data breakdown in relation to the complaints was noted; there were no trends within this data.

The meeting commended the very detailed report which provided assurance for governors that timely action was being taken and that no trends or consistent themes for complaints were emerging.

The Complaints report was NOTED and RECEIVED

18. **Strategic Map update**

The CEO (GM) presented a RAG rated version of the Strategy Map 2024-29 which reflected progress made at the end of the 2024-25 academic year. Governors noted that the College continued to make strong progress across its strategic priorities, with growth evident in 16–19, apprenticeships and full-cost provision. This trend had continued into 2025/26 with a further increase in 16-19 learners at Slough & Langley College (of which circa 100 had been retained at the end of the six-week census period). However, the Group had been unable to secure the additional commissioned places and funding via Slough Borough Council to take up the opportunity to introduce the 14–16 school full-time provision from September 2026 and would therefore defer this until the funding could be agreed and secured. GM highlighted management’s frustration as this provision would have been funded by DfE through lagged funding so would have been at nil cost for SBC. GM informed the meeting that the SLT were working with colleagues at DfE to try and resolve this impasse. The meeting noted that there had been 60 additional part-time schools students at Slough & Langley for 2025-26 which was strong but moving to full-time provision would have to be deferred.

Another key challenges remained in relation to adult funding, which was currently subject to a 10% cap on growth. GM informed the meeting that the FE sector was preparing to respond to the changes identified in the recent Skills White Paper and the associated curriculum reform. This would require change to the curriculum offer in the next academic year.

GM also highlighted the Apprenticeship achievement rate which remained an ongoing challenge. Performance for 2024/25 was 53% against a target/ benchmark of 65%. KG explained the reasons for this underperformance which included two key courses at BCA (one of which was greenkeeping) and a number of withdrawals due to large number of employers that were SMEs. KG assured the meeting that all apprenticeship provision was being closely reviewed and a clear line of communication was in place with representatives at the DfE to explain the drop in performance. The meeting noted that the lead on apprenticeships with the FE Commissioner’s Team was providing advice to the Apprenticeship Team at WFCG. There was a clear and rigorous action plan in place to secure timely improvement. KG highlighted that during 2025/26 this might necessitate slower growth in apprenticeship income than originally forecast but it was important to ensure that the quality of the provision improved.

Significant progress had been made against priority five; financial health had improved significantly with the Group now generating a small operational surplus and much improved EBITDA. GM informed the meeting that the financial health grading of “Good” for 2024-25 has now been confirmed by the DfE (November 2025). GM highlighted the work being done on curriculum planning and contribution analysis across the curriculum; this was work in progress but was currently available by curriculum area and by college. It was noted that this work was more complicated for the Sixth Form provision as learners were on more than one course.

The meeting was pleased to note that there were no priorities rated as ‘red’ all were ‘green’ (achieved) or ‘amber’ (on track for completion). GM suggested that a new CEO might have a new format for the College Strategic Plan and it would need to be revised for 2026-27 in light of any new CEO’s strategic vision for WFCG.

Progress against the WFCG Strategy May 2024-29 was NOTED.

19.

Mirror Board update: WFCG Employee Representative Body

The meeting noted a paper which outlined progress towards establishing an ERB for the Group. At the Mirror Board meeting on 24 October 2025, members discussed the formation of an ERB and its potential structure. The Mirror Board considered how an ERB could strengthen collaboration and give staff a clearer voice. The meeting noted the following key points which had emerged during Mirror Board discussions:

- The ERB should focus on collective and strategic issues, distinct from individual grievances, which continue to be managed through line management and HR channels.
- The group recognised the importance of inclusive communication, balancing local engagement with a unified group perspective. There was strong support for local representation, ensuring all college sites have an active voice feeding into the central Mirror Board.
- The ERB could play an important role in staff consultation during periods of change, complementing quantitative staff survey data with qualitative insights.
- Sustainability, well-being, conditions and communication were identified as key themes for future ERB agendas.

The Mirror Board had also considered the structure and organisation of the ERB and the proposed approach as follows had been considered by Resources Committee members (25 November 2025):

- a. Local Employee Forums at each college site – led by members of the Mirror Board - to gather staff views. This campus focussed approach would allow staff better access and enable consideration of campus specific proposals or issues.
- b. Mirror Board to act as the overarching ERB, collating local feedback and engaging with the Executive.
- c. Pilot phase planned to take place after Christmas 2025, followed by review and formalisation early in 2026.

The meeting noted that there needed to be a refresh of the Mirror Board membership to recruit some additional members to ensure proportionate representation from all four college sites (this had not been an original aim of the Mirror Board). The meeting noted the proposed timeline to develop a draft structure and terms of reference informed by local staff in January 2026 and the final proposal for the ERB structure would be brought to the Board in March 2026. Governors suggested that this work should be undertaken sooner but were reminded of the ongoing work to recruit a new CEO and Group Principal which had to be the priority for senior HR staff. Governors asked that there should be more reporting to the Board on the impact of the Mirror Board. GM confirmed that the two Principals (GD and SO'D) would be used as a conduit to get the ERBs established.

The HR Update Report was NOTED and RECEIVED.

ACTION: Update on progress with the ERB would be brought to the Board in March 2026.

GM/ TR

20.

DfE briefing and guidance

The meeting noted and received copies of the following new guidance from DfE published in November 2025. Which had been referenced and discussed in the recent sub-committee meetings. GM confirmed that the FE & Skills White Paper would be a key document for strategic planning in spring 2026.

- Education & Skills White Paper
 - DfE Letter to FE
 - AoC Briefing
 - Link to White Paper
- FE and Sixth Form College Governance Guide

MINUTE
NO.

ACTION

- Revised College oversight procedures: including the new Regional Improvement Teams that would be involved in securing strong college performance
- FE Commissioner (FEC) Autumn Newsletter

These documents were taken as read but Members noted that they should aim to familiarise themselves with key aspects of the first three documents as these would be more important moving forward. GM reminded the meeting that a briefing paper would be developed for spring 2026 looking at what the White Paper and the new oversight regime might mean for FE College governance.

The DfE and FEC briefing was NOTED and RECEIVED

21. **Minutes from Strategy Governance & Search Committee – 18 November 2025**

The Director of Governance confirmed that the major matters considered by the meeting had been brought forward to the Board within the current agenda. ***The minutes from this meeting would be circulated as soon as finalised.***

TR

NOTED

22. **Minutes from Resources Committee – 25 November 2025**

The Resources Committee Chair (SF) confirmed that the major matters considered by the meeting had been brought forward to the Board within the current agenda. ***The minutes from this meeting would be circulated as soon as finalised.***

TR

NOTED

23. **Minutes from Quality & Curriculum Committee – 25 November 2025**

The Chair of the Committee (SS) confirmed that the major matters considered by the meeting had been brought forward to the Board within the current agenda including the College Self-Assessment Report 2024/25 and the Quality Improvement Plan 2025/26. ***The minutes from this meeting would be circulated as soon as finalised.***

TR

NOTED

24. **Minutes from Audit Committee – 26 November 2025**

The Chair of the Committee (AH) confirmed that the major matters considered by the meeting had been brought forward to the Board within the current agenda. The meeting noted the formal minutes from the meeting which provided a detailed record of discussions in relation to the external audit and progress against other audit recommendations.

NOTED

25. **Dates and Times of Future Meetings and Events**

The dates and times of future meetings were noted.

TR confirmed that Corporation meetings were scheduled on:

- Wednesday, 18 March 2026, 5.00pm at Slough and Langley College
- Friday, 15 May 2026, 8am to 2pm Strategy Event and meeting (venue TBA)
- Wednesday, 8 July 2026, 5.00pm at Slough and Langley College

NOTED

26. **Any Urgent Business**

- ***Retirement of FE Principal***

The meeting recorded a vote of thanks to Anne Entwistle as she was retiring from her role as Principal FE on 31 December 2026. The Chair thanked AE for her considerable input to governance over the last twenty three years and for her part in taking forward WFCG after the merger with BCA. AE thanked the meeting and asserted what a privilege it had been for her to work with the Board at WFCG. Governor interactions had always been positive and she

MINUTE
NO.

ACTION

really appreciated the open dialogue and trust between governors and members of the Senior Leadership Team. AE also said she felt very confident stepping away from WFCG now that the new FE Principal (GD) had been appointed. All Members wished AE well in her well-earned retirement and thanked her for the significant contribution to governance and management at BCA and WFCG.

There was no other urgent business. The Chair closed the meeting and thanked all governors and executive members for their hard work and ongoing commitment during another busy year.

The meeting ended at 7.00pm.

At this stage of the meeting, it was agreed by all members present that matters of a private and confidential nature were to be discussed and had there been any members of the public present they would have been asked to leave the meeting.