THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION

Held at Slough & Langley College on Wednesday, 8 July 2026

PRESENT:	Paul Britton	*Governor*
	Jacob Clay	*Academic Staff Governor Sixth Form*
	Jo Croft	*Corporation Chair*
	Jeo Dozono-Kim *(online)*	*Governor*
	Louise Fellows	*Governor*
	Sam Foley	*Interim CEO & Group Principal*
	Nathan Garat	*Governor*
	Anthony Haines	*Governor*
	Alasdair Lenman	*Governor*
	Rob Lewis	*Senior Independent Governor (SIG)*
	Sam Marshall-Davies *(online)*	*Governor*
	Antonia Spinks *(online)*	*Governor*
	Signe Sutherland	*Corporation Vice-Chair*
	Sarah Waller	*Academic Staff Governor FE*
	Alison Wheatley	*Support Staff Governor*
APOLOGIES:	Kirsten Ashman	*Governor*
	Riley Campisi-Dignan	*Student Governor FE*
	Jane Fawkes	*Governor*
	James Fernley	*Governor*
	Rachel Fowler	*Governor*
IN ATTENDANCE:	Susan Brady *(online)*	*Group Director of People*
	Gary Dixon	*Principal FE*
	Lucy Gill	*Group Finance Director*
	Karen Griffiths	*Acting Deputy Group Principal*
	Sinead O'Donoghue	*Principal Sixth Form*
	Tracy Reeve	*Group Director of Governance*

PART I

MINUTE NO.		ACTION
	The meeting started at 4.30pm	
1.	**Health & Safety Housekeeping** The Chair (JC) welcomed everyone to Slough and Langley College for the final meeting of the academic year. She also welcomed Oliver Symons who was attending the meeting before formally taking up the role of CEO and Group Principal in September 2026. JC asked for a minute of thanks to be recorded for the SLT who had all stepped up to lead the college during a challenging transitional time. The meeting agreed and governors confirmed how pleased they were to see all the activities that had been going on for learners during the end of term. The updates that had been recently circulated by the Group Director Governance e.g. the ALFIE Newsletter gave governors a really good view of all that was happening across WFCG.	
2.	**Apologies for Absence** Apologies had been received as detailed above.	
3.	**AOB** There was no urgent other business notified.	

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4.	**Declarations of Interest** There were no declarations of interest.	
5.	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 15 May 2026** The Minutes of the previous meetings held on 15 May 2026, 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.**	
6.	*Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meetings* The Group Director of Governance (TR) presented a report which updated the meeting on the current status of 'matters arising'; all matters were included on the agenda or completed. The meeting noted an updated copy of the WFCG Accountability Statement which had been amended following comments at the previous Board meeting. Deputy Group Principal (KG) confirmed that this document had been submitted to the DfE ahead of the 6 July 2026 deadline. A press release (dated 22 May) announcing the appointment of Oliver Symons as CEO and Group Principal of WFCG was also noted. ***The update was NOTED*** It was noted that there were no other matters arising.	
7.	**FEEDBACK REPORTS**	
7.1	**Staff Governors' Report** Each of the Staff Governors gave the meeting a short verbal update on what was happening at the Colleges. External governors commended the wide range of activities taking place across the Group. 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***	
7.2	**Student Feedback** The meeting thanked the student governors – Riley and Ketija - in their absence for their contribution to the Board discussions during the 2025/26 year. Director of Governance (TR) informed the meeting that FE Student Governor (RCD) would be staying on in this role during 2026/27 as he moved into his second year of study; the meeting commended this continuity. TR confirmed that an election for the sixth form student governor would take place at the start of the autumn term. ***The Student Governor Feedback was NOTED and a minute of thanks was RECORDED for the student governors 2025/26.***	
7.3	**Link Governor Feedback** The meeting noted feedback from individual governors who had visited during the last two months. Link Governor for Windsor (Alasdair Lenman) highlighted the prize giving at Windsor College which he had recently attended. It had been a very positive experience seeing the range of awards for performing arts as well as for art students and maths and science. The Link Governor for Safeguarding (Antonia Spinks) had recently visited the team at BCA. She had spoken to Foundation students to ascertain whether they felt safe on campus. Students had given her positive feedback about the staff who were seen as supportive and trusted. AS confirmed that students had been able to articulate how they were helped to stay safe. She had also discussed with managers about access to counselling provision across the Group for learners. Staff had confirmed that the two Principals (FE and Sixth Form) had really helped by working to align processes and cross-college policy. Staff also believed that data was better now and staff training was well received. AS highlighted the issue of parental complaints which had been raised by staff; they were increasing in volume and complexity which was a concern for staff. It was suggested that this did need a careful watch by Governors. The Chair confirmed that an increase in complicated legal complaints across the FE sector had been cited by the AoC. This was borne out by recent experience across WFCG	

where several complicated and litigious complaints had caused a great deal of work for a number of managers. Group Director of Governance (TR) highlighted the role of AI in making it easier for people to submit a long complicated legal complaint without having to access legal specialists. The meeting agreed that the emotional toll of dealing with these protracted complaints needed to be considered for management. Governors (AH) sought confirmation on the college complaints process and Acting Deputy Group Principal (KG) confirmed that it did contain three stages. KG informed the meeting that after receiving feedback from the DfE the Group had rewritten the complaints policy to encourage resolution of complaints at an earlier stage; face-to-face discussion was often the key to solving a complaint early in the process. A programme of staff training would reinforce this new approach and ensure that the WFCG Complaints Policy was fully adhered to.

The two principals confirmed that they would work through existing student events e.g. the student parliament at each site to invite Link Governors to attend events during the year.

The Link Governor Feedback was NOTED

ITEMS FOR DECISION

8. **BUDGET 2026/27 and FINANCIAL PLAN 2027/28**

The Group Finance Director (LG) presented the budget 2026/27 and the revised financial forecast through to 2027/28. LG highlighted that the outturn was based on actuals for the first ten months (to the end of May 2025). Governors were assured that the budgets for FY25 and FY26 had been produced on a prudent basis. LG reminded the meeting that this budget followed on from what had been presented and discussed at the Governors Strategy event in May 2026.

Governors were assured that the budgets for FY27 and FY28 had been produced on a prudent basis and were based on nine months of actual data and three months of estimates. LG confirmed that the financial year 2026 (FY26), had seen the Group cement its' financial position, with continued strong financial health. Revenue had increased by £5.4m from FY25 following successfully growth in learner numbers. Careful management of costs had resulted in a positive forecast EBITDA £4.407m for FY26, and cashflow from operations of £4.1m; this would result in total cash held at year end of £10.470m (£7.6m unrestricted cash) and a financial health grade of Outstanding. LG outlined the key risks and uncertainties that would occur in the FE sector during the next few years and the limited access to control measures for all colleges. These included: curriculum reform; devolution; a forecast fall in the student demographic; and SEND reform. Governors were assured that more briefing on these challenges and uncertainties would be provided as soon as guidance was available. LG confirmed that the budget was finalised before the recent government announcement of additional funding for 16-18 learners over the next two years; the exact amounts for each college would not be known until later in the summer.

The meeting noted the methodology and assumptions used in the budget and financial forecast:

- FY27 Income projections were derived from allocation statements and an anticipated 2.5% growth in commercial and estate income.
    - The grant to fund increased NI costs would cover April 2026-March 2027 and would be paid in September 2026; the budget assumed no grant for this from April 2027.
- For FY28, income projections assumed:
    - No growth in 16-19 learner numbers
    - No increase in funding rates in the light of 0.5% being awarded in FY27
    - The Inclusion Grant to be awarded at the same level as FY27 at £0.420m
    - No further NI grant after March 2027
    - TPS pension grant remaining in place
- Cost inflation was estimated at 2.5% annually, with total pay cost (including temporary staff and sessional staff) to rise by 4.7% for FY27 and 2.25% for FY28 to

accommodate employer National Insurance, pension contributions and national living wage salaries.

Income

- **DfE 16 to 19 income** for FY27 was expected to be at £37.524m including the NI grant. A provision for a decrease in T-level student numbers against the allocation had been set at £300,000.
- **Adult Education income** including Greater London Authority (GLA) devolved funding was expected to be £2.724 in FY27, down from £3.209m in FY26. Thereafter the assumption was that FY28 income would fall by a further 10% due to the ongoing impact of devolution.
- **Apprenticeship income** was forecast to grow by 2.5% from £2.784m in FY26 to £2.854m in FY27; an additional 2.5% growth was also included for FY28. This steady growth was based on current pipeline strength and employer demand.
- **High Needs income** was forecast to continue to grow due to sustained high demand. The group had 503 DfE funded places confirmed for FY27 (same number as FY26). The 'element 3' funding from local authorities was projected to remain consistent with FY26 levels at £3.997m with an expected £4.097m for FY28. The meeting noted that the actual number of Slough Borough Council (SBC) learners needing support in 2025-26 as 546; SBC did fund the additional 43 learners but would not accept any increase for 2026-27. LG confirmed that SBC had agreed to meet with the College in September 2026 to discuss students enrolled for FY27. If the college had significantly greater than 503 learners with additional learning support needs, SBC had committed to engage with the College to provide further funding.
- **Other income streams** had been increased by 2.5% on all non-DfE income streams. The government grant for the additional TPS costs would continue and was assumed as £1.601m for each year based on the March 2026 DfE statement.

Pay Costs

- Pay costs would continue to put pressure on the financial performance of the College. The budget assumed an increase in pay costs (excluding FRS102 pension charges) from £38.203m (FY26) to £39.998m (FY27) and £40.885m (FY28). The meeting noted that the AoC had not yet announced their pay recommendation. LG confirmed that the budgeted £1.798m pay award allocation for FY26 was broken down as follows: progression related pay £680,000 and a consolidated pay award for all staff £1.118m.
- With 16-18 student numbers at a static level for FY26 and FY27 and pay award in September 2026, pay as a percentage of revenue was forecast to remain above the FE Commissioner benchmark of 65%; FY26 68.6%, FY27 69.87% and FY28 71.92%. The meeting agreed that this was problematic and additional thought would have to be given to how to bring this in line with sector norms.

The meeting discussed the proposal for a cost of living pay award in some detail which is minuted in the part II minutes.

Non-pay costs

- A 3% inflationary assumption had been made on all non-pay costs for both years, except for bus transport costs for FY26 at 5%.
- £0.110m had also been included in each year for SOC and SIEM contracts to manage the cyber security risks faced by the Group.
- Forecast operating expenditure was: FY26 £13.165m, FY27 £12.705m, FY28 £14.114m.

Capital expenditure

- The meeting noted the FE capital grants received in June 2025 and May 2026 and the completed and planned expenditure to meet the deadlines of March 2028 and 2029.

Outputs

- EBITDA was forecast to be £4.407m positive in FY26 but reducing to £3.547m positive in FY27 and £1.844m positive in FY28. This reduction reflected no assumed growth in

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learner numbers and an increase in pay costs (progression pay would drive costs upwards regardless of any cost of living increases).

- Year-end cash balances were forecast to be £7.597m in FY26 (56 cash days) moving to £9.769m (66 cash days) in FY27 and £10.269m (68 days) in FY28. The meeting was pleased to note this was above the new FEC benchmark of 40 cash days but the Group Director of Governance reminded the meeting that the WFCG figure was still below the sector average.
- Financial health for FY26 was forecast to be 260 points (outstanding); reducing to 250 points (outstanding) in FY27 and 220 points (good) for FY28.

LG reminded the meeting that the College was required to submit the College Financial Forecasting Return (CFFR) with an accompanying narrative to the DfE by 31 July 2026.

The CEO and Group Principal elect (OS) reminded the meeting of the impending impact of devolution which was already having a negative impact on Adult Skills Funding (ASF) available to the group. As highlighted, the budget assumed an ongoing 10% reduction in this income line due to devolution of ASF. The complex nature of where WFCG sat geographically – dealing with 16 separate local authorities – would add further uncertainty to learner income (possibly affecting 16-19 provision) over the next few years. The curriculum reform would also lead to additional staff training costs – which were factored into the budget as presented.

Governors (RL) sought confirmation on whether the decreased in EBITDA in FY28 was likely to be a downward trend or a one-off step; he was concerned that any trend might result in a negative EBITDA for FY29. LG confirmed that the Group would need to remain mindful as non-pay cost inflation was assumed at 3% and the funding increase per learner had only been 0.5% (although the additional funds recently announced might increase this). LG confirmed that this difficulty would be affecting all FE colleges where revenue was stable due to limited or no growth in learner numbers. This meant that management of known costs e.g. pay became even more important.

Governors (AL) sought assurance from management that the group had time to put in place mitigating actions against this reduction in EBITDA. The financial forecast as presented showed WFCG heading to a loss making position and Al asked management to consider what actions could be taken now to reduce the potential drop in financial health.

Audit Committee Chair (AH) reminded the meeting that the College Financial Forecasting return (CFFR) template contained the ability to undertaken sensitivity analysis. He sought confirmation from the Group Finance Director that this had been used. LG confirmed that this element of the model had been used but only to a limited extent. She suggested that the 2026 enrolment numbers would be key and further sensitivity analysis could be undertaken once the learner numbers were finalised at the end of the six-week census period (October half-term 2026). AH suggested that the narrative commentary which accompanied the CFFR needed to demonstrate to DfE that sensitivity analysis had been used. However, the DfE would only intervene in relation to a downward trend when it was too late to avoid a drop in financial performance. The meeting agreed that good governance would necessitate management and the Board taking any necessary action sooner rather than later. ***The meeting agreed that that a full sensitivity analysis on the WFCG budget 2026-27 and financial forecast 2027-28 using the CFFR template would be undertaken in autumn 2026 once final enrolment numbers were confirmed.*** This analysis of risks, sensitivities and mitigating actions should be taken to Resources Committee and the Corporation to inform strategic thinking .

The meeting discussed the drop in Adult Skills Funding and the impact that it was having on adult learners. KG highlighted the specific impact that had been felt at Slough and Langley College with ESOL learners. This was cited as a massive issue across the FE sector and would have a negative impact moving forward. Governors (AL) pointed out that adult learners were specifically referenced within WFCG's strategic plan and suggested that the Corporation and management needed to ask whether that was still a valid objective. ***It was agreed that this should be considered at the next Governors Strategy Day (late 2026 or early 2027) once OS had taken up the role as CEO.*** Governors were also keen to see a clear dashboard of how WFCG provision mapped to local skills priorities; TR pointed out that this was clearly outlined in the College Accountability Statement but this was a longer document.

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	The meeting APPROVED the budget 2026/27 and the financial plan 2027/28 as presented. **All Members were agreed** ***ACTION: CFFR to be submitted to the DfE to meet the deadline of 31 July 2025.***	**LG**
	It was AGREED that a full sensitivity analysis on the WFCG budget 2026-27 and financial forecast 2027-28 would be undertaken in autumn 2026 once final enrolment numbers were confirmed; this would be taken to Resources Committee and the Corporation to inform strategic thinking .	**LG**
	• *Leasing proposal IT expenditure* The meeting considered a paper from the Group Finance Director which was recommending a specific leasing proposal for teaching walls and staff and student devices. LG reminded the meeting that during 2025 the Board had approved moving to a lease model for the purchasing of IT equipment, this had also been discussed in detail during the May 2026 strategy meeting. Leasing was judged to be a proactive solution to the challenge of keeping IT equipment current, allowing the Group to replace equipment that had reached the end of its usable life, without significant upfront capital outlay. This would ensure that WFCG's learning and working environments were equipped with the best tools available, compliant with security recommendations, enhancing productivity and the overall educational experience. The other primary driver for leasing would be to ease the pressure on cash flow related to capital expenditure. This would free up capital cashflow that could be reallocated to other strategic initiatives or used to build financial reserves, providing greater financial stability for the Group. LG confirmed that three full tenders had been undertaken with CPC to find the best value for money; however, prices were rising rapidly due to global market conditions and quotes would only be held for limited periods. The meeting noted the tender costs; the total lease costs that the Group would incur through to FY28 and the impact on gearing ratios. LG informed the meeting that once approval was given the whiteboards would take six months for delivery so costs might not vest until early 2027. The meeting noted that management were currently considering whether planned server upgrades should be funded via leasing or as a cash purchase; this would be brought back to the Board during 2026-27. The meeting talked about the strategy of leasing when the college was cash rich but also noted that one positive aspect of leasing was the additional support and service offered by the leasing company which supported cyber security ***The Board APPROVED the lease of:*** • ***Teaching walls - £450k over a 3-year lease with Triple Point (College ownership at the end).*** • ***Student devices - £608k over 4-year lease with Triple Point – no residual value.*** • ***Staff devices - £170k – 4-year lease with CHG – residual value to hand back (or buy).*** **All Members were agreed.**	
9.	**POLICIES FOR APPROVAL** • *Procurement Policy* (new) • *WFCG Financial Regulations* (updated) The Group Finance Director (LG) presented the final WFCG Procurement Policy which had been drafted to meet the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023. LG reminded the meeting that the draft procurement policy was shared at the March Resources Committee meeting. The policy has been subsequently reviewed and updated with the assistance of the Crescent Purchasing Consortium (CPC) to ensure that it was compliant with the Procurement Act 2023 and Managing Public Money regulations. LG highlighted that the Procurement Policy would operate alongside the College Financial Regulations so the WFCG Financial Regulations had also been updated to reflect the revised limits from 1 August 2026.	

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Although the approval limits in the WFCG Financial Regulations were approved in draft at the March Resources Committee, LG informed the meeting that in order to align limits to the Procurement Policy, the following subsequent changes were recommended to and approved by Resources Committee in June 2026:

Increase in Executive Leads sign off level from £15,000 to £29,999 –

- Enabling all contracts classed as 'Low' (contract cost between £10,000 and £29,999) and requiring 3 written quotes or a Framework could be signed off by either the Group Finance Director or any of the Exec Leads.

Increase in Group Finance Director Sign off level from £50,000 to £99,999 –

- Enabling all contracts classed as 'Medium' (contract levels between £30,000 and £99,999) and requiring a Framework or single source supplier could be signed off by the Group Finance Director or CEO.
- Note single source items –
    - Group Finance Director up to £25,000
    - Group Principal and CEO up to £50,000
    - Over £50,000 Resources Committee

Both of these changes had been made to allow some operational flexibility whilst maintaining suitable control. The detailed schedules and the two policies and changes made since the March meeting were discussed by the meeting. It was noted that the Resources Committee were recommending these policies for approval. Governors (RL) sought clarity on the very specific number in the financial limits table where 'high' was defined as £100,00 to £207,719. LG confirmed that this figure resulted from conversion of a statutory amount in euros; there was no flexibility to amend within procurement law.

- *Modern Slavery Statement*

The Group Director of Governance (TR) presented the annual update for the WFCG Modern Slavery Statement. Governors were reminded that this had to be signed by the Chair of Governors and displayed on the college website. The Resources Committee was recommending this policy for approval.

All of the above policies were APPROVED as presented.

All Members were agreed.

10. **RISK REGISTER**

The Interim Group Principal (SF) presented the updated Risk Register for 2025/26 which had recently been reviewed and updated by the Senior Leadership Team. The meeting discussed the highest scoring risks and the updated narrative explaining current mitigation and assurance levels.

- Risk 1 IT Failure with loss of data for staff or students. Risk of cyber-attacks across FE sector (risk score still at 20 and still 'red'): The CEO affirmed that the Executive team considered that while mitigation was improving the likelihood score, the impact of a major cyber incident remained severe, meaning the risk score remained high and requires continued monitoring. The meeting was assured that once the SOC and SIEM controls were in place during 2026/27 it would be possible to reduce the current score of 20 post-mitigation. The meeting noted that in order to provide additional assurance for governors a new standing report on AI would be brought to each Board meeting in 2026/27.
- Risk 2 Failure to meet budget forecast or targets to reduce the operating deficit (risk score remains at 16 'amber'): Acute risk linked to financial health; the upwards pressure on pay was still a very real concern. Although cash days were now meeting the FE Commissioner benchmark of 40 days, the ongoing pressure of staff costs and the pay dispute with UCU remained a significant risk. WFCFG pay costs as a percentage of income were still at the very top of acceptable parameters. The meeting was assured that the FY26 mid-year position was on track to meet the budgeted operating surplus at year-end.
- Risk 3 Failure to complete the sale of the Honey Lane site, resulting in loss of anticipated capital receipt and delay to strategic capital investment (risk score raised from 12 to 16

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'amber'): This new and emerging risk relating to the Honey Lane land sale was added to the Risk Register in May 2026 but had now been moved to a higher priority following increased uncertainty regarding completion of the transaction. However, the meeting was assured that this risk continued to be well managed through the Capital Development Steering Group (reporting into the Resources Committee); further details would be discussed in Part II of the meeting due to commercial confidentiality.

- Risk 4 Uncertainty and risks associated with emerging national curriculum reforms (risk score stays at 9 'green'): This key 'acute' risk continued to be well managed and senior staff continued to be engaged in advisory groups linked to reform. Curriculum planning for recently announced reforms including new V Level qualifications from September 2027 was now well advanced as discussed l at the May strategy meeting. KG highlighted the current challenge in relation to staff training as the curriculum change was happening at pace. KG confirmed that the Strategic Transition Planning Statement (STPS), required by DfE, had been submitted to meet the deadline of 6 July 2026.

The Chair of Quality and Curriculum (Q&C) Committee (SS) suggested that Q&C should look at the risks and the detail of the STPS to see how it developed over the first year. **KG**

Members NOTED and RECEIVED the updated College Risk Register.

11. **INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2026/27**

Group Finance Director (LG) presented a paper which outlined the final draft of the internal audit plan for 2026/27 which had been agreed with WFCG management. This plan has been discussed in detail by the Audit Committee on 17 June and was being recommended for approval subject to management considering whether a review of AI should be added to the plan sooner than 2027/28. The meeting was assured that the proposals had considered several factors, including the College's latest strategic plan and current risk register, as well as the previous internal audits carried out in the College and the experience of the range of audits and their findings at other Colleges. The planned programme of work for 2026/27 being suggested was as follows:

- GDPR (6 days) }
- Curriculum planning (6 days) } Visit 1: November 2026
- Funding review – Adult Skills Fund (7 days) }
- IT equipment and replacement strategy (7 days) } Visit 2: February 2027
- Environmental Social and Governance (7 days) }
- Financial Planning (7 days) }
- Follow-up work (4 days) } Visit 3: May 2027

The meeting noted that the proposed plan would involve 50 days of WBG's time (including Audit Management and attendance at Audit Committee meetings) which was in line with the initial plan for 2026/27. The timetable of reviews with proposed dates for visits and reporting to audit committee throughout the year was noted. The meeting was also reminded of the grading structure used by WBG with definitions for the four levels of assurance; strong, substantial, weak and no. TR highlighted that the Audit Committee had sought and received confirmation that the time allocated to each review was sufficient for robust testing.

Members NOTED and APPROVED the proposed internal audit coverage 2026-27 as recommended by the Audit Committee.

All Members were agreed.

12. **GOVERNANCE UPDATE**

➢ **External Governance Review**

Governors were reminded that it was now mandatory for each FE College Corporation to commission an external review of Governance on a triennial basis; this was made a condition of funding in spring 2022. The first mandatory review had to be undertaken by 31 July 2024 and WFCG had decided to delay the first mandatory review until autumn 2023/ spring 2024

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in order to allow the new Board formed by the merger of WFCG and BCA to establish working practices for one full year. Rockborn LLP were commissioned to undertake this external review for WFCG and reported to the Board in May 2024. The review was undertaken by two experienced governance professionals working as consultants for Rockborn. The review was well planned, well handled with some useful suggestions for governance improvement included in the final report. The Group Director of Governance welcomed the challenge from experienced governance professionals and found the experience with Rockborn a very positive experience.

TR presented the proposal to commission Rockborn LLP to undertake the second review of governance at WFCG. The proposed timing would be spring 2027 to allow the new CEO/ Group Principal to have some time in post before any external review starts. The detailed proposal from Rockborn was considered by the meeting and the cost of £6,500.

TR informed the meeting that she already had outline discussions with Rockborn about building on the first review rather than replicating it. Items of particular interest for review would be the team dynamic of the Board after recent appointment of six new governors and a new CEO/ Group Principal.

TR informed the meeting that she had also discussed the provision of the external governance review with the team from the AoC (Wednesday 8 July) and was awaiting a formal proposal. The cost of the AoC proposal was £6,300 for a similar service. TR asserted her current preference to use Rockborn as there was already a level of understanding and knowledge of WFCG and the second review would allow a focus on useful improvements and good practice as they would undertake a lighter touch review of paperwork and documentation.

The CEO and Group Principal elect (OS) suggested that the Group should also seek a proposal from Stone King as they had a good reputation in the market for external governance reviews.

The meeting DEFERRED the decision on engaging an external governance reviewer until the next Board meeting (October 2026).

(All members were agreed.)

ACTION: Ask Stone King for a proposal for an external governance review of WFCG. **TR**

➢ **Internal self-assessment of governance 2025/26**

TR confirmed that the usual annual self-assessment of governance would take place in early 2026/27. The Chair of TWFCG Corporation would undertake her usual round of 'one-to-one' meetings with all Governors during July and August 2026. The Director of Governance would also carry out an internal self-assessment of Governance at WFCG 2025/26 during October 2026. This would include seeking feedback from individual governors as well as assessing the Governing Body performance against its adopted code, the English Colleges Code of Good Governance. The governance self-assessment would be brought to the next meeting of the Strategy Governance & Search Committee (November 2026) and then onto the Board (December 2026).

The plans for the internal review of governance 2025/26 were NOTED.

➢ **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 TWFCG was determined at 21 members and there was no vacancy. The meeting also considered the list of committee membership and noted that Louise Fellows had been elected as the Chair of the Resources Committee. TR confirmed that Chairs of Remuneration and SG&S Committees and Vice-Chairs for each of the sub-committees would be elected at the first meetings of 2026-27.

- *Committee Membership*

TR informed the meeting that the link scheme would also be reviewed at the start of 2026/27. The Chair (JC) had suggested routing links more closely to committee membership and taking link governor reports via sub committees. Governors were reminded that JC would

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	be undertaking online 1:1 meetings with all governors over the summer; these were currently being arranged. ***The incoming CEO (OS) also suggested some useful practical additions to maximise the impact of any governor link activity; this would be developed during autumn 2026.***	**OS/ TR**
	➢ **WFCG Corporation and sub-committee meeting timetable 2026/27** The Director of Governance (TR) presented a final schedule of Corporation & Committee meetings for the academic year 2026/27. TR confirmed that this schedule was based on the prior year timetable. TR informed the meeting that these dates had been taken to each of the sub-committee meetings in June to allow Member to advise of any non-availability. ***The meeting timetable 2026/27 was APPROVED.*** ***ACTION: Calendar invitations and Zoom links for all committee meetings to be circulated before 31 July 2026.*** **All Members were agreed.**	**TR**
	➢ **Annual Schedule of Business 2026/27** The meeting considered the draft Annual Schedule of Business for the Corporation and sub-committees during 2026/27. TR informed the meeting that there had been the following additions since the paper was published on Board Intelligence: o AI Update as a standing report to each Board meeting o Schools 14-16 reporting to be more visible and included at Quality & Curriculum (Q&C) Committee and the Board. o A safeguarding update with case studies/ scenarios to be brought to Q&C Committee and the Board at least termly. ***The WFCG Annual Schedule of Business was APPROVED.*** ***ACTION: Final schedule of business and meeting timetable to be published on Board Intelligence before 31 July 2026.*** **All Members were agreed.**	**TR**
	➢ **Use of the College Seal** The meeting noted that there had been no use of the WFCG seal since the last timetabled Corporation meeting on 15 May 2026. ***The Governance update report was NOTED and RECEIVED.***	
	ITEMS FOR INFORMATION	
13.	**ACADEMIC REPORT**	
13.1	Update on in-year performance 2025/26 The meeting noted an update report, presented by the Acting Deputy Group Principal (KG), which gave the meeting assurance on performance year-to-date against the College KPIs. KG highlighted the following summary data: • **Group attendance was 87.32% (+0.04pp from prior year)** and remained above the sector average of 85% but below the 90% Group KPI. Attendance continued to be a key focus across all sites. The data by college was also considered. • **Group retention was 92.3% (+2.0pp)** and was now closer to the 95% KPI, showing positive improvement. This was noted as being broadly in line with sector averages. • **Sector context:** National retention across general further education colleges typically sat in the low 90% range. Current Group retention at 92.3% was therefore broadly in line with sector performance; however, the Group continues to benchmark against the higher internal KPI of 95%. While overall trends were positive, variability between sites highlights the need for continued focus on learner support, attendance, and timely interventions to improve student persistence. The meeting considered the progress against the Quality Improvement Plans for Sixth Form and Further Education.	

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Sixth Form:

- Recent QRBs indicated that the Sixth-Form colleges were strengthening both teaching and use of assessment information. Mid-year data from Year 1 internal progression exams and BTEC unit assessments in areas such as Media, Psychology, and Health and Social Care was now being used more effectively to inform improvement. In parallel, quality systems for managers had been refined, with clearer reporting and more accurate, streamlined data enabling a sharper focus on areas requiring timely intervention and support.
- Attendance was improving overall, with Windsor at 86.5% and Strode's at 89.5%, moving closer to both the national average of 88% and the College target of 90%. However, it remained below target in some subjects and Year 2 cohorts, increasingly reflecting individual student needs. Pastoral and curriculum staff were working closely together to provide targeted support.
- Teaching was generally secure and improving, with interventions increasingly consistently applied. Managers were focusing on specific subjects where there remained some inconsistency in delivery and intervention.
- Support for additional learning needs and quality assurance processes were strengthening and increasingly seeing early implementation.
- Retention and pass rates were consistently strong across most areas, often above 90%, indicating that students remain on programme and achieve passes. The focus was now on securing higher grades and improving value added, in addition to completion.

The meeting took the detail value-added data by courses and curriculum area as read.

Further Education:

- Following the mid-year QRB's the majority of courses were predicting achievement rates at or above the 2024/25 National Achievement Rates (NARTS).
- Construction courses (50%) were highlighted as an area of improvement and there was continuing, enhanced tracking and monitoring being implemented to ensure intervention was being applied. Although there would be courses that were performing below the NART's in 25/26 they were on an upward trajectory when comparing against the 24/25 achievement rates.
- Extended diploma in Sport & Exercise Science & Uniformed Protective Services significantly under the NART's in 24/25. Both courses were predicting above national averages in 25/26.
- A new and improved quality cycle would be implemented in 2026/27 to ensure the highlighted 'At risk' courses that were below national averages were closely monitored by the Principal, Assistant Principals and Heads of Department. An introduction of three termly data points in the 26/27 academic year would allow for intervention to be implemented and applied immediately.
- Attendance for the first examination of the English and Maths GCSE examination series had been positive (97% Maths and 96% English).

Quality of teaching learning and assessment: The meeting noted the detailed feedback from the lesson observations undertaken to date across FE and the Sixth-Form.

- ***FE***

  - Number of observations undertaken at BCA and Slough & Langley were 139 and 83 respectively.
  - 93% of staff achieving 'meets expectations' with 16 on development plans (9 BCA & 7 S&L)

- ***SIXTH FORM***

  - Number of observations undertaken at Strode's this academic year was 144 and 102 Windsor
  - 88% of staff observed at Windsor and 86% at Strode's

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	o 91% of staff achieving 'meets expectations' at Strode's and 89% at Windsor; the remainder were on development plans. The detailed trends and CPD needs being identified following the programme of lesson observations were noted by the meeting,	
13.2	Apprenticeship Update 2025/25 The meeting noted a detailed update on improvement work taking place in this area of provision. The meeting was reminded that the College had reached out to the DfE and the FE Commissioner (FEC) earlier in the academic year for support after apprenticeship performance dipped below the minimum level of performance for 2024-25. KG reminded the meeting that a specialist adviser from the FEC team had been allocated to work with the Group. They had spent two days across the FE colleges in February 2026 and had made some very useful observations and recommendations. The meeting noted the current data compared with the prior year • Overall Retention R10: 24/25: 51% **25/26: 63.8%** • In Year Retention R10: 24/25: 76% **25/26: 76.4%** • Achievement Update R10: 24/25: 47% **25/26: 61.9%** The meeting was assured that the action plan remained on target with the focus on getting apprentices who were due to complete between July and September through their End Point Assessments (EPAs) and reducing the number of legacy Past Planned End Date (PPED) learners. Managers were now accessing the Strata Dashboard, providing live data that reflected the DfE Accountability Framework against performance measures. Governors also noted that an audit of apprenticeship funding had commenced on 22 June 2026; this was brought forward from 2026-27 as the funding for apprenticeships was so complicated and vulnerable to possible errors. Findings of this audit would be presented to the Audit Committee in September 2026 by internal audit providers WBG. *Apprenticeship Learner Voice - Spring 2026* • Students were complimentary of the majority of staff, complimenting their industry knowledge and support. • The majority of apprentices find the review process helpful at supporting progress. • Feedback highlighted concerns around shortages or tools and materials in the workshops • Apprentices also reported concerns over continuity of teaching staff. • A lack of access to laptops was also highlighted. The College was taking the following action in response to this learner feedback: ➢ The college was investigating a combined tools and materials lockup across construction curriculum to improve availability of materials. ➢ Staffing shortages were due to ongoing recruitment challenges that were sector wide. Management were reviewing roles to ensure the right staff were in the right places and discussing contract options with union representatives. ➢ Timetabling and resource availability had been looked at collaboratively across all curriculum to ensure that student and staff needs would be met for 2026-27.	
13.3	Adult Education ***Funding update***: Governors were reminded that following the devolution changes, the Group had experienced an initial top-line reduction of £327,862 to its overall Adult Skills Fund (ASF) allocation. Surrey County Council had reduced its allocation to WFCG to £104,101 and Buckinghamshire Council had confirmed a zero budget for the Group. The cumulative impact	

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for WFCG was a deficit of £223,862 compared to the prior year. KG explained the immediate concern for a cohort of vulnerable and high-needs adult learners living on the Buckinghamshire border who believed they had already secured a place with WFCG for 2026-27. Management had been trying to establish how the Group could support these individuals to apply for funding, but there was currently no information to share with learners and their families. The meeting was assured that management were pursuing ongoing discussions with Buckinghamshire to resolve this issue. The meeting noted the impact on the adult curriculum offering:

- Applications to 16-19 programmes by 19+ learners was halted in January and students who were progressing internally were given priority.
- Management were meeting all curriculum HoDs to discuss planned groups for 26/27
- ESOL provision reduced from 40% (£744k) of income to 32% (£555k)
- Course planning sustained in priority areas of construction, engineering and travel but no growth.
- Small growth allowed for progression in access courses.
- Adult English and Maths reduced to 15% from 17.5% to allow for viable provision.

13.4 Higher Education (HE)

The meeting noted a very comprehensive report which gave them a clear view of performance to date 2025-26 with Higher Education as well as an outline of future developments. Areas of current strength in the Group's HE provision had been identified as:

- Early identification of student needs during interview was recorded ready for September 2026 starts which included early application for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) support if needed to ensure all support was in place when students started their programme of study.
- An area of strength of the HE team was the high-quality written feedback and feedforward in assignments which had also been highlighted as excellent practice by the external examiners. The aim now was to disseminate this across the whole HE provision.
- The delivery of the Level 4 Education and Training Certificate was very strong. Participants were all internal teaching staff from the four colleges within WFCG. Feedback was extremely positive and had confirmed how this training had improved their teaching and learning practice.
- The HE Team continue to work with the Group's marketing team to promote the courses. The current priority was a summer promotion (Website, YouTube and social media).

Some key future developments were noted as:

- New module design currently going through validation with the University of West London (UWL) to meet the directives of the current Government White paper relating to Special Educational Needs
- Currently researching the possibilities of collaborating with the University of Reading regarding the delivery of higher-level courses in Agriculture
- Potential development of the existing WFCG level 4 teacher training programme to expand to delivery at Level 5

The Academic Update report was NOTED

14. **CURRICULUM REFORM and WFCG PLANNING**

The Deputy Group Principal (KG) presented a report which had been asked for by the Chair of Audit Committee for additional assurance around the curriculum planning process. This had been asked for when Audit Committee agreed to amend the internal audit schedule for 2025-26 to defer the curriculum planning audit to autumn 2026.

KG reminded the meeting that curriculum planning had been considered at the Governors' Strategy meeting on 15 May. Governors were also reminded that WFCG had now changed its curriculum planning model to cover a 15-month period which was considered good

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practice by DfE. This meant that staff had already planned September 2027/28 and were now working on September 2028/29 so plans were in place well in advance of deadlines and implementation. This allowed staff to have more time for detailed planning.

KG confirmed that WFCG had met the deadline of 6 July to submit the Strategic Transition Planning Statement (STPS). KG and her team had attended all the relevant DfE webinars. The STPS outlined how each FE college would transition to the qualifications in September 2027 and 2028. KG confirmed that by September 2030 most of the legacy qualifications would have been defunded. The 2030 landscape at level 3 would be V, A and T levels. WFCG curriculum teams were working from the perspective of 2030 and where the college needed to be then. They were using data from the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and looking for gaps in provision where WFCG had expertise; this process required close liaison with other regional colleges. KG assured the meeting that curriculum teams were working with MIS staff to ensure that appropriate qualifications were used. The two Principals were attending department meetings to make it clear that the changes would come into effect as planned and remind staff that WFCG could not afford to run both sets of qualifications in tandem (legacy qualifications and new V and T levels). The long-term plan would be to specialise more by college with less duplication between sites. KG assured the meeting that her team would continue to work on curriculum transformation plans in order to safeguard individual transition plans as new courses came online. Management was currently looking at upskilling staff and the work that would need to be done to engage with employers. T Levels included 315 hours of compulsory work experience per learner and all FE colleges were implementing this over the same timeline so competition would be high for employer engagement and work placements. KG asserted the danger of employer fatigue and the need for regional co-ordination to ensure this was being managed properly.

The curriculum planning update and the timely submission of the Strategic Transition Planning Statement was NOTED.

15. **FINANCE DIRECTORATE REPORT**

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

- *Management Accounts May 2026*

LG presented the management accounts to 31 May 2026 for information and assurance. These were largely taken as read as they had been discussed during agenda item 8.

16. **ESTATES UPDATE**

- *Sale of land at Honey Lane, BCA (see minute included in Part II minutes due to commercial confidentiality)*

17. **APPLICATIONS REPORT**

The meeting noted the current applications report for 16-19 programmes at 1 July 2026 which showed that the Group was 4.7% (245 learners) ahead of the same position in the prior year for applications. Offers accepted were 1.7% (65 learners) ahead of the prior year. KG informed the meeting that Admissions have been conducting a clean-up exercise of applicants who had been invited to book an interview but had not moved forward. This had reduced the number of live applications noticeably from previous reports, but Governors were assured that they were now much closer to the prior year numbers. The meeting noted that data also included 450 multi-site applications (195 accepted places).

The applications update was NOTED

- ***In-year Funding 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 all key elements of funding.

Members NOTED the funding update.

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18.	**WFCG STRATEGIC MAP** The meeting took this item as read. The Chair suggested that this would be considered in more detail in autumn 2026 when the new permanent CEO and Group Principal (OS) had started at WFCG. OS confirmed that he would be looking a strategic priorities and key performance indicators early in his tenure. ***The RAG rated WFCG Strategy Map 2024-29 was NOTED.***	
19.	**Minutes from Quality & Curriculum Committee – 11 June 2026** 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. ***The minutes from this meeting would be circulated as soon as finalised.*** ***NOTED***	**TR**
20.	**Minutes from Audit Committee – 17 June 2026** 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 draft minutes from this meeting were RECEIVED.***	
21.	**Minutes from Resources Committee – 24 June 2026** 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.*** ***NOTED***	**TR**
22.	**Dates and Times of Future Meetings and Events** The dates and times of future meetings were noted. TR confirmed that the first Corporation meeting of 2026/27 would be held at Strode's College on Wednesday 7 October 2026 at 5.00pm. ***NOTED***	
23.	**Any Urgent Business** There was no other urgent business. The Chair closed the meeting and thanked all governors and executive members for their hard work and congoing commitment during what had been a busy year. **The Part I meeting ended at 6.35pm**	

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.