

**Meeting of Kendal College Corporation
10th December 2025 5.00 pm Conference Room 2
MINUTES**



Present:

Rob Trimble (Chair)
Kevin Boles (Vice Chair)
Neil Boggin (Governor)
Jane Barker (Staff Governor)
Niamh Holliday (Student Governor)
Tracy Houlden (Governor)
Elaine Davies (Governor)
Andrew Lord (Governor)
Mary Osmaston (Governor)
Rachel Tyson (Governor)
Richard Quinn (Governor)
Jason Turton (Principal)
Daniel Waterhouse (Governor)
(Attendance: 77%- 13/17)

In attendance:

Karen Rae (External Auditor, Armstrong Watson)
Tamara Breeze (Director of Governance and Compliance) DGC
Richard Evans (Deputy Principal, Education and Standards) DPES
David Francis (Director of Inclusion) Dol
Elaine Gilpin (Finance Manager) FM
Sinead Kay (Director of Curriculum)
Craig Owen (Vice Principal, Data, Finance & Funding) VPDFF
Gavin Teasdale (Director of Finance) DoF and (Chief Finance Officer) CFO

Presentation on Ofsted readiness by Sinead Kay

2449	Apologies for Absence Sue Keenan, Michael Watts (Staff Governor), John Mansergh (Governor) Molly Downes (Student Governor)
2450	Declaration of Interests There were no declarations of interest not already noted in the register.
2451	To approve the Minutes of the last meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd of October were approved as an accurate record. Rob Trimble proposed and Jane Barker seconded.
2452	Matters Arising from the Minutes & Action Plan A change in date was agreed for the action on Sustainability, changed to Feb 2026. Other actions to be covered during the meeting.
2453	Finance & Funding

- **Presentation by the Finance Manager (FM) of the annual statements**

The FM presented the Kendal College Statutory Accounts.

College performance against Key Performance Indicators were outlined:

- Operating surplus (EBITDA) as a % of income of 4.76% is below the target and prior year;
- Staff costs as a percentage of income of 69.9% were slightly higher than target and higher than the prior year;
- Operating cash balances and cash days in hand were above target; and
- Borrowing as a % of income was slightly below target;
- Student achievement improved again and was 87.4%.

The DfE Financial Health Grade was confirmed as 'Good', by the Financial Record, that had not been finalised prior to board.

The Corporation were informed that the statement had been prepared on a 'going concern' basis, meaning that they were based on the assumption that the College would continue in operation for the foreseeable future (being at least 12 months from the date the accounts were issued). That approach had been agreed by Governors at the July Corporation meeting, when a balanced budget was agreed for the subsequent 12-months. The Governors' Letter of Representation was to be signed by the Chair and included a statement that the Board considered to be appropriate.

The SORP and College Accounts Direction required that a Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control was included within the accounts, named as the Governance Statement. That included a declaration of compliance with the AOC Code of Good Governance 2023, details of Governors who served during the year and details of the governance framework. The Corporation agreed the 'Review of Effectiveness statement'.

The FM reported that the statement of regularity, propriety and compliance, was a requirement of the DfE and was a declaration by both the Accounting Officer and Chair of Governors that the College had used the funds provided to it in line with the terms and conditions under which it was provided and in line with Managing Public Money guidelines.

The statement had been very slightly modified to state that no instances of non-compliance were identified during the year or up to the date of the statement from the wider statement that no non-compliance issues had been identified, reflecting the issues identified in the previous year.

The FM provided a comprehensive statement of income and expenditure. In the year to 31 July 2025, the College generated income of £17.9 million and incurred costs of £17.8 million, resulting in an operating surplus of £99k. That compared to an operating surplus of £277k in the prior year.

Income increased by £1.2 million (7%) compared to the prior year, primarily as a result of increased income generated from the provision of education to 16 to 18 year olds, which had increased by £0.9 million. This was matched by increases in pay expenditure as well as interest and other finance costs, following the drawdown of the new Natwest loan in the previous year. Depreciation (a non-cash cost) also increased, reflecting the higher asset base following the purchase of the Westmorland Campus (WmC)

After £16k of losses on disposals of assets of £211k of bad debt-write offs, the deficit for the year was £128k. The bad debt write off includes £200k for the write-off of prepayments made to Crogan in relation to the film studio, before they entered voluntary liquidation having completed only limited works, £10k was for the write-off of wages paid to a member of staff after they were dismissed which the College had been unable to recover. Those were accounting adjustments only and no further cash outlay was expected in relation to those matters.

It was noted that whilst the DfE had confirmed that the write-off of the wages was within the College's delegated limits, they were unable to give guidance on the treatment of the Crogan costs as the liquidation process was ongoing. The College would need to make a submission to the DfE once the liquidation process was complete, therefore there was a risk that the DfE would seek to recover some, or all, of the T Level Creative grants which were used to fund the film studio that would result in future losses of up to £200k. The board noted that the College were working with their DfE contact to prepare a business case to minimise that risk.

Overall, the College had net assets of £13.7 million compared to £13.9 million in 2024. This was comprised of £13.1 million of income and expenditure reserves and a revaluation reserve of £618k. Meaning, the College had sufficient assets (through cash, sale of stock and recovery of debts due) to meet its liabilities and obligations due within the year.

The LSPG pension scheme valuation has been capped at nil, in line with the previous period.

The cash balance held at the end of the year was £2.7 million, compared with £4.1 million in the previous year. This included £135k of LSF funds held on behalf of qualifying students and £1.1 million of unspent restricted grants. The unrestricted cash balance was £1.3 million, compared to £1.6 million in the previous year.

The Corporation thanked Elaine Gilpin (FM) for her work and her thorough presentation.

- **Presentation from the External Auditor (Virtual):**

Karen Rae from AW joined the meeting via MS Teams to provide an overview of the audit findings report, noting that recommendations for control had no impact on funding. From an external perspective, it was confirmed there was sufficient assurance to sign off the financial statements.

They provided the meeting with a summary of the findings in the financial statements to end of July 2025 and presented the audit report.

The regularity statement was approved by the External Auditor, noting the potential for clawback of the Crogan Spend. The audit recognised that prior year findings on holiday pay, would be mitigated by the implementation of the new software, iTrent.

The Audit and Risk Committee had accepted the recommendations from the audit at their meeting of the 24th of November 2025.

Karen Rae informed the Corporation that a webinar on the key changes in SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice) for FE and HE, would be delivered in January 2026. That was to cover changes related to leasing and how it was capitalised, and revenue recognition. **The webinar would be made available to governors in January**

<p>2026. The audit provided the board with assurance that there were no significant deficiencies in internal controls.</p> <p>The auditor asked the board to confirm that there were no; post balance sheet events, incidents of potential fraud, or reputational risks, known to Corporation that would affect the accounts. That was confirmed to be the case.</p> <p>KR thanked the Finance team for their time to facilitate the audit.</p> <p>The governors asked that the EA redacted a staff member's name from the report prior to publication, that was accepted.</p> <p>The DGC was asked to add the EA actions onto the audit tracker and present to the next board meeting</p> <p>The Board RESOLVED to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the financial statements and authorise the signing of the letters of representation and financial statements by the Corporation Chair and Principal as Chief Accounting Officer. <p><u>Finance Monthly MI</u></p> <p>The FM reported that the College's first quarter performance was strong, with income on budget at £4.8m, while pay costs were £0.3m under budget due to the delayed 4% pay award and vacancies. Non-pay spending was on track, and the College delivered an operating surplus of £380k, exceeding the budget by £315k.</p> <p>Following a detailed review, several year-end forecast adjustments had been made. Key pressures had arisen from reduced 16–19 grant income (£221k), lower tuition-related income, and increased costs including Cidori (+£75k) and student transport. Some positives include higher high-needs funding and an uplift in the post-16 NI grant. Overall, the year-end forecast was now £324k, £209k below budget, that was noted as a concern by the Governors, who requested an accurate position to be presented to the FRC in alongside a plan on how to recover the budget position.</p> <p>Cash remained strong, with £3.5m at 31 October and with 62.85 cash days in hand. LUF funding was still awaited, but claims preparation was underway. Liquidity and financial health remained good, and all bank covenants were met. The key risks moving forward included cashflow uncertainty, pay and non-pay cost pressures, and grant volatility. Further cost reviews were planned alongside updated forecasts in November.</p> <p><u>Report from Finance and Resources and Audit and Risk Committee</u></p> <p>Neil Boggin (Chair) reported on the last joint meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee and Audit and Risk held on 24th of November 2025. The meeting had been focussed on the financial statements and external audit report.</p> <p>He asked the Corporation to note the risk associated with the Cogra Studio build, the reduction of the end of year financial position, and gaps in policy compliance. The Principal was asked to report a significant improvement in policy compliance to the ARC meeting in March 26.</p> <p>The board noted that procurement activity was now monitored by FRC but agreed that for purchases over 100k approval must be sought from the whole Corporation and a timeline for those high value purchases was requested from the SLT.</p>	
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Report on Annual Internal Audit Report 24-25

The Chair of ARC reported that the committee had received the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2024/25 from ICCA, our previous internal auditors.

The Head of Internal Audit confirmed that sufficient work had been undertaken to provide an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of Kendal College's risk management arrangements and systems of internal control for the year ending 31 July 2025.

The opinion was outlined as:

- The College has adequate and effective risk management and internal control systems in place to support achievement of objectives and ensure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Reasonable Assurance was provided overall; no material control failures were identified.

Although ICCA had noted that, 'insufficient work was undertaken to provide an opinion on corporate governance arrangements' The board were informed that WBG did not agree with that finding and made it clear that they would not have included that point based on the work carried out.

Audit Activity had consisted of 6 assurance reviews and 1 advisory review covering areas such as curriculum planning, risk management, IT security, employer engagement, ESFA funding audit, and senior post holders. These resulted in the following recommendations: 4 high, 8 medium, 5 low priority, all were accepted by management. The difference with previous years, was that in terms of design and delivery, there had two weak elements, both in areas where there was a risk of financial clawback. The apprenticeship audit actions were closed done immediately, the other was in the ESFA Mock Funding Audit, actions were accepted and a timeline was in place. The action around distance learning was put to WBG and they acknowledged that the College's approach was appropriate.

The follow-up statement confirmed that substantial progress had been made on prior year (23-24) recommendations with 88% fully implemented. The Corporation agreed that ARC as to keep the board informed on progress against all audit actions.

Risk Register

The Principal reported on the risk register, the top five risks were accepted as;

- Failure to sustain high-quality learning and teaching
- Failure to sustain high-quality student and stakeholder experience
- Failure to meet planned budget / financial sustainability risk
- Fraud and financial control failure / compliance failure
- Major ICT failure disrupting college operations

The Corporation noted that the risk register was a live document that could be viewed at any time in the Governance Team.

The board were assured that the Principal had scrutinised the curriculum offer when preparing the strategy and the forthcoming business plan.

The board accepted that the risk relating to teaching and learning would be tested by an Ofsted inspection. The executive team reported that there was urgent work to do to improve careers guidance for all learners and that progress on that was to be reported back to Corporation later in the year.

	<p>The development of the Westmorland campus was a significant and ongoing risk that board members were keen to be involved in mitigation measures such as the formation of a focus group.</p> <p><u>Updated action plan for Procurement</u></p> <p>Management had strengthened procurement compliance by moving all tenders to formal platforms such as Find a Tender and the Crown Purchasing Consortium, supported by a new College Tender Register, while updating X-Ledger so that any expenditure over £40k now required Principal approval. They had also introduced mandatory procurement training delivered in January and August 2025 with further sessions planned for 2026 and circulated standardised guidance to all staff to ensure consistent documentation and approvals. Work was underway to formalise a scoring system for quotes, and oversight has been improved by making the contract risk register a standing item at the Finance & Resources Committee.</p> <p>The Corporation requested a more detailed update at the next meeting.</p> <p>Governors checked that in line with the financial regulations, no contracts over £100k had been awarded this year without board approval and were assured that regulations had been followed and that all requests would be presented first to FRC for scrutiny and then to Corporation, therefore ensuring a robust system of oversight.</p> <p><u>SLT response to anti-fraud training (22.10.25)</u></p> <p>The Senior Leadership Team had begun strengthening the College's fraud-prevention framework following the October 2025 training delivered by Armstrong Watson, prompted by new duties under the Economic Crime & Corporate Transparency Act 2023. Actions already implemented included, appointing an Interim Director of Finance to oversee procurement, risks and projects, ensuring all risk-related decisions are documented and linked to the risk register, and updating the College's Anti-Fraud Policy to align with legislative requirements. Further measures included integrating anti-fraud considerations into all future policies, adding fraud-prevention content to new staff inductions, providing all-staff training on the February 2026 development day (with Finance staff already given access to the training recording), and committing to ongoing governance reporting as improvements continue.</p>
2454	<p>HR</p> <p>1. <u>Meeting the Duty to Prevent Sexual Harassment</u></p> <p>To meet the enhanced legal duty, the Principal confirmed that the College must implement a coordinated, whole-college approach to preventing sexual harassment. That included completing departmental sexual harassment risk assessments, strengthening third-party protections, delivering mandatory staff training, and introducing clearer controls around events, trips and alcohol-related settings.</p> <p>The actions had significant operational implications: they required consistent leadership oversight, changes to employer and visitor processes, staff time for training and risk assessment completion. Failure to progress the actions in a timely manner presents compliance, cultural and reputational risks, meaning urgent and sustained attention was required across SLT, HR and curriculum leadership. Governors asked if external support was needed to ensure the work was done in a timely way, the Executive team did not think that was immediately necessary as the plan presented created compliance</p>

at that stage but would assess capacity to deliver outcomes and ask for support if needed. **Updated requested from the Principal in March 2026.**

Staff satisfaction survey and HR Report

The Corporation received the termly HR and People Report, which highlighted ongoing workforce pressures relating to recruitment, retention, sickness absence and staff wellbeing. Turnover had stabilised at 8.5% for Sept–Nov, though sickness levels had risen to 3.78%, and specialist technical vacancies remained difficult to fill. Governors noted the progress made against the Task and Finish Group's recommendations, including improvements to recruitment processes, induction, employer branding, and communication practices. Early results from the Autumn Communication Pulse Survey were improved but the Principal acknowledged that they required further improvement. 63% of staff reported improved communication since September, though consistency and clarity remained areas for development. The Corporation endorsed continued focus on recruitment, wellbeing initiatives, and strengthened communication, and noted that further updates, including workforce, culture and communication developments should be reviewed in January 2026.

Governors questioned the low response rate and challenged the Principal to improve that, he stated that the next survey would open on the staff training day with each staff member expected to respond. Governors were concerned about staff Sickness and asked if there was an issue of long term sickness within the College. The Executive team responded that a robust analysis had taken place, although some cases had proved legally challenging. The board discussed whether there was a link between staff being over stretched, becoming stressed and then being off sick. **An analytical report was requested of overall sickness levels and those attributable to work related stress (where known).**

Governors asked whether technology was fully utilised in order to improve delivery when teachers are absent, the Executive team assured the board that there was a current plan to improve that position.

The Student Governor noted that cover arrangements for absence had impacted negatively on the quality of their student experience. SLT stated their intention to minimise that impact, with a plan to reduce global teaching hours to allow for more cover by college staff.

1. Principal's Update and KPI Report

The Corporation received the Principal's Update, which outlined continued progress in strengthening communication, leadership visibility and strategic alignment across the College, supported by Principal-led Ofsted readiness sessions that are beginning to shift culture and consistency. The report highlighted stable progress in curriculum alignment, staff development and partnership work with Westmorland & Furness Council, alongside measured improvements in health and safety and security following the recent Protective Security Assessment. Technology transformation work and data alignment continue to advance, with the first phase of the new KPI Dashboard now in use. The KPI report was well received by Governors, and they questioned the internal management systems that were behind the KPIs. Governors offered support with that work. It was agreed that relevant elements of the KPIs would come to FRC and QSC in January, to be scrutinised, prior to recommending approval to Corporation.

	<p>The Westmorland Campus redevelopment remained on schedule within the tendering phase. Workforce capacity had improved through interim appointments and ongoing recruitment for key roles. The Corporation noted Kendal College's increased regional profile following sector engagement at the AoC Conference. Governors agreed to continue monitoring progress in key areas including Ofsted readiness, security, health and safety, organisational communication and strategic data development.</p> <p>The Board RESOLVED to: Note the Principal's report.</p>
2456	<p><u>Chair's Report</u></p> <p>The Chair reported that the Governors who were likely to be involved in an Ofsted inspection had attended three training sessions so far with another planned in January. He explained that the External Board Review was to happen during the Spring and that this process was extensive and would provide assurance on our governance processes in addition to providing support to improve. There was an expectation that changes made over the last 12 months would be noted as positive in the review, and the Chair informed the board that the external reviewer would observe the next board meeting.</p> <p>The Chair and the Principal were to attend the AoC meeting in London on the 12th of December and would meet the new FE Commissioner and report to the next meeting. The Chair had attended the Tuesday morning staff briefing and had emphasised the legal responsibilities of the Corporation, the staff governor commented that this was well received.</p>
2457	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>The new DSL drew attention to the huge rise in the number of recorded incidents in the last 3 years but was clear that this was a result of increased vigilance and reporting. He provided an explanation of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, that became law on the 3rd of April 2025. The board were informed that the College falls into the Standard Tier of the legislation, that required a named person responsible for security of the premises and for the implementation of reasonable steps to ensure the safety of people in the College in the event of a terrorist incident. The expectation was that the College would be fully compliant within the allowed 2 year period. An external security consultant had been employed, and the College was working on their recommendations. The Interim Dol said that there was a strong culture of Safeguarding within the College, and he based that on his extensive experience of other FE colleges. He assured the board that safer recruitment practices were in place, and that the Single Central Register (SCR) was checked and monitored regularly.</p> <p>It was noted that Fast Vue alerts were working well and were acted upon promptly. Recorded incidents were inline with annual peaks and troughs.</p> <p>Themes were noted as consistent with last year, with the most referrals indicating pastoral concerns, he stressed that those are very important, as they could indicate other issues arising. Mental Health was the biggest concern, and had increased in the last 10 years, year on year. Suicidal ideation was significant for the learners and was always taken seriously.</p> <p>The DSL assured the board that the Prevent risk assessment was currently being updated and would be presented to Corporation in January.</p> <p>The report concluded that there was 100% compliance against new EIF for Safeguarding.</p> <p>Governors asked about the SG arrangements in workplaces and on work placement.</p>

	<p>They were informed that with an apprentice the College had no direct control over the employer but the apprentice was aware that they must report any concerns to the College. In relation to the reporting of the data, governors questioned how many of the cases were closed down after one incident. The DSL reported that the current system was set to be improved to allow reports to show the severity of each referral and illustrate when cases were escalated or de-escalated. Governors checked that the DSL felt there was enough capacity across the three campuses to deal with the demand. He was confident that the SG team was good, but that it needed to be broadened, with succession planning considered.</p> <p>Annual Safeguarding Report 24-25 was approved by Corporation</p>
2458	<p>Strategic Focus</p> <p><u>Inclusion</u></p> <p>The Interim Director of Inclusion (DoI) provided a verbal update on Inclusion within the College. Significant changes had been made during the year and a new structure introduced. The DoI had assessed the current funding for element 3, and found that there was approximately £100k that could be further claimed. In terms of element 2 funding, the College had 140 students with EHCPs, only 80 of those received high needs funding, he had negotiated with the Council and had achieved 100 funded places for next year, the board acknowledged how positive that was for college learners. An Exams Access Assessor post had been filled, with a L7 qualified individual now in place, that ensured compliance with JCQ regulations. Board noted that 10% of college students had EHCP's, a high proportion that was likely to increase due to a positive reputation.</p> <p>The Governors asked whether the DoI was confident that all EHCP targets were being tracked and were told that a 100% audit of EHCP targets on Promonitor had been carried out.</p> <p><u>Sandgate partnership update</u></p> <p>The VPES reported that the partnership work had gathered momentum. There was a Quality improvement collaboration in place that included successful taster sessions for Sandgate learners, reciprocal SEND related CPD, and the rebranding of Vocational Studies to Link 2, which had driven strong recruitment and the addition of new staff. Supported internships at Westmorland General had also moved under this specialist faculty, strengthening SEND focused provision. The proposal for Sandgate@College a satellite sixth-form facility at the College's Milnthorpe Road site had been made and the Council had commissioned a full feasibility study and was exploring estates, sufficiency, and SEND budget implications. The original space requirements remained, though an additional new-build extension had been suggested as a future phase. Emerging discussions included a potential long-term lease arrangement and service responsibilities. A formal recommendation to the Board was expected once the feasibility study concluded, with a possible interim option to lease a smaller short-term facility for September 2026.</p> <p>Finally, W&F officials had opened a conversation about expanding provision to 19+ SEND learners. The College was open to this if scale and quality could be ensured without compromising existing strategic priorities. Conversations remained at an early stage but indicated strong council interest in strengthening local adult SEND provision.</p>

2459	<p>Quality of Education</p> <p>1. Quality and Standards Committee</p> <p>Andy Lord, Chair of the Committee reported the meeting of the 20th of November, when the SAR had been approved after input from board members in October. The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) had also been approved after advice taken from the FE Commissioner to condense it to 6 key actions. The committee had met a Head of Faculty and a Curriculum Director to triangulate information on the impact of Course and departmental Improvement Plans.</p> <p>Governors requested a copy of the new QIP- DGC to send.</p> <p>2. Walkthrough report</p> <p>Over a one-week period, 79 targeted walkthroughs were completed across the College, focusing on learner readiness, engagement, and learning culture, aligned with the Teaching & Learning Charter and Ofsted 2025 expectations. The walkthroughs were graded for the first time and used the new EIF to identify strength and areas to develop. Most walkthroughs were directed toward new staff, new programmes, and areas with active improvement plans. Five walkthroughs remained outstanding and would be carried out by the end of the term.</p> <p>College-wide outcomes showed that 82% of sessions met the Expected Standard or above, with 31% graded Strong or Exceptional, reflecting a broadly consistent and positive learning culture. However, 18% of walkthroughs indicated a need for improvement.</p> <p>Stronger departments included Art, Engineering, Agriculture, Production, Gaming, Functional Skills, and Sport, while Business, Care, English, Motor Vehicle, and Music delivered largely consistent “Expected” performance. Areas requiring greater focus include A Levels, Link2/SI, and Construction, where variable standards and learner-engagement challenges were observed.</p> <p>Key development priorities included ensuring consistent engagement strategies, improving learner readiness (punctuality and equipment), and addressing environmental barriers such as classroom setup and digital access.</p> <p>Resulting actions involved reinforcing culture expectations, (and differentiating these for adult learners), targeted CPD for departments requiring support, increased walkthroughs for high-priority areas, strengthened tracking via negotiated observations, and enhanced sharing of good practice between high-performing and developing departments.</p> <p>Governors received assurance that all areas of development identified were followed up in targets for colleagues and appropriate development activities.</p>
2460	<p>Student Voice</p> <p><u>UCAS Support for Students</u></p> <p>The Student Governor described the outstanding support, they, as an A-Level learner had received for their UCAS application and for other potential progression routes. The Curriculum Leader for A-Levels was commended for this work. An improvement suggestion was that students be encouraged to do more towards an application in year 1, as that would allow time for them to gain experiences that strengthen applications, such as work experience over the summer.</p> <p><u>Estate and Facilities</u></p> <p>The estates and cleaning staff were praised by the student governor, and it was acknowledged that they have a positive impact on the learning environment.</p>

	<p>The student governors reported that the social spaces at AMC were good, but the WmC and MRC did not have sufficient student social space.</p> <p>The Café at MRC was commended for variety, cheap options for food and friendly staff, but they noted that the Café at AMC was too small to accommodate students from two campuses.</p> <p>Other points raised included, requests for improved Wi-Fi, temperature control at WmC. The industry standard of facilities and equipment were described as excellent and thought to directly lead to recruitment in areas such as Animal Care and Engineering. The DPES was to meet with Student Governors to provide feedback on their points.</p>
2461	<p>Reports and Policies</p> <p>1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report</p> <p>The College was required to report annually on its progress towards the agreed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion targets and practices. The report reflected updates during the year of organisational structures and new developments.</p> <p>The report stated that the College had a whole-college commitment to equality, focusing on removing barriers for learners, staff, and the wider community. The 2024–27 Equality & Diversity plan targeted improvements in staff diversity, student achievement gaps, LGBTQ+ inclusion, and building accessibility. Progress was strong in areas like ethnic diversity recruitment, support for colleagues with neurodiversity and reducing subject-area gender imbalance. However, key challenges remained including significant achievement gaps for learners in receipt of Free College Meals, those who were Care Experienced and delays to accessibility audits. Improved access for those who used wheelchairs at all campus' remained a priority.</p> <p>The Board received and approved the report.</p> <p>2. Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy</p> <p>Approval was recommended by QSC and had been agreed by JCNC. The significant change was that additional graded walkthroughs had been added.</p> <p>Approved by Board</p> <p>3. Careers Policy</p> <p>Approval was recommended by QSC and the careers link governor who had worked with the Careers lead on the Policy.</p> <p>Approved by Board</p>
2462	<p>Governance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Link Governor Programme had been updated to align with increased Ofsted expectations of link governors. This was accepted. The DGC asked governors to update their biographies on the website if they had not already done so, in order to highlight the high levels of skills and expertise on the Corporation. Governor Strategic Planning Event 28th January 2026 was discussed with acknowledgement that the time was needed for governors to discuss the draft strategic plan and influence it. The AOC was to provide a brief update on policy changes in the FE landscape and a local firm Oxleys would present ideas to improve the retention of staff.
2463	<p>Any other business</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
2464	<p>Next meeting: 28th January</p>

	12 pm Lunch with staff 1pm Strategy Event 5pm Meeting
2465	Reserved Business (Independent Governors only)