Corporation

Tuesday 17th March 2026, 6:00-7:35pm
Block 10 seminar room (10.107)

Meeting papers link: 17 March 2026

Corporation members:
Jacquie Carman, CEO & Principal
Jo Chilton, Chair of the Corporation
Sarah Dawson
Stuart Fisher
Andrew Hanson (Virtual)
Ian Hughes, Vice Chair of the Corporation (Items 1-6)
Balraj Singh Jagdev
Alison Jarrett
Grant Johnson (Virtual)
Raj Joshi, Vice Chair of the Corporation
Gail Rothnie
Mark Sterling
Anthony Wood, Staff governor
Dawn Woods

In attendance:
Steph Morley, Director of Governance
Jon Priest, Asst Principal/Chief Information Officer
Andrew Woodford, Vice Principal/CFO
Jo Williams, Deputy Principal/Deputy CEO

APPROVED MINUTES

Item details

\- **Governor training – NEETs**
J. Carman delivered a training session focused on NEETs, current partnership activity to engage the local NEET population and future plans. Separate notes of this session were taken.

1 **Welcome and introductions**
The Chair formally opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance, in particular B. Jagdev and D. Woods who were attending their first Corporation meeting as newly appointed governors.

It was confirmed both virtual attendees were able to hear and contribute to the meeting.

2 **Procedural matters**

2.1 Apologies
Apologies were received and accepted from S. Chagan, I. Evans, R. Marmeleiro and A. Sutton.

2.2 Declarations of interest
There were no declarations of interest for this meeting.

2.3 Confidential item(s)
There were confidential items for discussion at this meeting.

2.4 Minutes of last meetings and actions/matters arising

The Corporation **approved** the minutes from the following meetings as a true record:

- 17 December 2025 (general and confidential)
- 24 February 2026 (special meeting)

The Corporation **noted** the update provided on agreed actions and the notes from the Corporation development day on 23 January 2026.

2.5 Approvals since last meeting

There had been no approvals to report since the last meeting.

3 Delivering the strategic plan

3.1 Annual plan

J. Carman presented the report, which provided an update on delivery of the actions within the 2025/26 annual plan.

The Corporation noted the achievement gap for SEND students was reported at 100% complete and asked what the impact of this for those students had been. J. Carman explained this ultimately would be the outcomes achieved by the students. Governors were advised a consultant to support with the development of an action plan in response to the recently commissioned SEND review, which included raising awareness across all staff about the renewed focus on inclusive practices.

The Corporation noted the action related to the digital/AI CPD offer for staff was reported as 30% complete and asked if further progress would be seen before year-end. J. Priest confirmed it would and explained, in addition to the approval of the Digital Strategy, the following would support the achievement of this action – the appointment of the Digital Learning & Innovation Manager, identified digital gurus throughout the college and focused CPD on the next staff development day.

The Corporation requested clarity regarding the RAG-rating provided within the report. In addition to the previously shared key, it was agreed a projected year-end forecast column would be added to provide the rationale for RAG ratings. **JCa**

The Corporation **noted** the report.

3.2 Performance

J. Priest referred to the performance report shared with the Principal's report and within the papers for the recent SCQC meeting, and the following was highlighted/ discussed:

- Attendance had decreased slightly and the target had not been met; however, performance was above that at the same point last year. Rates for Resit English and Maths continued to affect the whole college figure
- Socio-economic disadvantage was the biggest affecting factor for both attendance and retention

Governors were advised the activity already undertaken to address attendance to date was under review to identify which strategies had the greatest impact and what could be done further to improve attendance. This would include a more structured system, building on the work of the Engagement & Support Officers (ESOs) and the increased use of data and insights.

The Corporation noted there had been a particular attendance concern relating to male Bangladeshi students and asked what action had been taken to address this. J. Priest advised the main issue had been identified as texts to parents only being sent in English – this had been changed and going forward messages sent to parents would be sent in their preferred/first language.

The Corporation asked if any seasonal patterns had been identified. J. Williams explained how the beginning of each half-term would typically have lower attendance and spoke about the strategies employed by some divisions to encourage attendance after college holidays, for example expert speakers and enrichment activity.

The Corporation asked at what point would the impact of the ESOs be assessed. J. Williams advised the full team needed to be in place for a year before this could be properly assessed to provide the opportunity for reviews/adaptations to be made and relationships to be built. J. Carman stated this would be alongside a focus on students' motivation for attending college and the need for better engagement and purposeful lessons.

The Corporation asked what the journey for a poor attendee to a withdrawn student looked like. J. Priest explained how conversations would be held with the student around the reasons for non-attendance and what would be in the best interest for everyone involved. J. Williams advised she was looking at the approach being taken by schools regarding persistent attendance and whether there was practice that could be replicated or adapted for college.

The Corporation noted the disparity between the dashboard and report, and were advised the dashboard required updating. A report containing the latest data had been prepared and would be shared on GovernorHub following the meeting. **JP & SM**

The Corporation **noted** the latest position and verbal update provided.

3.3 Finance

A. Woodford referred the Corporation to the latest management accounts (January 2026) and revised budget forecast (RBF2) and the following was highlighted/ discussed:

- The financial position was broadly in line with budget
- Fee income (from a number of different streams) and apprenticeship income were below budget
- Non-pay savings had helped to mitigate the income variations
- All financial targets/benchmarks remained on target to be met
- Confirmation of in-year funding had not yet been released by the DfE

The Corporation asked if there was progress to report regarding the LRF (LUF) project. A. Woodford advised meetings continued to take place regarding the release of the funds and the planned refurbishment of town centre premises as part of the college's capital programme.

The Corporation noted the disparity between the dashboard and report, and were advised the dashboard required updating. It was confirmed the reports contained the latest data.

The Corporation **noted** the latest financial position.

3.4 Risk

A.Woodford introduced the item and informed the Corporation the usually quiet period between meeting cycles had been busy in relation to risk, with changes in level and new risks added to the register. He highlighted the high-level strategic risks facing the college, the context behind them and action being taken to mitigate their likelihood and/or impact.

It was agreed a risk training meeting would be arranged as part of the new governors' induction. **AW & SM**

The Corporation **noted** the latest risk position.

4 Principal's report

J. Carman referred to the written report and provided a verbal update on the following:

- The outcome of the government's curriculum reform, its implications and the timetable for implementation
- Changes and confirmations at the West Midlands Combined Authority

The Corporation acknowledged the confirmed changes to curriculum and assessment, and the timescales for the staged implementation of the reform, and asked what was known about the requirement for regular submissions to the DfE. J. Carman advised the current requirement was for a plan outlining how the changes would be implemented to be submitted in June 2026, with a mid-year review and annual reviews thereafter.

The Corporation asked if any further change was likely. J. Carman advised what had been recently published were the finalised plans; however, it was thought lobbying would continue based on the reception from the FE sector.

The Corporation acknowledged the amount and pace of change within the sector at the current time, and the impact this had on the college's senior leadership team, and thanked them for their work to review, plan and respond to this change.

The Corporation **noted** the Principal's report and the verbal update, a written version of which would be uploaded to GovernorHub. **SM**

J. Carman referred to the report outlining the changes made to staff contracts, the need for which had arisen through engagement with trade unions.

The Corporation **noted** the changes made to staff contracts, as set out in the report.

5 Committee updates

The Chairs from their respective committees provided the following updates from their most recent meetings, the paperwork for which was available to all Corporation members via GovernorHub:

5.1 Students, Curriculum & Quality (03/03/26)

G. Rothnie provided a verbal report from the Committee's meeting on 03 March 2026 and advised the Committee had:

- Reviewed and discussed in detail the progress report for the QIP 2025/26
- Received feedback from the divisional performance reviews undertaken since the previous meeting

- Reviewed the performance and committee-allocated risk dashboards
- Received reports on student performance data; learner voice; attendance; safeguarding and wellbeing; inclusion and the SEND review; learning, teaching and assessment; apprenticeships; careers and progression and curriculum offer for 2025/26

The Corporation **noted** the update provided.

5.2 Personnel (04/03/26)

M. Sterling provided a verbal report from the Committee's meeting on 04 March 2026 and advised the Committee had:

- Received updates on workload monitoring, industrial relations and policy review
- Discussed and agreed the annual reporting cycle and format
- Reviewed the performance and committee-allocated risk dashboards
- Approved the updated Staff Sickness Absence Management Policy
- Received an update on governor recruitment and membership
- Recommended the reappointment of G. Johnson for a second (3-year) term
- Reviewed the skills audit matrix and agreed the proposed next steps
- Discussed the consultation draft of the AoC's updated Remuneration Code for Senior Post Holders

The Corporation **approved** the reappointment of G. Johnson for his second term (3 years) starting on 15/05/26.

The Corporation **noted** the update provided.

5.3 Audit (05/03/26)

I. Hughes provided a verbal report from the Committee's meeting on 05 March 2026 and advised the Committee had:

- Received an update on the developments being made to the risk register dashboard
- Reviewed the 'live' risk register dashboard and risk action plan
- Received an update from the external auditor, including the incoming changes to FE accounting practice
- Discussed the internal audit report for payroll controls (substantial assurance rating given), progress with the internal audit plan, RSM's annual FE benchmarking report and an update on the implementation of audit recommendations
- Reviewed/recommended approval of the updated Health & Safety Policy and Risk Management Policy
- Reviewed and approved the updated Freedom of Information Policy
- Discussed the performance of the college's external audit provider

The Corporation **noted** the update provided.

5.4 Finance & Resources (12/03/26)

A. Hanson provided a verbal report from the Committee's meeting on 12 March 2026 and advised the Committee had:

- Reviewed the performance and committee-allocated risk dashboards

- Discussed the latest estates and capital report, including the requested information regarding procurement and work underway to update the Estates Strategy (for presentation in Summer 2026)
- Reviewed the college's management accounts for January 2026 and recommended the revised budget forecast (RBF2) for approval
- Reviewed HCE's management accounts (January 2026) and revised budget forecast
- Reviewed/recommended approval of the updated Digital Strategy, Health & Safety Policy, Marketing Strategy and Tuition Fees Policy
- Approved the updated Procurement Policy
- Discussed the consultation draft of the AoC's updated Remuneration Code for Senior Post Holders

The Corporation **noted** the update provided and **approved** the college's revised budget forecast (RBF2).

6 Policy review

The Corporation **approved** the following policy documents:

- Digital Strategy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Marketing Strategy
- Risk Management Policy (subject to the inclusion of Personnel in the list of committees within the policy) **AW**
- Tuition Fees Policy

7 Governance and compliance

7.1 <u>Governance update report</u>

S. Morley presented the report and the following was highlighted/discussed:

- The Personnel Committee had recommended the re-appointment of G. Johnson for his second term (see Item 5.2)
- No further governor interviews had taken place due to candidate withdrawals
- Governors were asked to complete and return their biography templates (link on GovernorHub to be re-sent) **Govs SM**
- Governors were invited to attend the next student engagement session, (student support focus), scheduled for 26/03/26

7.2 <u>Confidential items review</u>

The Corporation **approved** the release/retention of confidential items as set out in the report, with the exception of any reports/items relating to capital projects where financial aspects had not yet been concluded.

7.3 <u>Students' Union constitution</u>

The Corporation **approved** the Students' Union Constitution, subject to increasing the number of students able to call a meeting/request an amendment to the Constitution. **SM**

8 Any other business

There was no further business for discussion and the Chair closed the meeting at 7:35pm.

2025/26 meeting dates:

Corporation	Audit Committee	Finance & Resources Committee
~~15/10/25~~	~~25/09/25~~	~~18/09/25~~
17/12/25	~~04/12/25~~	~~27/11/25 (& RemComm)~~
~~23/01/26 (DD)~~	~~05/03/26~~	~~12/03/26~~
~~24/02/26 (Special)~~	21/05/26	25/06/26
~~17/03/26~~	**Personnel Committee**	**Students, Curriculum & Quality**
17/06/26 (SS)	~~17/09/25~~	~~01/10/25~~
08/07/26	~~12/11/25~~	~~03/12/25~~
DD – Development day	~~04/03/26~~	~~03/03/26~~
SS – Strategy session	13/05/26	24/06/26

Actions from this meeting			
Ref	**Action**	**Owner**	**Date**
1	Item 3.1/Annual plan – add projected year end forecast into template	JCa	Jun-26
2	Item 3.2/Performance – upload additional performance paper to GHub	JP & SM	18/03/26
3	Item 3.4/Risk – set up training meeting with new governors	AW & SM	Jun-26
4	Item 4/Principal's report – upload written report linked to verbal update	SM	18/03/26
5	Item 6.4/Risk Management Policy – add Personnel to committee list	AW	ASAP
6	Item 7.1/Governance – resend link to biography template to GovernorHub	SM	18/03/26
7	Item 7.1/Governance – complete/return biography template	Govs	ASAP
8	Item 7.3/SU Constitution – revise number of students able to call meetings	SM	ASAP

See <u>here</u> for live action tracker