

Minutes of a Meeting of the CORPORATION held on

Wednesday 10th December 2025, 2.00-5.00pm at the College Business Centre

85/25 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Dmytro Buyanov-Taylor, Dr David Ndzi, and Ms Hephzibah Biju.

86/25 WELCOME AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting. She paid tribute to Mr Ken Dueck at his last meeting as a Governor and thanked him for his service and contribution. The Chair also acknowledged pressure on the leadership team and gave apologies for late papers. She assured Members that the Corporation would take time to go through each paper.

There were no declarations of interest.

87/25 APPROVAL OF THE NON-CONFIDENTIAL, CONFIDENTIAL, AND SLT, STAFF AND STUDENT CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD 15 OCTOBER 2025

The non-confidential, confidential, and senior leadership team (SLT), staff and student confidential minutes of the meeting held 15 October 2025 were approved as a true record.

88/25 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Director of Governance reported on Matters Arising. All actions were complete as detailed. It was noted that the appointment rules for the Student Executive have been amended. The Corporation requested that the Instrument and Articles of Government and Standing Orders are revised commensurate with this to ensure consistency and separation between Student Executive and Student Governor roles.

89/25 CHAIRS BUSINESS/RATIFICATION OF CHAIRS ACTION/GOVERNOR APPROVALS

The Chair reported positively on attending the College Open Day in November, describing it as a moment of genuine pride to see strong engagement from prospective students and clear progression for existing students.

The Chair also reported on her attendance at the AoC (Association of Colleges) Conference, including a session addressed by the new FE (Further Education) Commissioner. The conference provided valuable insight into national priorities and sector direction. She highlighted the benefit of attending alongside the Principal, and Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO, allowing comparison with practice across other colleges and a broader understanding of the national picture.

In addition, the Chair confirmed attendance at the College SAR (Self-Assessment Review) Panel.

She also drew attention to Governor approval made electronically since the last meeting in respect of the Panel for the recruitment of the Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO.

A Member asked whether there would be an opportunity for Governors to hear more from the AoC Conference. The Chair would share her notes or bring to a future meeting.

The Chair also shared a key highlight from the Conference as learning from the Happiness Project in Southport, which focused on ways of bringing joy and positivity into the college community following the Southport incident.

A Member asked whether a similar approach could be replicated locally to support a sense of belonging. Another Member added that this could also be beneficial in supporting staff wellbeing.

The Corporation APPROVED the appointment of a Panel for the recruitment of the Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO comprising Sara Weech, Ros Parker and Fidelma Washington (as current and incoming Principal respectively), Martyn Pearl, Stephen Brooks and Judith Abbott.

90/25 BALANCED SCORECARD

The Principal presented the Balanced Scorecard, advising that the Excel dashboard continues to be refined, with additional narrative commentary and risk mitigation included. She took Members through the paper, noting that a specific focus on attendance had been incorporated at the request of governors. It was proposed that deeper analysis be undertaken at Committee level where required. Attendance was reported at 79%, which was acknowledged as low. The Principal confirmed that attendance was declining nationally and that, while this position was not satisfactory, it was not unique to the College. Work was underway to better understand the causes of low attendance, including analysis of contributing factors and observations of teaching and learning. The method by which registers are taken was highlighted as a potential factor. The new Head of Quality would be undertaking walk-rounds across all areas to support this work. Retention, however, remains strong.

A Member asked whether school attendance patterns were improving. The Principal confirmed that this had been discussed with the AoC recently and that there was a strong relationship locally with secondary headteachers. She expressed an intention to undertake further work with schools to understand attendance trends. The Chair asked the Member whether she had undertaken similar work. The Member responded that work had taken place with the Local Authority to share data sets, including a local agreement for sharing NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) risk data. She also noted that attendance targets may not be realistic for students entering College with historically low school attendance, particularly where attendance has improved post-transition.

The Principal reported ongoing work with the Local Authority English and Maths Advisor and the Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support), reviewing NEET profiles and targeted interventions, which have had a positive impact. It was noted that IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) will be revisited as part of the upcoming Matrix inspection, with work underway to strengthen compliance with the Gatsby Benchmarks. Destination data continues to be strong.

Workforce matters were also discussed. The Principal outlined efforts to improve staff induction, both corporately and at team level, with a focus on retaining staff once appointed. It was acknowledged that induction practice was not yet consistently applied, and work was ongoing to address this. Recruitment challenges persisted in hard-to-fill areas, reflecting both national and Island-wide pressures. The need to position the College as an employer of choice was emphasised.

In response to a query from the Chair regarding Electrical provision, the Principal confirmed that challenges remain into January, pending awarding body certification sign-off. A Member raised concern regarding the demotivating impact on learners, noting previous challenge at the Curriculum and Quality Committee. The Principal confirmed that the issue related to awarding body requirements and staff turnover. She advised that two permanent staff had now been recruited, alongside an assessor, and confirmed that if this staffing position had been in place earlier, the issue would not have arisen. However, Electrical staffing was described as inherently fragile, and therefore a continuing risk. It was noted that all agency capacity has been exhausted.

T Level recruitment was discussed. The Principal advised that some T Levels have been withdrawn due to national recruitment challenges, while others have recruited well. Work was ongoing to market the provision more effectively and build confidence in newer qualifications. It was noted that A Level recruitment was also declining locally, reflecting a national trend. Student numbers were up on the previous year overall, and clawback had been appropriately provisioned for. The Principal advised that future demographic trends were downward and that the College must therefore focus on adult provision, higher-level learning, access routes, and securing market share.

A Member queried whether economic pressures were influencing learner choice, including a shift towards paid apprenticeships. The Assistant Principal confirmed this reflected current feedback.

The Chair noted that workforce data systems required improvement to better monitor progress against strategic objectives. The Principal agreed and confirmed that this would be addressed through improved data transfer into the system.

The Corporation APPROVED the Balanced Scorecard.

91/25 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal presented her report. The Interim Director of Finance spoke to the update on Delamite Ltd. He provided a timeline as advised by RSM UK LLP. He explained that the building had been opted to tax and that the transaction now required the College to remove the sale of the building back from Delamite before determining next steps. This approach removes the immediate risk of Corporation tax, although HMRC (His Majesty's Revenue and Customs) may still review the position. It was noted that Delamite can remain dormant for a minimum of three months before any strike-off can be considered. The Chair queried the date of 2 March 2026 referenced in the paper. The Interim Director of Finance confirmed that the statutory three-month dormant period would therefore run from March 2026, noting that this timeline was rolling due to the accounts position. He advised that it was likely Delamite would remain dormant rather than being struck off. The Chair stated that clear legal advice was required to ensure the approach taken protected both individual directors and the best interests of the College. A Member sought clarification that, assuming the building was successfully purchased by the College, it may be preferable to retain Delamite as a dormant company for an extended period (potentially up to ten years). The Interim Director of Finance agreed. The Principal stated a letter of comfort for directors in the event of any HMRC challenge should be provided. The Chair noted that this could not be progressed until after the accounts were signed.

The Principal provided the in year position following RO4. This was key performance reporting for the Department for Education (DfE) to confirm recruitment. She reported that 16–18 learner numbers remain strong, although a drop-off in T Level numbers was noted. The focus was now on retention, ensuring high-quality IAG and maintaining 'Swop Don't Drop' so that learners do not withdraw.

A Member asked whether the position on high needs numbers had been concluded satisfactorily. The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) confirmed that reconciliation work was ongoing. At present, 243 EHCPs (Education, Health, and Care Plans) have secured first-term funding. Discussions with the Local Authority regarding future funding were ongoing, noting the wider national pressures on high needs budgets.

The Principal reported that adult recruitment was below the level hoped for.

It was noted that devolution has stalled due to the absence of a mayoral election for a further two years, and that activity has largely gone quiet, which AoC has raised as a concern.

Free Courses for Jobs delivery was reported as well over-achieved at this point in the year.

The Principal provided an update on the national Data Dashboard, advising that the November dataset remains incomplete, with some national data not yet fully updated. As a result, some figures should be treated with caution. The dashboard was currently in a transition phase, with the next update due in March. It was suggested that a full dataset be brought to Governors once the March update was available.

The Chair asked whether this was a national issue. The Principal confirmed that it was, although the College understands where it sits in comparison to national benchmarks. Concerns around achievement will continue to be scrutinised through the Curriculum and Quality Committee and the SAR process.

A Member asked whether other data sources were being used. The Principal confirmed that, in addition to the national dashboard, alternative datasets were used to triangulate performance.

A Member requested greater clarity on performance measures, particularly progression and the reported 30% achievement rate for apprenticeships. The Principal explained that the current figure reflects very small numbers, including one learner who was ill at assessment. Predicted outcomes for the current year were expected to be in the 60% range. The Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO added that progression was measured primarily by learners achieving at a higher level than previously attained, noting that internal progression (for example, Level 2 to Level 3) was most commonly captured. It was confirmed that GCSE resits would not normally count as progression where a qualification had already been achieved. The Principal advised that positive destinations and sustained progression would continue to be the primary measures.

A Member sought clarification on what constitutes apprenticeship achievement. The Principal confirmed this was completion through End Point Assessment, with sustained positive destinations defined as sustained employment for six months. The Chair requested that the minutes reflect that the dashboard data discussed was illustrative rather than definitive.

A Staff Governor raised a query regarding a discrepancy between data showing 2023–24 numbers as 4,790 and figures within the Self-Assessment Report. The Principal confirmed this question would be taken away for investigation, with the Member forwarding the query to the Director of MIS (Management Information Systems) and Funding.

The Principal advised that the College remained in dispute with UCU (University and College Union), alongside approximately 30 other colleges, relating to pay, workload and national bargaining. A ballot has taken place and strike action has been voted for on 14–16 January 2026.

A Member asked about the impact on learners. The Principal confirmed that mitigations were planned, although there would be disruption, including BTEC assessments, plumbing exams and the period immediately before mock examinations.

The Principal confirmed that a visit for local MPs (Members of Parliament) had been hosted, with a focus on high needs provision.

A Member asked about next steps following the MPs' visit. The Principal confirmed that follow-up letters would be sent, thanking them for the visit and setting out what the College would like them to do next.

The Principal also reported that the groundbreaking ceremony for the DfE Transformation Fund project build would be taking place on 10 February 2026.

The Corporation NOTED the report for ASSURANCE and ALERT and APPROVED the seeking of further legal advice in relation to the provision of a letter of comfort regarding Delamite Ltd.

92/25 REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLAN

In an earlier Strategy session during the morning, the Principal had presented an update against the agreed strategic priorities, setting out progress to date, how success would be measured, and the interventions currently in place. She had invited comments from Members.

The Chair advised that Members may require further time to review the paper in detail and suggested that additional feedback could be provided following the meeting. The Chair noted that, notwithstanding this, progress had clearly been made against two of the priority areas. It was suggested that the paper could be tighter in articulating the intended position for the next academic year.

A Member commented on the section stating that learners feel safe and benefit from an inclusive and diverse environment, noting that while the narrative covered safety in some depth, there was less explicit reference to inclusivity. The Principal acknowledged this and confirmed that this reflects the need to better align with new and emerging measures in this area, which would be taken away following the discussion.

The Chair further noted the importance of considering longer-term alignment and future direction, acknowledging that time constraints had limited the depth of discussion at this meeting.

A Member suggested that the use of RAG-rating, alongside longer-term indicators, would help Governors better understand whether the College remains on track against its priorities.

A Member requested an update on progress against the objectives relating to higher education (HE), particularly within health and care. The Principal confirmed that work was progressing, including plans for higher-level coaching provision in partnership with the NHS (National Health Service), alongside the development of additional higher-level qualifications with healthcare providers. The Principal advised

that the provision was close to delivery, with overall HE learner numbers around 100, and that further growth was anticipated. It was noted that expansion was more straightforward in some curriculum areas, such as engineering, while modular delivery models had taken longer to establish.

The Chair suggested that it would be helpful for the Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) to provide an update on HE progress upon her return. The Principal agreed and proposed that a paper on HE be brought to the Curriculum and Quality Committee for more detailed consideration.

The Principal would take the comments away from the morning Strategy session and the request to add a RAG rating and bring back to Governors.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the Strategic Plan and were ASSURED on progress to date.

93/25 STAFF PAY AWARD

The Interim Director of Finance presented the report and provided background information. He reported that November management accounts were looking positive. The position on high needs funding had improved, noting that this currently reflected one term only but remains above expectations. It was confirmed that there were no financial constraints preventing the payment of an additional 1% pay award.

The Principal provided further context, explaining that the EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortisation) remains below the 6% benchmark, although it has improved from 5.7% to 5.9%. The Principal confirmed that correspondence had been sent to the FE Commissioner seeking clarification. A response has been received confirming that, while EBITDA was an important measure, the critical benchmark for the College was its financial health rating. The College's financial health position was confirmed as good.

The Chair sought clarification on the EBITDA position and noted that, while improvement was evident, the College remains marginally below the benchmark. A change in the FE Commissioner was also noted. The Principal advised that, from the outset, the intention had been to meet AoC recommendations. It was confirmed that awarding the additional 1% would bring the College into line with AoC guidance.

The Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO confirmed that the 1% pay increase would be backdated to 1 August 2025. It was noted that there had also been one non-consolidated element and that the 1% applied only to those staff not already meeting the benchmark.

The Chair raised the question of whether January might be a more appropriate timing for future pay awards. The Principal agreed, noting that June was too early in the year to negotiate with AoC, as national positions were not yet clear and the year-end financial position and recruitment outcomes still uncertain. A Member confirmed that their college operated a January model for pay awards. The Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO agreed that a January approach allowed for a more informed decision-making process.

The Corporation APPROVED an additional 1% staff pay rise backdated to 1 August 2025 to ensure that all staff received a minimum total pay increase of 4%.

The Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO reported that she would send an email to the trades unions as a courtesy and to all staff informing them of the pay award.

94/25 3As REPORT CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

The Vice Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee presented the Committee's 3As (Alert, Assure, Approve or Action) report. She reported that there had been constructive discussions and noted requests for additional papers relating to subcontractors and awarding body sanctions. She highlighted that issues identified within the construction report, including the electrical provision, had been reviewed. She also noted having heard concerns relating to motor vehicle provision and expressed concern that there was not currently a formal mechanism for discussing this. It was agreed that this would be incorporated within the Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) report going forward. She commented that the SAR (Self-Assessment Review) was a strong document.

The Chair thanked all staff involved in the SAR process, acknowledging the significant amount of work undertaken to produce it.

The Corporation was ALERTED to:

- The Head of Learning for Construction report and areas of weakness identified including the removal of certification in electrical for Level 1 and Level 3;
- The Performance Progress Report and Balanced Scorecard and areas of low attendance, declining retention, and health and safety incident or accident recording and was ASSURED on retention, teaching observations and work placements, and that key performance indicators (KPIs) are monitored to ensure the appropriate interventions are taken;
- That the Committee has requested a report on work placements at its next meeting;
- That the Committee received a verbal update on subcontractor safeguarding processes and has requested an Annual Subcontracting Report with a focus on curriculum and quality issues; and
- That the Committee has requested an update on awarding body sanctions in the next Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report noting the Construction report and following a verbal report of removal of certification for motor vehicle Level 1.

The Corporation was ASSURED on:

- That the minutes of the meeting held 24 September 2025 were approved as a true record;
- Monitoring of Matters Arising to December 2025;
- The Termly Safeguarding Report and ALERTED to updates on Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), Martyn's Law, and the Ofsted Toolkit;
- The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report and ALERTED to the use of the Canvas virtual learning environment (VLE) as an area for development; and
- The Termly Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) report and ALERTED to the Ofsted update on inclusion, and next steps.

The Corporation APPROVED:

- The Draft College Self-Assessment Review (SAR) and ALERTED to the Committee's request for an appendix of grades by department/ area;
- The Draft College Quality Improvement Plan and ALERTED to the Committee's request for interpretation to be added for acronyms; and
- The Inclusion Policy.

95/25 3As GOVERNANCE, SEARCH AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Governance, Search & Remuneration Committee presented the Committee's 3As (Alert, Assure, Approve or Action) report. He reported that general compliance requirements and key performance indicators are being met and remain on track. He highlighted an emerging risk relating to Governor coverage on this Committee, noting that both he and the Vice Chair would be departing, which would result in vacancies. Given his experience on the Committee over an extended period, it was suggested that it would be very helpful for other Governors to come forward to support continuity and capacity. He advised that the EGR (External Governance Review) process was now to be underway for the next cycle. As part of this, the Corporation was asked to approve the establishment of a Task and Finish group to enable this work to proceed.

The proposed calendar of Corporation meetings was also presented for approval.

The Chair commented that the Committee was an interesting and important forum including holding responsibility for recruitment. She noted that while the Committee did not meet frequently, it convened as needed. She also welcomed the early visibility of meeting dates, commenting that it was helpful to have dates scheduled well in advance.

The Corporation was ALERTED to:

- The requirement for an External Governance Review in 2026/27;
- Current and future Governor vacancies and was ASSURED on plans for addressing and monitoring;
- Governance Performance Indicators during the academic year to date and was ASSURED on plans for monitoring;
- To areas of non-compliance on the Governance Compliance Register and was ASSURED on monitoring and follow-up; and
- To Governor attendance during the academic year to date and was ASSURED on plans for monitoring.

The Corporation was ASSURED on:

- That the non-confidential and confidential minutes of 25 June 2025 were approved as a true record;
- Monitoring of actions and Matters Arising to October 2025; and
- The Review of Governance 2024/25.

The Corporation NOTED that the Committee had a strategic discussion on inclusion principles for Governors covering what to achieve through inclusion principles, and assessing how inclusive were board and governance practices. Inclusion principles would now be further developed and brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Corporation APPROVED:

- The establishment of a Task & Finish Group for External Governance Review comprising the Chairs of each Corporation Committee, Stephen Brooks, Chair of Corporation, Principal, and Director of Governance; and
- The Calendar of Corporation meetings 2026/27.

96/25 3As REPORT JOINT MEETING OF AUDIT AND RISK AND FINANCE AND RESOURCES

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee presented the 3As (Alert, Assure, Approve or Action) report from the joint meeting of the Audit & Risk and Finance & Resources Committees which was largely concerned with the Draft Financial Statements and related documents. She reported that Members had

heard feedback from the auditors, who reported that there were no matters of significant concern arising from the audit. The position of Delamite was discussed, with accounts prepared on a going concern basis. She confirmed personal comfort with this assessment and noted that the Corporation should be explicitly alerted to this position. It was confirmed that the College would need to provide a letter of support to Delamite to support the going concern assumption.

The Chair thanked all those involved in the preparation of the accounts and the audit process, including the finance team and the auditors, noting that the process had been straightforward. She commented that this was reflective of the strength of financial management throughout the year and the quality of preparation.

The Corporation confirmed that it was content for Delamite to be treated as a going concern.

The Corporation was ASSURED on:

- That the non-confidential and confidential minutes of 8 October 2025 were approved as a true record;
- Monitoring of actions and Matters Arising to November 2025; and
- The Financial Statements Management Letter (Audit Findings Report) and ALERTED to recommendations by the external auditors and unadjusted misstatements.

The Corporation NOTED the Annual Report of the Audit & Risk Committee.

The Corporation APPROVED:

- The Gender Pay Gap Report for 31 March 2025;
- The Annual Report to Governors – Credit Card Usage, Governors' expenses and entertaining, foreign travel and payments over £50k;
- The Draft Financial Statements for the Isle of Wight College for the year ended 31 July 2025;
- The Letter of Representation from the Board to the external auditors regarding the preparation of the Financial Statements;
- The Letter of Representation from the Board to the external auditors regarding the regular use of funds during the year;
- The Letter of Support to Delamite Ltd regarding the College's loan and Letter of Representation from the Board to the external auditors regarding the preparation of the Financial Statements for Delamite Ltd;
- The Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire;
- The use of the Financial Statements for the DfE finance record;
- The Statement of Internal Control and Corporate Governance; and
- The Draft Financial Statements for Delamite Ltd for the year ended 31 July 2025.

97/25 MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT, MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS, AND FORECAST

The Interim Director of Finance presented the Monthly Finance Report, Management Accounts, and Forecast. The management accounts for November 2025 were provided with the key points as follows: 1) The forecast surplus for the year has improved to £582k (£1,463k EBITDA). This includes an assumption that the College will pay a 4% pay award as provided for in the budget. Whilst apprenticeship income is lower this was provided for in the budget and overall other income and expenditure lines have improved.

2) Cash held at 30 November 2025 was £8,213k equivalent to 154 cash days (with £3,500k being placed on deposit for 3 months to earn higher interest and the remainder on overnight deposit). The College's

uncommitted cash holding is £3,826k if it were to pay its short-term working capital liability and the College's debt is £2,910k.

3) All banking covenants are currently forecast to be achieved.

4) Performance against the Financial Strategy KPIs is provided in Appendix 8. The forecast EBITDA improvement would move the College to Outstanding financial health.

5) These management accounts use the R03 student enrolment figures in order to provide the updated forecast prior to the College Corporation Day. The R04 figures are being reviewed.

It was highlighted that learner numbers for 16–19 year olds are currently 56 above allocation, with a shift in demand towards lower-funded courses (for example Health and Social Care, and Childcare) and away from higher-funded areas such as Electrical. Overall, funding for 16–18 provision is reported as approximately £260k above plan. The R04 position remains broadly similar to the previous year. Adult education funding was reported as performing strongly and well above the position achieved in the previous year.

A Member raised a concern regarding the assumptions made around increasing licence and system fees. The Interim Director of Finance confirmed that figures had been reviewed line by line with departments, but that some assumptions were unavoidable at this stage. The Member asked what the most significant risks were within this area. The Interim Director of Finance advised that increased learner numbers can drive additional licence costs and confirmed that further work would be undertaken to review when contracts were last tendered or renegotiated.

The Deputy Principal and CEO added that some increases in licence fees were anticipated due to the introduction of new systems and products aimed at improving teaching and learning, and reducing staff workload. She confirmed that the use and impact of these systems would be actively challenged to ensure they were delivering value for money and demonstrable benefit.

The Corporation NOTED and was ASSURED on the Monthly Finance Report, Management Accounts to November 2025, and Forecast.

98/25 STUDENT GOVERNOR REPORT

A Student Governor reported positively on the recent increase in student numbers, noting that this has contributed to a more vibrant and lively College environment. He reflected on his experience since joining the Governing body, stating that he had found it easy to engage and follow discussions at meetings. He expressed appreciation for the supportive approach taken by Governors, highlighting that Student Governors feel listened to, valued, and that their contributions matter.

The Chair responded reassuring the Student Governor that, should they ever feel this was not the case, they should feel confident in raising this.

99/25 FEEDBACK FROM AOC NETWORK MEETINGS

The Designated Lead Governor for Inclusion provided an update from recent AoC network meetings relating to SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) and EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion). She advised that discussion focused on the direction of travel noting that there has been limited movement since the previous year and referencing statements made by Bridget Phillipson MP in the prior period. Members were informed of presentations covering a range of national policy areas, including the Schools White Paper on high standards and inclusion. It was noted that there remains a lack of clarity and a perceived vacuum of information from the DfE in relation to SEND advisors. Greater support for post-16 learners with SEND was emphasised, particularly in creating inclusive environments.

It remains unclear whether proposed changes would lead to restrictions on EHCPs or result in no substantive change. Updates were also provided on qualifications and curriculum developments, including proposals around V (vocational) levels with two pathways (occupational and further study), maths preparation for students with low GCSE attainment, and current DfE consultations on post-16 Level 3 provision. Members noted forthcoming consultations on new Level 1 English and maths qualifications and the requirement to support young people at risk of becoming NEET through an automatic “backstop” college place. Improved support for learners with SEND was highlighted as a continuing priority. She also reported on an AoC EDI presentation delivered in November, which focused on navigating belonging and community tensions. The importance of providing staff with clear guidance on managing social media, addressing racism and hate speech, and ensuring that college environments reflect diversity was emphasised. It was noted that the AoC EDI Charter is available and that the College has signed up to this. She further referenced Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance on single-sex spaces, with a revised Code of Practice expected following consultation.

The Vice Chair advised that she would be attending a Chairs and Vice-Chairs meeting next week.

100/25 SELF-ASSESSMENT OF MEETING

The Chair commented that it was hoped the Strategy session was useful, particularly for those who had not previously attended a session of this nature. Members were advised that a feedback form would be circulated.

A Member reported that the group work undertaken during the session was particularly valuable and described it as an effective way to stimulate thinking and collective discussion.

A Member noted that the session was timely and helpful in the context of the significant changes facing the sector. Another Member echoed these comments, highlighting the value of the strategic discussions and the opportunity to step back from day-to-day operational matters. He also commented positively on the lunch with students, noting the benefit of hearing directly from learners.

The Chair wished all members a happy Christmas and thanked students and staff for their contributions.

Students and staff departed the meeting for Part C agenda items.

101/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 18TH March 2026

102/25 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER RECRUITMENT (SLT, STAFF AND STUDENT CONFIDENTIAL)

103/25 PRINCIPAL AND CEO HANDOVER INCLUDING ACCOUNTING OFFICER HANDOVER ARRANGEMENTS (CONFIDENTIAL)