Minutes

SEG Corporation Meeting (training 4.30-5pm)

Governor Meetings

Date	16/12/2025
Time	4:30 PM - 7:00 PM
Location	Southport College TL 3.01/.02
Members Present:	Paul Walker (Corporation Chair) Laura Bell (Independent Governor) Margaret Boneham (Independent Governor) Michelle Brabner (Principal) (excl. item 16.3) Andy Bridson (Independent Governor) Kevin Burke (Independent Governor) *Colin Davies (Independent Governor) Rob Firth (Associate Member) *Roderic Gillespie (Independent Governor) Diane Hutchinson (Independent Governor) Kashfa Kalim (Independent Governor) Sophie Kinnear (Staff Governor) (up to and including item 14) Mo Kundi (Independent Governor) Claire Moffat-Lonsdale (Independent Governor) Mike Naden (Independent Governor) Susannah Porter (Independent Governor) John Sheldon (Staff Governor) (up to and including item 14) Elaine Small (Independent Governor) *Tracey Wood (Independent Governor)
Members Apologies:	Alex Barton (Independent Governor) David Mutori (Independent Governor)
In Attendance:	Paris Bonwick (Vice Principal Business Services) (up to and including item 14) *Claire Dalrymple (Wylie and Bisset) (item 8 only) Lisa Farnhill (Dir. Governance and Compliance) (excl. item 16.4) Alison McDowell (Vice Principal People and Culture) Stephen Musa (Deputy Principal) (up to and including item 14) Paula Smith (Vice Principal Finance) (up to and including item 14)

*indicates attendance vie videoconferencing facilities

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1 - Training

The meeting commenced with a training session delivered by the Principal outlining Ofsted's renewed Education Inspection Framework (EIF). The Principal explained the changes and implications for the organisation. Members were informed of a delay to the launch due to legal challenges, with the new framework coming into effect on the 10th of November, with only a few organisations having been inspected, with no reports published yet, providing limited insight for the wider sector.

Members were advised that although no reports had been published, the sector had benefitted from information from those involved in inspections and the pilot, noting those involved described the new process as a more rigorous approach compared to the previous EIF.

Detailed feedback from a college that had volunteered to receive a pilot inspection was provided, with the process described as a more positive but intense experience, noting they had been recently inspected under the previous framework, and found Ofsted's approach under the previous EIF to be inconsistent.

The Corporation was given a detailed overview of the new report card system used for judgements, with inspections now having 16 judgements across various areas, including safeguarding, inclusion, leadership and governance, and different provision types, being advised there would be no overall grade. It was explained that each judgement will be based on a set of criteria, and colleges will receive detailed feedback in a report card format. Members were informed that key messages from Sir Martin Oliver highlighted the importance of not comparing previous grades to the new system, as grading format, and expectations had shifted significantly, with this having been reiterated to staff within the College. A further explanation of the five-point grading scale was provided, noting the 'expected standard' would be the midpoint, with all criteria within the grade to be met to achieve this grade, with any missed points resulting in a lower grade.

The Principal informed the Board that inclusion features as a golden thread throughout the inspection framework, encompassing SEND, socio-economic deprivation, support requirements, mental health challenges, and academic subjects like Level 2 Maths and English. Members were advised of the emphasis on ensuring provision supports all disadvantaged learners. The focus on the context of the institution was highlighted, noting an expectation that the education provided supports and enables disadvantaged students to thrive, as this would then be of benefit to all students. Members discussed the strength of the college in this area, indicating Ofsted's focus on this would benefit the college due to its inclusive practices, particularly for high needs learners.

The process for inspections was summarised, noting the Principal's presentation is now to be embedded into the initial planning calls, with this intended to set the context of the organisation and ensure inspectors understand the unique circumstances of the college.

The Principal outlined feedback from the Governance Professionals network, which included example questions, noting the broader focus, to include finance and wellbeing, in addition to a continued focus on the oversight of quality, including governor's role in the quality assurance process. Members noted previous mixed practices among inspectors regarding involvement and inclusion of Governance Professionals, with it recommended that Governance Professionals arrange to attend inspection meetings with governors and not wait to be invited. Members noted other lines of questioning included succession planning, challenge, quality assurance, staff well-being, resource management, and inclusion activities. The Principal advised governors they should be prepared to answer questions confidently and provide evidence of their involvement and understanding of the college's context, suggesting clarification should be sought from inspectors that the questions have been fully answered before moving on, noting feedback from the pilot indicated inspectors did not probe for additional detail or ask supplementary questions when insufficient information was given.

In summarising, the Principal confirmed the time frame, including for monitoring visits, where standards are not met. Following the presentation, members engaged in discussion, querying the post-inspection follow-up and quality assurance process, being assured that the process has been improved. Members confirmed that the College had already begun to map judgements internally against the inspection scorecard, acknowledging that not all areas would meet the expected standard, discussing the timing and impact of data.

Members were assured that the SAR and SIP to be presented during the meeting, would provide an overview of areas that continued to need to improve, along with actions in place to address this. Members asked about the impact of falling below expected standard, with a more detailed outline of the monitoring-visit process provided.

The Corporation requested clarity on final outcomes, reporting and marketing of outcomes, confirming that there would be no overall grade, asking how this would impact accessibility and understanding for stakeholders, particularly parents. The Corporation encouraged proactive communications, noting a need for consistent and supportive practice throughout the sector relating to marketing outcomes, acknowledging the use of Ofsted grading in marketing may become less prevalent now there are no single overarching judgments.

The Principal encouraged members to submit any additional questions or points to be clarified in an email so that she could ensure that all members felt prepared and supported ahead of inspection.

Item 1: Noted

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2 - Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed both new and existing members to the meeting. Apologies for absence were noted and accepted. Members acknowledged those participating online due to other obligations, with it confirmed that they could hear and be heard to ensure they could be included in discussions.

Item 2: Accepted – Apologies were noted and accepted

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3 - Declaration of Interests and Confirming Confidentiality

It was confirmed that all staff would need to withdraw ahead of reviewing Part B items, with declarations of interest were made by the Dir. Governance and Compliance and the Principal, who indicated that they would need to withdraw ahead of any discussion relating to their own pay and performance. The importance of confidentiality was reiterated, ensuring that all members were aware of the need to maintain discretion regarding the items discussed.

Item 3: Noted – Interests were noted

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4 - Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting held on 5th October were presented for approval. The Chair asked if there were any questions or points of inaccuracy relating to the minutes. With nothing raised, the minutes were approved.

Item 4: Approved – Minutes of the meeting held on 5th October 2025 were approved.

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5 - Matters Arising, Actions Summary and Impact Statements

The Dr. Governance and Compliance provided a brief overview of actions undertaken following matters arising, noting nothing was to be carried forwards.

Members endorsed the impact statements, and these were approved.

Item 5: Approved – Members noted the update and approved the impact statements.

6 - Chair's report

The Chair reported on the activities undertaken since the last Corporation meeting. Regular fortnightly meetings with the Principal and Dir. Governance and Compliance were noted, and the Corporation was advised that their performance reviews had taken place, with the outcomes reported to the Remuneration Committee.
The Chair advised of a need to ensure broader feedback informs the outcomes of performance reviews for Senior Post Holders, and the development of annual goals. He summarised the current process, with members invited to provide feedback in their annual review, with this aspect to be strengthened, and given more emphasis, perhaps including a summary of the targets, with this feedback then supporting the review by the Remuneration Committee to ensure SPH receive adequate support and recognition for their efforts.

Item 6: Noted – Members noted the update.

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7 - COMMITTEE UPDATES

7.1 - Audit Committee Update

The Chair of the Audit Committee provided an update on the meeting held on 27th November 2025. The Corporation was informed that the Committee had a meeting with the auditors, without the presence of management, which had been informative and reassuring.

Members were informed that in addition to items included for assurance and approval, the meeting had looked at a range of information, including the risk register, a number of internal audits, with findings challenged robustly to ensure thorough assurance.

A member of the Corporation confirmed that they had contacted the Dir. Governance and Compliance to feedback that they had noticed an improvement in the quality of the IAS reports and recommendations, thanking the Audit Committee for their work in managing the contract effectively and driving forward the improvements.

The Corporation was informed of the decision to initiate the two-year extension to the contact of the external audit firm, noting this had been built into the original three-year contract when the appointment was approved. The Corporation noted that ahead of agreeing to the extension, the Committee had reviewed in detail the performance of the auditors, as well as the cost implications of maintaining the service and going to tender. The Committee confirmed that they had been assured of their ongoing independence, and it was decided that extending the contract was more cost effective, noting the satisfaction in the service received.

Item 7.1: Noted – Members noted the update.

7.2 - Resources Committee Update

The Chair of the Resources Committee reported on the meetings held on 23rd September and 19th November. The Chair confirmed the Committee had welcomed two new members, achieving a good balance between new and experienced members. Work summarised included a review of the monthly accounts, financial statements, and cash flow projections, with the Corporation informed of the clear, transparent and effective reporting provided by the Vice Principal Finance.

The Committee Chair confirmed they had reviewed the viability and affordability of the recent pay award for staff, as well as reviewing bank signatures, policies and contracts, staff development, and personnel matters including the annual and termly reports, and various policies such as grievance and disciplinary policies, with the Committee having commended the approach to presenting policy updates.

Members were advised that the Committee had interrogated the recruitment data, noting an unexpected decline, with the Committee having reviewed the information, being satisfied with the college's analysis of the data, noting retention had improved, with higher student satisfaction considered to have been key to improved attrition.

The Committee Chair advising the Committee had received a new format of estates report, which was succinct and clearly identified areas of focus and concluded the item by confirming they had reviewed the IT strategy and requested this is re-written taking a longer-term approach and written in a more accessible format, with it suggested this should now be a three-year strategy.

Item 7.2: Noted – Members noted the update.

7.3 - Standards Committee update

The Chair of the Standards Committee provided an update on the meetings held on 16th September and 5th October, with the Vice Chair summarising the work done on 2nd December. The Corporation was assured by the Committee's focus on the performance in GCSE Maths and English, apprenticeships, and making accurate predictions for student progress.

The Committee Chair highlighted progress in understanding students' needs, driving up attendance, and responding to student feedback. Members were informed there had been progress in improving GCSE Maths and English grades, however, these remain challenging areas, for the sector as a whole, indicating a need for reform of the government's resit strategy.

Other key areas of improvement were noted to include the onboarding process for apprenticeships and the relationship with employers, narrowing of achievement gaps, as well as improved response rates to satisfaction surveys, and improved satisfaction scores.

The item concluded with Committee Members confirming they had also discussed the White Paper and curriculum reform, whilst endorsing the new format for the whole College Self-Assessment Report. Members added they felt it was clear, well-structured and effective on presenting key information, with plans in place to review and consider how best to self-assess against the new Ofsted Framework. Reflecting on the earlier presentation, the Committee reiterated the benefits of the EIF's focus on inclusion, with the College well positioned to demonstrate their effectiveness in this area, as a known strength of the College.

Item 7.3: Noted – Members noted the update.

7.4 - Governance Committee Update

The Governance Committee Chair provided a summary of its recent activities and discussions. The Corporation was advised that the Committee had continued their focus on succession planning, ensuring a mix of skills and forward planning for membership across all Committees. Their review of attendance at meetings was noted as an area for improvement, with the Chair encouraging members to attend as many meetings as possible. Members noted the Committee had discussed the importance of maintaining the option to attend virtually and improving the experience for members who cannot attend in person.

Item 7.4: Noted – Members noted the update.

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8 - Compliance and Statutory Items

8.1 - Fraud & Irregularity Report 2024/2025 and Policy Update

The report on fraud and irregularity considerations for 2024/2025 was summarised, with members noting that this ensured assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

Members noted that the Audit Committee recommended the report for assurance, and the policy for approval. The Corporation was advised that the policy had been updated to reflect new legislative requirements, highlighting the importance of ongoing training for members overseeing this area, with a request made to the internal audit service (IAS) to provide additional training to the Committee on the new requirements.

Item 8.1: Approved – Members noted the assurances provided by the report and approved the policy amendments.

8.2 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/2025

The Annual Internal Audit Report for 2024/2025 was presented to the Corporation, summarising the reviews and findings from the previous year. The Audit Committee recommended that the Corporation noted this report ahead of approving the financial statements, ensuring assurance of internal controls.
Members noted the cyber security review resulted in reasonable assurance, asking if resources in the area were sufficient. It was explained by the Vice Principal Business Services that the recommendations in the review related to policy updates, all of which had since been addressed.

Item 8.2: Noted– Members noted the assurances provided by the report.

8.3 - Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2024/2025

The Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2024/2025 was presented for information and assurance. Members noted the need to receive this before the statement of corporate governance and internal control in the annual accounts is signed. The Corporation was asked to approve its presentation to the DfE with the audited accounts.

Item 8.3: Resolved– Members resolved to accept the assurances provided by the report, approving its submission to the DfE.

8.4 - Regularity Assurance and Self-Assessment Checklist 2024/2025

The report on Regularity Assurance and Self-Assessment for 2024/2025 was presented, providing an overview of compliance and assurance measures. Members noted that the Audit Committee had reviewed and recommended the report for approval and signing ahead of the approval of the financial statements.

Item 8.4: Resolved– Members resolved to accept the assurances provided by the report, approving its signing and submission to the DfE.

8.5 - Audit Completion Report 2024/2025

A representative of WBG presented the audit findings report for 2024/2025. The Corporation was given an overview of all sections of the report, including changes for this year which saw the section on comparisons replaced with an outline of the audit completion process.
Members were advised the process had been well managed by the finance team, resulting in an unmodified audit opinion, with one journal entry to be incorporated due to a timing issue, confirming that the financial statements were free of material misstatement.

The item concluded with confirmation that all key risks identified at the audit planning stage had been satisfactorily concluded, and the management letter indicated a clean audit process.

Item 8.5: Approved– Members resolved to accept the assurances provided by the report, approving its signing and submission to the DfE.

8.6 - Financial Statements 2024/2025

The Financial Statements for 2024/2025 were presented for approval, including the letter of representation and statement of regularity, with it confirmed these had been reviewed and recommended by the Resources Committee and Audit Committee.

A representative of WBG provided their summary of the financial statements, explaining the content and purpose of key sections, including the auditor's role in their review.

It was reiterated that the audit report confirmed an unqualified opinion, indicating that the financial statements are free of material misstatement. Key figures were highlighted by the Vice Principal Finance, including staff to income ratio, financial health score, deficit against budget and the EBITDA. The financial health grade was confirmed as 'good' with a 220-point score, highlighting this was also better than the budgeted figure.

The item concluded with members extending their gratitude to the Vice principal Business Services and her team for their efficient and effective work throughout the year.

Item 8.6: Approved - Members resolved to approve the signing of the Financial Statements and submission to the DfE.

8.7 - Governor's Handbook

The updated format and content of the Governor's Handbook were presented for approval, including updates to the Code of Conduct, mainly reflecting the removal of reference to the ESFA, replaced with the DfE.

Members were reminded that in approving the handbook, Governors reaffirmed their commitment to the Code of Conduct, including adherence to the Nolan principles.

Members were advised of discussions within the Governance Committee that would see a procedural update, with annual confirmation of commitment to the Code now being included in the annual returns and not presented as an agenda item.

Item 8.7: Approved – Members resolved to approve the updates to the Handbook and Code of Conduct and reaffirmed their commitment to it.

8.8 - Scheme of Delegation

The Dir. Governance and Compliance provided a summary of the review process, confirming the initial stage had been to collate and summarise all delegated authorities, as specified in a range of Corporation documents including the Instruments and Articles of Government, Terms of Reference, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders, into one document.

Having collated the information, a review of what would be permissible to delegate had been undertaken, as reviewed by the Governance Committee, with this now being presented for approval.

It was explained that in approving to the updates, all associated documents, including terms of reference would be updated to reflect the approved Scheme of Delegation.

Item 8.8: Approved – Members resolved to approve the Scheme of Delegation including recommended updates to delegated authorities.

8.9 - Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference and SPH Pay Policy

The Remuneration Committee recommended minor amendments to their Terms of Reference and updates to the SPH Pay Policy to account for management changes and DfE updates to thresholds. The Corporation approved the amendments.

Item 8.9: Approved– Members resolved to approve the updates to the Terms of Reference and Senior Post Holder Pay Policy .

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9 - Principal's Strategic Report

The Principal provided a strategic report covering external factors impacting the sector. The report highlighted key challenges and opportunities, ensuring that the Corporation was aware of the broader context in which they operate.

The Principal highlighted the impact of the post-16 education and skills white paper, including the significant emphasis on Further Education (FE) colleges in the skills agenda, noting that FE is now recognised as a crucial sector for delivering educational skills in the UK, with it hoped this would secure additional funding for the sector.

The Principal informed the Corporation of the government’s announcement to introduce ‘V Levels’, a new vocational qualification route for school leavers, as an alternative route to A Levels and T Levels. Members noted this third route is intended to provide vocational options where there is no direct overlap with existing qualifications and is considered to be positive for the College and the sector.

The discussion also covered proposed changes in curriculum assessment, including the introduction of alternative maths and English qualifications at Level 1, which are intended to provide a stepping stone for students struggling to achieve higher grades in GCSEs.

Questions were raised about the impact of these changes on current students and how the college plans to prepare for and integrate the new qualifications into their offer. The Principal responded by outlining the steps being taken to ensure smooth implementation and support for students, assuring the Corporation this had been discussed in detail with the Standards Committee. The positive work and success in preparing for and delivering T Levels was highlighted, reassuring the Corporation of the College's approach to new qualifications.

The Principal summarised the success of pay negotiations, and outlined issues in the sector relating to workload, noting this had not been raised as an issue within SEG. The Corporation was advised that although this had not been raised as an issue, the SLT were being proactive in reviewing all areas of the organisation, with focus groups planned to look at workload as part of the wellbeing focus. It was explained that following the workload survey, the Principal would attend meetings in every area to discuss outcomes and new initiatives to ensure staff wellbeing remains a priority.

Members were given an overview of other wellbeing activities, noting some had not had the take up expected, which had been disappointing, however, all who had signed up were provided with alternative opportunities to enjoy the activities proposed.

Item 9: Noted– Members resolved to note the update.

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10 - Strategic Intent 1: A Place Where Learners Fulfil Their Potential

10.1 - Principal's Overview of Strategic Intention One

The Principal provided an overview of SI1: 'A place where learners fulfil their potential,' including the SIP action update and KPI extract, highlighting the actions to date. Members noted the continued focus on creating an inclusive environment where learners can fulfil their potential, with initiatives aimed at improving student outcomes and a culture of inclusivity.

The Happiness Project was discussed, with the Principal answering questions on its impact to date, with the Deputy Principal confirming that while they could not directly correlate the projects with improved satisfaction and retention, it could be considered to have had a positive impact, summarising the data in the student perspectives report.

Whilst acknowledging challenges in measuring tangible outcomes, the Deputy Principal confirmed the project has encouraged engagement and provided a positive focus for activities. The Principal informed the Corporation that this was now being rolled out to the sector, having set up a Happiness Network, with other college's able to sign a Happiness Pledge. Members of the Standards Committee summarised their discussions on the positive impact on culture and improved sensed of belonging. The link to positive attrition rates was considered, highlighting these are the lowest seen by the current management team.

Questions were raised about the impact of initiatives outlined under strategic intention one, including any corelated measurable impact on attendance, noting that although it remained below target, it was contextualised with the time of year, where absence tends to be high due to seasonal illnesses. Attendance KPI's were reviewed, noting this was now divided by provision type, with an explanation given of the Engage project. Members were informed this was targeted provision for around seventy students with low engagement in education, that had been NEET or school refusers, therefore attendance in the region of 50%, for those that had not previously attended at all, was considered to be positive. The initiative was described as successful in reengaging an d supporting learners to have a more positive association with education, demonstrating positive engagement trends, despite lower than targeted attendance rates.

Item 10.1: Noted – Members resolved to note the update.

10.2 - Equality and Diversity Report and Public Sector Equality Duty Reporting

The Deputy Principal presented the Equality and Diversity report, emphasising the College's achievements in support for young carers, and mental health support award, highlighting the Carnegie gold award had only been achieved by 3% of colleges.

Members noted questions from the Standards Committee about the specific measures taken to support mental health and young carers, and how these initiatives are being monitored, as demonstrated in the impact statements enclosed. The reduced achievement gaps were highlighted, reiterating the importance of data to support with providing evidence during an inspection.

Members asked if the public sector equality duty documentation needed approving, with it confirmed this was for information and assurance, with the requirement being for oversight and publication.

Item 10.2: Noted – Members resolved to note the update.

10.3 - Student Perspectives

The report on student perspectives was presented, highlighting the inclusion of the feedback from the start-of-year survey. Members noted the Standards Committee had recommended this report as essential information, highlighting the impact of initiatives in the strategic improvement action plan on student satisfaction. Attention was drawn to questions from the Standards Committee about the specific feedback from students and plans to address concerns raised in the survey.

Members were informed that the survey results indicated positive feedback from students, particularly regarding the induction process and engagement activities. Additional information was provided about the exchange programme with American students, with positive experiences reported by both staff and students.

Item 10.3: Noted – Members resolved to note the update.

10.4 - Self-Assessment Report 2024/25 and Strategic Improvement Plan 2025/26

The Deputy Principal provided a comprehensive presentation on the key findings from the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and outlined the focus for the Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2025/2026.

Members noted the SAR provided a comprehensive analysis of learner demographics, highlighting the diverse and often challenging backgrounds of students, including a significant proportion of young carers, care-experienced individuals, high levels of deprivation, and an increase in students supported by Youth Offending Teams due to incidents during the summer of 2024. Members noted the college's steady and supportive approach in addressing these challenges, utilising the trauma informed approach, supported by training for all staff.

The curriculum was noted to align with regional priorities, focusing on sectors such as healthcare, construction, digital, hospitality, and professional services, noting the regions visitor economy was not the sole priority or focus. Key strengths highlighted included student’s positive opinions of their teacher’s knowledge, and enjoyment of lessons, as well as high pass rates on A-level equivalent courses, positive destinations, strong performance in T levels, and improvements in high-grade achievements. The strengths of pastoral support and work with high needs learners was outlined, noting high needs achievements were notably above the college average, with 100% positive destinations for these learners.

Areas for improvement were identified, including a decrease in adult achievement rates, with challenges in specific courses outlined, and below-target apprenticeship achievement rates and attendance still needing to improve further. Members noted that English and maths outcomes had improved, however, required further improvements, with the consistency of teacher feedback recognised as an issue.

Members were assured of actions, including a high number in progress and already completed, which included improved accountability and enhanced oversight, with members assured by the appropriate use of formal performance procedures.

The SIP and KPI’s were outlined, noting improvements in 15 of the 17 KPI’s compared to the same point in the previous year.

Members asked about self-assessment requirements and report and format, with it explained that the college could choose how to self-assess, with no prescribed format, highlighting the expectation around submission to Ofsted, although noting there was no review or response to its submission.

Item 10.4: Approved – Members resolved to approve the SAR for 2024/2025 and SIP for 2025/2026.

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11 - Strategic Intent 2: A Place Where People Want to Work and Are Supported in Their Careers

11.1 - Principal’s Overview of Strategic Intention Two

The Principal provided an overview of Strategic Initiative 2, reminding the Board this intention focused on creating a workplace where people want to work and are supported in their careers.

Members attention was drawn to the SIP and KPI extracts, as included in the overview. Members noted that the new agenda format intended to only focus on one Strategic Intention (SI), however, two had been included due to the number of recommended reports from Committee’s that triangulated the actions taken under this SI. The Corporation agreed to focus time on delivery of the updates as opposed to receiving a summary of the SIP action plan, noting these highlighted the importance of staff well-being and engagement, with initiatives aimed at improving the work environment and supporting career development.

Item 11.1: Noted

11.2 - Whistleblowing Report 2024/2025 and Policy Update

The Whistleblowing Report for 2024/2025 and policy updates were presented for review and approval. Members noted that the Audit Committee recommended the policy updates and had been assured there had not been any incidences in 2024/2025.

Item 11.2: Approved – Members resolved to accept the recommendation of the Audit Committee and approved the updated Whistle Blowing Policy.

11.3 - Annual HR Report and Policy Updates

The Vice Principal People and Culture summarised the key data in the Annual HR Report and policy updates, confirming that the Resources Committee had considered and recommended the policy updates for approval, and annual report as essential information.

Members noted 2024/2025 had seen improved staff turnover, however, sickness absence rates had declined. Members were assured the data had been analysed for trends, with nothing significant found. Members asked if there was a link between the application of formal HR procedures and increased rates of absence, with members advised HR procedures had not been as robustly applied in 2024/2025, utilising more informal processes. Members were however advised this had been tightened this year, with a number of staff supported by formal HR processes, however, reassured that none had subsequently then been absent.

In response to questions about updates to the language used in the HR policies, the Corporation noted this was to ensure improved consistency, with examples given of how terminology can negatively impact individuals, particularly when managing lower-level issues. It was clarified that the use of ‘meeting’ as opposed to ‘hearing’ still enabled the same outcomes, including dismissal. Members proposed inclusion of reference to wellbeing support in the policy, highlighting the impact on all involved, including those managing and supporting the process. The Corporation was assured that this was incorporated to all letters and emails, agreeing to strengthen the message around support and wellbeing through inclusion to references to available support in the policy.

Members agreed to approve the policy, subject to the inclusion of references to available support, confirming they did not need to see the policy again, delegating approval of the wording to the Principal.

Ahead of concluding the item, members confirmed the gender pay gap reporting was for information and publication and did not require approval, forming part of the annual HR review.

Item 11.3: Approved– Members resolved to approve the updated HR Policies, subject to the inclusion of references to support available.

11.4 - Ratification of the Staff Pay Award

The Resources Committee confirmed their review of the affordability of the approved staff pay award. This item was presented for information and ratification only.

Item 11.4: Resolved – Members resolved to acknowledge and ratify the affordability review of the pay award that supported their approval of the Pay Award, as agreed in October, noting this award had now been implemented.

11.5 - Annual Report of the Remuneration Committee

The Corporation noted the Remuneration Committee's annual report, which provided a summary of their work and assurances for the year 2024/25.

Item 11.5: Resolved – Members resolved to note the assurances provided within the report

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12 - Strategic Intent 3: A Place Where Employers Develop Their Skilled Workforce

Members were informed an in-depth review of strategic intention three would be provided at a subsequent Board meeting, with an overview of the actions and KPI's provided for the assurance and continued oversight of the Board.

12.1 - Principal's Overview of Strategic Initiative 3 (SI3)

The Principal asked if there were any questions relating to the actions and KPI's. With none raised, the item was noted.

Item 12.1: Resolved– Members resolved to note the assurances provided within the report.

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13 - Strategic Intent 4: A Place at the Heart of Our Communities

Members noted that this strategic intention will be reviewed in more detail at a forthcoming meeting, with some items presented by Committee's for review and approval linked to this SI.

13.1 - Principal's overview of SI4

The Principal invited questions related to the KPI's and actions under Strategic Intention four 'A place at the heart of our communities'. With none raised, the item was noted.

Item 13.1: Resolved– Members resolved to note the assurances provided within the report.

13.2 - Appointment/reappointment of Student Governors and Audit Committee Chair

Members noted the appointment of Sophie Kinnear as staff governor by written resolution had been approved with appointment to the Standard Committee.

Members were advised the Governance Committee recommended Andy Bridson for appointment as Chair of the Audit Committee effective from September 2026, with this approved.

The Corporation was informed that following their approval of a new process for appointing student governors, applications were invited, which had seen more interest than recent year, with thirteen applications, resulting in ten interviews. Members noted the scoring system was considered fair and supportive of all involved, resulting in the two highest scoring students recommended for appointment based on their high scores and diverse skills.

The Corporation members highlighted how the increased number of applicants further evidenced the supportive and inclusive college culture, thanking those involved for their time in ensuring all who wished to progress to interview gained that valuable experience.

Members were advised that those that had been unsuccessful would be given other opportunities to support the work of the Board, with a Shadow Board being considered.

Item 13.2: Resolved – Members resolved to appoint Andy Bridson as Audit Committee Chair with effect from September 2026. The Corporation resolved to accept the outcome of the student interviews, appointing Jamie Boland and Chelsea Hassanyeh as student governors appointed to the Standards Committee.

Task: Create additional opportunities for student governor applicants who were not selected, to ensure their engagement and development within the college.

13.3 - Annual Complaints Report
Members noted the Standards Committee recommended the Annual Complaints Report for essential information.

Item 13.3: Resolved– Members resolved to note the assurances provided by the Committee's review and endorsement of the report.

13.4 - Governor Engagement Strategy
The Corporation was reminded of its requirements and commitment to the Governor Engagement Strategy. Members noted the Governance Committee asked for approval of minor amendments to the strategy.

Item 13.4: Resolved– Members resolved to approve updates to the Governor Engagement Strategy.

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14 - Date of Next Meeting and Closing Comments Part A
The Chair confirmed the date of the next meeting as Wednesday, 25th March 2026. Staff were thanked for their time and contributions and wished a merry Christmas and restful break ahead of withdrawing.

Item 14: Noted

PART B UNDER THE PAGE BREAK