

Minutes

SEG Standards Committee Meeting

Governor Meetings

Date 16/06/2026
Time 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM (closed at 5.50pm)
Location Southport College Board Room

Governors Present Michelle Brabner - Principal – (Ex-Officio Member)
Kevin Burke (Independent Member)
*Roderic Gillespie (Committee Chair - Independent Member)
Chelsea Hassanyeh (Student Governor)
*Anita Holt (Associate Member)
*Kashfa Kalim (Independent Member) (from item 6.2 onwards)
Susannah Porter (Independent Member)
Elaine Small (Independent Member)
*Tracey Wood (Independent Member and Committee Vice Chair)

Invited Attendees Lisa Farnhill (Dir. Governance and Compliance)
Shaun Hindle (Assistant Principal Apprenticeships and External Relations) (items 6.2 and 7 only)
Stephen Musa (Deputy Principal)
Jane Rowley (Assistant Principal Curriculum & Quality) (items 6.2 and 8 only)

Apologies Sophie Kinnear (Staff Governor)
Jamie Boland (Student Governor)

***indicates attendance via videoconferencing facilities**

Agenda

1 - Apologies for Absence

The Chair opened the meeting, welcoming new members and confirming remote participants were able to hear and be heard, following a short delay due to technical issues, participants, acknowledged technical difficulties affecting some attendees had been resolved.

The Chair acknowledged and confirmed the acceptance of apologies for absence, and encouraged the student members to contribute actively, particularly on learner voice matters.

The meeting opened with reference to the number of items on the agenda, noting that the standing agenda items were intended to reflect the college's current position in relation to quality of education, learner voice, safeguarding, curriculum, and wider assurance matters. Members were asked to keep the committee's risk remit in mind throughout the meeting, particularly where discussion might suggest any change in the nature or level of risk.

Item 1: Accepted

2 - Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made in relation to agenda items, with the Committee Chair reminding members of his standing declaration, confirming that he continues to undertake work connected with awarding organisations and Ofqual-related activity, however, advised that he currently holds no relevant contracts in England, with current work limited to Scotland, Wales, or international activity.

Item 2: Noted

3 - Minutes / Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2026 were reviewed and approved without amendment. Members were invited to raise comments, observations, or corrections, and none were proposed.

The committee thanked the Dir. Governance and Compliance for preparing a comprehensive record and confirmed that the minutes accurately reflected the previous meeting, with no additional matters for follow up beyond those covered in the report in item four.

Item 3: Approved – The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 4th March 2026 were approved without amendment.

4 - Follow Up of Previous Meeting - Actions and Impact Summary

The Dir. Governance and Compliance reported that most previous actions had either been completed or were covered within items on the agenda. Members noted the only follow-up item outstanding was the planned external review of the impact statement, with this relating to the next published version, to ensure it is easier to understand for those not working within education. The Deputy Principal indicated that this had been noted and remained in view for the next cycle.

The Chair restated the committee's primary assurance role, emphasising that Standards Committee scrutiny is intended to provide the Board with confidence on quality of education, safeguarding, curriculum delivery, and the proper implementation of policy. The discussion reinforced that the committee's function is not only to review and discuss the detail, but also to offer formal assurance to the Corporation on learning and curriculum matters.

Item 4: Approved – The impact statements of the Standards Committee meeting held on 4th March 2026 were approved without amendment.

5 - Confidential Items

No matters were identified for confidential treatment in relation to either the previous minutes or the current agenda.

Item 5: Approved – The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 4th March 2026 were confirmed to be made publicly available without redaction.

6 - QUALITY MATTERS

6.1 - Risks Movements Relating to the Standards Committee

The Deputy Principal reported that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had reviewed the risk register in April, with discussions having reflected on the high scoring for the risk previously introduced around the new Ofsted framework, concluding that this remained unchanged. The committee revisited the rationale for the newly developed risk, confirming the high rating was not relating to any concern over the college being unable to meet expectations, but that uncertainty around how the framework will be interpreted.

Further discussion confirmed that the Ofsted risk should remain unchanged, agreeing that the high-risk rating remained in relation to limited information continuing to create ambiguity. Members noted a high level of uncertainty and inconsistency seen in the limited number of FE inspections, agreeing it was still too early to fully understand how the framework is being implemented. Members considered how this limited the ability to predict outcomes confidently, or understand the impact of outcomes in terms of reputation and recruitment. It was proposed that the risk would reduce over time with further insight and understanding, clarifying that the concern remains in relation to the ambiguity in how the new criteria will be applied rather than any belief that the college cannot meet them. Members were satisfied that the current risk description, although lengthy, reflected the situation accurately and did not require amendment.

Members considered whether any additional risks had emerged, including in relation to the Bridge provision, recruitment, and qualification reform. The Deputy Principal and Principal advised these areas had been considered, however, assured the Committee that no new standards-related risk had been identified, with these considered to be incorporated in existing risks. Members were advised of mitigations, including discussing the recruitment and funding for the Bridge. Members reflected on the close alignment to existing courses, adequate resourcing and learner numbers. Members were assured that qualification sizes were not expected to create a material effect on QAR performance.

In reviewing the impact of qualification reform, members noted the effective approach to continually reviewing and revising the curriculum offer, reminding of the successful introduction of T Levels. It was agreed this was captured by existing risks, however, the Committee suggested that risks around qualification reform should remain under review, particularly after transition planning, noting there remained external influences, relating to competitor offers and uncertainty around the impact on recruitment.

Item 6.1: Noted – The Committee noted assurances relating to the SLT's review and oversight of risks relevant to the Standards Committee.

6.2 - Quality of Education Report

The Deputy Principal introduced the report confirming this would cover the KPI scorecard, the 2024/25 QAR comparison data, and predicted outcomes. Members were advised that due to the timing of paper circulation, the April scorecard was included in the papers, however, May data was now available.

Members noted that attendance remained one of the principal amber areas, contextualised against the high standards and expectations in place, with members reflecting on this being an ambitious and stretching target. The data was considered against the wider sector benchmarking data, noting inconsistencies in measuring attendance data across the sector, and limited data sharing. Members were advised that although the college was below its own internal target, new AOC data highlighted performance was above the national FE attendance benchmark of 85 percent.

The Committee was advised Southport College retention for 16 to 18 learners stood at 86.91 percent in April, which was described as disappointing against the previous year. The Deputy Principal attributed the drop to a reform of the entry level 3 Engage programme. It was explained that this had previously operated as a 6-week programme on a roll-on, roll-off basis, leaving learners completing short engagement periods without a route immediately into substantial study. Members were informed that this resulted in a gap in study before enrolment to a new course the following September, effectively making the young people NEET. The restructuring was presented as the right change educationally, however, acknowledging it created a retention consequence in the short term.

In response to questions about target setting, the Deputy Principal confirmed that targets are proposed by the senior team, based on internal and any available benchmarking data, and brought to the Standards Committee for agreement, with an expectation that all targets are stretching but achievable.

Members briefly reviewed the 2024/25 QAR data, noting that this was now outdated, but included because recent national data had only just made comparative analysis possible. Current positioning remained in quartile 2 nationally, with it expected that recent improvements would result in being at, if not above, national rates, with pass rates described as strong, however, overall achievement lowered by the retention data.

Maths and English was discussed at length, noting the focus and innovative approaches had resulted in improvements, yet attendance remained significantly below targets. Members noted staffing changes and were informed that exam attendance had improved to 97 percent, which was considered to be evidence of a significant improvement in engagement. The Deputy Principal emphasised that progression by one grade remains meaningful even where learners do not reach grade 4, especially for students arriving with no prior attainment or with grade 1 or grade 2. Members challenged the SLT to develop a more rounded narrative for engagement beyond lesson attendance. Members proposed that students may still be engaged in learning even where formal attendance in English and maths remains lower than expected, particularly if they continue to attend exams and demonstrate literacy or numeracy development through their main programmes.

The Committee highlighted the Ofsted risk, noting that English and maths remain pivotal to inspection judgements and therefore contextualising and broadening engagement would be beneficial, whilst conceding that attendance will remain a key focus of inspectors.

The Deputy Principal accepted that attendance alone is an imperfect measure, however, cautioned that poor attendance still has consequences for achievement and would remain a negative factor in inspection, therefore needed monitoring. Members were advised of low take up of functionals kills, with learners opting to continue with GCSE's, due to familiarity and understanding of the qualification. The Committee discussed the impact of national policy in this area, which continued to be a sector wide issue and evolving area of focus, with level 1 reform under consideration by the Department for Education.

The Deputy Principal provided the overview of the Quality of Education report for Southport College, due to the unavailability of the Assistant Principal, Curriculum, Planning and Projects. Members were informed that Southport College was currently tracking at an 83 percent achievement rate for predicted year-end outcomes, against 83.6 last year. Predicted pass rates were generally above the prior year, however, retention remained the key issue, particularly in foundation learning and hair and beauty. Members noted that lower-level learners tend to have a higher impact on retention, as they are often enrolled on their main vocational programme plus GCSE English and GCSE maths, therefore the retention impact is tripled, with a concentration of withdrawals at those levels having a disproportionate effect.

The Assistant Principal Curriculum, Quality, Teaching and Learning provided an overview of the update for KGV. She described a more positive outlook, with retention stronger than at Southport and a significant uplift on full-time vocational courses. Specific improvements were noted, highlighting a level two course where a poor exam outcome last year had been replaced by a 100 percent pass rate this year with 80 percent achieving a high grade. AS provision was also showing encouraging achievement and retention trends, although there was no direct comparator due to being the first year of introduction.

The Committee noted that A level performance was improving more slowly, however, exam attendance had been strong, responding to questions about the impact of not attending an exam, by explaining the process for special consideration, noting claims were limited to a very small number of cases.

The Assistant Principal advised that predictions indicated around a 4 to 5 percent increase in A level achievement. In response to questions, members noted that science remained an area still requiring improvement, however, the predictions were considered to be more accurate, supported by curriculum and staffing interventions, engagement with higher-performing colleges, and a sharper focus on high-grade performance as well as an expectation there would be improved basic pass rates, with work needed to increase high grades.

Members asked about T Level provision, being advised of the subject offered, learner numbers and a 100 percent predicted pass rate, broadly in line with last year's 100 percent pass rate but with retention stronger and high grades expected to improve by around 10 percent.

Members asked about destinations, value added, retention, and accountability. Members explored the distinction between retention measures that satisfy inspection methodology and measures that better explain genuine educational impact, especially when considering controllable and uncontrollable measures. Members asked about the benefit of data which excludes uncontrollable impact, including where learners move house, transfer courses, or leave for reasons beyond college control. Whilst considering the benefits of this, including in improving staff morale and for marketing, members proposed that external frameworks still judge the published data set, however, acknowledged there were benefits in ensuring teachers and leaders know their learners well enough to explain context with confidence.

Looking ahead, the Assistant Principal described refinements to onboarding and course suitability. Members were informed that entry requirements for A level maths had been raised in response to analysis showing that students entering with a grade 6 were statistically more likely to struggle or withdraw. To support learners who need mathematical study for science or psychology without committing to full A level maths, the college had introduced statistics as an alternative route. KGV would also continue using a managed early-course change window so that students could move quickly if initially placed on the wrong programme. Members agreed that securing the right course choice from the outset remained one of the strongest levers for improving retention and achievement.

The item concluded with an overview of the apprenticeship position, delivered by the Assistant Principal Apprenticeships and External Relations. The Committee noted the positive position, with improvements in achievement and high grades and asked about the changes to the electrical framework, discussing the impact of the removal of grades, replaced with only an option to pass or fail.

In response to questions about the processes underpinning the improvements, particularly in retention, members commended the focus on engaging apprentices and employers, building effective working relationships.

Members discussed the government's reform of apprenticeships, noting the negative impact of the defunding of leadership and management, being assured of the proactive steps taken by the College to secure suitable alternatives that meet the needs of their employers.

Data relating to out of funding learners was discussed, clarifying the legacy position and progress in this area, whilst discussing EPA and gateway entry dates and the impact on outcomes.

Members asked about learner numbers, with an overview of the strategic review and refinement of the offer outlined for the benefit of new members, noting the continued focus on improving quality over driving up recruitment.

The item concluded with appreciation given by the Committee for the efforts of the team in delivering improvements.

Item 6.2: Resolved – The Committee resolved to note impact of initiatives to drive improvements, acknowledging areas of strength and areas that continue to be supported to improve.

6.3 - Learner Perspectives & Engagement

The Deputy Principal presented the learner engagement update due to the unavailability of the Assistant Principal Learner Development and Careers. He described a wide range of activity across the group, including learner voice work, the hair and beauty catwalk show, media A level awards, achieving first place at the Harrogate Flower Show for floristry, external professional input, and artwork by art and design students displayed at the new Wickes site in Southport.

The committee was given an overview of complaints, noting a total of 32 complaints had been received so far in the year, with members reviewing two anonymised complaint examples included in the papers.

The Deputy Principal advised the Committee of the impact of an increase in AI-generated complaints. Members were informed these were often lengthy and difficult to analyse, which was increasing the resource burden of response, whilst making it harder to identify the substantive issue quickly. Members commended the proactive approach to ensure the process remained effective, for the benefit of the complainant and staff teams managing complaints. Improvements under consideration and outlined to the Committee included ensuring verbal contact early in the process, to clarify and support a better understanding of the issue in the complainants own words, as well as consideration for replacing open free-text submissions with a more structured form so that complaints are more focused from the outset. Members asked if the issue had only presented in this academic year, noting this was becoming a sector-wide issue with College's actively sharing best practice to minimise the impact, whilst ensuring genuine complaints could be addressed.

Members asked about the nature and timeliness of complaints. Members were informed most common themes were access arrangements for exams, concerns about teachers or courses, and perceived unfairness in marking. It was confirmed that the policy outlined a clear time frame, and all complaints had been resolved within the given timeframe, with an appeal stage available where complainants remain dissatisfied. The discussion concluded that the volume was not excessive for an organisation of this size.

Item 6.3: Resolved – The Committee resolved to note the positive focus on learner experience and commended improvements in the complaint handling process that counteracted the impact of AI generated complaints.

6.4 - Strategic Improvement Plan

The committee reviewed progress against the Strategic Improvement Plan for strategic intention 1, enabling learners to fulfil their potential. The Deputy Principal advised the Committee that many of the substantive updates had already featured in the quality of education report, including developments in A level sciences, the use of Up Learn, and the expected effect on ALPS and predicted achievement.

Members asked about the impact of CPD, and how the college was measuring the impact of interventions. Members asked about progress in ensuring support and improvement activity covered all areas, not just those initially flagged as requiring improvement. The Principal explained that this had been one of the strongest academic years for 360 reviews, with every area covered through a broader and deeper methodology including work scrutiny, planning materials, and direct classroom observation.

The Committee was informed that the SLT had undertaken early analysis and intervention, having identified common themes, and used those findings to introduce two additional CPD days. These were implemented immediately to ensure in-year improvements rather than waiting until June, so that training would influence delivery and outcomes within this academic year. Members were assured the additional days had limited impact on learning hours, with this earlier intervention utilising internal colleagues whose practice was already proving effective. Members noted this would be supplemented by further CPD planned for June.

Members were advised that at a more granular level, individual teachers had also been given action plans linked directly to what had been observed in their own practice. Members were informed that the college is introducing short "Morning Zest" CPD sessions from 8.30 to 8.50, led by staff identified as demonstrating effective practice, together with monthly walkthroughs linked to the Zest for Learning strategy so that training can be seen in classroom and then reviewed.

In response to questions about measuring the success of the training, support and interventions, members were advised student outcomes were the most significant measure, however, evidence could also be seen in observations of improved practice, and staff satisfaction. The committee concluded that the strength of the current approach lies in its flexibility and timeliness.

Item 6.4: Resolved – The Committee resolved to note the assurances provided by the update, endorsing the swift action and flexible approach to CPD.

7 - Draft Accountability Statement

The committee reviewed the draft Accountability Statement, confirming its statutory status, including the need for Corporation approval. Members were advised of the submission and publication deadlines, in line with Department for Education requirements. Members discussed its purpose, with it described as a compliance document, serving as a position statement, responding to local skills priorities. Members noted inconsistency in the extent to which it is used by the DfE and FEC teams, with some colleges having seen it shape wider discussion with the DfE during the annual strategic conversations, while in other settings, references to the document were limited.

Members described it as engaging and well formatted, asking about how the statement's vision and goals would be operationalised and reported. It was confirmed that the strategic intentions in the document were aligned to the existing strategic plan, with performance against them tracked through the Committee and Corporation's cycle of work, including regular reporting to Corporation, with a review planned for early in the academic year.

A member suggested enhancing the narrative to better reflect the starting points of learners, particularly those with low prior attainment, high needs, and EHCPs. It was proposed this would ensure the statement captures not only employer and economic needs, but also the reality of the young people entering the college, evidencing how the college's curriculum serves the Community's needs. The Assistant Principal Apprenticeships and External Relations agreed that this contextual framing could be added by adapting material already used to set organisational context for inspection. The committee supported the proposed amendment, agreeing to recommend the revised statement to the Corporation for approval, confirming the wording did not need to be seen by the Committee ahead of presentation to the Corporation, asking that the Principal reviews and approves the added wording.

Item 7: Resolved – The Committee resolved to recommend the Corporation approves Accountability Statement subject to the inclusion of an enhanced student narrative.

Task: Draft the additional contextual section for the Accountability Statement covering learner starting points, low prior attainment, high needs, and EHCPs. The additional commentary is to be prepared by the AP Apprenticeships and External Relations and approved by the Principal ahead of submission to Corporation.

8 - Quality & Innovation Manual 2025/2026

Members asked about the development and introduction of the document, noting that the manual is now entering its third cycle and has evolved from an earlier folder-based approach into a more coherent single framework.

The updates were summarised, noting the most substantive change this year is alignment of self-assessment processes with the new inspection framework, alongside changes to reflect the updated management team structure, including revised job titles and clearer lines of quality oversight.

Members asked about curriculum changes and updates to role titles around innovation, ahead of reviewing the proposed KPI's. Members were advised that a revised version included the latest college logos, with assurances given that the KPI's and content was correct in the version presented

The Deputy Principal explained the strengthened quality assurance processes meant that while performance boards were already taking place at division level, the process has now been tightened through formalised curriculum leader meetings, clearer monitoring points, and a requirement for assistant principals to present to the senior leadership team rather than relying only on scorecard discussion. Members welcomed this as a move towards greater consistency, common data interpretation, and stronger quality assurance across the group.

The committee also discussed the proposed targets within the handbook. These were described as challenging and ambitious but achievable, intended to maintain high expectations. Members acknowledged that some minor presentational amendments had already been made internally, which needed to be included within the final version, including dates and logos, but no further material changes were proposed.

Members discussed the shift in terminology around intent, implementation and impact, noting that the themes remained, with clear curriculum purpose, strong delivery, and a continued focus on impact and outcomes, however, the terminology, as linked to the previous inspection framework, was no longer used.

Members supported the approval of the document, without amendment.

Noting this was her final meeting ahead of stepping into a new role, the Committee thanked the Assistant Principal Curriculum, Quality, Teaching and Learning for her time and commitment to the College, wishing her well in her new role.

Item 8: Approved – The Committee resolved to recommend the Quality Manual and 26/27 KPI's for the approval of the Corporation.

9 - Safeguarding

The Director of Student Wellbeing presented the semester 2 safeguarding update. Members were advised that overall referrals had decreased by 7 percent, with the main drivers remaining difficult home life, mental health concerns, anxiety, low mood, financial hardship, food poverty, digital poverty, and bereavement. Alongside the overall decrease, members were informed that more serious statutory activity had increased, with referrals to children's services up by 31 percent and police referrals up by 37 percent. In response to questions, the Director of Student Wellbeing clarified that the increase reflected external harm rather than incidents occurring on site, including sexual assault, domestic abuse, homelessness risk, and serious violence outside college. In response to a question about management of external issues, the Committee was assured that the college provided support for all issues and concerns, irrespective of where and when they occurred, including instances of historic abuse.

The local context was highlighted for members, noting that 8.4 percent of the national population experience four or more adverse childhood experiences, compared with 12.6 percent across Merseyside and Sefton. Members were informed that against that backdrop, the team had seen a rise in statutory referral activity as consistent with local need.

Members discussed the significant decrease in referrals for anxiety, which had fallen by 40 percent and low mood, which dropped by 49 percent, while counselling referrals had halved. The Director of Student Wellbeing attributed this to improved staff training and confidence, allowing staff to distinguish between ordinary distress and high-risk safeguarding concerns more accurately and to avoid over-pathologising learners where supportive relationship-based responses were more appropriate.

Counselling trends suggested that bereavement and relationship issues remained common presenting issues, with members asking about differences in trends across the campuses, noting that KGV was seeing increased anxiety about the future and readiness to progress. Members were assured by appropriate support and intervention, with progress sessions being planned to provide additional advice and support in this area.

The Committee noted the ongoing strength of relationships with external partners and agencies, with welfare support continuing through partnerships tackling digital poverty and material hardship, with laptops being supplied for learners to keep and food bank provision remaining well used for breakfast, lunch, and toiletries.

In considering key risks and local issues, members were advised that a substantial safeguarding concern remains online racism. The Director of Student Wellbeing reported sector intelligence from Smoothwall indicated national and international trends reflected similar issues, with more than 2,500 instances of a key offensive word being used in a bullying context over a two-week period, with UK rates now exceeding equivalent US monitoring data. Members were assured the college's response remains firm, using the Positive Behaviour Policy and restorative processes where appropriate. Members were assured that the college remained proactive, as well as reactive, with progress and IT sessions being used to provide advice and guidance around safe internet use and healthy online relationships. Members heard that the issue was generally tied to one specific term, sometimes even used as a username, and that induction and progress sessions continue to address this explicitly.

Members were informed of positive data for vulnerable groups. Retention for looked after children had improved by 9 percent and retention for learners supported by Youth Justice had risen by 32 percent. The Dir. Student Wellbeing linked that to monthly retention panels, strong staff understanding of vulnerability, and closer partnership working. The Committee noted the same targeted approach will now be extended to care leavers and previously looked after learners, whose transitions into independent living often create additional attendance and retention barriers.

Members were informed that training compliance remained high, with 93 percent online safeguarding training completion, 93 percent completion of KCSIE requirements, and 92 percent attendance at face-to-face training. In response to questions, members noted that these rates reflected the full staff body, including contractors, security staff, and cleaners. The committee asked about resources and support for the team, being assured that they were well staffed, and were proactive in securing appropriate development opportunities and seeking support with workload issues. The Dir. Student Wellbeing confirmed that although the role was difficult, and the team managed a high volume of significant issues, the team felt well supported and felt able to raise workload concerns. Members also heard that the college is investing in CPOMS, which will improve safeguarding file transfer and allow better understanding of learner histories and distance travelled.

Members reflected on safeguarding as a significant strength of the college, citing the pragmatic early-intervention approach, the quality of multi-agency work, and the relevance of staff and governor training.

The committee then reviewed policy updates. The Dir. Student Wellbeing outlined 10 KCSIE-related changes now embedded in the safeguarding policy, including stronger emphasis on early identification, early help, mental health as a safeguarding concern, multi-agency information sharing, online harm, AI-generated abuse, deepfakes, misogyny, harmful narratives, child-on-child abuse, financial exploitation, and greater awareness of learners at heightened risk through suspension, exclusion, or repeated removal from class.

The associated managing allegations policy was updated on the same basis, with the Committee endorsing both policies.

Item 9: Resolved – The Committee resolved to note the update, reflecting on the significant data shifts, strength of the team, and effective working relationships with external agencies. The Committee resolved to recommend the Corporation approve the policies for managing allegations and safeguarding.

10 - Equality & Diversity

Members were advised the Dir. Diversity and Inclusion was on a course, with the papers presented by the Deputy Principal.

The committee received a copy of the published data in line with Public Sector Equality Duty requirements, together with the Equality and Diversity strategy action plan and update. Members noted that the action plan runs from 2024 to 2028 so that progress can be monitored as trends with annual updates to evidence progress and address in year issues and concerns.

The papers were taken largely as read, with members noting the summary of key strengths and areas for improvement. The committee also considered how EDI outcomes would be reflected in reporting to Corporation and in the wider assurance picture, alongside policy and quality matters.

Item 10: Resolved – The Committee resolved to note the update, asking that the update is presented to the Corporation as essential information as a statutory Board responsibility.

11 - Strategic Transition Planning Statement

Given the volume of business elsewhere on the agenda, the committee agreed not to undertake a full discussion of the Strategic Transition Planning Statement during this meeting. Instead, members received a short framing update and noted that a pre-Corporation briefing would be delivered separately for all Bard members.

Members briefly discussed the curriculum and qualification reform and considered the wider financial implications attached to those changes. The Deputy Principal assured the Committee of its resilience due to operating a mixed study programme model across A levels, vocational qualifications, and T Levels.

Discussions highlighted the risks linked to the level 2 reform, reflecting on operational and financial uncertainty, particularly where decisions may be needed between one-year and two-year occupational routes, or a combination of both, with additional risks associated to changes in competitor offers. Members were assured by the SLT's responses and approach to continued monitoring, advising the Committee that learner guidance and course suitability will be central to implementation.

Item 11: Noted – The Committee noted the update, deferring presentation to the training slot ahead of the Corporation meeting.

Task: Deliver the pre-Corporation briefing on curriculum and qualification reform, including the financial implications of the Strategic Transition Planning Statement.

12 - Policies

The committee took the policy section by exception, using the executive summaries and highlighted amendments to focus discussion. Members were content that the papers were sufficiently clear to allow approval or recommendation.

The discussion also reinforced the value of a more consistent one-college approach across policy development and implementation.

12.1 - Careers Education Policy

It was confirmed that the Careers Education Policy sat within committee-level approval rather than requiring recommendation to Corporation. Members were content with the overall direction of the policy and commended the approach to highlighting and summarising key changes.

Item 12.1: Approved – The Committee approved updates to the Carrers Education Policy.

12.2 - Admissions Policy 26/27

The Admissions Policy for 2026/27 was considered alongside the executive summary of amendments. No concerns were raised and members were satisfied that the updated policy reflected statutory requirements.

Item 12.2: Resolved – The Committee resolved to recommend the Corporation approves updates to the Admissions Policy.

12.3 - Positive Behaviour Policy 26-28

The Positive Behaviour Policy for 2026 to 2028 was reviewed on the same exception basis. Members noted the highlighted changes and supported the updates.

Item 12.2: Resolved – The Committee resolved to recommend the Corporation approves updates to the Positive Behaviour Policy.

13 - Planning and Reflection

The committee closed with forward planning and reflection, looking both at future committee business and at the key points to be escalated to Corporation. Discussion focused on governance sequencing, risk oversight, and the balance between positive assurance and unresolved challenge.

13.1 - Planning For 2026/2027

The Dir. Governance and Compliance proposed the employer engagement strategy should move from the Resources Committee into Standards because its principal relevance now sits with quality, impact, and curriculum-related outcomes rather than finance alone. Members supported the change, subject to careful agenda planning so that capacity within future meetings is protected.

The committee also confirmed that agenda planning for the coming year would continue to be reviewed in advance meeting by meeting so that priorities remain proportionate. Members noted minor amendments to the Terms of Reference for Corporation approval.

Item 13.1: Resolved – The Committee resolved to approve the Committee workplan, whilst agreeing to ask for Corporation approval for minor updates to the Terms of Reference.

13.2 - Meeting Reflection

In its risk review, the committee reflected on the earlier discussion on qualification reform and considered whether a distinct new risk was needed. The Principal confirmed the wording of existing risks relating to curriculum planning, learner need, and quality, noting that the issue appeared to sit across both standards and resources, due to the quality and financial implications. Members were content that the matter was being actively monitored without requiring the addition of a distinct risk.

The committee was advised of a request from the Audit Committee to consider areas for review by the Internal Audit Service. This was due to concerns being raised that the highest risk on the register was a quality risk, linked to the new Ofsted framework, however, the plan failed to include any student or quality risks for this academic year. Members were informed that during the premeeting by the Chair, Vice Chair, Deputy Principal and Dir. Governance and compliance, consideration had been given to the most appropriate review from the list of those available provided by the auditors. The Committee noted the suggestion to focus on either teaching learning and assessment quality, or learner achievement and progression, agreeing to delegate the final decision to the Committee Chair, Vice Chair and Deputy Principal, with a post meeting review to be arranged to finalise the choice and confirm the scope.

For reporting to Corporation, the committee agreed that the board should receive a balanced message. Positive items included apprenticeship improvement, destinations, and EDI outcomes. Ongoing challenge should be reported in relation to attendance, English and maths, and the continuing uncertainty created by the new Ofsted framework.

Item 13.2: Resolved – The Committee resolved to maintain the current risk descriptors and scores, endorsing the presentation of key information to the Corporation alongside items for approval.

Task: Identify and include an appropriate quality-related audit in the next academic year audit plan to address the highest risk linked to the Ofsted framework and wider quality risks.

14 - Date of Next Meeting and Closing Comments

The date of the next meeting was not confirmed and will follow once Corporation has approved the wider schedule.

In closing, the Chair noted that the meeting had covered a heavy agenda and thanked members for working through intermittent audio issues, particularly those joining remotely. The committee also formally recorded its thanks to the Assistant Principal Curriculum, Quality, Teaching and Learning on her final governor-facing meeting before leaving for a new role, recognising her longstanding contribution across KGV, Southport College, and the wider group.

The meeting closed at 4.50 pm.