Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held at 5.30pm on 8th July 2026 in Room 1-37, Aylesbury Campus

Governors Present	Ian Greggor (Vice Chair) and Acting Chair	Nasim Khan (Independent Governor)
	Jenny Craig (Principal & CEO)	Nhyira Djan-Otoo (Student Governor)
	Adam Poland (Staff Governor)	Oreoluwa Adeyemo (Student Governor)
	Alex Reynolds (Staff Governor)	Sarah Mason (Independent Governor)
	Amir Khaki (Independent Governor)	Tim Marshall (Independent Governor)
	Cathie Prest (Independent Governor)	Tomas Pukalski (Independent Governor)
	Chris Oakley (Independent Governor)	Victoria Topham (Independent Governor)
	John Boyle (Independent Governor)	
In Attendance	John McGrath (Chief Operating Officer (COO))	
	Tracey Matthews (Vice Principal Commercial & Partnerships (VPCP))	
	Nicky Ellis (Assistant Principal Student Engagement & Support (APSES))	
	Oliver Roth (Executive Director MIS & Digital Transformation (EDMDT))	
	Ian Harper (Executive Director Business Development (EDBD))	
	Ruth Osgood (Executive Director People & Purpose (EDPP))	
	Anna Smith (Director of Governance (DG))	
Apologies	Martin Tugwell (Chair) Iain Brown (Independent Governor)	Sean Baker (Independent Governor)
	Hannah James (Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality (VPCQ))	

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
30.26	**CHAIR'S WELCOME** The Vice-Chair of Corporation welcomed all to the meeting and would be chairing the meeting in the Chair's absence. Apologies were noted. There were no new declarations of interest relating to matters of discussion. The meeting was quorate. The Chair reflected positively on the recent Student Awards Ceremony, recognising the outstanding achievements of students and, in acknowledging governors' support with employer contacts, thanked employers and external partners for their support. The Chair also formally congratulated Nicky Ellis on being awarded an MBE for services to Further Education and recorded the Board's appreciation of her significant contribution to education and student support, particularly supporting vulnerable members of the community and improving opportunities for SEND students. *There was an agreed change in order to the agenda due to technical issues for the presentation supporting the strategic conversation.*
31.26	**DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE REPORT** The Corporation received the report with discussion on the following items: Student Governor Reappointment: The Student Governors left the room while their recommended reappointment was considered and unanimously agreed. On their return, the Chair thanked the Student Governors for their significant contribution during the year and reflected on the value of the insight they have brought to Board discussions. External Board Review: Governors sought assurance regarding the proposed methodology and timetable which the DG confirmed, noting further details would be shared following the scoping meeting. Link Governor Review: Governors held a detailed discussion regarding the proposed feedback form. Concern was expressed that requiring reports to be reviewed by link managers could inhibit open conversations. Governors also challenged whether the scope of the Estates and Health & Safety Link Governor role remained appropriate given the scale of the new build *(although governance oversight of*

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
	this remains with the Estates Committee). These concerns were recognised and it was agreed documentation will be reviewed in light of governors' feedback **(Action: DG)**. Governors also discussed the role and purpose of link governance more broadly, noting the value that link governors provide as an independent source of assurance. It was suggested that future governor development could include active listening and coaching approaches to further strengthen link governor effectiveness **(Action: DG *on planning training & development)***. The DG formally recorded appreciation to governors for the outstanding level of engagement during the year, noting both attendance and the quality of governor contributions. The Corporation **Resolved** to: • **Ratify** the appointment of Thornwood Design & Build Ltd to deliver Phase 1 of the Aylesbury Campus refurbishment project. • **Approve** the reappointment of the Student Governors for a further year. • **Approve** the Corporation and Committee Memberships for 2026-27. • **Approve** the revised Conflict of Interest Policy. • **Approve** the appointment of Rockborn Ltd to undertake the next External Board Review. • **Approve** each Committee's Terms of Reference for 2026-27. • **Note** the update on the Curriculum Staff Governor election process and the latest overview of Governor engagement activity.
32.26	**MINUTES AND BOARD ASSURANCE REPORTS** The Corporation **Resolved** to: • **Approve** the minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 25/3/26. All actions had been completed or were covered in reports for the meeting. • **Note** the Board Assurance Reports and draft minutes of the committee meetings held since the last Corporation meeting. **Finance & Resources Committee** The Committee Chair reported that robust challenge and scrutiny had been exercised throughout the year, particularly in relation to major capital expenditure decisions and financial planning. Governors had provided effective challenge from a range of perspectives, enabling well-balanced decisions regarding investment priorities. Members received assurance that the College remains financially strong and is able to focus on growth and investment rather than financial recovery. The reinforced governance arrangements for estates oversight were also welcomed as strengthening scrutiny of significant capital projects. **Search & Governance Committee** The Committee Chair reported that the committee had maintained oversight of key governance risks including board succession planning, committee effectiveness, link governance arrangements, external board review procurement and governance policy review. Governors received assurance that governance arrangements remain effective and continue to evolve in response to emerging needs. **Curriculum, Quality & Students Committee** The Committee Chair reported that the committee had reviewed curriculum performance, student support, quality improvement and strategic growth plans. Governors had challenged executives regarding attendance, English & maths performance, apprenticeships and construction provision and received assurance that challenges are well understood and supported by realistic and targeted improvement plans. Several governance and quality policies were recommended for Board approval. The Student Governors confirmed they had been involved in development of the Student Voice Strategy, welcoming it and praising the new Director of Student Services' commitment to engaging with students before implementing changes. They noted the strategy demonstrates a genuine commitment to hearing and acting upon the student voice. **Audit & Risk Committee** The Committee Chair reported that the committee had received internal audit reports covering payroll, learner numbers and financial controls, which provided assurance over the effectiveness of controls with only minor recommendations identified. Members also reviewed the 2025-26 External Audit Plan, noting additional scrutiny in relation to the accounting treatment of the new capital project. The Committee agreed to retain TIAA as Internal Auditors for a further year and noted that the External Audit contract would be re-tendered in line with good governance following completion of the current five-year cycle.

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
Networking break	
33.26	**STRATEGIC CONVERSATION – COMMUNICATION *Led by Ian Greggor and Jenny Craig*** The Principal presented a strategic discussion on communication, drawing on feedback from staff, parents and carers which identified communication as an area requiring further improvement. The Board were assured of actions already implemented and future plans. Governors received an overview of the College's new communications arrangements including the 'Staff Space' intranet and the launch of "Bucky" (an AI-powered bot available as both an app and chat service). The EDMDT explained that Bucky had been designed to be highly accessible and inclusive, allowing easy interaction for staff. It supports staff with varying levels of digital confidence and language proficiency, and provides responses linked directly to source materials, ensuring transparency and accuracy of information. The Staff Governor described Bucky as a 'game changer', highlighting its potential to provide staff with quick access to information, policies and procedures. The Board strongly welcomed the emphasis on inclusion within the new communication approach, receiving full assurance that Staff Space and Bucky had been designed to be accessible for colleagues with differing levels of digital confidence, language proficiency and experience, helping to reduce barriers to information and support across the College. Future plans include parent webinars, simplification of parent communications and the longer-term development of AI-supported services for students, parents and employers. Governors challenged executives regarding: • The safeguarding implications of future student-facing AI systems. • Whether digital exclusion could prevent some staff and students from benefiting. • How success and adoption rates would be measured. • The risk of over-reliance on AI reducing professional judgement. • Accessibility for staff with low digital confidence. Executives provided assurance that: • Student-facing AI remains in development, and safeguarding controls will be fully considered before implementation. • Analytics will be available to monitor engagement and identify gaps in adoption. • Digital induction, training and support programmes will continue to address confidence barriers. • AI tools are designed to support rather than replace professional judgement. Governors congratulated the team on the developments made and requested future reporting on engagement levels, usage and impact at the October meeting **(Action: Principal/EDMDT)**.
34.26	**STUDENT AND STAFF GOVERNORS' REPORTS** **<u>Staff Governors</u>** The Staff Governors presented their report and highlighted improvements in internal communication and staff engagement during the year. Governors welcomed the constructive and balanced nature of the report and thanked the Staff Governors for their contribution throughout their term of office. The Chair reflected on the importance of hearing both positive feedback and areas for improvement and thanked the Staff Governors for their valuable insight into colleague perspectives.
35.26	**STUDENT AND STAFF GOVERNORS' REPORTS** **<u>Student Governors</u>** The Student Governors reflected positively on their year in office, including participation in Association of Colleges Student Governor Conference as a particular highlight of the year as well as various other AoC events, enabling Oreoluwa Adeyemo to be appointed as Vice Chair of the AoC Student Governor Network. They had also welcomed participation in governor meetings and involvement in staff recruitment activities noting these experiences had increased their confidence, skills and understanding of effective student voice.

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
	Student Governors expressed appreciation that student feedback is listened to and acted upon by the College and described the role as rewarding and empowering. They suggested that greater access to Amersham and Wycombe Campuses would help strengthen an inclusive student voice and it was agreed they would be fully supported and encouraged to work across all campuses. The Chair thanked the Student Governors for their contribution and welcomed their request for greater engagement across all campuses. He recognised their request for greater engagement across all campuses and encouraged the Executive team to explore opportunities to increase the Student Governors' visibility and involvement across all sites, strengthening the inclusivity of student voice arrangements and ensuring a broader range of student perspectives continue to inform College decision-making and Board discussions **(Action: DG/APSES)**.
36.26	**KPI REPORT** The Principal reported that 39% of KPIs were on track to achieve, with 88% showing either improvement or stability. Governors welcomed the positive direction of travel but challenged whether the current KPI framework and reporting methodology remained the most effective means of monitoring performance, questioning the significance of some measures, the use of benchmarking data and opportunities for stronger year-on-year comparisons. The Board was assured that areas of concern are subject to detailed scrutiny through the committee structure and that many red-rated KPIs continue to demonstrate positive progress. The Board discussed the need to distinguish more clearly between leading indicators and end-of-year outcomes, and to improve clarity around financial benchmarking measures. It was agreed that KPI reporting and performance measures would be reviewed as part of the cycle in presenting the proposed 2026-27 KPIs in October to ensure they continue to provide meaningful assurance and support effective strategic oversight. **(Action: Executive Team).**
37.26	**PRINCIPAL'S REPORT** The Principal updated Governors on national FE policy developments, including devolution, emerging priorities under the new FE Commissioner and increasing collaboration across regional FE partnerships. Governors were assured that the College is well positioned for devolution through its strong relationships with Buckinghamshire partners and active participation in regional networks. Discussion focused on the growing importance of governance, performance and inclusion within the FE sector. Governors welcomed the proposal to strengthen inclusion as a distinct strategic priority and recognised the commitment to increased focus on what inclusion means across all aspects of College activity. The Corporation **Resolved** to: • **Approve** the extension of the Beyond Ambition Strategic Plan by one year to allow time for reflection following the move into the new campus and to support development of the next strategic plan. • **Approve** the addition of a new strategic goal focused on inclusion, with further detail to follow at the next Corporation meeting. • **Note** the Health & Safety report which had provided assurance that health and safety arrangements remain effective and continue to support a safe environment.
38.26	**CURRICULUM, QUALITY & STUDENTS REPORT** The Chair of the Curriculum, Quality & Students Committee reported that overall performance remains positive, although attendance continues to be a key area of focus. Governors received assurance that curriculum planning is well advanced, recruitment remains ahead of the previous year and growth in apprenticeships, adult provision, skills bootcamps and priority curriculum areas continues in line with strategic objectives. Governors also received assurance that curriculum and quality risks are well understood and supported by realistic improvement plans. Particular scrutiny was given to Construction & Technology, where staffing and quality assurance challenges remain, although progress is being made and the area continues to be viewed as a strategic growth priority.

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
	Governors challenged the realism of future growth targets, particularly within construction, given ongoing recruitment and capacity challenges. Executives provided assurance that forecasts are evidence-based and that student numbers will be carefully managed, particularly at Wycombe, to ensure quality is maintained whilst capacity issues are addressed. Governors welcomed the appointment of a new Faculty Director for Construction & Technology and received assurance that this will strengthen leadership and stability within the area. Governors were advised that apprenticeship achievement remains affected by delays in end-point assessment processes across the sector, although apprenticeship performance remains strong. Assurance was also provided that targeted interventions are in place for higher-risk curriculum areas, including Plumbing, Hair & Beauty, Pinewood and Business Studies. The Committee received assurance that the College is well prepared for forthcoming SEND reforms, with new individual student plans and enhanced support arrangements in place. Governors also welcomed the College achieving Silver Trauma-Informed status, recognising its leadership role in inclusive practice and student support as the only college in the country to receive this from their local authority. Following a governor question regarding the increase in safeguarding incidents, Student Governors and the APSES provided valuable insight into the mental health challenges facing young people. Student Governors highlighted factors including transition from school to college, home circumstances, peer relationships, exploitation and wider social pressures. The APSES explained that the College continues to strengthen work around positive relationships, peer support and student wellbeing, whilst also encouraging earlier reporting of concerns. Governors were further assured that the increase in safeguarding reports reflects both growing national challenges and a stronger safeguarding culture within the College, with staff now more confident in recognising and recording concerns at an earlier stage. Governors welcomed the assurance that students continue to feel safe, with 96% reporting that they feel safe at College. During consideration of the Student Voice Strategy, Governors welcomed the inclusive approach taken in developing the strategy with student involvement. Governors challenged whether the document sufficiently articulated how feedback would be closed and communicated back to students through a clear "You Said, We Did" approach and the APSES agreed to strengthen this element of the strategy. **(Action: APSES)** The Corporation **Resolved** to: • **Approve** the Accountability Statement 2026-27 • **Approve** the Student Voice Strategy 2026-27 subject to the agreed amendment • **Approve** the Academic Misconduct & Malpractice Policy 2026-28 • **Approve** the Assessment & Internal Verification Policy 2026-28
39.26	**FINANCE AND RESOURCES REPORT** The COO reported that the College's financial position continues to strengthen, with performance progressing from consolidation in the current year towards meeting FE Commissioner benchmark expectations in 2026-27. Governors received assurance that improved financial performance has enabled continued investment in staff, facilities, infrastructure and the student experience, whilst maintaining a prudent approach to financial management. Income growth, learner recruitment and funding allocations are now clearer than in previous years, reducing reliance on year-end funding reconciliations. Governors welcomed the positive financial trajectory and particularly noted the significant investment being made in both the new campus development and improvements to existing facilities. During discussion, governors suggested a briefing session at the October strategy day on FE funding to support ongoing understanding of the increasingly complex funding environment and forthcoming devolution arrangements **(Action: COO/*DG on agenda)***. The Corporation **Resolved** to **Approve** the 2026-27 Budget and subcontractor contract values.

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
40.26	**WORKFORCE REPORT** Governors received the latest workforce update and welcomed the progress being made against recruitment, vacancy and absence measures. However, governors challenged the significant increase in staff leaving within their first year of employment, noting that this had risen considerably since the previous year and was concentrated within specific departments. Assurance was provided that detailed analysis had been undertaken, that the causes were understood and that targeted action was being taken through recruitment, induction, onboarding and staff support arrangements. Governors requested a further progress update at the next meeting, including evidence of impact from the actions being implemented **(Action: EDPP)**. Governors considered the proposal to replace the current HR and Payroll system. Members challenged implementation risks, particularly regarding payroll continuity and data migration. Assurance was provided that the preferred solution was offered by the existing supplier, reducing migration risk and providing flexibility around implementation timescales. Governors welcomed the thorough procurement process and **Resolved** to **Approve** the appointment of MHR (People First), requesting regular progress updates through the Finance & Resources Committee to provide continued assurance throughout implementation **(Action: EDPP).**
41.26	**DATE OF NEXT MEETING** 7th October 2026 *(9am followed by Strategy Day)* The Chair thanked the Student and Staff Governors for attending and the meeting moved to confidential business (minutes recorded separately). *Oreoluwa Adeyemo, Nhyira Djan-Otoo, Adam Poland and Alex Reynolds left the meeting at 7.40pm.*

AGREED ACTIONS:	ACTION OWNER
1. Link Governor Review: Feedback form and scope of Estates and Health & Safety Link Governor role to be reviewed. Also, active listening development activity to be considered for future governor training and development.	DG
2. Communication: Report to October Corporation meeting on engagement levels, usage and impact of Staff Space and Bucky.	Principal/EDMDT
3. Student Governors: Support to be provided to ensure their increased engagement at Amersham and Wycombe campuses.	DG/APSES *(with Director of Student Services)*
4. KPI Reporting: 26-27 review to include distinction between leading indicators and end-of-year outcomes and clarity of financial benchmarking measures.	Principal/ Executive Team
5. Student Voice Strategy: To be amended to articulate how feedback would be closed and communicated back to students.	APSES
6. FE Funding: Briefing session to be held at October strategy day to support ongoing understanding of the increasingly complex funding environment and forthcoming devolution arrangements.	COO/*DG on agenda*
7. Workforce Report: Report to October Corporation meeting to include progress update/impact evidence on actions being taken to address leaving within first year concern.	EDPP
8. Workforce Report: Finance & Resources Committee to receive progress updates on new system implementation.	EDPP

Approved as an accurate record of discussion: 7 October 2026