

R Harding joined the meeting at 8.40am

In the absence of P Harrison, the Principal/CEO will take on line management of the Head of Finance, Property Services, and HR. The Head of HR will be responsible for the line management of the Health and Safety Manager.

S Mitton joined the meeting at 8.55am

The Board will be notified and updated at the meeting to be held in March 2026. At this point no wider communication will be announced given the unsettling position until a firmer position is known. Specialist recruitment agencies are to be approached

Principal/CEO
HoG

Cullum Family Trust

The college is working with the Cullum Family Trust, the National Autism Society and Norfolk County Council to establish an autism centre at the King's Lynn campus. The package would bring £1.1m funding from the Cullum Family Trust and £50K contribution from Norfolk County Council.

Norfolk County Council – Confidential

Confidential Item under paragraph 17(2) of the Instrument and Articles of government

This item was deemed to be confidential.

School of Nursing - Front page news

There is positive press coverage for the school of nursing today with Norfolk County Council celebrating the centre and the £188k funded by them to equip the first-floor extension. The Principal/CEO was contacted by the Norfolk Consultant in Public Health, Lee Watson, to promote the School of Nursing and the wider provision of the college. He would like to use us as a case study in the Chief Medical Officer's 2026 Annual Report.

White Paper

There continues to be pressure on employers and an expectation of them to provide work experience opportunities for young people. Hospitality is an area that is particularly difficult to find placements for. The ICB released a tender for a co-ordinator for work experience across the health sector in the west. CWA successfully bid and although it's a small sum (£40k per year), the contract will run for a couple of years which will supplement the skills and expertise of CWA team.

Skills Boot Camps

CWA has successfully won contracts for skills boot camps from Norfolk and Suffolk and repeat contracts with CPCA. CWA will be running a new Sustainability Boot Camp from the new Green Skills Centre at Wisbech and are also running Engineering, and Construction boot camps at both the King's Lynn and Wisbech campuses.

Green Skills Centre, Wisbech, Official Opening

Governors and strategic partners (Anglian Water and CPCA) are invited to the official opening of the new Green Skills Centre at Wisbech on 22 April 2026, with a 10.00am start. One of the large workshop spaces is being kitted out for an electrical vehicle training centre and there are plans to relocate the Anglia Training Centre from King's Lynn into the smaller workshop space there.

Land Based Review

A consultant has been appointed and the terms of reference for that work have been agreed. The Deputy CEO/Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality will support the consultant together with Alison Barber, Head of Faculty Land Based Studies and Cambridge Campus Director.

Matrix

The Matrix reaccreditation standard is due (2-5 March 2026) and the Chair of Governors and /or link governor, Dave Clark, are likely to be involved in the visit.

Solutions for Polymer

S4PL apprenticeship transfers have taken place, of the retained apprentices just one is left to go through gateway which will conclude the transition process.

New firewall – cyber security

A new firewall has just been purchased, and the college is exploring wider engagement with JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) given the heightened risks of cyber security.

Princes 100-year anniversary

Hospitality and Catering Students took part in the Princes 100-year anniversary with Princess Ann visiting the event with CWA level 1 catering learners providing the hospitality.

CPCA Devolved Funding

CWA has 'put the breaks' on CPCA adult skills devolved funding and discussions continue with Norfolk County Council to explore any opportunities for funding this year and/or next year.

6 Membership Review:

1 Resignations

There are no resignations to report.

2 Reappointments

There are no terms of office due to expire this academic year.

3 Corporation and Committee Structure

The maximum membership for the Board is 21 governors, although the current target composition is 20 governors, to include the Principal/CEO, 2 staff governors and 2 student governors.

4 Vacancies

Currently there are 20 governors in post and therefore no vacancies. It was noted that Jan Feeney will join the membership of the Remuneration Committee. It was noted that 'Vice Chair' needed to be added against Jan Feeney's name to the membership list. It was further agreed that the Principal/CEO and the Head of Governance would reach out to potential candidates who may take on a co-opted role with educational knowledge and expertise, in the absence of Gemma Standen who remains on compassionate leave.

HoG

Principal/CEO
HoG

7 Equality and Diversity Board Review

The EDI profile of the Board was shared with the committee. A recommendation of the external governance review suggested that 'further exploration of diversity in membership reflecting students and communities' is undertaken so the demographic profiles of students and staff were also shared to see if the Board was representative of these datasets.

In summary the results showed that the gender split of members is comparable with students and census (2021) but staff are 30/70% male/female ratio. The age profile of students is of course younger than Board membership and the age groups collected for students is different to those collected for governors, so the best fit had been represented in the statistics.

The Board disability ratio is comparable with staff and is a higher ratio for students. This is because students are asked if they consider themselves to have a learning difficulty and/or a disability and/or health problem whereas governors and staff are asked if their disability is defined as such under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Governors asked the Head of Governance to reach out to other regional colleges to see if this statistic is comparable for the area.

HoG

The ethnicity profile (white – English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish) of governors is comparable with students and the 2021 census. Staff ethnicity of this category is slightly higher at 9.5%. BME representation on the Board is 5%, the staff profile is 4%, and students much higher at 19.6%.

The committee agreed that the Board keeps a balance between refreshing its membership and maintaining experience, knowledge, and skills to have the right people on the Board to fulfil the college's strategy and goals. It keeps its membership under regular review for these purposes. With students and staff from a wide range of backgrounds, the college values the differences and similarities of diversity. The dynamic mix of people and ideas underpins the college's reputation for excellence and makes studying and working at the college a unique and enriching experience.

8 Governor Attendance – Year to date review

Governors have, to date, achieved an overall average attendance level of 83%, which is the same as the attendance rate last year. Attendance for Corporation meetings however is down from 78% last year against 73% this year (7% below the aspirational target of 80%). It was noted that one governor has been on compassionate leave since September 2025.

Governors' attendance at the planning and training morning in November 2025 was the same rate as the year before at 67% with several apologies received on the day. A hybrid option was offered for the first half of the morning with 3 governors leaving for the second half (in person), disappointingly low numbers.

In summary attendance year to date has stayed the same as the previous year but remains above the aspirational target of 80% at 83%. No areas of concern.

9 Action Plan Progress

1 Code of Good Governance

As reported above the one remaining target to complete the action plan relates to the issue of regular monthly management accounts to governors which remains a focus and demand of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Once a cycle of monthly management accounts has been established the Code of Good Governance action plan can therefore be considered completed and closed.

2 External Governance Review

As reported at the last meeting held in October 2025, there are two actions left to complete on the plan. Action 2.1, the committee agreed would be work in progress and would remain on the tracker until sufficient work has been completed. Action 2.2, the committee had agreed that there was more work to do to get student survey outcomes reported to governors and better use of benchmarking data. Good progress is expected in this academic year to complete this action.

10 Governor Check-in Action Plan/Progress Tracker

The tracker provided an update against the actions arising from the Governor check-in meeting with the Chair (summer 2025). There are 14 actions to progress and nearly half (6/14) were reported as completed or closed, leaving 8 (57%) to be progressed/completed. Progress is on track although it was noted that actions 3, 4, 6 and 7 are likely to extend in 2026/27, and perhaps beyond.

It was reported that some progress had been made with action number 9 relating to reinvigorating the governor link scheme. The Head of Governance has met with the Head of Quality to discuss and agree the links. The feedback form for governors to complete after a visit has been amended to work more as an informal record of the visit as opposed to a formal 'observation' report. In addition, a governors' activity week labelled 'governors first hand' is proposed and a series of daily activity options will be available for governors to visit all campuses and visit hairdressing, equine, construction, plumbing for example.

The Chair of Governors commented that looking at the positive contributions that fell out of the check-in meetings these really were worthwhile. It has surfaced several issues that hadn't been raised before which was useful. Governors were conscious of balancing governor workloads particularly around the governor links. It was noted that Vice Chair, Jan Feeney went 'back to the floor' and visited Buttercups Pre-School nursery seeing an apprentice in their workplace and found this hugely valuable and interesting. Finally, it was suggested that the funding workshop for governors delivered by the Assistant

Principal Funding and Performance could be organised online via TEAMS and the Head of Governance will take this back to organise.

11 Annual Governance Self-Assessment

Feedback from Governors' Training/Development Morning

The new annual governance self-assessment was released over the summer (2025) and the commentary and cumulative scores against the six principles of the Code of Good Governance were shared with the committee at the last meeting held in October 2025.

The assessment concluded that there were three principles (2, 3 and 5) that were cumulatively scored 'strong'. At the governors' training and development morning held on 5 November 2025 three groups of governors were asked to consider 'how do we get to strong' for principles 1, 4, and 6. The committee agreed the actions intended to progress all principles to a 'strong' assessment.

HoG

On reflection governors wondered how progress against the assessment would be measured and it was agreed that before using the assessment matrix again some areas of the principles will be refined. For example, some governors had assessed stakeholder engagement lower as this was an area that Ofsted had highlighted at inspection was not consistent across the college although at strategic level Ofsted did highlight this as a strength. The Principal/CEO suggested that perhaps management could provide better visibility and do more at the strategic planning morning in June 2026 or give a quick overview of collaboration and partnership working in the strategy report to the Board.

HoG

Principal/CEO

12 Skills Audit

The skills audit has been updated to reflect the scores of current governor membership further to resignations in 2024/25 and new appointments in October 2025. In summary the top strengths compared to the last data collection point (September 2025) were not too dissimilar but were slightly reordered with governance emerging in the list and Board Experience (Directorship/Trustee) scoring slightly lower.

The areas of development/skills gap were also comparable to those in September 2025 with accountancy emerging in the list and Estates/Property matters scoring slightly higher.

In summary it was felt that the composition of the Board was strong with high calibre members despite losing some key/long serving governors.

The recent round of recruitment had gone well. The only apparent gap is someone with 16-18 education expertise/experience.

13 Latest Governance Guidance/Info (AoC, DfE etc)

External Governance reviews – updated guidance.

The DfE has updated its guidance to emphasize that external reviewers should be given access to all relevant documents and meetings.

FE Governance Guide – FEC section updated

The section relating to the Further Education Commissioner has been refreshed.

Updated guidance on accountability agreements and local needs duty

The guidance for college and local authority accountability statements and the local needs duty for the 2026/27 academic year has been updated and include

- Revised submission deadline of Friday 31 July 2026
- Stronger alignment with Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs)
- Clearer expectations for early engagement with Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) and Mayoral Strategic Authorities
- Flexibility to use existing strategic documents when drafting the statement

The requirements for the annual accountability statements places a statutory duty upon the college to review how well the education and training the college provides meets local needs. The Local Needs Duty is a requirement of Section 52B of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, as amended by the Skills and Post 16 Education Act 2022, which came into force on 28 June 2022.

14 Any Other Business

There were no other items of business.

15 Chair's Items for Briefing to Corporation

- With four members of the senior management team signalling retirement between Summer 2026 and summer 2027, the Succession Task and Finish Group will extend its terms of reference and look to engage with a specialist recruitment agency.
- There is a partnership opportunity with the Cullum Family Trust and Norfolk County Council to develop an autism centre at King's Lynn, supported by £1.1m Trust funding plus £50k NCC contribution.
- The college has had successful bids for Skills Boot Camps across multiple areas, including Sustainability, Engineering and Construction, supporting regional skills priorities.
- Governors are invited to attend the Green Skills Centre (Wisbech) official opening confirmed for 22 April 2026.
- Governor attendance remains strong overall at 83% year to date, above the 80% aspirational target, with no areas of concern.
- Outcomes of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Board review show broadly representative Board demographics, with further benchmarking on disability requested.
- The committee was updates on the Governor Check-in Action Plan, with nearly half of actions completed and proposals to reinvigorate governor link activity through a "Governors First Hand" week were proposed.
- The Skills Audit indicates that the Board remains strong, with only one notable gap in 16–18 education expertise

Chair

16 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 27 May 2026 at 8:30am (Remote Meeting, via TEAMS)

Meeting ended at 9.55am