

cash balance at year-end in excess of £11m. There are some audit adjustments to make. The MTFP predicts a good financial outcome for 2025/26 and 2026/27 and outstanding in 2027/28. The DfE funding audit is about to conclude with just one area (vulnerable bursaries) under question. The college has applied the funding rules per learner with best intentions for the learner to participate, but we await DfE ruling on how eligibility has been determined. This could result in £27k clawback. The RSM income testing has concluded with auditors finding satisfactory approaches to apprenticeship funding.

Pay Award Proposal

The Principal/CEO is to propose a 4 ½% pay award, £200 differential at the support staff lower spine points and equalizing the pay of a few CLT members. The AoC have recommended a 4% pay award which matches the School Teachers' Review Body pay award). UCU, who continue to make a pay claim of 10%, are taking national action against 76 colleges (CWA is not on the list).

Strategy Paper

The strategy paper for the Corporation meeting to be held next week will reference an impending Post-16 Education & Skills White Paper and skills being moved out from the Department for Education to the DWP. The Labour Party recently announced that they will ditch the 50% target for young people to go to university and replace this with two thirds of twenty-five-year-olds either going to university or progressing to higher apprenticeships.

Performance Data and KPIs

Retention for 16–18-year-olds is up 3.6% on the year before. Retention for adults is slightly down; apprenticeships are up and close to 60% on apprenticeship achievement rates. A Level performance was poor, and CWA is moving rapidly to remedy. Meetings are being held with those responsible to ensure that everyone is accountable. CWA will self-assess as a good college.

Start of 2025/26

The college is seeing a positive start to the year with good attitudes, engagement and behaviour. A whole college training programme, 'when the adults change', has been launched to support staff to positively engage differently with learners to get better outcomes. These new approaches are beginning to show some dividends.

LynnSport

The CWA Sport campus will need to relocate pending the Borough Council plans to redevelop the LynnSport site. This will cause some disruption to CWA sport delivery whilst works are undertaken but will result in discrete accommodation for this provision. This has been added to the strategic risk register.

J Feeney joined the meeting at 10.30am

7 Membership Review

1 Resignations

There are no resignations received to record.

2 Reappointments

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

3 Vacancies 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. Currently there are 15 governors in post and therefore five vacancies. Two vacancies are for student governors.

Nominations for student governors closed on 19 September 2025. Five individuals will stand for election week commencing 6 October 2025 with the successful two to hopefully attend the Corporation meeting to be held on 15 October 2025.

The remaining three vacancies are for independent members.

4	<p>Recruitment</p> <p>Over the summer, applications have been received from Joe Solomon (Eastern Regional Director of Barhale), James Nash (retired Rector of the Church in the Woottons), Craig Rothery (Insurance/Project/Change Management), and Jemma Curtis (Regeneration Programmes Manager, Borough Council King’s Lynn West Norfolk). Their applications and CVs were shared with the committee for consideration.</p>	
	<p>It was reported that all four candidates had been interviewed, and it was proposed that the committee recommended the Corporation to approve the appointments of Joe Solomon, James Nash, and Jemma Curtis. It was noted that Joe and Jemma were a direct approach made by the Principal/CEO and he provided a background of their working career to the committee. Craig Rothery wasn’t as standout at interview however the committee discussed the option to co-opt him to a committee. Members however were not convinced that a co-opted role would benefit him or the skillset/need of the Board. It was noted that the skills audit does show an education skills gap and agriculture/environment, but James and Joe do have experience/skills in this regard. Jemma doesn’t come with education expertise but does come with the expertise of skills and community-based projects. It was agreed therefore to look for education specialism to join the board when the next vacancy arises. Members agreed that Joe Solomon would join the membership of the Finance and General Purposes committee, and Jemma Curtis on Performance Review and Quality.</p>	Chair
	<p>The Remuneration committee also holds a vacancy, and members were asked by the Chair of that committee to consider joining its membership.</p>	All
	<p>It was agreed that the committee will recommend the appointments of Joe Solomon, James Nash, and Jemma Curtis to the Corporation for approval at the meeting to be held on 15 October 2025.</p>	Chair
8	<p>Code of Good Governance Action Plan Update</p> <p>The final review of the action plan shows that 22 (96%) of the 23 targets have been achieved. The incomplete target relates to the issue of regular monthly management accounts to governors which remains a focus and demand of the Finance and General Purposes committee. It was agreed that this outstanding action would be delegated to the Finance and General Purposes committee and once a cycle of monthly management accounts has been established the code of good governance action plan can therefore be considered complete and closed.</p>	HvdW
9	<p>External Governance Review Action Plan Update</p> <p>The report provided a final update against the plan for the 2024/25 academic year. There were 18 actions to progress. A total of 15 actions have been achieved, 1 closed and the remaining 2 (actions 2.1 and 2.2) have made reasonable progress. These relate to reviewing the workplan and agendas to promote strategic items on the agenda (2.1) and supporting Board triangulation of student voice (2.2). Governors commented that the executive summaries of reports can be variable so there is more work to be done to improve consistency in approach. Progress of the two remaining recommendations will continue to be reported to each meeting of the committee until complete.</p>	HoG
10	<p>Governor’s Code of Conduct Review</p> <p>The review has been completed to update references to funding and other regulatory bodies, the details of which were summarised in the report and highlighted using tracked changes. The committee considered the amended copy, accepting the changes, and will recommend that the Corporation approves the document at the meeting to be held on 15 October 2025. As a general point governors commented that the recent government announcement suggests more regulation for the sector and therefore the code of conduct will be ever prominent so more updates and amendments can be expected.</p>	Chair
11	<p>Governor Check-in/Check-out Report</p> <p>The Chair held brief ‘check-in’ meetings with every governor in September 2025. The emerging themes and action points arising from those meetings were summarised in the report. There are several quick wins that the Head of Governance will look to complete and will bring an action plan and progress tracker back to each meeting. The Chair of</p>	HoS

Governors suggested that board discusses the points from the check-ins together with strategy and the annual governance self-assessment as they are all intrinsically linked. There was good engagement from every governor, and everyone was happy to talk and happy to share their thoughts, concerns and challenges. The summary provided a mix of meatier (strategic) items, such as HE, A Levels, and succession planning. Governors questioned if HE was an area that may benefit from a Task and Finish Group to help with oversight, challenge and prospects (strategy). This will be given more thought.

HoG

Regarding the action point for the Head of Governance to move position at Corporation meetings to enable closer eye/support to the Chair and those who have online questions it was agreed that the chat function will be disabled. Members who wish to speak are to raise a hand rather than open a chat that other members in the room cannot see.

HoG

The 'check-out' the Chair questionnaires were completed over the summer by governors and the report provided a summary of the responses received. This affirms the role of the Chair as positively impacting the success of the college and underpins the strong governance opinion of the external governance review. The responses were so positive, the Chair commented that she felt that she would like to encourage more negativity as this would help her to reflect and draw out any areas for improvement or learning from the experience.

12 Annual Governance Self-Assessment Report

The report confirmed that 14 out of 15 governors responded to the new annual assessment. The scores and full commentary were appended to the report. In summary 57% judged that governance was strong across the 6 principles of the code of good governance. However, collective discussion at the governors' training/development morning in November 2025 will determine the overall annual assessment of governance performance.

The committee acknowledged that the most valuable part of the new framework is what will come out of the training/development morning in November. The Chair, Principal/CEO and the Head of Governance will look at the agenda for the training/development morning to frame the session recognising that the commentary and actions arising from the check-in and check-out processes all sit together with this annual governance self-assessment so the session in November will be more about agreeing on the way forward than reaching a consensus on overall scoring.

HoG

13 Review of the Register Interests

The annual update of the register of interests has been completed. This has been periodically kept up to date and filed with external auditors for scrutiny. It was suggested that the register of interests is shared with governors ahead of each Corporation meeting, perhaps via the governance portal so that declarations of interest are transparent.

HoG

14 Skills Audit

The skills audit has been refreshed and updated over the summer. The scores have been colour coded for ease of identifying areas of strength and/or skills gaps for training/development. Overall, the audit shows a good balance of skills and experience across all categories and there are governors, Joe Yexley, Russel Liddington, and Sally Mitton who have the expertise in the fields where development/skills gaps have shown lower collective scores. The Head of Governance will update the matrix once new governors have been appointed to include their skills/scores. This will come back to the committee at the next meeting to be held in February 2026.

HoG

15 Governance Attendance – Annual Review

The report was received for information. Overall, the average attendance was 89% (89% in 2023/24) and an average board attendance of 81% (89% in 2023/24). For comparison, recent results published on the Governance Professional's network, with statistics collected from 91 colleges, gave an overall average attendance rate of 81.82% with results ranging from 71% to 94%.

Board attendance during 2024/25 therefore has decreased by 8% compared to the previous year, even with offering hybrid meetings enabling governors to attend virtually.

Overall, however the average has remained the same as the previous year at 89%, well above the 80% aspirational target.

The Head of Governance confirmed that the attendance record for one of the members had been adjusted as an error was found in the formula.

16 Standing Orders Review

The review of the standing orders has captured a few minor amendments to reflect current practice and replace, for example. References to the ESFA, with the DfE (page 3).

The committee accepted the changes as presented and will recommend the standing orders for the Corporation to approve at the meeting to be held on 15 October 2025.

Chair

17 Committee Performance Reviews 2024/25

The performance reviews of each committee have been completed for the 2024/25 academic year. In summary it was reported that no concerns had been raised by any committee, the business cycles have been reviewed with amendments made, where appropriate for the 2025/26 academic year and the Corporation approved the terms of reference for each of its committees at the meeting held on 9 July 2025.

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

The committee was informed that the AoC Code of Good Governance adopted by the Corporation on 3 July 2024 has since been reviewed and updated. A summary of the amendments made was included in the report and where applicable will be replaced in the annual governance self-assessment as this is modelled against the code. The code will be uploaded to the governance portal.

HoG

The report also informed the committee that the FE Commissioner had called upon colleges to publish board minutes within four to six months after an FE Week probe revealed that half had failed to publish any this year. A review of 215 colleges found 106 had not released any full board meeting minutes to the public in 2025, while a fifth (45) had published nothing in 12 months. In summary the report highlighted that colleges are expected to publish governing body and committee meeting minutes for at least the current and previous three years. Governors were assured that CWA Corporation and committee meeting minutes are routinely published and kept up to date on the college website.

19 Any Other Business

There were no other items of business.

20 Chair's Items for Briefing to Corporation

- The committee is to recommend the appointments of Joe Solomon, James Nash, and Jemma Curtis to the Corporation at the meeting to be held on 15 October 2025.
- The Code of Good Governance Action Plan shows that 22 (96%) of the 23 targets have been achieved. The one remaining target will be delegated to the Finance and General Purposes committee and once a cycle of monthly management accounts has been established the action plan can be considered complete and closed.
- The External Governance Review Action Plan shows that 15 of the 18 actions have been achieved, 1 action closed and the remaining 2 actions remain in progress.
- The Corporation is asked to approve the Governors' Code of Conduct which has been reviewed by the committee.
- Governor 'Check-in' and Chair 'Check-out' processes have been completed. Both underpin the strong governance opinion of the external governance review.
- The committee received the scores and full commentary arising from the new annual governance self-assessment. Collective discussion will be held at the November 2025 governors' training/development morning to determine the overall annual assessment of governance performance.
- The annual update of the register of interests has been completed
- The overall, average governor attendance was 89% (89% in 2023/24) with an average board attendance of 81% (89% in 2023/24).
- The Corporation is asked to approve the Standing Orders which has been reviewed by the committee.

Chair

- Governors should be aware that the AoC Code of Good Governance adopted by the Corporation on 3 July 2024 has since been reviewed and updated. This will be uploaded to the governance portal.
- An FE Week probe revealed that half the number of colleges had failed to publish any Board or Committee minutes this year. CWA Corporation and committee meeting minutes are routinely published and kept up to date on the college website.

21 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 4 February 2026 at 8:30am (Remote Meeting, via TEAMS)

Meeting ended at 11.30am