MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2026 AT 4.00 PM IN T108, THE BOARD ROOM, THE ROUNDHOUSE

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Present: Andrew Cochrane (Chair), Simon Allsop, Alan Brady, Ranjit Singh Dol, Andrew Dymond, Stuart Ellis, Robert Pritchard, Jill Matthews.

In attendance: Jo Clifford, Aaron Denton, Heather Kelly, Melanie Lanser, Brian Malyan, Rose Matthews (Clerk to the Corporation)

PART ONE - GENERAL MINUTES		Action	Date
53/25-26	**WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**		
	The Chair introduced Robert Pritchard who would be joining the Board and the Audit Committee.		
	Apologies for absence were received from Richard Blackmore, Sue Bradley, Guy Hodgkinson, Jane McNeil, Mandie Stravino and Anju Virdee.		
54/25-26	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, CONFIRMATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND QUORUM**		
	All members were eligible, the meeting was quorate and there were no new declarations.		
55/25-26	**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 23 MARCH 2026**		
	RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2026 were formally approved as a true and accurate record.		
56/25-26	**MATTERS ARISING**		
40/25-26	The Corporate Risk Register had been updated to reflect the changes of the SEND reforms		
41/25-26	Acronyms to be expanded in future reports once at the beginning of the report.		
	Inclusion of the relative ratio between students and staff for the reporting of incidents would be carried forward to the next meeting as this would be presented at the next meeting.		
48/25-26	The Vice Principal – Landbased to be invited to the next Curriculum Performance Committee to provide an update on sustainability (as the curriculum lead).		

57/25-26 **CHAIR'S UPDATE**

- **SECTOR UPDATE/LETTER TO PM AND MPS**
- **DERBYSHIRE CHAIRS MEETING**
- **FUNDING AUDIT**
- **VICE CHANCELLOR AND CHAIR OF UNVIERSITY OF DERBY MEETING WITH DCG CEO AND CHAIR**

The Chair provided a comprehensive sector and regional update, this included feedback from the Association of Colleges Chairs' meeting highlighting emerging national concerns regarding community cohesion and safeguarding and asking colleges to be alert.

The Deputy CEO explained the College had reached out to the Ukrainian and Russian students and had recently held the first Jewish culture event. Members were appraised of local activity to strengthen community engagement and student safety, including awareness work on knife crime and collaboration with local police. The College had a zero tolerance towards knife crime and students had responded positively towards preventative measures as it made them feel safe.

The DFE Strategic Conversation meeting recognised the College's strong financial management and investment in pastoral roles supporting students.

Members discussed the circulation of a sector-led letter to MPs and the Prime Minister outlining funding pressures, including unfunded student places and real-terms funding reductions.

The Chair updated members on his recent meeting with the Derbyshire Chairs. A key theme related to Board diversity which would be followed up with regional AoC colleges in terms of good practice.

The Chair, CEO and DCEO had met with the Vice Chancellor and Chair of the University of Derby to maintain ongoing dialogue and strong strategic relationships.

Discussions too place with regards to curriculum reform and the challenges this presented for curriculum planning. **AB questioned V Level rollout, which is likely to happen, with T Levels also set to continue.**

RESOLVED: Corporation Members discussed and accepted the updates provided.

58/25-26 **OFSTED INPSPECTION FRAMEWORK GOVERNOR RESPONSIBLITIES**

The Vice Principal provided a detailed presentation on the revised Ofsted inspection framework, including its shift to standards-based assessment, increased focus on inclusion, and expanded expectations on governance.

The Board noted the increased emphasis on evidencing impact and the requirement to demonstrate outcomes across multiple judgement areas.

Governors questioned whether the College's current evidence base was sufficient to meet the significantly higher evidential requirements of the new framework. It was, but work was underway to strengthen evidence and assurance processes.

RESOLVED: The Corporation accepted the presentation.

59/25-26 REPORT FROM THE CURRICULUM PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 APRIL 2026

The Committee Chair shared a report summarising key activity discussed at the meeting.

The Committee had received a presentation on Voice 21 and the importance of oracy, which was timely and a good process.

The Organisational Performance Management Report had been presented and reported a positive position with continued improvements in key performance indicators including retention, attendance and apprenticeship outcomes. The Committee Chair praised the continuing improvements.

Areas of weaker performance had been shared and were subject to targeted intervention.

The Committee had received the Curriculum Performance Risk Register, along with reports relating to Higher Education which confirmed strong attendance and continuation and the performance of the Nursery.

RESOLVED: The Corporation accepted the report from the Curriculum Performance Committee and its oversight of key performance indicators.

60/25-26 DERBY COLLEGE STUDENTS' UNION

The Board considered proposals to change the legal structure of the Students' Union from a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to an unincorporated representative body. A recommendation made by the Derby College Student Union Trustees.

The rationale included reducing regulatory burden, costs and governance complexity, and improving alignment with the College strategy.

Changes would involve how the Student Governor was appointed to the College Board, the details of which, were included in the report.

Governors challenged the risk implications of moving to a model where liabilities would sit with the College and requested clarity on risk mitigation and questioned whether sufficient comparative analysis and formal risk assessment had been undertaken

Leaders acknowledged that while risks had been considered, a formal documented risk assessment would be produced.

The Independently examined Financial Statements for the Students' Union were presented to members to evidence the activity and spend of the grant monies provided by the College. These had been approved by the Students' Union Trustees and filed with the Charities Commission.

RESOLVED:

- **That the Corporation support commencement of consultation on the proposed model;**
- **That a formal risk assessment be prepared and reviewed.** Clerk 09/07

- **Receive the DCSU Financial Statements.**

61/25-26 **REPORT FROM FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 MAY 2026**

The DFE Financial Health letter and Governors Dashboard was received and endorsed. This confirmed the College's strong financial health.

RESOLVED: The Corporation accepted and endorsed the DFE Financial Health Letter and Governors Dashboard.

The Period 8 Management Accounts (including financial KPIs) were shared with the Corporation confirming a strong year to date EBITDA, which was ahead of budget and forecast.

RESOLVED: The Corporation accepted and discussed the Management Accounts.

Discussions also related to the impact of the DFE funding audit and feedback in the sector from other colleges experiencing similar issues.

A Chair's action had been undertaken in relation to the Broomfield Hall window replacement procurement, due to programme constraints. Davlyn Construction was appointed as the preferred supplier.

Governors questioned the due diligence undertaken on contractors, including financial health checks. It was confirmed the appropriate financial checks were undertaken.

The Clerk was asked to send Robert Pritchard the report presented at the last meeting on capital. Clerk 09/07

RESOLVED: THE Corporation ratified the Chair's action to appoint Davlyn Construction to carry out the Broomfield Hall window replacement procurement.

A suite of policy updates had been presented and were recommended to the Corporation for approval:
Talent Acquisition Policy
Carers Leave Policy
Student Financial Assistance Policy
Tuition Fees Policy for 2026-27

RESOLVED: THE Corporation approved all the above policies.

62/25-26 **REPORT FROM THE SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 APRIL 2026**

The Committee received an update on progress of recommendations/actions from the 2023-24 External Review of Governance with the majority of these complete.

The Committee reviewed and approved the proposed scope for the 2026-27 External Review of Governance. Following a shortlisting exercise and detailed discussion of three providers, the Committee agreed that, based on value for money, sector expertise and capacity, the Association of Colleges was the preferred provider.

RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the commission the Association of Colleges to carry out the 2026-27 External Review of Governance.

Board succession planning was discussed and with Sue Bradley leaving the Board at the end of the academic year, it was proposed that Ranjit Singh Dol take on the role of Safeguarding and Business Continuity Lead Governor for the new academic year.

RESOLVED: The Corporation approved Ranjit Singh Dol as the Safeguarding and Business Continuity Lead Governor.

Discussions related to the Chair and Vice Chair roles with the governors in both those roles reaching their maximum term of office in 2027.

The Chair asked for expressions of interest to be sent to the Clerk and would be happy to speak with anyone interested in the role - with a view to the proposed Chair picking up the Vice Chair role for a year. These would be presented to the Board at the next meeting for Members to vote on their preferred candidate. | All | 24/06

Members questioned whether relying on internal candidates would ensure the best candidate, which was debated by those present. It was agreed to seek internal expressions of interest first from current Board members and if no responses were received, then an external appointment process would need to be undertaken.

RESOLVED: The Corporation accepted the proposed options for succession planning.

63/25-26 REPORT FROM THE STRATEGY AND CURRICULUM PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 APRIL 2026

The Chair of the Strategy and Curriculum Planning Committee presented the report from the meeting held on 21 April.

The Committee recommended the Corporation approve the revised Terms of Reference for adoption.

RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the Terms of Reference for the Strategy and Curriculum Planning Committee.

The Committee had received an mid-year update on the Curriculum Strategy and development of the 2026-27 Accountability Statement. Members had received assurance the strategic objectives remained aligned to the three year development plan with sustained focus on attendance, achievement and work readiness.

The Committee went on to consider the Sector Intent Overview, noting strong alignment between the curriculum offer, Skills England priorities, the Local Skills Improvement Plan and the National Industrial Strategy across a range of priority sectors.

RESOLVED: The Corporation accepted the assurances the Committee provided.

64/25-26 STRATEGIC REFLECTION, INCLUDING LINK GOVERNORS

The Board reviewed progress against the College's three strategic pillars and the Chair praised the College on the Routes and Steps provision at the heart of pilar 2 to champion social mobility.

A discussion focused on the balance between delivery, demand and available resources **with SE questioning whether there was enough evidence in meeting the three pillars to the right regional demand rather than performing strongly within existing constraints.**

There was appetite in the College to do more, but there was limited space within the College and restrictions on funding, which made this difficult.

There was debate in that the College was meeting the three pillars and if the Board were monitoring performance in the pillars or the volume in the pillars, one will inevitably conflict against the other. The DCEO explained the College were conflicted as they wanted to do more Level 3 but space did not allow, and if they had more space they could increase the volume. **SE questioned if there was demand and the College were not meeting it what were the next steps.** The College were meeting the three pillars to the best of the capacity they can. **SE said there was a need to choose which argument they wanted to pursue and what else they could do if the funding model changed.**

The DCEO explained those arguments and challenges were presented to EMCCA and the DFE along with evidence, but there was no more funding provided. The Vice Principal – Technical and Vocational explained there were plans to extend certain spaces. **SE said the challenge was the gap the College were not serving.**

The Chair asked if a report could be provided on what the College could do if they had the resources. The DCEO explained they did have the detail behind it and it was reviewed at SLT but not presented to the Corporation.

The Chair asked if it could be revisited at the Board Day, he said it didn't matter what was happening with the budget, but they needed to know what they were not able to serve. Chair 09/07

Link Governor visits had taken place since the last meeting and the Chair reported he had attended the Inclusion event on 26 March engaging with businesses which was valuable.

The Strategy and Curriculum Business Planning Panels had taken place between May and June and those Members who attended reflected they had been very thorough and robust and it was good to see the range of staff presenting.

RESOLVED: **The Committee accepted the updates and discussions.**

65/25-26 **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)**

The Corporation noted that KPIs had been reviewed through committee structures and reflected strong overall performance, with continued monitoring of in-year measures such as attendance and retention.

RESOLVED: The Corporation accepted the KPI report.

66/25-26 **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no consent agenda items brought forward for discussion. All consent agenda items for approval were considered approved.

The staff and student governor left the meeting.

The meeting finished at 6.30 pm