**APPROVED minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on 22 June 2026 at 6.00pm, in the Library Mezzanine**

**Present**: Gill Burbridge (Principal); Robert Kendrick (Chair); Michael Boachie (Support Staff Governor); Karen Hetherington (Independent Governor); Dom Wiffen (Independent Governor); Helen Rand (Independent Governor); Syed Mubashir Hasan (Parent Governor); Andrew Ringshaw (Independent Governor); Brian Pratt (Independent Governor); Kumbirai Chikosha (Independent Governor); Joga Kabra (Independent Governor); Zayna Hossain (Student Governor)

**In Attendance:** Elisabeth Igbokwe (VP, Wider Student Experience) Michael Gallagher (VP, Teaching, Learning and Student Achievement), Alan Leak (Director of Finance)

**Clerk to the Corporation:** Mirna Peach

**1.Apologies for Absence:** Dr Adriano Fachini (Staff Governor); Carmen Trachenko (Independent Governor); Fabio Da Costa (Independent Governor)

**198.26** The Chair reported that Harry Shackleton had resigned from the Board affective 15 June 2026, due to professional commitments. The Board placed on record its thanks to Harry for his contribution to the Corporation and to safeguarding oversight.

**199.26** The Chair also noted that this was Syed Mubashir Hasan's final meeting as Parent Governor, as his daughter was leaving the college. The Board thanked Syed for his service, noting his interest, engagement and contribution to the work of the Corporation and to the QS Committee.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

**200.26** No declarations of interest were made.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting held 07 May 2026**

**201.26 The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and approved as an accurate record of the meeting held.**

**4. Matters Arising and Action List**

**202.26** It was noted that Fabio Da Costa's appointment had not previously been formally recorded as approved by the Corporation. The Corporation therefore approved Fabio Da Costa's appointment by a show of hands**.**

**203.26** The Board noted that the pastoral programme update would be deferred until later in the year, once the programme had been implemented and its early impact could be evaluated. An update in December 26 was considered appropriate.

**204.26** The item on academisation is to be considered at this meeting of the Board.

**Strategy Day Notes 07 May 2026**

**205.26 The Board reviewed the Strategy Day notes and confirmed that they accurately reflected the activities and discussions held. The notes were noted.**

**6. Marketing Annual Report**

**206.26** Elisabeth Igbokwe (VP, Wider Student Experience) presented the Marketing Annual Report in the absence of the Marketing and Communications Manager, drawing attention to the key points. She informed the Board that the college's principal feeder schools had remained broadly consistent, whilst targeted liaison activity had been undertaken with schools that had previously generated significant numbers of applications but had more recently fallen outside the top feeder list. There was renewed engagement with Little Ilford and Dukes Aldridge, where strengthened relationships had supported increased interest in the college.

**207.26** The Board discussed the importance of school liaison activity, including assemblies, careers fairs, open days and subject experience events. The Board queried how the college intended to build on the report's findings and grow the impact of its marketing activity. In response, Lis explained that the college was developing a more coherent social media calendar, increasing student-led content, promoting staff work through professional channels and continuing to develop the alumni programme. The Board noted that tailored and bespoke work with schools appeared to generate the strongest return in terms of applications.

**208.26** The college now had a clearer sense of the actual number of prospective students attending open events, rather than counting accompanying parents or siblings. Lis reported that the November open day had been busy, whilst the March event had been quieter, in part because of its timing during Ramadan. Despite this, applications had exceeded the previous year's numbers. Governors also discussed the changing demographic of the local area and the increasing importance of engaging parents as well as young people.

**209.26** The Board welcomed the growth in social media reach and noted the continued importance of digital engagement. The Board queried whether possible restrictions on young people's access to social media could affect future marketing and recruitment activity. It was noted that, if access to social media became more restricted for younger students, school liaison, the website and parent-focused communications would become even more important. The Board reflected that the college would need to retain and refresh pre-social-media approaches to outreach.

**210.26** The Board discussed the alumni programme and the opportunity to use former students to support careers, progression and student aspiration. The Board asked how the college identified and engaged successful former students. It was reported that contact information was now being captured for current leavers and that curriculum managers were helping to identify former students who had left the college some years earlier but remained in contact with staff. The Board noted the potential value of alumni networks in supporting aspiration and progression.

**211.26** The Student Governor highlighted that prospective students may find current students' perspectives particularly authentic and relatable when considering the college. The Board therefore discussed the role of student ambassadors in marketing and school liaison. It was recognised that students were already central to marketing materials, open days and subject ambassador activity, although careful consideration was needed to avoid disrupting their education through too much off-timetable activity.

**212.26 The Board noted the Marketing Annual Report.**

**7. Principal's Report and Presentation**

**Academisation Update**

**213.26** The Principal provided an update on academisation and the proposed MAT application. She informed the Board that the process had accelerated significantly since the last update given at the previous Board meeting. Locally, the Principal had sought to meet the borough's Director of Education to discuss the proposal. Although several meetings had been cancelled, documentation had been shared and the response received was described as overwhelmingly positive, particularly in relation to inclusion and the potential wider benefit to the borough.

**214.26** The Board sought clarification on the factors that appeared to be contributing to the positive response from the DfE and regional teams. The Principal explained that the inclusion vision appeared to be central to the proposal's appeal, particularly because it aligned with current national policy priorities, the Ofsted framework and wider developments in education. The proposed Inclusion Hub and shared professional development work were discussed as potentially distinctive elements of the trust proposal. The Board noted that the proposal was built on a shared commitment to inclusion across the partner institutions.

**215.26** The Board discussed the implications of approving the submission of the application and was reminded that approval at this stage would allow the proposal to be developed and considered by the DfE and other relevant bodies but would not commit the Corporation to a final transfer. Any final decision would remain subject to due diligence and full consideration of educational, financial, legal and governance matters, as well as the receipt of all necessary approvals.

**216.26** The Board asked about the timing and likely cost of due diligence. It was noted that due diligence would take place later in the process, following submission of the application, and that the costs would be shared. The Board also noted that project management support would be provided through the Sixth Form Colleges Association and partner institutions. The Board was assured that approval to submit the application did not constitute a final decision to proceed with conversion or transfer arrangements.

**Board Approval: Conversion to 16–19 Academy and Proposed Multi-Academy Trust**

**217.26** The Board considered the report on the proposal for the college to become a 16–19 academy within the proposed multi-academy trust (The National Sixth Form Partnership).

**Following discussion, the Corporation resolved to approve the submission of an application for the college to become a 16–19 academy and to progress proposals for the dissolution of the Sixth Form College Corporation and the transfer of its property, rights and liabilities to the proposed multi-academy trust.**

**The Corporation noted that this resolution was intended to enable the proposal to be developed and considered by the Department for Education and other relevant bodies. The Corporation further resolved that any final decision to proceed with conversion and transfer arrangements would be subject to satisfactory due diligence, full consideration of the educational, financial, legal and governance implications, and the receipt of all necessary approvals.**

**AVP Role Appointees**

**218.26** The Principal updated the Board on appointments to the two Assistant Vice Principal roles, noting that the recruitment process had been deliberately rigorous and was designed to resemble an external appointment process rather than a comfortable internal exercise. The process had been challenging for candidates and panel members but had resulted in two strong appointments.

- **Taiyyabah Ijaz**, currently covering maternity leave as Programme Manager for ELW and is also the Vocational Manager had been appointed to the Inclusive Practice post
- **Henry Wilkins**, currently the Pastoral and Tutorial Manager, had been appointed to the Participation and Engagement role.

Both appointees had attended the recent Sixth Form Colleges Association conference and were expected to have direct input into the forthcoming all staff conference and Managers' conference. The Board was advised of the respective reporting lines.

**219.26 The Board noted the AVP appointments and welcomed the outcome of the recruitment process.**

**Curriculum Transition Plan**

**220.26** The Principal updated the Board on the Curriculum Transition Plan, which would be submitted online. She explained that, as existing vocational provision was phased out, the college expected some increase in A level provision, with the important caveat that some students moving from vocational routes into A levels would require additional support. For other students, the college intended to develop coherent packages using V levels, A levels and T levels, depending on students' needs and progression aims.

**221.26** The Board discussed the emerging policy landscape for V levels and T levels. It was noted that B levels were currently proposed as single-strand qualifications equivalent in size to an A level, with a vocational focus. However, there was uncertainty about permitted combinations and whether packages could be designed in a way that met the needs of students who were not suited either to A level study or to T levels. Governors noted the tension between the Government's desire to increase T level numbers and its wider objective of reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).

**222.26** The Board queried the practical deliverability of T levels, particularly the requirement for substantial industry placements. The Principal explained that placements were challenging nationally and especially difficult where the local economy was dominated by small and medium-sized employers. The Board noted that a 45-day placement was a significant commitment for employers and had to be directly relevant to the occupational route. The Board also explored the implications of employer capacity, competition for placements, safeguarding and supervision requirements, and the possible introduction of virtual placement options.

**223.26** The Board noted that the college would increase T level provision in a phased and cautious way. The current T level offer would be expanded with a Digital/IT route from September, with Engineering likely to follow and further consideration being given to Business, Health and Science. It was recognised that the initial curriculum transition plan would represent the college's best current assessment and would need to evolve as further details became available.

**224.26 The Board noted the update on the Curriculum Transition Plan.**

**8. Accountability Statement**

**225.26** The Principal presented the Accountability Statement for approval. The Board discussed whether the skills described in the Accountability Statement were sufficiently future facing, particularly considering developments in artificial intelligence and changing labour market expectations. It was noted that confidence, resilience, problem solving, communication, project management and the ability to test and evaluate AI outputs were increasingly important.

**226.26** The Principal advised that this year's Statement included reference to the mainstream inclusion fund and how the college intended to use it. The Board noted that the relevant section was currently expressed in broad terms but aligned with the wider inclusion agenda discussed elsewhere in the meeting.

**227.26 The Corporation approved the Accountability Statement. The Chair's signature will be obtained at the end of the meeting.**

**9. Financial Report**

**Management Accounts May 2026**

**228.26** The Finance Director presented the Management Accounts for May 2026 for noting. He drew the Board's attention to a proposed change in the depreciation policy for IT assets. Following discussion with the auditors and potential MAT partners, the useful economic life of PCs had been reviewed because some assets continued to be used after being fully written down. The proposal was to depreciate PCs over seven years rather than five, reflecting their expected useful life and the higher specification of recent purchases. He noted that the change would also affect the release of related grant income, which would be spread over seven years rather than five.

**229.26** Governors discussed the change in depreciation policy for IT assets. They queried whether the revised seven year depreciation period for IT assets was realistic. The Board was assured that seven years was considered appropriate and potentially conservative. It was noted

that if assets were disposed of before the end of their depreciated life, any remaining book value would be written off on disposal. The Board also considered the related effect on grant income, which would be released over seven years rather than five.

**230.26** The Board scrutinised the treatment of holiday pay accruals, particularly in relation to teaching staff. The Director of Finance explained that practice varied across the sector and that further discussion with auditors was taking place. It was noted that the matter had not been reflected in the current forecast at this stage. If a different treatment were adopted, this could result in a one-off adjustment in the accounts of at least £150,000 in the current year. The Board noted that the issue related to accounting treatment and timing, rather than an immediate cash movement.

**231.26 The Management Accounts for May 2026 were noted.**

**Draft Budget 2026-27**

**232.26** The Finance Director presented the Draft Budget for 2026-27 and advised that the position had improved since earlier forecasts, partly because confirmation had been received about the National Insurance grant and mainstream inclusion funding. The budget now showed a small marginal surplus whilst allowing for a cost-of-living increase, other staff measures and the roll out of the Progress Coach model.

**233.26** The Finance Director discussed capital expenditure, including digital capital spend, estate strategy requirements and the potential replacement of the finance system. He advised that two systems remained under consideration: Sage Intacct and iplicit. Further work was being undertaken with budget holders before a final recommendation was brought forward.

**234.26** The Board queried the assumptions around pay award risk. The budget assumed a 3% cost-of-living increase, but the final sector pay award was not yet known. It was noted that each additional 1% would cost approximately £125,000. The Principal reported that the Sixth Form Colleges Association negotiating remit was around 3%, although affordability varied significantly across the sector. The Board also considered the potential implications of London weighting, pension contribution changes and any repurposing of national funding.

**235.26** The Board asked whether the budget papers included a quantified risk and opportunity schedule showing the potential impact if key assumptions changed. It was noted that these risks were actively discussed by management but were not currently presented in the format suggested. The Board indicated that it would be helpful to see the major risks and possible offsets set out more explicitly in future reporting. The Principal and Director of Finance noted that many of the key risks were familiar, including student numbers, staffing costs and pay pressures, but that the forward years remained challenging.

**236.26 The Corporation approved the draft Budget for 2026–27. It was noted that, if required, approval of the new finance system could be progressed by Chair's Action, with the decision reported to the next Corporation meeting.**

**CFFR and Commentary**

**237.26** The Finance Director presented the CFFR and Commentary and explained that the return was based on the Management Accounts and Draft Budget considered earlier in the meeting. Governors noted that, although the underlying financial position remained tight and the later forecast year showed a small deficit, the college's financial health grading was expected to remain good.

**238.26** The Board asked whether the forward-year deficit reflected the potential impact of academisation. It was confirmed that the forecast did not yet take account of any potential financial impact from academisation. The Board noted that further demographic information and commentary might be refined before submission, but that the figures needed to remain consistent with the approved budget.

**239.26 The Corporation approved the CFFR and supporting commentary for submission, subject to any minor refinements to the commentary that did not alter the approved figures.**

**10. IT Review**

**240.26** Due to the confidential nature of the item, the discussion and decision have been recorded in Part 2 of the minutes at C240.26–C245.26.

**11. Governance**

**Committee Draft Terms of Reference 2026-27**

**241.26** The Clerk presented the annual approval of governance documents. The Board received the draft Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee, Remuneration Committee and Quality and Standards Committee. She noted that the Audit and Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference had no significant changes. The Quality and Standards Committee Terms of Reference had been refreshed to align with the updated Ofsted areas, whilst retaining the same broad purpose and focus.

**242.26** The Corporation approved the Audit Committee Terms of Reference 2026, Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference 2026 and Quality and Standards Committee Terms of Reference 2026.

**Cycles of Business 2026-27**

**243.26** The Clerk presented the Full Board, Audit Committee and Quality and Standards Committee cycles of business for 2026–27. She explained that the Full Board and Audit Committee cycles remained the same as the previous year. The Quality and Standards Committee cycle reflected the move to four meetings a year, with the first meeting scheduled before the first Full Board meeting of the year.

**244.26 The Corporation approved the Full Board Cycle of Business, Audit Committee Cycle of Business and Quality and Standards Committee Cycle of Business for 2026–27.**

**Scheme of Delegation 2026-27**

**245.26** The Clerk presented the Scheme of Delegation for approval and advised that the document remained unchanged.

**246.26** The Corporation approved the Scheme of Delegation 2026-27

**Calendar of Meetings**

**247.26 The Clerk presented the Calendar of Meetings for 2026-27, which was noted.**

**12. Link Governance**

**248.26** The Vice Chair presented the Link Governance paper and invited Governors to indicate areas of interest and were encouraged to confirm their preferences. The Chair emphasised the value of link governance in supporting direct engagement with priority areas whilst maintaining an appropriate governance focus.

**249.26** The Board noted the existing and proposed link governor allocations. Following discussion, the link governor roles were agreed as follows:

Carmen Trachenko – Safeguarding
Karen Hetherington – Curriculum, Teaching and Training
Andrew Ringshaw – Leadership and Governance
Helen Rand – Inclusion
Dom Wiffen - Achievement
Rob Kendrick – Meeting the Skills Needs
Brian Pratt – Participation and Development

**250.26 The Clerk will follow up with link governors to connect them with the relevant members of staff.**

**13. Committee Minutes**

**Audit Committee Meeting 12 June 2026**

**251.26** The Board received the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 12 June 2026. They were informed that the meeting had run efficiently and commended the transparency and constructive working relationship between college officers and the auditors. The Board noted that feedback had been received about the phasing of audit work and some duplication, but no significant concerns were raised.

**252.26** The Board acknowledged the significant role played by the Director of Finance in supporting the audit process and thanked him for his work.

**253.26 The Corporation noted the draft minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 12 June 2026.**

**Quality and Standards Committee Meeting – 4 June 2026**

**254.26** The Chair of the QSC presented the draft minutes of the QSC meeting held 4 June 2026. She reported that the Committee had discussed preparation for a potential Ofsted inspection and noted that governors could play an important role in inspection discussions, particularly where they had relevant link governor or specialist areas of knowledge. She further reported that actions and interventions identified by senior leaders had been put in place and that learning across subject areas was being shared. She noted that the development of the Centre for Learning and Teaching would be important in strengthening this work further.

**255.26 The Corporation noted the draft minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on 4 June 2026.**

**14. AOB**

**256.26** The Clerk reminded governors that Smartlog training notifications would be issued and that the training requirement had been narrowed to the three essential modules. Governors were also reminded to complete board evaluations by the final deadline of Wednesday.

**257.26** The Clerk reminded governors who had not yet activated their GovernorHub accounts to do so, as future papers, including the September pack, would be accessed through GovernorHub. The Clerk advised that instructions would be circulated, including details of how to access papers using college iPads and a generic email account where required.

**15. Date of the next Meeting**

**258.26** The next meeting of the Corporation Board will be held on **Monday 21 September 2026.**