

CORPORATION MEETING

PART 1 NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

December 10, 2025

5:00 PM - 6:15 PM

Cathedral Room, Chichester College

PRESENT

Cayleigh Ancell-Faulkner (Student Governor)

Chris Bennett

Steve Cooper (Chair)

Megan Coull (Student Governor)

Helen Everitt

Anne Gornall

David Jones (Vice Chair)

Helen Kilpatrick

Sue Lal (Staff Governor)

Paul Lansdowne (Staff Governor)

Ian Moore

Richard Moore

David Parfitt

James Sarmecanic

Dean Spears

Steven Skinner

Peter Thompson

IN ATTENDANCE

Christine Bianchin (Principal, Brinsbury College & Crawley College)

Steve Coulthard (CFO)

Vicki Illingworth (Executive Principal & Deputy CEO)

Helen Loftus (Principal, Chichester College)

Jon Rollings (COO)

Helena Thomas (Principal, Worthing College & Northbrook College)

Matt Vaughan (Principal, Haywards Heath College & Brighton MET College),

Catherine Vinall (Clerk to the Corporation)

Sarah Box (Governance Officer)

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Standing item

Speaker: Chair

Time: 5.05pm

Attendees were welcomed to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Steve Bassam, Ian Larkham and Tom Simmonds.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Standing item

Speaker: Chair

Governors were reminded that they have a personal responsibility to declare any interests they may have in items under discussion and to know that they would be required to withdraw from the meeting during such discussions.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 OCTOBER 2025

Standing item

Speaker: Chair

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22 October 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

3.1 MATTERS ARISING

Information item

Speaker: Chair

4. LEADERSHIP TEAM SECTOR UPDATE AND STRATEGIC PLAN MONITORING

Information item

Speaker: Vicki Illingworth

Time: 5.10pm

Vicki Illingworth presented the sector update

4.1 FE SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS AND KEY ISSUES FOR CHICHESTER COLLEGE GROUP

Vicki Illingworth provided a presentation to provide an update on policy change, developments within the FE sector and key issues for Chichester College Group. Key developments included the Post 16 White Paper, the Curriculum and Assessment Review, Autumn statement 2025 along with national FE priorities and local priorities for CCG.

There were four key sections to the post 16 white paper, these were working with employers, a specialist and prestigious high quality FE system, strengthening of the HE system and measuring success.

It was confirmed that the final report of the Curriculum and Assessment Review set out the pathways at Level 3, to include T Levels, A levels and new V levels (with de-funding of BTEC qualifications). The design of qualifications would be inclusive for SEND learners and there would be a reduced burden of assessment for T Levels. Two pathways would be introduced at Level 2, one which would progress to Level 3 and one which would progress into work or an apprenticeship. There would be a focus on enrichment and new level 1 pathways for maths and English. In response to a query on the scale of the impact at Level 3, it was explained that it was expected that around 50% of the current level 3 provision would be reviewed and revised.

Moving to the government's autumn statement, Governors were advised that money had been allocated for the youth guarantee and there would be reforms to simplify the apprenticeship system. A local growth fund would be launched in addition to the introduction of an international student levy.

In terms of national priorities, it was advised that the 'adult learning pays' campaign had been launched. The sector was leading thinking on the 'how' of the white paper and 'doing, not being done to' and formulating an evidence based response to the qualification reforms.

Regionally, there was a need to be proactive on the devolution agenda, embed LSIPs and local growth plans. There were strategic opportunities with universities to explore and work to ensure that technical excellence colleges operate as a regional system. Digital and defence technical college bids were being monitored. In addition, there was work underway with the Association of Colleges and local networks to support, campaign and collaborate.

Governors were given an overview of the new data dashboard which provided real time access to data and would support Governor monitoring and oversight.

The celebrations and achievements of students and staff during the autumn term were shared with Governors.

4.2 STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-26 MONITORING SUCCESS MEASURES

Information item

The report showing performance against success measures was noted.

5. CHICHESTER COLLEGE GROUP PERFORMANCE REPORT AND SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2024/25

Time: 5.20 pm

5.1 UPDATE ON THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING

Information item

Speaker: Richard Moore

Richard Moore confirmed that the recent CQC meeting had been positive with both new governors and new principals attending and a healthy balance of governors and staff. There had been an increasing focus on curriculum and teaching and learning this year, which was welcomed by the Committee.

It was reported that enrolments were broadly positive and the challenges of over and under recruitment had been discussed. Attendance continued to be a work in progress, with many strategies in place to drive improvements. The areas that were a current focus included A'level achievement, T'level performance, achievement gaps and Maths and English. Some of these were recurring issues and so important for the Committee to understand them in detail.

In addition, the Self Assessment Report had been reviewed along with the Safeguarding and Behaviour Report. The Student Induction Survey results had been delayed due to low participation rates, and it had been informed that the Group were considering alternative ways to obtain stakeholder feedback. In addition, the HE strategy and action plan would be covered at a later meeting.

5.2 CHICHESTER COLLEGE GROUP PERFORMANCE REPORT

Information item

Speaker: Vicki Illingworth

The report giving a summary of the performance of teaching and learning at Chichester College Group was received. Vicki Illingworth confirmed that the key themes discussed at CQC meetings had been reflected in the SAR and the College quality improvement plans.

5.3 CCG SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT 2024/25

Decision item

Speaker: Vicki Illingworth

Vicki Illingworth explained that the format of the SAR would change from next year onwards to reflect the new Ofsted toolkit. The draft headlines had been presented to CQC and then a fuller report was discussed at the validation meeting, where robust conversations had taken place.

The Chair of CQC confirmed that the final product was a fair assessment of the Group, presenting an honest assessment which clearly identified areas for improvement. He expressed thanks to the Executive Principal, Principals and teams for their work on the report. It was confirmed that each College had a Quality Improvement Plan for the year ahead. It was

Resolved

That the CCG Self Assessment Report 2024/25 be approved.

COMMITTEE UPDATES AND ITEMS FOR APPROVAL/INFORMATION

6. FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Time: 5.35pm

6.1 UPDATE ON THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

Information item

Speaker: James Sarmecanic

James Sarmecanic provided an update on the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 1 December 2025. The Committee had been pleased to review the positive results following the post merger period.

The Group and Subsidiary Accounts had been reviewed, along with accounting estimates and areas of judgement. The Management Accounts for 2025/26 showed a strong start to the year. There was a need for focus on the commercial areas, and the Committee would continue oversight of performance and the strategy for recovering the position.

6.2 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS 2025/26

Information item

Speaker: Steve Coulthard

The Group's Management Accounts to 31 October 2025 were received. Steve Coulthard explained that a reasonably positive picture was shown, with the Group being slightly ahead of budget. It was reported that overall income was slightly down but 16-18 was slightly up, this was mainly due to BN1 Arts, but the costs of subcontracting would need to be taken into account.

Contingency had been increased in this year's budget, and this would allow the Group to look at the challenges of covering staff sickness absence. The major capital programme was coming to an end, and the Group would begin to spend the £5.2m received from the government for Capital. The cash position was stabilising and growing, and it was confirmed that it was expected that the Group would return to a good financial health rating at the end of year.

7. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Time: 5.45pm

7.1 UPDATE FROM THE AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

Information item

Speaker: Helen Kilpatrick CB

The summary of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 26 November 2025 was noted.

7.2 RISK MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE REPORT

Decision item

Speaker: Steve Coulthard

Chichester College Group's Risk Registers were received, and it was noted that this was the first report using the new system. It would take some time to fully populate the risks, and the Audit & Risk Committee had discussed the importance of ensuring the balance of financial, student and staff risks. Two areas were noted as very high risks, cyber security risk and commercial.

A confidential minute was taken at this point.

It was

Resolved

That the CCG Risk Management and Assurance Report be approved.

7.3 RSM CHICHESTER COLLEGE GROUP INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

Information item

Speaker: Helen Kilpatrick CB

The RSM Chichester College Group Internal Audit Annual Report 2024/25 was received. The internal auditors had provided an assessment of reasonable assurance for audit work undertaken in 2024/25.

8. GOVERNANCE & SEARCH COMMITTEE

Time: 5.55pm

8.1 UPDATE FROM THE GOVERNANCE & SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

Information item

Speaker: Steve Cooper

The summary of the Governance & Search Committee meeting held on 11 November 2025 was received. Catherine Vinall explained that the report received on governance improvement actions had collated a number of actions which had been discussed at the Corporation meeting in July. Governance & Search Committee would oversee the progress of these.

Governor attendance had also been reviewed and for 2024/25 attendance was confirmed as 80%.

It was explained that the Governance Self-Assessment had been ungraded this year in line with the approach for the rest of the Group, and this been reflected in the SAR 2024/25. The assessment brought together information from a variety of data points including Ofsted feedback, governor attendance and compliance with the Code of Good Governance.

8.2 CORPORATION MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Decision item Speaker: Catherine Vinall

Governors noted the change of Sue Lal's role to an Associate Lecturer and that she would continue as a Staff Governor but from a teaching and learning perspective rather than as support staff.

8.3 REMUNERATION COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Decision item Speaker: Catherine Vinall

It was confirmed that the Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference had been updated to reflect best practice and succession planning. The Remuneration Committee had recommended the Terms of Reference. It was

Resolved

That the Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference be approved.

9. RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Discussion item

9.1 UPDATE FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Information item Speaker: Steve Cooper Time: 6.00pm

The summary of the Resources Committee meeting held on 1 December 2025 was noted. The Committee had reviewed the annual Health and Safety action plan and received a sustainability update.

10. STUDENT COMMITTEE

Discussion item

10.1 UPDATE FROM THE STUDENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Information item Speaker: David Jones Time: 6.05pm

The summary of the meeting on 5 November 2025 was received. The format of the meeting had been amended for 2025/26 with just Student Leaders and Student Presidents in attendance rather than all Student Executive members. As a result, the Committee could meet face to face and the engagement was more effective. David Jones confirmed that all colleges had been represented and the quality of discussion had been excellent. The level of student confidence and professionalism was also noted. There had been some important feedback from student leaders on the work undertaken by the Student Unions in the first term and their experiences at college.

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings were noted as:

Corporation Development/Strategy Event

Tuesday, 10 February 2026 2-4pm at Worthing College

Corporation Meeting

Wednesday, 25 March 2026 4pm at Brinsbury College

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Governor Farewell

Thanks and gratitude were expressed to James Sarmecanic who was attending his final Corporation meeting. James had joined the Corporation following the merger with Central Sussex College in 2017, his time as a governor at CCG had been interesting and varied, primarily serving on Finance Committee as well as Governance & Search and Remuneration Committees.

James had served as Vice-Chair of the Corporation as well as Chair, and then Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee. James led the board through the merger with Worthing College, being part of the shadow board for that merger, followed by the merger with GB Met. His continued dedication and commitment to the role was valued and appreciated.