

CORPORATION BOARD of the Governing Body
Minutes of the Committee held on Tuesday 8th July 2025, 4.00pm
at Stanmore College and on MS Teams

Present:

Rabbi Gideon Schulman (GS) – Chair
Mr Sundeep Bhandari (SB) – Vice-Chair
Mrs Annette Cast (AC) – Principal
Mr Paul Goodman (PG) – Governor
Mr Mike Bluestone (MB) – Governor
Ms Kate Parsley (KP) – Governor (for part of meeting)
Mr Ramin Hashemain (RH) – Academic Staff Governor
Mr Zaid Ghandi (ZG) – Support Staff Governor

In Attendance:

Ms Angela Jackson (AJa) – Deputy Principal
Ms Anjana Jonathan (AJ) – Director of Finance
Ms Justine Gooch (JG) – Director of MIS, IT, Admissions (until item 11.)
Ms Gayle Brown (GB) – Director of Student Services & Safeguarding (until item 13.)
Mr Ruairidh Kane (RK) – Director of Quality, Teaching & Learning (until item 12.)
Ms Fatima Cutting (FC) – Student Governor
Ms Kayee Chan (KC) – Director of Governance

Apologies:

Mrs Hannah Butland (HB) – Governor/ Chair Elect
Mr Julian Davies (JD) - Governor
Ms Ying Kay (YK) – Governor
Ms Stephanie Chittendon (SC) - Assistant Principal
Mr Shaurya Deshmukh (SD) - Student Governor

RESOLUTION

To confirm the minutes of the meeting Part I held on 25th March 2025.
To confirm the confidential minutes of the meeting Part II held on 25th March 2025.
To approve the Accountability Statement 2025/26.
To approve the Annual Safeguarding Report 2025/26.
To approve the Budget Plan and the proposed pay award of 3%, if funding permits.
To approve the appointment of Governor Kate Parsley for a second four year term.

To approve the appointment of student governors Jawad Mustafa and Milli Nathwani.

To approve policies under section 14. As recommended by relevant committees.

To approve the following Governance proposals:

Skills Audit Report and Governor Recruitment Update.

Governor Terms, Renewal and Succession Planning.

Revised Committee Structure Proposal and Terms of Reference.

Governance Meeting Schedule for 2025/26.

Work Programme for 2025/26.

Governor Self Assessment and Improvement Action Plan 2025/26.

Governor Engagement Programme Interim Proposal 2025/26.

Governance Documents:

- a) Instruments and Articles
 - b) Standing Orders
 - c) Governor Code of Conduct
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1. Chair's Opening Remarks

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all attendees and acknowledged the Corporation Board's and Senior Leadership Team's hard work during the academic year. There were no Chair's actions taken since the last meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

- 2.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Hannah Butland, Julian Davies, Ying Kay, Shaurya Deshmukh and Stephanie Chittendon.

3. Conflicts of Interest and Declarations

- 3.1 No declarations of interest were made.

4. Confirmation of Quorum

- 4.1 The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting (25th March 2025)

- 5.1 Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

6. Matters Arising Not on the Agenda

6.1 No additional items were raised.

7a). New Build Update

7.1 The New Build Project Assistant (VP) gave a detailed update on the new build project, via presentation slides. There had been no safety or compliance issues, and a recent inspection raised no concerns. However, Phase 2 was currently eight weeks behind schedule due to service rerouting and unexpected asbestos discovered in the Oak building. Despite this, the completion date remained tentatively between February and April 2026, with efforts underway to recover time through extended working hours. The decamp from the current building was now planned for Easter 2026 to reduce disruption.

7.2 The concrete structure was complete, the tower crane removed, and Phase 2 construction—including the first four floors and roofing— was progressing. Utility connections were underway, affecting some facilities. Future phases (Blocks C, D, E) required a new crane post move-in. ICT planning was nearly complete, with no delays reported.

7.3 Community engagement continues, with evening events, leaflet drops, and potential use of local media for wider outreach. Site visits with neighbours, students, and T Level engineering learners had been positive.

7.4 The internal working group visited the site, viewed tech demos, and would soon finalise decisions on furniture and finishes. They noted encouraging progress.

7b). Risk Register

7.5 The Risk register was reviewed monthly- shared with the Resources Committee and there were no changes from its last update.

7c). Tendering Services for New Build

7.6 Proposals for upcoming procurement of catering and cleaning services were shared, with support from Cohesion Consulting. Two separate tenders would be launched in late July, aligned with the expiration of the current catering contract in August 2026. The consulting team had advised against an early tender for cleaning, suggesting instead a new contract to begin in April 2026 when the new build was ready. The

focus for catering was on sustainability, using local suppliers, and providing healthier food options. There was also interest in ensuring the catering provider engaged with students and supported the College's green strategy. With the new refectory being the largest social space on campus, there would be potential for commercial use (e.g. weddings and events), though the College did not want to be locked into exclusive use agreements. The new provider needed to be flexible and compatible with both educational and community use. The cleaning contract would be integrated into the broader facilities strategy.

8. College Performance

- 8.1 The 2024-25 KPIs showed strong overall performance. Targets for 2025-26 were discussed. Some of the data presented was based on mid-June figures and did not fully capture end-of-year achievement rates due to ILR submission timing. Since then, achievement rates have improved significantly. For example, the overall rate rose from 15.9% to 30.5%, and 16–18 and 19+ rates also increased.
- 8.2 Applications were up year-on-year for 16–20 and adult learners, though progression was slightly down. Attendance remained steady but below target at around 75%, requiring continued focus.
- 8.3 Adult learner comparisons to last year were affected by increased funding rates and static allocations, limiting recruitment. While unfunded learners were tracked internally, they were not included in official KPIs. No major concerns were raised.

9. Curriculum Structure Update

- 9.1 The Deputy Principal AJa provided an update following the staff consultation process in May. The purpose of the restructure was not to reduce spend but to plan more resource in the heart of the curriculum where it can impact most directly on teaching, learning and assessment and support the teacher by impacting on the wrap around at a curriculum level. Key adjustments included the establishment of new Heads of Faculty roles, an Assistant Principal of Skills, and Business Development roles. Most appointments were confirmed, and interviews for remaining posts were underway.
- 9.2 The new structure was set to go live on 1st August 2025. Two Director roles (SEND Inclusive Learning and Business Development) remain unfilled and may require interim cover. Staff feedback had been mainly positive, and the transition was being managed sensitively.

10. Accountability Statement 2025/26

- 10.1 The Accountability Statement was a required annual submission to the DfE, outlining how the College meets local skills needs. It follows a standard DfE format and

includes provision plans for 2025/26, such as ESOL, Rail Futures, HTP learner support, and numeracy development. It also detailed how the College engages with local stakeholders and addresses local needs duties.

- 10.2 The statement was signed by the Chair and Principal, submitted to the DfE, and published on the College website. This process linked directly to the Strategic Plan and KPIs, ensuring alignment between College goals and delivery.

11. Enrolment Plan 2025/26

- 11.1 Since January 2024, a full review and restructure has been implemented, resulting in streamlined processes, improved tracking, and significant cost savings (over £20k from digital communications alone). EHCP processes were tightened with better co-ordinated, and enrolment events were reorganised for a smoother learner experience.

- 11.2 Key improvements include:

- Digital shift for communication and reporting
- Real-time application tracking and conditional offers
- Segmented enrolment dates (16–18s, EHCPs, adults) for better flow
- “One-stop-shop” student hub launching in August for bursaries, FSM, and queries
- New Eventbrite booking system to manage learner slots and flow
- Contingency planning for IT/infrastructure risks
- Built-in 42-day leaver buffer into curriculum planning

- 11.3 Despite ongoing construction, learner engagement remains strong, with enrolment scheduled to begin on 20th August 2025 (soft launch for EHCP), and full main enrolment from 21st August.

- 11.4 Governors questioned how the conversion of applications to enrolments would be tracked in real-time and how risks were monitored (covering IT issues, facilities, bad weather). The Director of MIS, IT and Admissions confirmed that a dashboard to track and monitor enrolment risks was in place and would be shared with governors upon request. The Board would receive reports if risks were to escalate during September enrolment.

12. Teaching, Learning & CPD Report

- 12.1 The annual report showed improvements in lesson observation outcomes and CPD participation.
- 12.2 This year focused on engagement, attendance, and outcomes. Progress had been made, though attendance remained a challenge. A trauma-informed approach had been introduced to improve behaviour understanding, with good early staff feedback.

- 12.3 CPD was now mandatory and targeted, linked to observation outcomes and team needs. Curriculum managers played a bigger role in leading development. Induction for new staff included clear messaging on expectations and culture.
- 12.4 There has been a shift from schemes of work to learning sequences to improve impact and alignment with Ofsted. The quality cycle was being refined to better link teaching, assessment, and development.
- 12.5 Student surveys showed improved support for mental health and wellbeing. Going forward, there would be fewer, better-timed surveys with clearer follow-up ("You said, we did").
- 12.6 New AI tools (TeacherMatic and Quality Assistant) have reduced staff workload and improved planning. The College won a national award for AI use.
- 12.7 Key priorities for 2025-26 include embedding new practices, curriculum changes, and continued CPD focus, with digital tools supporting delivery.

13. Safeguarding Annual Report

- 13.1 An annual report was presented, showing strong safeguarding performance and compliance.
- 13.2 The College continued to promote a strong safeguarding culture with clear visibility of the Safeguarding Team through digital media, posters, and tutorials. Students and staff were aware of who to contact for Safeguarding concerns.
- 13.3 The number of concerns reported (218) was similar to last year, but there had been a significant increase (183%) in referrals from external agencies, mainly children's services, often related to criminal exploitation affecting learners or their families. Serious issues like self-harm and suicidal ideation have risen slightly, though general mental health concerns have decreased. Male learners are slightly more represented in concerns than females.
- 13.4 The Safeguarding team collaborated closely with the safeguarding governor, meeting regularly to oversee serious cases. Attendance, especially for vulnerable groups such as looked-after children, remained a concern; intensive support was provided through counsellors and welfare teams.
- 13.5 An external audit of satellite sites showed positive safeguarding awareness and confidence among staff and students. Training on topics such as consent, misogyny, forced marriage, and emotional regulation continues, with a focus on updating staff about new risks including online safety threats like misinformation and AI-related issues.

- 15.7 A new Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) role was being recruited to strengthen the team's capacity. The College was proactive in responding to safeguarding issues and was on track to fill the Deputy DSL role by September.
- 15.8 The College recently completed its three-year Matrix accreditation review and successfully retained its accreditation. Safeguarding was identified as a key strength in the assessor's report.
- 15.9 Governor approved the Annual Safeguarding Report for 2025-26.

14. Policies for Approval

- 14.1 The following policies were approved as recommended by the relevant Committees:
- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
 - Financial Regulations
 - Fees Policy
 - Reserves Policy
 - Student Financial Support Policies
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Risk Management Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
- 14.2 It was noted that the Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and other HR policies were subject for a full review in the autumn term this year, ensuring all legislative updates were incorporated.

15. Principal's Year-End Report

- 15.1 The Principal's Report summarised the College's achievements for the year and highlighted strategic priorities moving forward – which were noted by governors.
- 15.2 The Principal highlighted the following points:
- The College ranked 3rd out of 8 FE colleges for 16–18 achievement, which was positive. However, adult (19+) learner outcomes remain disappointing, with ongoing concerns for 2024-25 and plans to improve for 2025-26.
 - The College's Turing application (international opportunities for students) was unsuccessful due to changes in criteria focusing on staff and learner profiles. An appeal had been submitted based on grounds that key points were overlooked.
 - The recent student awards evening was successful and positively received, with room for further improvement.

- A major concern was growing adult education provision and achievement. Current offerings are limited, partly due to building constraints and the college's historic focus on 16–18 education.
- Employer engagement, especially with local business parks and industries (e.g., construction trades, health and social care), needed strengthening to boost adult course relevance and uptake.
- Recruitment for an Assistant Principal focused on skills development was underway to help drive these improvements.
- Staff generally excelled in their roles but required support and guidance to develop employer relationships and diversify adult learning.
- Governors were encouraged to support and consider strategies to enhance adult learning growth and employer partnerships. It was agreed to schedule a discussion on adult education growth strategy and employer engagement.

16. Governor Strategy Day Outcomes

- 16.1 The Governor Strategy Day on the 28th April reviewed current challenges and aligned the College's priorities with its Strategic Plan. Key areas included leadership strengths, employer engagement, curriculum alignment with the London Growth Plan, and management of new facilities. A SWOT analysis informed these discussions, opportunities such as GLA boot camps and local partnerships were presented by representatives from the GLA and Harrow Council.
- 16.2 Clear governance and operational reporting structures were emphasized to ensure effective oversight. Governors commented the need for preparing the Board as well as the College staff for an upcoming Ofsted inspection in 2025-26.

17. Good Governance Updates

- 17.1 The Director of Governance presented a report highlighting key themes from the FEC intervention report on governance failures at Weston College and implications for governance.
- 17.2 The FEC summary report's governance recommendations were reviewed and aligned against Stanmore College's current practices. Key points included ensuring transparency in governance processes, especially regarding remuneration decisions, where full Board approval is required. It was also emphasized that the Principal's pay increase should not exceed that of other staff, reinforcing the principle of equity within the College team. In summary, governance adjustments had been taken over the course of the year and practices largely met or were in progress to meet the FEC recommendations on good governance.

Committee Reports

18. Curriculum and Quality Committee

18.1 No summary update of the Committee was provided to note.

19. Minutes from of the approved Curriculum and Quality Committee on 6th May 2025 were noted by the Board.

20. Resources Committee

20.1 No further updates other than discussed in the minutes were provided by the Chair of the Committee.

21. Approved minutes from of the approved Curriculum and Quality Committee on 6th May 2025 were noted.

22. Budget & Financial Plan

22.1 The budget and financial plan 2025-26 reflected an increase in funding primarily due to higher learner numbers and improved funding bands, particularly for 16-18 year-olds. A 2.5% pay award was currently budgeted, though a 3% pay award was being considered to align with other London colleges. The final budget was dependent on confirmation of additional income, including potential contributions related to National Insurance increases. Adult funding had reduced due to a smaller 19+ learner cohort, but this had limited impact due to the College's focus on younger learners.

22.2 Internal audit concerns related to the new build were also discussed, with an resolution with the auditors agreeing to move from a formal audit report to an advisory document due to the College not owning the building until August completion.

22.3 The Board approved the budget and financial plan for 2025-26 with the option to adjust pay award to 3% if funding permits.

22.4 Governors raised concerns around the effectiveness of the current internal audit provider and alternatives to be evaluated if necessary.

23. Audit and Assurance Committee

23.1 No further updates other than discussed in the minutes were provided by the Chair of the Committee.

24. Approved minutes from of the Audit and Assurance Committee on 20th May 2025 were noted by the Board.

The Board approved the following:

- 25. Risk Register
- 26a). Internal Audit Strategy
- 26b). External Audit Strategy

27. Governance Committee

- 27.1 The Director of Governance provided a verbal update on Governor recruitment, which was progressing well, with six candidates currently engaged via Peridot recruitment and more interest coming in. Two informal meetings were held with promising candidate, both of whom were positive about committing to the role. It was a diverse candidate pool including in skills such as law, HR, marketing, social entrepreneurship, further education, and accountancy.
- 27.2 Two student governors, Jared Mustafa and Milli Nathwani, were successfully elected and recommended for appointment to the Board for 2025-26. The Board approved the appointment of the student governors as recommended.
- 27.3 Staff governor recruitment was still ongoing, due to a low uptake in interest.
- 28. Approved minutes from of the Governance Committee on 24th June 2025 were noted by the Board. A summary update from the Chair of the Committee was noted.

The Board then approved the following proposals as recommended by the Governance Committee:

- 29. Skills Audit Report and Governor Recruitment Update
- 30. Governor Terms, Renewal and Succession Planning
- 31. Revised Committee Structure Proposal and Terms of Reference
- 32. Governance Meeting Schedule for 2025/26
- 33. Work Programme for 2025/26
- 34. Governor Self-Assessment and Improvement Action Plan 2025/26
- 35. Governor Engagement Programme Interim Proposal 2025/26
- 36. Governance Documents:
 - a) Instrument and Articles
 - b) Standing Orders
 - c) Governor Code of Conduct

37. Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair opened by expressing pride in the collective achievements of the Board and staff, particularly highlighting the effective handling of the new build and ongoing organisational changes. Appreciation was extended to all members for their dedication and hard work. The Chair and the Board gave special thanks to those who were stepping down, Governor Ying Kay, Staff Governors Ramin Hashemain and

Zaid Ghandi, and Student Governors Fatima Cutting and Shaurya Deshmukh, acknowledging their valuable contributions and commitment.

Through the achievements through the year, members recognized a strong, motivated team of staff and governors committed to the College's success. There was optimism about the ongoing development of the Board and looking forward to new appointments joining to further strengthen governance, alongside the College's physical expansion and operational growth.

38. Meeting Review

Staff governors who were stepping down, reflected positively on their governance roles, noting that it offered a comprehensive understanding of the College's operations and decision-making, and had been an enriching experience.

Governors expressed their concern about low attendance at recent meetings, particularly in light of the Board's efforts to facilitate participation via online options and especially during significant periods of change. With new governor recruits planned for the new year, a new approach to Board and Committee meetings and a comprehensive governor engagement plan, would aim to strengthen governor attendance and engagement.

Governors acknowledged the challenges faced but remained optimistic about the direction and progress being made. Appreciation was also given to the Senior Leadership and Director of Governance for their support and effective management of Board processes.

39. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board would take place on Tuesday 7th October 2025.

Part 1 of the meeting ended at 6.50pm.

The meeting then moved into Part II confidential business and non-members withdrew.

Kayee Chan, Director of Governance

Schedule of Actions:

	Action	Responsible	By When	Progress
	25th March 2025			
5	Email addresses for reporting spam to IT to be shared with governors	PD	26/03/25	
New Build Update	IA to share the phasing plan to governors.	IA	31/03/25	
7	Review of the Principal's Report around what is presented and how it is presented .	AC		
	8th July 2025			
15.2	Schedule discussion on adult education growth strategy and employer engagement.	Dir. of Governance	Spring 2026	