BUSINESS COMMITTEE

CONFIRMED MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 5 MAY 2026 AT 4:00PM
CITY COLLEGE NORWICH, A50 NORWICH BUILDING

Present:

Noel Bartram	MB	Chair
Jerry White	JW	Principal and Governor
Joe McNeill	JMc	Governor
Phil Gormley	PG	Governor
Sarah Appleton	SA	Governor
Shirley Barker	SB	Staff Governor
Lillian Rackham	LRa	Student Governor

Attendees:

Chris Caddamy	CC	
Ed Rose	ER	Executive Director Business Development, Apprenticeships and Adults
Jen Eves	JE	Chief Operating Officer
Jodie Mitchell	JM	Director of Governance and Legal
Marcus Bailey	MB	Chair of the Corporation (*remote, via MS Teams from 5:00pm*)
Martin Colbourne	MC	Chief Finance Officer
Matt Poll	MP	Director of Estates and Facilities *(until 5:15pm)*
Nick Sainton-Clark	NSC	Health & Safety Manager *(for item 1.1 only)*
Claire Harber	CH	Governance and Legal Officer

Apologies:

Lacey Ross	LR	Student Governor, SU President

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1. Area Updates

1.1 Health & Safety Update

The Health & Safety Update was circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- The spike in reports of slips and trips has been analysed and predominantly due to winter weather and sports rather than faults with the estate.
- Reports of student violence and aggression have increased. Many of the reports are within Inclusive Learning, one of which resulted in a RIDDOR and a seven-day absence of a staff member (Governors questioned the incident and were provided with detail of the outcome).
- There have been 5 RIDDORs over the reporting period.
- A new events management policy is in place; event planning templates and an advisory group have been implemented.
- Paston fire door updates are making progress and fire risk assessments are planned at some sites next week.
- Protection of premises training has been rolled out, and information posters have been put up across all sites. Next steps include testing notification solutions for those in outside spaces.
- A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) complaint was made in January regarding staff/student ratios and incorrect personal protection equipment in engineering. The HSE investigated and were content with the procedures in place and no further action was pursued.

- No major problems have been surfaced from the occupational health surveillance to date.

Governors asked whether consistent incident figures indicate that no progress is being made and were informed that many incidents are minor and difficult to completely irradicate. Governors asked for analysis of incidents by group size and context.

ACTION 1: Provide analysis of health and safety incidents by group size and context (NSC).

It was additionally highlighted to the Committee that there have been incidents of violence and aggression around one of the gender-neutral toilet facilities on the Norwich site. Governors questioned the severity of the incidents, and it was confirmed that one has been serious. It was confirmed that the gender-neutral toilets are a trial running to the end of the academic year, at which point their continuation will be considered.

NSC left the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and noted as above.

3. Declarations of Conflict

No declarations were made.

4. Estates and Facilities Update

The Estates and Facilities Update was circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- Final inspections are underway to allow release of retention payments for works carried out with the £12.5m capital grant.
- Further FE College Condition (FECCA) funding has been awarded for 2026/27; updates to the Easton 3G pitch, toilet refurbishments and Easton accommodation upgrades are included in the project list.
- The scope is being finalised for a project to create eight new classrooms in Norwich.
- The College has applied for additional post-16 capacity funding to infill the Norwich building courtyard to accommodate additional learners.
- Advice has been sought on the utilities contract renewal due in September due to cost risk.

Governors questioned how the vacancies listed in the paper as on hold due to finances are reviewed and it was confirmed that vacancies are considered weekly and those considered business critical are released. Governors asked when the College will be able to afford the staff it needs and were informed that work is being undertaken to confirm year one of the five-year plan.

4.1 Estates Strategy

The Estates Strategy was circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read. It was highlighted that the strategy is a dynamic document which will evolve as the Curriculum Strategy takes shape.

The Committee queried whether a Sustainable Travel Plan has been drafted and it was confirmed that although cycle paths and car parking are being considered, a plan has not been finalised.

The Committee asked that analysis be carried out on how the Curriculum Strategy and Estates Strategy interplay ahead of the May Board meeting. Subject to this work, the Committee determined to recommend the Estates Strategy as a framework for estate planning to the Board for approval.

ACTION 2: Analyse how the Curriculum Strategy and Estates Strategy interplay ahead of the May Board meeting (MP/JW).

4.2 Easton Solar Panel Roof Project
The Easton Solar Panel Project proposal was circulated prior to the meeting.

Governors asked the extent of the College's obligations in relation to green energy and how the solar panel project links into the 5-year plan.

ACTION 3: Investigate the College's obligations in relation to sustainability and green energy (MP).

ACTION 4: Clarify how the solar panel project links into the 5-year plan (MP).

Governors requested that the expected increase in electricity consumption vs export be included in the financial modelling for the project.

ACTION 5: Include the expected increase in electricity consumption vs export in the financial modelling for the Easton Solar Panel Project (MP/MC).

The Committee approved release of £5k for an initial site survey to further the project.

5. Procurement Activity Update
This item was taken after item 5.1.

The Procurement Activity Update was circulated prior to the meeting and was noted by the Committee.

The Committee were informed that the main utilities contracts are due for renewal on 1 October 2026. It was highlighted that the College is gathering intelligence from the sector to inform budget setting and how to interact with the current market.

Due to the fast-paced nature of the utilities market, the Committee agreed to delegate authority to approve the utilities contracts to the Chair of the Corporation and the Chair of the Business Committee. It was agreed that advice received in relation to utilities would be forwarded.

ACTION 6: Forward advice received in relation to utilities contracts renewal to the Chair of the Business Committee and Chair of the Corporation (MC).

5.1 CONFIDENTIAL – Catering Contract
The discussion was confidential and is recorded in the confidential minutes.

MP left the meeting at 5:15pm.

The meeting took a break at 5:15pm and reconvened at 5:27pm.

5.2 Finance System Update
This item was taken after item 5.

The Finance System Update papers were circulated prior to the meeting.

The Committee were informed that presentations for potential new systems are due to take place on 13 July 2026 and requested that a Governor participate on the panel.

ACTION 7: Contact Governors to seek governing body participation on the panel for finance system presentations on 13 July (JM).

The Committee asked how the finance system fits into the wider digitisation process and were informed that the College will be looking at a cloud-based system which will integrate with EBS and provide automated invoice scanning.

The expected value of the system was confirmed at approximately £50-60k per annum for five years, with £40-50k implementation costs.

In response to a question from the Committee as to whether cyber security due diligence had been carried out on potential systems and it was confirmed that it has.

Due to timescale, the Committee delegated authority to the Chair of the Business Committee and Chair of the Corporation to agree the finance system provider.

6. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting Held on 17 March 2026

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2026 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

7. Unconfirmed Confidential Minutes of the Meeting Held on 17 March 2026

7.1 Unconfirmed Confidential Minutes of the Meeting Held on 17 March 2026 (Set 1)

The unconfirmed confidential minutes (set 1) of the meeting held on 17 March 2026 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

7.2 Unconfirmed Confidential Minutes of the Meeting Held on 17 March 2026 (Set 2)

The unconfirmed confidential minutes (set 2) of the meeting held on 17 March 2026 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

8. Matters Arising

Bus 2 Action 3: ACTION COMPLETE

Bus 4 Action 1: Amend wording in the 'governance' section of the Digital Strategy to clarify that these are SMT actions rather than for the governing body (CC). *To be included in the IT Update to the June meeting.* ACTION ONGOING (Due: June 2026)

Bus 4 Action 2: Include a diagram in the Digital Strategy to show reporting lines (CC). *To be included in the IT Update to the June meeting.* ACTION ONGOING (Due: June 2026)

Bus 4 Action 3: Implement method of tracking goals within Digital Strategy for reporting to Governors (CC). *To be included in the IT Update to the June meeting.* ACTION ONGOING (Due: June 2026)

Bus 4 Action 4: ACTION COMPLETE
Bus 4 Action 5: ACTION COMPLETE
Bus 4 Action 6: ACTION COMPLETE

Bus 4 Action 7: Present a record of all current vacancies on hold due to financial pressures (MC). *A summary of payroll spend against budget year to date was provided. Governors asked whether a register of vacancies held exists and asked for clarification on how decisions are made in relation to holding, releasing or temporarily filling vacancies.* ACTION ONGOING (Due: May 2026)

Bus 4 Action 9: ACTION COMPLETE
Bus 4 Action 10: ACTION COMPLETE
Bus 4 Action 11: ACTION COMPLETE
Bus 4 Action 12: ACTION COMPLETE
Bus 4 Action 13: ACTION COMPLETE
Bus 4 Action 14: ACTION COMPLETE

Bus 4 Action 15: Ensure objectives of the College Principals include sickness management targets reflecting the action plan (JW). *College Principals will be reporting to the Group Leadership Team on absence rates in their area and these will be monitored by the Committee under workforce updates.* ACTION COMPLETE.

Bus 4 Action 16: ACTION COMPLETE
Bus 4 Action 17: ACTION COMPLETE

Some discussions under Matters Arising were confidential and are recorded in the confidential minutes.

9. Risk Register Review

The Risk Register Review was circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- The risk rating for finance has increased due to government funding announcements and mitigations are being considered.
- The industrial relations risk has decreased since the resolution of the recent dispute with UCU.
- Cyber risk continues to be significant, and mitigations are being actively worked through.

Governors expressed concern over the high rating for cyber risk and asked what the next steps of mitigations are and were informed that although the risk can be slightly reduced with mitigations, it will always remain a high risk.

After questioning from the Committee, it was confirmed that the student behaviour risk is included in the operational risk register and there discussion as to whether this might become a strategic risk. It was agreed that this would be considered at the next Senior Management Team risk meeting.

ACTION 9: Discuss the student behaviour risk at the next SMT risk meeting and ascertain whether it should be classified, or might become, a strategic risk (JW).

ACTION 10: Flag student behaviour risk to Audit and Risk Committee (NB/JM).

ACTION 11: Consider how emerging risks are identified and documented and the ownership of such risks (JW).

It was noted that work is ongoing to establish the College's risk appetite and risk tolerance.

10. Strategic Targets 2025/26
No matters were raised under this item.

10.1 Proposed Accountability Agreement and Strategic Targets 2026/27
The Proposed Accountability Agreement and Strategic Targets 2026/27 were circulated prior to the meeting.

It was agreed that the proposal would be updated to reflect discussions at the Curriculum and Quality Committee which requested inclusion of strategic targets important for the College that might fall outside the Department for Education guidance. It was further agreed that the amended targets could then be considered and discussed at the May Board meeting.

Governors stressed that the 2025/26 targets should continue to be monitored.

11. CONFIDENTIAL – Finance Report
The discussion was confidential and is recorded in the confidential minutes.

11.1 CONFIDENTIAL - Insurance Update
The discussion was confidential and is recorded in the confidential minutes.

11.2 CEFSS Action Plan
The CEFSS Action Plan was circulated prior to the meeting. It was confirmed that seven of the actions have been delegated to the Business Committee. The two actions due by the summer are on track for completion and progress is being made against other actions.

The Committee noted the action plan and that it would be developed further and reported to the Committee on an ongoing basis.

12. Employer Engagement and Partnership Report
The Employer Engagement and Partnership Report and draft Employer Engagement Strategy were circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. The following points were highlighted:

- The strategy seeks to strike a balance between service to employers and accountability targets.
- Memorandums of Understanding with key strategic partners will be put into place.
- The Employer Engagement Strategy will help inform the curriculum and therefore links directly to the Curriculum Strategy.

Governors asked how commercial income is expected to grow and how objectives for growth will be set and were informed that the commercial element will align with apprenticeships and it is intended that the apprenticeship team be developed to be more multifunctional. However, there will be need for investment to grow the sales force, and further detail will follow.

13. GDPR Compliance Report
The GDPR Compliance Report was circulated prior to the meeting.

The Committee noted the report.

14. CONFIDENTIAL – Union Minutes
The discussion was confidential and is recorded in the confidential minutes.

15. Health & Safety Minutes
No minutes were presented.

16. Other Urgent Business
No matters were raised under this item.

17. Meeting Review
The Committee expressed the need for a People Committee to reduce the workload of the Business Committee.

18. CONFIDENTIAL – Industrial Relations
The discussion was confidential and is recorded in the confidential minutes.

19. Date of Next Meeting
The next Business Committee Meeting is scheduled to take place on 16 June 2026 at 4:00pm.

All formal business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 6:39pm.

Signed ………………………………………………….. Date ………………………
(Chair)