

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

CONFIRMED MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 13 MAY 2025 AT 4:00PM THETFORD BOARDROOM, CITY COLLEGE NORWICH

Present:

Noel Bartram	NB	Chair
Andrew Barnes	AB	Governor (<i>from 4:05pm to 6:27pm</i>)
Jerry White	JW	Principal
Joe McNeill	JMc	Governor
Hazel Thomas	HT	Student Governor (<i>remote, via Teams</i>)
Shirley Barker	SB	Staff Governor

Attendees:

Jen Eves	JE	Chief Operating Officer (<i>from 4:18pm</i>)
Jodie Mitchell	JM	Director of Governance and Legal
Martin Colbourne	MC	Deputy CEO
Nick Kershaw	NK	Director of IT Services (<i>until 4:28pm</i>)
Phil Gormley	PG	Governor
Seb Gasse	SG	Vice Principal
Claire Harber	CH	Governance and Legal Officer

Apologies:

Freddie Simpson	FS	Student Governor, SU President
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1. Area Updates

1.1 IT Update

The report was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

Some confidential points were highlighted which are recorded in the confidential minutes.

AB joined the meeting at 4:05pm.

The Committee expressed some concern over the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and a discussion took place as follows:

- There is external benchmarking available on the use of AI, but there is a cost to accessing the data.
- The AI Framework acts as guidance for the use of AI in the College.
- There are tight policies for the use of AI in HE, and clear guidance for FE students.
- HE have a detection system, and teachers are generally able to spot where AI has been used to complete assignments.

The Committee were informed that a draft process for the business continuity exercise has been prepared and includes recommendations sourced from external experts. Arrangements are underway to secure a date to move forward.

It was confirmed that an annual check is carried out to ensure DFE Digital Standards are followed. The Committee were unable to access the embedded MS Excel document outlining RAG progress within the paper, so it was agreed that it would be included in the next update.

ACTION 1: Include the RAG progress relating to the DFE Digital Standards within the next IT update (NK).

JE joined the meeting at 4:18pm.

In response to a question from the Committee on how printing costs are being controlled, the Committee were informed that there is a cap for each staff member and messages are being reinforced through various channels.

NK left the meeting at 4:28pm.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and noted as above.

3. Declarations of Conflict

No declarations were made.

4. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18 March 2025

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2025 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

5. Unconfirmed Confidential Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18 March 2025

The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2025 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

6. Matters Arising

Bus 3 Action 7: ACTION COMPLETE

Bus 3 Action 8: ACTION COMPLETE

Bus 3 Action 12: An Insurance Working Group to include NB, AB and MC to be set up to review College insurance issues (JM/MC). *A conversation took place around whether an insurance working group is still necessary. The Committee expressed that there needs to be assurance that cover limits are appropriately reviewed, particularly in relation to cyber risk. The Committee were informed that limits are circulated to departments for consideration and update annually. The published cost of recent cyber incidents in the news demonstrate that the College's current cover is appropriate. The Committee were satisfied and agreed to close the action.* ACTION CLOSED.

Bus 4 Action 1: Due June 2025

Bus 4 Action 2: Due June 2025

Bus 4 Action 3: Due June 2025

Bus 4 Action 4: Due June 2025

Bus 4 Action 5: Provide numbers of potential students turned away because demand cannot be met (JW). *The estimated figure for September 2024 is 200, which is exclusively in relation to the 16-18 provision. Level 3 demand was over-planned and Levels 2, 1 and entry under-planned. This change in demand is a national trend which the curriculum plan for September 2025 will reflect.* ACTION COMPLETE.

Bus 4 Action 6: ACTION COMPLETE

Bus 4 Action 7: Reflect on the duration of Business Committee meetings (NB/JM). *It was agreed to extend the scheduled duration of Business Committee meetings to 3 hours.* ACTION COMPLETE.

ACTION 2: Amend scheduled timing for Business Committee meetings to 3 hours and update draft meeting schedule for 2025/26 (CH).

7. CONFIDENTIAL – Confidential Matters Arising

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

8. Workforce Development Report

The Workforce Development Report was circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- A targeted social media recruitment campaign for English and Maths teachers has been successful and has attracted a higher level of applicants than previous campaigns.
- The onboarding module of iTrent has been purchased which allows a paperless recruitment and induction process. This should be embedded by the autumn.
- A tender process to outsource DBS checks has been completed.
- Sickness rates continue to be an issue within the College, and the Sickness Policy is in the process of being reviewed to help address this.
- Sickness reporting and return to work processes will move from GoodShape to iTrent from July.
- The People Strategy has been officially launched, along with the leader toolkit.
- Next steps in relation to leadership include creating a 'coaching culture' and the implementation of masterclasses (budget dependant).
- The Bradford Factor will no longer be used by the College.
- Training compliance is at 98%.
- The College has been awarded with the Investors in Diversity status at silver level.

ACTION 3: Add Sickness Policy to autumn agenda (JW/JM)

There was discussion around the Employment Rights Bill due to come into force August 2026. It was noted that the role of Human Resources will become more important as a result and will need to be effectively resourced.

The Committee were informed that resource is needed to deliver the People Strategy. It was noted that the College were unable to recruit to the People Director position after the initial recruitment campaign and that a further amended campaign for the position is planned. There was a discussion around the reasons for the difficulty in attracting candidates for the position and it was noted that the main hurdle was the salary level and that the rate has since been enhanced.

In response to action Bus 3 Action 7 requesting data on the number of staff accessing the wellbeing area of College Rewards, it was reported that the all-page views number was 454, with 124 visitors and 184 home page views.

The meeting took a break at 5:25pm and reconvened at 5:33pm.

9. Cyber Risk

It was agreed that cyber risk will be discussed under the Risk Register Review item at future meetings.

ACTION 4: Add Cyber Risk as a bullet point under Risk Register Review item for subsequent Business Committee meetings (JW/JM/CH).

10. CONFIDENTIAL – Finance Update

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

10.1 CONFIDENTIAL – Management Accounts and Debtors Report

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

10.2 CONFIDENTIAL – Benchmarking Report

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

10.3 CONFIDENTIAL – Cleaning Tender

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

10.4 CONFIDENTIAL – Minibus Tender

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

11. CONFIDENTIAL – Strategic Target Monitoring

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

11.1 CONFIDENTIAL – Accountability Agreement Strategic Targets for 2025/26

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

12. GDPR Compliance Report

The GDPR Compliance Report was circulated prior to the meeting.

Governors scrutinised the GDPR Compliance Report. The Committee asked to be informed of significant Freedom of Information requests.

ACTION 9: Implement a process to inform Governors about significant FOI requests (JM).

AB left the meeting at 6:27pm.

13. Risk Register Review

The Risk Register was presented on screen. Mitigating actions in relation to cyber security were noted.

Governors requested that a summary of movement between each meeting be included in future updates, along with reasoning where there has been no progress.

ACTION 10: Provide a summary of risk movement between meetings in future Risk Register Review papers (JW).

14. CONFIDENTIAL – Union Colleagues Meeting Minutes

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

15. Health and Safety Group Minutes

Due to timings of Health and Safety Group meetings, there were no minutes to present.

16. Other Urgent Business

No matters were raised under this item.

17. CONFIDENTIAL – Meeting Review and Summary

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

18. Date of Next Meeting

The next Business Committee Meeting is scheduled to take place on 24 June 2025 at 4:00pm.

All formal business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 6:34pm.

Signed Date
(Chair)