

**Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on
Thursday 9 July 2026 at 3.00pm
Westfield Teaching Room 1, Askham Bryan College, York, YO23 3FR**

The pack of meeting papers was circulated in advance of the meeting for Governors to read. The meeting was preceded by a tour of the Wildlife Park.

65. Present

Graeme Osborn (GO)	Chair of Corporation and meeting
Paddy Harrop (PH)	
Annabel Jelley (AJ)	Chair of Quality & Standards Committee
Martin Moorhouse (MM)	Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee
Tracey Roberts (TR)	
Trevor Shaw (TS)	Chair of Audit Committee
Anne Tyrrell (AT)	
Tim Whitaker (TW)	Principal/Chief Executive

With over seven members present, the meeting was confirmed as quorate. The Chair reported that proper notice of the meeting had been given.

Emma Barber (EB)	Chief Finance Officer
Judith Clapham (JC)	Deputy Chief Executive
Joanna Green (JG)	Observer
David Hillier (DH)	Shadow Governor
Chloe Rendall (CR)	Vice Principal
Sharon West (SWe)	Interim Clerk to the Corporation

66. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Tazambal Ali, Heather Clegg, Linda Haigh, Dominique Lendhill, Chris Moss, Matthew Parkin and Sharon Sheppard (Vice Principal).

67. Appointment of Governance Professional

Resolved: to appoint Joanna Green as Governance Professional with effect from 1 September 2026 and to extend the appointment of the Interim Clerk to 11 September 2026.

[Joanna Green and Sharon West joined the meeting.]

68. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

69. Declarations of Interest

Consideration was given to the Declarations of Interest Register and members asked for any new declarations.

There were no changes to the Declarations of Interest impacting on the College as detailed in the register, none of which it was agreed amongst those present precluded anyone.

Those thought relevant are listed below:

- TW, GO and MM as Directors of ABC College Co Ltd and ABC Enterprises Ltd.
- TW as a Landex Director and Director of National Land-based College and Vice Chair of Landex.
- GO as Chair of Durham University Students' Union.
- AJ as a consultant in the sector, Project Manager for the Skills Innovation Fund which is part of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Mayoral Investment Fund and working on a shared governance project with York North Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- MM as an Elvington Parish Councillor.
- LH as Finance and Procurement Director at South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service with possible links to the College from public service training, King's Trust.
- TR as a Member of National Council and Senate - Co-operative Group.

The Chair reminded Governors that the College was an exempt charity and that all transactions must be compliant with all obligations under applicable charity law.

70. Minutes from the Meeting held on 18 May 2026¹

A concern was raised that a paper had not been received in advance for the special focus topic discussion on the strategic risk register (Minute 52). The Principal/Chief Executive explained that the item was always intended to be a presentation by the Executive to facilitate a conversation amongst Governors.

Resolved: The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising from the minutes/Actions schedule

The matters arising and actions schedule were updated.

¹ Editorial Note (added following the 15 October 2026 Corporation meeting):

The reference in minute 70 to a concern being raised regarding the absence of an advance paper for the strategic risk register discussion was subsequently queried. The concern was not in fact about whether an advance paper should have been circulated, but about the fact that the minutes of 18 May 2026 did not record that the lack of an advance paper had been raised as a concern by a governor during the 18 May meeting. For further details, see the minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 15 October 2026.

71. Chief Executive's Report

The Principal/CEO presented his report and provided an overview of content with input from the Executive, as detailed in the report. In particular, he highlighted:

- Strong progress in student recruitment, achievement, curriculum development, staff engagement, external recognition and wider advocacy work across the sector;
- That the Department for Education (DfE) had announced an additional increase to base funding within the last few days, further details were awaited.

The Corporation recorded its congratulations to the Apprenticeships Team on outcomes. A question was raised about the Highways Academy. The Principal/Chief Executive explained that the programme would include highways and groundworks and was linked to the requirements of the Councils of City of York and North Yorkshire.

72. Finance & General Purposes Committee

The Chair of the F&GP Committee reported back on the meeting held on 24 June and highlighted the recommendations made by the Committee and decisions taken in relation to the awarding of contracts. He highlighted that the Committee had some concern about the farm budget as market movement could have a significant impact. The budget was thought to be conservative. The Chief Finance Officer reported that there had been market movement already and that this would be reflected in the forecast.

The Chief Finance Officer explained that the recently announced increase in base funding would have a positive impact. Confirmation of the funding allocation was awaited but outline calculations were looking good.

Resolved: that the budget for 2026-27 and forecast for 2027-28 be approved, and that the CFFR be submitted to the DfE.

Governors recorded their thanks to the Chief Finance Officer and her Team for all the work that went into producing the budget and forecast.

Governors received and noted the period 9 and 10 Management Accounts.

73. Student Union/Student Governor Update

The Deputy Chief Executive advised Governors that a new SU President had been elected.

Governors discussed ways of better engaging with student representatives. They noted that student representation had recently been reviewed.

[MM left the meeting.]

74. Staff Update

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that staff voice via the Staff Forums was active with plenty of feedback being received and fed into the whole people and culture piece. Governors discussed ways of better engaging with staff representatives.

75. Key Corporate Measures Update/Student Recruitment/New Strategy Roadmaps

The Vice Principal presented the Key Corporate Measures and targets, including student recruitment. She highlighted achievement levels and how this was not correlating to attendance.

Governors noted that the Quality & Standards Committee had had detailed discussions on the challenges around attendance. Governors recognised the importance of making learning valuable but also that there might be barriers to learning. The Vice Principal drew attention to a major piece of work that was being undertaken in terms of attendance and attendance recording. The introduction of an automated text messaging system would be a driver for compliance on recording attendance.

Governors were informed that the National Student Survey report had been published the previous day. They acknowledged that the number of students required to complete the survey provided quite a small sample, although the return rate had been positive, the College had other means of assessing student satisfaction.

The Principal/Chief Executive provided an update on student recruitment and highlighted that it was ahead of the position at the same time the previous. Provided that conversions rates followed the same trend the position was looking positive.

Governors asked about applicants and were informed that numbers were trending in the same way as acceptances. They were advised that waiting lists had been established for courses in which the College had no capacity.

The Corporation recorded its congratulations to the Vice Principal and her Team for the positive turnaround on recruitment.

New Strategy Roadmaps

The Principal/Chief Executive presented the roadmaps.

Governors suggested that it would be useful to have a timeline across the three themes in order to highlight the interdependency and received assurance that work on the timeline was already underway.

Governors liked the presentation of the roadmaps as it provided an holistic view.

76. Audit Committee

The Chair of the Audit Committee highlighted that two appendices relating to the strategic risk register had been published late. The Committee had reviewed strategic

risk 13 as previously requested and following discussions outside of the meeting had agreed to leave the appetite as was and accept that the risk likelihood would go up.

- **Recommendation:** That the Corporation approve the Audit Strategy Memorandum and the Chair of Audit be given delegated authority to sign off the memorandum on behalf of the Corporation.
- Reviewed Progress on the Internal Audit Plan.
- **Recommendation:** That the Corporation:
 - (a) note the Internal Audit Reports on Safeguarding; Funding (Adult Skills Fund) and Budget Setting and Monitoring; and
 - (b) approve the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2026-27, subject to any changes recommended by the Executive
- Reviewed the progress on implementing Internal Audit recommendations, Progress was being made and actions were recommended to Corporation;
- **Recommendation:** That the Corporation approve:
 - (a) the amended Strategic Risk Register; and
 - (b) the Risk Appetite Statement 2026-27.
- Policies and Procedures update was reviewed.
- GDPR and OfS regulatory spreadsheet were reviewed.
- **Recommendation:** That the Corporation approve the revised Terms of Reference.
- **Recommendation:** That the Corporation approve the tendering of the External Audit Contract in early 2027 in line with best practice.

Resolved: To approve:

- (a) the Audit Strategy Memorandum and the Chair of Audit be given delegated authority to sign off the memorandum on behalf of the Corporation;
- (b) approve the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2026-27;
- (c) the amended Strategic Risk Register;
- (d) the Risk Appetite Statement 2026-27;
- (e) the revised Audit Committee Terms of Reference; and
- (f) the tendering of the External Audit Contract in early 2027 in line with best practice.

and to note:

- (a) the Internal Audit Reports on Safeguarding; Funding (Adult Skills Fund) and Budget Setting and Monitoring; and
- (b) the policy and procedure update.

77. Quality and Standards (Q&S) Committee

The Chair of the Q&S Committee reported back on the business covered at the meeting held on 25 June and outlined the recommendations made by the Committee. She highlighted the accountability statement which provided really good description of the links to work.

- **Recommendation:** that the Corporation approve the Accountability Agreement Statement 2026-27 for publication.
- To note the Policy and Procedure update.
- HE would be a useful focus topic for a future meeting of the Corporation.
- A briefing on generational issues might be a good topic for the Corporation Away Day.

Resolved To approve:

- (a) the Accountability Agreement Statement 2026-27 for publication;
- (b) HE as a useful focus topic for a future meeting of the Corporation; and
- (c) a briefing on generational issues would be a good topic for the Corporation Away Day;

and to note the policy and procedure update.

Governors noted that the Post 16 Pathways Strategic Transition Statement had been prepared in line with the current plan and had been submitted to the DfE.

78. Governor activities/training, visits, Governor Recruitment, Chairs' Committee

Governor activities/training

AJ had started to undertake the mandatory training.

The Chair and Principal/Chief Executive had attended a dinner with DfE officials and had some useful conversations around V Levels. He had also attended a Peridot Chairs event and an AoC event. AT had attended the internal EDI Committee meeting and a meeting of the AoC EDI Committee group. She had a meeting planned with the Inclusion Team and had attended the FE Leavers event. TR had had induction meetings with members of the Executive, had attended the Quality & Standards Committee meeting as an observer and had also attended one of the awards ceremonies.

The Chair thanked Governors for their contributions both in and outside of meetings.

Governor Recruitment

The Chair proposed the extension of the Vice Chair's term of office until the end of the 2026-27 academic year.

Recruitment of an Independent Governor with HR experience was being taken forward via the DfE service, but might need to be placed with an external recruitment agency if no candidates were forthcoming.

The Chair advised Governors that he had asked the Interim Clerk to conduct a skills audit over the summer to inform future recruitment.