

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING (no.189)
HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2025 AT 6.00 PM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present: J. Booker (Chair), M. Bagley, D. Clayton, S. Collinge (part of time), S. Gerrard, W. Johnson (Principal and Chief Executive), A. Jones, A. Massey, T. Narey, R. Newton-Syms and K. Townsley.

In Attendance: J. Sherrington (Vice Principal & Deputy Chief Executive)
D. Stewart (Deputy Principal, Education)
A. Gadsdon (Executive Director of Quality) (part of time)
Anne-Marie Nixon (Interim Director of Governance)

90. Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks

90.1 The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and thanked all members for accommodating the change to an online meeting.

91. Attendance of College Management

Submitted: Extract from Section 13 of the current Standing Orders (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes)

91.1 The Corporation noted the contents of the extract, and it was:

Resolved – that: the College Management Staff be invited to attend the meeting.

92. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr. Wallace and Mr. Morris. An apology for early departure was received and accepted from Ms. Collinge.

93. Declarations of Interest

93.1 **All members and officers present declared that they had no interests, personal, fiduciary or otherwise in any of the business on the agenda for the public meeting.**

94. Minutes of the Corporation Meeting (no. 188) held on 23 September 2025

Submitted: Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 September 2025 (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2025 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.

95. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

96. Code of Conduct Training and New Code for Adoption

Submitted: PowerPoint Presentation from the interim Director of Governance and Eversheds-Sutherland Model Code of Conduct 19th Version (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes)

96.1 Ms. Nixon advised the Corporation of the rationale for the recommendation to adopt the Eversheds-Sutherland Model Code rather than the College's previous version, namely that this Code was made available to all colleges with the Governance Plus subscription and was reviewed and updated regularly by lawyers with significant experience in the FE sector. Members noted that this was widely used across the sector and supported the recommendation.

96.2 Ms. Nixon guided members through the training slides, drawing attention to the requirement to have a Code of Conduct; the Nolan Report on Standards in Public Life, Corporation Powers, Dealing with Conflicts, Collective Responsibility and Complaints. Members were invited to reflect on what the Nolan Principles meant for them as governors at Myerscough.

96.3 With reference to conflicts of interest, Ms. Nixon highlighted governors' fiduciary duty and the conflicts of interest disclosure process. During discussion of collective responsibility, Ms. Nixon drew attention to common pitfalls in the sector and highlighted the need for all governors to understand their roles and responsibilities.

- 96.4 Members noted the requirements relating to complaints and whistleblowing policies, particularly the need for these to be publicised and accessible.

Resolved – that:

- a) **the Eversheds-Sutherland Model Code of Conduct for FE Corporations 19th Version dated 1 July 2025 be formally adopted with immediate effect;**
- b) **the training session be accepted.**

97. Ofsted Toolkit and SAR Overview

Submitted: PowerPoint Presentation and Report from the Executive Director of Quality (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

- 97.1 Mr. Gadsdon guided members through the detailed slides, drawing attention to the content of the new Ofsted Toolkit, which had been released in September. Members noted the areas of judgement relating to whole provider and for each provision type. With reference to provision type level, Mr. Gadsdon confirmed that Myerscough would be judged on: Education Programmes for Young People, Apprenticeships, Adult and High Needs Funded provision and the judgements would cover curriculum, teaching and training, achievement and participation and development.
- 97.2 Members noted that the result would be a report card for the College and the provision types, with these areas judged to be: exceptional, strong standard, expected standard, needs attention or urgent attention. The exception was safeguarding which would be graded as 'met' or 'not met'.
- 97.3 Mr. Gadsdon explained the criteria for the grading of leadership and governance as detailed in the Toolkit and highlighted that the judgements would be based on "secure fit" not "best fit" and all criteria in a judgement banding had to be met to achieve that judgement. Mr. Gadsdon encouraged all governors to accompany him on learning walks in the College to see how judgements could be applied.
- 97.4 In turning to the inspection methodology, members noted the emphasis on no surprises and the way in which the inspection would be driven by the College's own assessment of strengths and areas for improvement. Mr. Gadsdon drew attention to the priorities for governors, confirming that the SAR and Quality Risk Assessment (QRA) would drive the inspection and repeated the open offer to governors to conduct

Learning Walks to triangulate what the College was saying in its Self-Assessment Report and QRA.

- 97.5 Before addressing the SAR format, members acknowledged the importance of safeguarding, inclusion and contribution to skills needs in how local and regional context would be acknowledged in the inspection process. Mr. Gadsdon stated that Ofsted had said they would give colleges greater opportunity to explain the context in the new Inspection Framework. Another member, with Ofsted inspection experience highlighted the opportunities the College would have to show what it was doing to promote inclusion for disadvantaged students.
- 97.6 At this stage in the meeting members were invited to review the SAR activity and draft report and provide feedback to Mr. Gadsdon before the final report was submitted to the Corporation meeting on 9 December. A member questioned how the next inspection would take account of the College's previous inspection and subsequent Monitoring Visit and was advised that inspectors would consider that the College's last judgement was Requires Improvement, the positive Monitoring Visit Report and examine the areas for improvement in the light of the new Framework. Members noted that inspectors would be looking for continuous improvement since the last inspection would use achievement data as evidence.
- 97.7 In concluding the discussion, Mr. Gadsdon requested that all members complete a brief survey which would be circulated after the meeting.

Resolved – that:

- a) the presentation be approved and Mr. Gadsdon be thanked for a clear and informative training session;
- b) a survey on the SAR be circulated to all members after the meeting for completion before the final SAR report was prepared for Corporation approval;
- c) all members be invited to arrange learning walks with Mr. Gadsdon;
- d) the final SAR report be amended following the outcome of the governor-attended QPMM round in November and governor feedback.

Mr. Gadson left the meeting at 6.59 p.m.

98. Principal and Chief Executive's Update on Finalised KPIs and Corporate Strategies

Submitted: The following reports from the Principalship: Strategic KPIs, Curriculum Strategy, People Strategy, Health and Safety Strategy and Finance Strategy (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

- 98.1 Mr. Johnson introduced the reports, highlighting that the Strategic KPIs had been presented and approved on 8 July 2025 and underpinned the new suite of strategies which had been designed to expand on the new Strategic Vision 2030. Members noted that these strategies, once approved would be monitored through relevant Committees, with Health and Safety being monitored by both by both Audit and Governance Committee and Finance and Resources Committee.
- 98.2 Mr. Stewart introduced the new Curriculum Strategy, highlighting that curriculum planning was at the heart of the College's work and guided members through the detailed report. Members noted that every aspect of the new strategy was underpinned by the quality of education. With reference to quality-based growth, Mr. Stewart reported that managers were using a multi-disciplinary approach to curriculum development and encouraged governors to attend the Curriculum Planning Day scheduled for 2 December.
- 98.3 During discussion, Mr. Stewart drew attention to the improved outcomes when compared with the previous year. Mr. Johnson confirmed that the strategies would be prepared for publication once approved by the Corporation.
- 98.4 Ms. Sherrington presented the draft People Strategy, drawing attention to the cultural journey over the last two years and highlighting the intention for services to be fit for now and for the future. Members noted that the strategy was underpinned by a People Strategy Delivery Plan which would set the operational activities based on the College's priorities. Ms. Sherrington reported that a key focus was recruiting with integrity and ensuring that the right people were in place and working in a way that mirrored the College's values. Members noted that a key piece of work was establishing the contract between what the College expected from employees and what it would do for them (which would be like a staff charter). Members expressed support for values-based recruitment and the inclusion of a staff charter.
- 98.5 Mr. Johnson introduced the new Health and Safety Strategy, highlighting the College's mission to empower students to challenge health and safety practices in the workplace. Members agreed that

compliance wasn't enough, that the strategy was based on embracing the highest standards.

- 98.6 During discussion a member questioned how the College was engaging with students on campus about health and safety. Mr. Johnson reported that every course had a health and safety element and, in higher risk areas, students engaged in writing risk assessments and safe systems of work. Mr. Johnson highlighted the need for health and safety to be an active conversation with students and for the College to enable students to conduct dynamic risk assessments. Members noted that this would prepare students well for work. Mr. Johnson highlighted the College's duty to provide real environments with appropriate control measures for students to learn. This was echoed by a member, who confirmed that inspectors would look for site specific risk assessments with robust control measures.
- 98.7 A member drew attention to the benefit for the College in introducing health and safety qualifications for students to run alongside their vocational qualifications. Mr. Johnson undertook to review this proposal and report back to the Corporation, noting that this was a current topic of conversation in curriculum planning meetings.
- 98.8 At this stage in the meeting, the Chair invited Ms. Sherrington to present the Finance Strategy. Ms. Sherrington drew attention to the financial aims as stated in the report, advising members of the proposal for a new finance system to generate stronger forecasting, whilst acknowledging that the current manual system was accurate. The improvement needed related to the speed at which reports could be generated. Members acknowledged the benefit of having clearly stated objectives and detailed milestones.
- 98.9 During discussion, a member questioned how the potential for new external (commercial) partnerships could be explored as part of the 2030 strategy. Mr. Johnson stated that there would be an opportunity for early discussions at the December meeting when the Centre of Excellence proposal was scheduled for discussion.
- 98.10 In concluding the discussion, a member questioned whether there were any trade-offs the Board needed to make to meet the 2030 objectives and what further support senior managers needed from the Board. Mr. Johnson explained that there remained some variables and the College was waiting for the long-anticipated Skills White Paper before these questions could be answered in full. Members were advised of the need to remain flexible and be agile to adapt to future changes in the FE landscape and regulation. Mr. Johnson confirmed the intention for the Principalship members to bring the approved strategies to the next

meeting of relevant Committees to propose the key milestones and measures for the year. The Corporation welcomed this proposal.

Resolved – that, subject to presentational amendments and inclusion of the missing data from the People Strategy:

- a) the Curriculum, People, Health and Safety and Finance Strategies be approved;
- b) the annual targets for each strategy be submitted to the next meeting of the relevant Committees for scrutiny and challenge before approval and reporting back to the Corporation.

99. Health and Safety Policy and Procedure

Submitted: Draft Health and Safety Policy and procedure (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes)

99.1 Mr. Johnson introduced the revised policy and procedure, highlighting that this had been drafted with the Vice Principal Finance and with the advice of the Health and Safety Consultant. During discussion, Mr. Johnson highlighted that senior managers would go through the processes with their teams to ensure that all staff understood their responsibilities. Members noted that progress updates would be reported through Audit and Governance and finance and Resources Committees as well as the Corporation.

Resolved – that the revised Health and Safety Policy and Procedure be approved.

100. Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Submitted: Report of the Director of Student Support and Welfare (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes)

100.1 Mr. Johnson introduced the revised policy and procedure, advising members that this had been reviewed internally before submission. All members present confirmed that they had read the detailed document in advance of the meeting. The Chair reported that as Safeguarding Link Governor she had reviewed the updates with the Director of Student Support and Welfare.

Resolved – that the updated Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure be approved.

In accordance with her apology for early departure, Ms. Collinge left the meeting at 7.32 p.m.

101. Counter Fraud Policy and Response Plan

Submitted: Report of the Vice Principal Finance and Deputy Chief Executive (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

101.1 Ms. Sherrington presented the updated policy, advising members that the proposed changes had been highlighted and that these related to titular changes and some updated content. Members noted that from 1 September 2025, a new offence had come into force – failure to prevent fraud. Ms. Sherrington explained that this widened the definition of fraud and clarified the responsibility to report fraud.

101.2 During discussion, Ms. Sherrington highlighted that the College conducted detailed fraud risk assessments and that the College fell into the definition of a large organisation under the Act.

Resolved – that the Counter Fraud Policy and Response Plan be approved.

102. Myerscough College Value for Money Statement

Submitted: Report of the Vice Principal and Deputy Chief Executive (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

102.1 Ms. Sherrington guided members through the background to the report and the requirement for an annual review. Members noted that the statement had been updated with the year end accounts and would be published on the College's website.

Resolved – that the updated Value for Money Statement be approved.

103. Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Submitted: Report of the Vice Principal, Finance and Deputy Chief Executive (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes)

103.1 Ms. Sherrington introduced the report, advising the Corporation that this had been prepared in association with the Executive Director of Finance and the Director of Governance. Members noted that this was required as part of the External Audit of the Financial statements for 2024-25 and once approved, would be signed by the Chair and

Principal and Chief Executive. During discussion, members noted that the questions were set by the DfE and that all evidence would be audited.

Resolved – that the Regularity Audit Questionnaire be approved and the Chair and Principal be authorised to sign the document before submission to the External Auditors.

104. Revised Standing Orders

Submitted: Report of the Director of Governance (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes)

104.1 Ms. Nixon presented the revised report, drawing members' attention to the amendments highlighted in red, which included provision for an authorised leave of absence and students usually serving for the period of their programme of study. Members supported the proposed amendments and updates (including the removal of the DfE as the appointing authority should the membership fall below that needed for a quorum).

Resolved – that the revised Standing Orders be approved.

105. Complaints and Appeals Monitoring Report 2024-25

Submitted: Report of the Director of Corporate Services (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes)

105.1 Ms. Clayton presented the report, advising members that during 2024-25 there had been a significant increase in stage 1 and stage 2 complaints when compared with 2023-24. This was being attributed to a more effective reporting mechanism and publicity about the policy and procedure. Members noted that there had been a reduction in the number of complaints relating to course content and delivery.

105.2 With reference to the number of complaints relating to student disciplinary procedures, particularly in relation to students with Education, Health and Care Plans, Ms. Clayton reported that action had been taken to improve communication. Members noted that the new Student Behaviour Policy was having a positive impact and was being seen as more supportive and more effective.

105.3 A member questioned whether there was any underlying reason for the increase in complaints from Apprentices and was advised that there

were a variety of reasons behind the complaints, with no identifiable trend.

Resolved – that the report be approved.

The Corporation moved to the confidential agenda at 7.46 p.m.

Anne-Marie Nixon

Interim Director of Governance

22 October 2025