Clarendon Sixth Form College — Tameside College

Minutes of the Corporation Meeting Held on
Tuesday 9 December 2025

Present: Subhaan Ali, Damien Bourke, Amanda Bromley, Phill Brown, Malcolm Bruce (Chair), Nicky Littler, Jackie Moores, Jemma Newton, Mariam Rana, Remell Thompson-Bell, Atta Ul-Rasool

Nils Elgar, Clerk to the Corporation

In Attendance: Dave Dobson (Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure), Leon Dowd (Deputy Principal Quality and People), Pewist Osman (Assistant Principal Student Services and Inclusion), Nicola Welland (Deputy Principal Curriculum)

		ACTION
25/26.30	**Apologies for Absence**	
	Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to accept the apologies of Simon Boyle, Jonathan Frankham, Michael Ginger and John Lyne	**Accepted**
25/26.31	**Declarations of Interest**	
	It was noted that in relation to the Confidential Minutes of the Board Meeting, 18 November 2025, Staff and Student Governors and College officers would withdraw from the meeting for the consideration of this item should Governors wish to discuss the minutes.	**Noted**
25/26.32	**Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18 November 2025**	
	Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2025.	**Approved**
25/26.33	**Matters Arising**	
	On minute 25/26.24 (Pay Award Proposal), the Deputy Principal Quality and People reported that the pay award was well received by staff and that the trade unions had no issues with the offer.	
25/26.34	**Safeguarding Annual Report 2024/25 and Policy**	
	The Assistant Principal Student Services and Inclusion raised the following points:	
	(i) key strengths and effectiveness of safeguarding: • the College had self-assessed the arrangements for safeguarding as effective; Ofsted also reached this judgement during the College's inspection in March 2024; • in the December 2024 teaching and learning survey, 96% of students said they felt safe in College; • the College's vulnerable students were well supported; • safeguarding policies and their implementation fully complied with statutory guidance and local authority processes;	

- in 2024/25 there were 1,869 safeguarding incidents relating to 670 students that were being supported by the College;
- mental health remained a key factor;
- one Prevent referral was made to Greater Manchester Police;
- the overall achievement rate for students receiving support was 84%. This was 2.1%-point improvement on 2023/24, but 3.4%-points lower than the achievement rate of students who received no support (87.4%). Similarly, the retention rate for those supported was 89.9%, which was a 3.9%-point improvement on 2023/24, but 1.8%-points less than the retention rate of those who did not receive support (91.7%) – achievement rates had improved in all areas;
- the overall achievement rate for care experienced students in 2024/25 was 84%. This was 3.0%-points lower than for all 16-18 students. The retention rate for care experienced students was 88%, which was 4%-points lower than for all 16-18 students;

(ii) policy update:
- the Safeguarding Policy had been revised to reflect Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, as well as guidance from the Open University;
- the Prevent Strategy has been revised to reflect the latest Home Office and DfE statutory guidance;

(iii) emerging themes 2024/25:
- the increase in the number of care-experienced students and students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) enrolling at the College;
- the rising mental health needs, increased anxiety, self-harm, emotional issues, which demand earlier and specialist support;
- an increase in online and digital concerns, including harmful content, social media pressures and AI risks;
- an increase in students with complex home and social circumstances, vulnerable families including substance misuse, financial instability and increasing student support needs;
- the Colleges was handling complex cases and with more external agency involvement;
- mental health remained the greatest factor for referrals.

Issues discussed by Governors included:

(i) whether the increase in student numbers needing support was commensurate with the increase in overall student numbers. It was noted that this was the case for 2024/25, but in recent prior years there had been a greater increase in the number of students needing support compared with the overall increase in student numbers;

(ii) whether risks related to artificial intelligence (AI) were apparent. It was reported that the risks related to ‘online space' were considerable and gave the example of two students that had presented at enrolment with bail conditions related to the downloading and altering of images. Another example, was the use of AI / online space for radicalisation, where one student had been referred to the Prevent programme;

(iii) the significant growth in individuals presenting with mental health conditions leading to the question on whether the current support system was sustainable. While it was acknowledged that funding was outside College control, management felt that the curriculum design was right for the College's students, that the support on offer was optimised for the available funding and that the College was focussed on getting students ready for work. A view was expressed that the College's teaching staff were doing amazing work teaching students presenting with multiple issues;

(iv) issues considered relating to funding included:
- that the local authority Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) capital funding did not extend to colleges and so the increasing number of students with SEND leaving school and going into colleges would not receive the same level of capital support. The College receives an allocation for supporting students with additional needs, but the very significant growth in students with EHCPs means that there was less support funding available for those who do not have an EHCP;
- that young people who were unable to engage with the College at the present time might wish to do so in the future. However, the year-on-year decline in adult skills funding meant that the level of funding would likely be entirely inadequate should this cohort seek to re-engage.

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to note the quality of safeguarding practice as judged in the self-assessment report. **Noted**

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to approve the revised Safeguarding Policy. **Approved**

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to approve the revised Prevent Policy. **Approved**

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to note the emerging themes so far this academic year. **Noted**

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to note the Prevent Action Plan Update. **Noted**

The Assistant Principal Student Services and Inclusion withdrew from the meeting at the end of this item.

25/26.35 **Committees' Report**

The Board was satisfied that this minute should be treated as confidential.

25/26.36 Members' Report and Financial Statements

(i) Annual Report to the Members of the Corporation on the External Audit for the Year Ended 31 July 2025 (incl. Letters of Representation)

The Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure commented that an early draft of this report had previously been scrutinised by the Board of Governors in a joint meeting with the Audit Committee to meet the requirement of the ESFA. Key points included:

(i) the College reported a surplus of £1,502k (2024: surplus £590k). After accounting for actuarial gain of £1,090k (2024: loss of £836k) in respect of the pension schemes the College reported total comprehensive income of £412k (2024: total comprehensive income deficit of £246k);
(ii) the College balance sheet position at the year-end showed net assets of £33,421k (2023: £33,009k);
(iii) for the year ended 31 July 2026, the College had predicted a surplus of £4k within its financial budget prior to adjustments in respect of the pension schemes;
(iv) audit opinion – WBG, the External Audit and Reporting Accountant. Items listed as outstanding could impact on their audit opinion;
(v) regularity audit opinion – WBG had no issues to report in relation to their regularity opinion;
(vi) going concern – WBG were satisfied that the Board of Governors' assessment of the going concern basis of preparation was appropriate;
(vii) governance arrangement – WBG were satisfied that the College operated appropriate governance procedures and that management had adequate arrangements in place covering standards of conduct;
(viii) internal controls – one low priority recommendation had been brought to the attention of management for the current year – that all assets disposed of by the College be timeously removed from the asset register.

Governors noted that this report had previously been reviewed in a joint session of the Audit Committee and the full Board and were content with the report as presented.

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to approve the signing of the Letters of Representation by the Chair of Governors and Principal / Accounting Officer. **Approved**

(ii) Audit Committee Annual Report 2024/25

The Clerk to the Corporation reported that the Audit Committee Annual Report 2024/25 had drawn on the work of the Internal Audit Service, External Auditor and Reporting Accountant as well as Ofsted and the External Governance Review. The overall opinion of the Audit Committee provided the usual assurances as in previous years, but included an additional sentence in relation to planned future assurances being sought.

Governors considered the Audit Committee's prior scrutiny and recommendation of the report, together with the wording of the opinion in the context of earlier discussions (see minute 25/26.35).

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to approve the Audit Committee Annual Report 2024/25. **Approved**

(iii) Members' Report and Financial Statements

The Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure reported the following key points:

(i) the outturn position including pension charges showed the College incurred a surplus before other gains and losses in the year of £1,502,000 (2023/24: surplus of £1,876,000), with total comprehensive income surplus of £412,000 (2023/24: income deficit of £246,000);
(ii) if the demolition loss and pension entries were removed from the accounts, the College had reported an underlying operating surplus of £792,000 (2023/24: surplus of £1,240,000). This was the position after stripping out the loss of demolition of £0 (2023/24: £1,286,000), net charges for payroll costs of minus £198,000 (2023/24: minus £97,000) and interest income of £908,000 (2023/24: £733,000).
(iii) The Audit Committee has already reviewed a draft this report and recommended it to the Board of Governors for approval.

Governors were content with report as presented but noted some minor spelling and punctuation changes were required before being finalised.

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to approve the Members' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 July 2025. **Approved**

25/26.37 October Finance Report

The Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure reported the following:

(i) as at 31 October 2025 there was an overall positive variance of £552k to the approved year-to-date budget. This variance was due to additional grant awards and timing variances on pay and non-pay expenditure that were expected to self-correct during the year;
(ii) a higher than budgeted pay award had been approved, with a risk accepted on £300k in-year growth funding;
(iii) College capital expenditure was in line with agreed approvals;
(iv) the College's financial health was planned to be 'Outstanding' for 2025/26;
(v) cash was expected to remain strong to the end of the year (£5.5m), which would ensure that the College could continue to operate effectively on a day-to-day basis;
(vi) an update on capital projects:

- Medlock Phase 1 (Summer 2025): Of the budget of £1,800k, some £1,038k was allocated to works over the summer of 2025. This included refurbishment of the ground and first floors of this building completed in time for the commencement of teaching in September 2025;
- Summer 2025 Works: a series of minor projects were completed over the summer to support the expected intake of students in 2025/26;
- Wilko's Development: The College had now received a further £1.5m in capital monies from the GMCA in additional to the initial £743k funding for the Sufficiency Project. A further £0.192k was received for equipment. The current cost plan had increased by £364k from £4.17m to £4.536m, but this had been subsequently mitigated by tender responses received. Work would start in late January and complete in time for September 2026;
- Summer 2026 Works: To support the expected intake of students in 2026/27, a number of other smaller projects were planned within the agreed £1.5m capital allocations.

Governors considered the following issues:

(i) aspects of the Wilko Development including:
- whether the contract allowed for price increases. It was noted that this would be a fixed price contract;
- whether penalty clauses were included within the contact. This was expected;
- whether an analysis had been undertaken on the tenders received. It was noted that this had been undertaken and that it was expected that the final price would come in less than the current cost plan (as indicated above);

(ii) a view that the new format for the Finance Report represented a positive development.

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to note the October Finance Report. **Noted**

25/26.38 **Finance Matters:**

(i) Financial Regulations

The Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure reported that the Financial Regulations had been reviewed and only minor changes were proposed. These were outlined.

Governors were content with the report as presented.

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to approve the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations. **Approved**

(ii) Treasury Management

The Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure reported the following points:

(i) that he had reviewed the Treasury Management Policy and no changes were proposed;
(ii) an update on progress against key targets (spanning cash days in hand, trade debtors, creditor payments, reporting of cashflow, cash deposits in line with Treasury Management Policy was presented;
(iii) income earned from interest in 2024/25. This stood at £203k;

Governors were content with the Treasury Management Annual Report as presented. On the observation that College creditor payments within 30 days stood at 81% against a target of 95%, it was noted that two suppliers had negatively impacted this data by presenting incomplete evidence with their invoices

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to note the progress made in respect of the Treasury Management targets for 2024/25. **Noted**

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to approve key targets for 2025/26. **Approved**

25/26.39 **Update on Governor Engagement and Development Activities**

The following Governor development and/or engagement activities that had taken place since the last Board meeting were reported:

(i) 14.10.25 – Governor Learning Visit to Engineering – John Lyne, Remell Thompson-Bell, Atta Ul-Rasool;
(ii) 15.10.25 – ETF Session – Culture, People and Organisational Development – Remell Thompson-Bell;
(iii) 21.10.25 – ETF Session – Effective Teaching Learning and Assessment– Remell Thompson-Bell;
(iv) 24.11.25 – Meeting with Assistant Principal re. HE Provision – Michael Ginger;
(v) 27.11.25 – AoC Webinar – Empowering Students for a Low Carbon Construction Industry – Remell Thompson-Bell;
(vi) 04.12.25 – Graduation Ceremony – Malcolm Bruce, Nicky Littler, John Lyne, Remell Thompson-Bell, Atta Ul-Rasool.

Governors noted that the HE Graduation Ceremony was a great evening with the highest number of graduates attending.

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to note the verbal update on Governor Engagement and Development Activities. **Noted**

25/26.40 **Items to Note**

(i) **Chair's Action**

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to note that no Chair's Actions had been taken since the date of the last meeting. **Noted**

(ii) Use of the Seal of the Corporation

The Clerk to the Corporation reported that the Seal of the Corporation had been used earlier in the day for in respect of a grant agreement with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) for funding for the College's sufficiency project (£1.5m for capital and £0.194m for kit and equipment). A brief paper would be brought to the next Board meeting.

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to note the use of the Seal of the Corporation. **Noted**

(iii) Interim Report on Governor Attendance 2025/26

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to note the Interim Report on Governor Attendance 2024/25 (74%). **Noted**

As no discussion was requested for the following confidential item, conflicted individuals were not asked to withdraw from the meeting

25/26.41 Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on:

(i) 18 November 2025

Resolved: The Board of Governors resolved to approve the confidential minutes (Part B) of the meeting held on 18 November 2025. **Approved**

25/26.42 Time and Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 10 February 2026

The Chair reported the following:

(i) the date of the next Board meeting was Tuesday 10 February 2026 (via Teams);
(ii) the Governors' Dinner was taking place in the College's Restaurant on Tuesday, 13 January 2026. Prior to the Dinner there would be a Governor Learning Visit to A Levels;
(iii) that he wished Governors, management and staff a good Christmas break.

Minutes formally approved by the Corporation:

Chair **Date**