

MILTON KEYNES COLLEGE GROUP

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2025

Pitching Room, SCIoT, Bletchley

17:00 – 19:00

Board Members	Category of Governor	Attendance Record 2025/26	Present at this meeting
Sally Alexander	CEO	2 of 2	Sally Alexander
Jawad Al Midani (from 24.10.25)	Student	1 of 1	Jawad Al Midani
Richard Bartlett-Rawlings	Independent	2 of 2	Richard Bartlett-Rawlings
Ian Bickers	Independent	1 of 2	<i>Sent apologies</i>
Ajira Bouchada	Independent	0 of 2	<i>Sent apologies</i>
Emily Bousfield (from 29.9.25)	Staff	2 of 2	Emily Bousfield
Carla Derriscott (from 30.9.25)	Student	2 of 2	Carla Derriscott
Mark Homans	Independent	2 of 2	Mark Homans (Teams)
Ajay Kabra	Independent	2 of 2	Ajay Kabra
Rebecca Myrie	Staff	2 of 2	Rebecca Myrie (Teams) (in part)
Amit Nayyar	Independent	2 of 2	Amit Nayyar (Teams)
Hiran Odedra (from 2.10.25)	Independent	0 of 1	<i>Sent apologies</i>
Ruby Parmar	Independent	1 of 2	<i>Sent apologies</i>
Ian Revell	Independent	2 of 2	Ian Revell
Neil Sainsbury	Independent	2 of 2	Neil Sainsbury
Lindsey Styles	Independent	2 of 2	Lindsey Styles
Manish Verma	Independent	2 of 2	Manish Verma (Teams)
Jeremy Wilsdon	Independent	2 of 2	Jeremy Wilsdon
Tom Wraight	Independent	2 of 2	Tom Wraight
Attendance % this meeting		79%	15 / 19
Attendance % year to date		86%	31/ 36

Attendees at this meeting: Jason Mansell (COO), Mark Fell (Executive Principal), Karen Brown (Head of Governance), Sam Samuels (Governance Partner)

Attendees in part: Claire Atkins (Lead Director: Prison Services), Mariyam Azher (Interim Group Director: Employee Relations and People Development), Arv Kaushal (Head of People Development and EDI), Anna Clarke (Group Director: Employer Engagement and Partnerships)

1.0 Procedural

1.1 Welcome and Apologies

Ian Revell (Vice-Chair) welcomed Jawad Al Midani to his first Board meeting, and everyone introduced themselves.

Claire Atkins was also welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Ruby Parmar, Ian Bickers and Hiran Odedra.

1.2 Declaration of Interests

Richard Bartlett-Rawlings, Neil Sainsbury and Jez Wilsdon had an interest in item 3.2 (which had previously been approved so there was no conflict of interest at the meeting).

2.0 Strategic Priorities 2025/26

2.1 CEO Report and Board Dashboard *(previously circulated as Paper 2.1)*

Sally Alexander referred to her report.

Board Dashboard'

The KPIs ragged 'Red' in the Dashboard were Prison Staff Sickness and Prison Staff Turnover: both items addressed in Paper 2.2.

Post -16 Education and Skills White Paper see [here](#)

The White Paper proposes:

1. £1.2 billion additional investment per year in Skills by 2028/29 for 16-19 year olds (which we are growing). Devolution will address adult funding but as we are not in a devolved area yet, there will be no change to how adult funding is currently paid.
2. £200 million of capital investment and £375 million to support post-16 capacity. Also, £1.7 billion capital funding (and possibly a loan option for capital build programmes).
3. New V Levels (Vocational) qualifications are proposed from 2027/28, to sit alongside A Levels (Academic) and T-Levels (Technical) to replace the existing BTECs. A V Level will be a similar size to A Levels and students can study both A and V Levels as a part of one Study Programme. A challenge for the sector is that some substantial BTECs will be de-funded before the V Levels are available.
4. New Level 2 provision is proposed to replace the T Level Foundation Year. This will follow either a 'further study' pathway or an 'occupational' pathway.
5. New 16-19 English and maths 'preparation for GCSE' Level 1 qualifications (short units). Studying English and maths as a part of the study programme will still be a condition of funding.
6. New apprenticeship units to be available from 2026, offering flexible 'short and fast' courses (in some cases one week) for basic skills.
7. TECs (Technical Excellence Colleges), supporting excellence across FE, will be operating across the country, using a 'hub and spoke' model. Construction TECs (CTEC) have been announced (our hub is North Kent College and Bedford College is a national CTEC). We anticipate 4 in Advanced Manufacturing, 5 in Digital, 5 in Defence and 5 in Clean Energy. £175 million has been allocated.
8. An expectation that FE and HE will work in partnership, to create L4 and L5 progression pathways. The Office for Students to grant colleges their own awarding powers for technical L4 and L5 provision.
9. Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE) will be available from January 2027, offering 4 years of loans for HE, per learner, in their lifetime.

10. A Youth Guarantee, to guarantee all young people access to employment, training or education, with a focus on reducing the numbers of young people 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEETs).
11. Schools will focus on helping young people who are leaving school and are at risk of becoming NEET. All 16 year olds with no post-16 option on leaving school will be automatically enrolled at a designated college or FE provider. Pilots will run to test this out and funding has yet to be determined. As the only FE provider in MK, this is likely to mean further growth in our student numbers.
12. A Professional Development Framework to support FE teachers at every stage of their career from initial training through to leadership.
13. A Regional Improvement in Standards and Excellent (RISE) team will be established, overseen by the FE Commissioner, to support colleges to meet the needs of all their learners and respond to Combined Authority and LSIP (Local Skills Improvement Plan) Skills needs.
14. A commitment to continue to invest in high quality governance development.

A task group has been established to work through the proposals. It is the biggest change for FE in several years.

Jez Wilsdon arrived at 17:15

Governors discussed the proposals:

- The Youth Guarantee Scheme, to address NEETs, will mean an increase in student numbers, in addition to demographic growth.

This cohort of students, who have not chosen to come to college, may increase the behavioural / SEND / Safeguarding challenges and affect our attendance and achievement. The student governors expressed concern about how this might impact the quality of the student experience.

Spaces may need to be adapted to create dedicated space for these learners so we will need to engage with the Council.

- Milton Keynes is short-listed for a new towns deal so there will be investment in the city.
- The opportunity to access capital funding / loans is welcomed as the College needs to increase capacity to meet growth.
- Small / micro businesses could benefit e.g. by being allocated additional workforce under the Youth Guarantee Scheme. We are exploring how we can bring employers together to offer meaningful work experience.
- Large corporates are complex organisations and have their own schemes.
- Currently, English and maths is a barrier for apprenticeships e.g. construction; the proposed change for English and maths would help to get people into work sooner.
- There may be some funding available for planning and development prior to the roll-out of new qualifications in 2027/28
- We are developing a good relationship regionally with DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) because DWP is now responsible for skills. We are keen to be part of a pilot.

- The White Paper is timely as it can feed into our new strategy.

The Board received the CEO Report and Board Dashboard

2.2 PES (Prison Education Services) Mobilisation (previously circulated as Paper 2.2)

Minuted as confidential

Claire was thanked for attending and she left the meeting

Mariyam Azher and Arv Kaushal were welcomed to the meeting

Rebecca Myrie left at 18:00

2.3 EDI Strategy 2026 – 2031 / EDI Policy (previously circulated as Papers 2.3A and 2.3B)

Mariyam Azher and Arv Kaushal referred to the headlines in the report

EDI Strategy 2026 - 2031

- The EDI Strategy follows on from the People Strategy and is a targeted approach to deliver maximum impact. The College has recently retained the Investors in Diversity, Gold award and attained Menopause Friendly accreditation both of which recognise our inclusive culture. The strategy will be reviewed in July 2026 to ensure it is aligned with the new strategic plan.
- The Vision for the EDI strategy is '*A community where all colleagues and learners feel **Visible, Valued, and Included***'.
- The strategy has four strategic aims:
 1. Reduce Pay Gaps for Staff
 2. Reduce Attainment Gaps for Learners
 3. Improve Inclusive Spaces
 4. Strengthen a Culture of Belonging
- Hiran Odedra is the Link Governor and has given her input.
- Annual milestones have been determined, and progress will be reported annually to the Board.
- The strategy includes the following KPIs which are a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures:

KPI Area	SMART KPI Statement	Baseline Data	Lead Department
Pay Gap Reduction (Staff)	Reduce headline pay gaps by at least 20% from 2026 baseline by end of 2031	2026 pay gap baseline	People Services
Attainment Gap Reduction (Learners)	Reduce attainment gaps by at least 15% from 2026 baseline by end of 2031	2026 attainment data	Curriculum Team Quality Team
Progression (Learners)	Increase progression rates for underrepresented groups by 25% from 2026 baseline by End of 2031	Progression data 2026 (Sept 2025 19.7%)	Student Experience
Disability Confident Level 3 (Action 9)	Achieve Level 3 accreditation by End of 2031	Level 2 status 2026	People Services

Inclusive Culture Survey (Staff and Learners)	Achieve 85% positive response in staff and learner surveys by End of 2031 and increased engagement	Investors in Diversity Gold report 2025 Engagement: Leaders -5 Staff – 273 Learners - 227	People Services
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Governors asked questions to which Mariyam and Arv responded:

What is the context for reducing attainment gaps by 15% from a 2026 baseline? What does this mean in practice and has it been agreed with the ESG?

To date, the EDI strategy has had mainly a ‘people’ focus. We have the learner attainment data but have not carried out the analysis.¹ This will be a KPI for the Curriculum and Quality Teams to deliver.

How will this KPI be aligned to the performance scorecard?

There will be tangible, measurable outcomes which will be included in the performance scorecard. We will set milestones so there is an impact in-year.

How ambitious are these targets?

The numbers are ambitious, but the bigger challenge is achieving consistency across the Group.

What are the measurable outcomes for inclusive spaces?

This measure relates to creating barrier free access to learning so it includes virtual accessibility (online) as well as physical spaces.

New projects have delivered inclusive spaces (e.g. which are accessible for all types of disability), but the challenge is with older classrooms and spaces. We will measure this KPI through internal audits commencing in 2026.

The IoT was designed with quieter spaces (for neuro diverse students) but with the growth in students, these are being re-purposed. This EDI strategy will ensure we remain focused on this.

The tariff project completed this summer delivered 364 additional spaces but with further growth in students, the College is now looking at options for 2026/27, and we will revisit the Estates Strategy in the context of our new Strategic Plan.

The Board:

- ***Reviewed and approved the EDI Strategy 2026–2031***
- ***Reviewed and approved the EDI Policy***
- ***Subsequently requested more detail behind the KPIs***

Action 2: Arv Kaushal by 10th December 2025

*Mariyam and Azher were thanked for attending and they left the meeting
Anna Clarke was welcomed to the meeting*

¹ After the meeting, the Group Director: Quality & Standards confirmed that the analysis for 2024/25 is included in the SAR which will be reviewed by the CQG on 10th November and Board on 10th December. The analysis confirms there were no attainment gaps in 2024/25.

2.4 Partnerships and Meeting Skills Needs *(previously circulated as Paper 2.4)*

Minuted as confidential

3.0 GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

3.1 Capital Projects Monitoring Group 14 October 2025 *(previously circulated as Paper 3.1)*

Manish Verma referred to the report of the meeting. The Tariff project (to support growth in student numbers at Chaffron Way and Bletchley) and Carbon Offset project (replacement of boilers at Bletchley) are compete; final costs are being compiled and will be reported in November. There has been good publicity about the Tariff project which has delivered an additional c.364 spaces. Scoping for the Salix 4 project (to fully decarbonise the Bletchley Campus) is in progress and tenders are due to be issued in January.

The Board approved the report from the CPMG meeting on 14 October 2025

3.2 Search & Governance Committee meeting 21 October 2025 *(previously circulated as Paper 3.2)*

Ian Revell referred to the report of the meeting and highlighted:

- the Board Development Plan and KPIs. There will be annual reviews (currently biennial).
- The governance documents which are recommended for approval,
- The Board reappointments which have been previously approved via the Board portal.

The Board:

- ***approved the report of the meeting on 21st October 2025***
- ***ratified the re-appointment of Richard Bartlett-Rawlings (3rd term), Neil Sainsbury (3rd term) and Jez Wilsdon (2nd term)***
- ***approved:***
 - ***Board Development Plan 2025/26 and KPIs***
 - ***Instrument and Articles of Government***
 - ***Board Standing Orders***
 - ***Scheme of Delegation***

3.3 Items for the next meeting

- Financial Statements 2024/25 / Financial Health P3
- OU Validation and relicensing
- Campus SAR and QIP, Prison Quality Strategy, student voice (survey 1)
- Reports from CPMG, A&R, CQG, FinG, MKCC Ltd, CMA Ltd
- Consent Agenda: Climate Action Plan and KPIs
- Modern Slavery Statement
- Strategy Development Group update (CEO report)

4.0 CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were approved by consent / without discussion:

4.1 Student Experience: Student Outcomes *(previously circulated as Paper 4.1)*

4.2 Remuneration Committee 23 October 2025 *(previously circulated as Confidential Papers 4.2 and 4.2A to Independent Governors only)*

- **Report of the Meeting**
- **Written Resolution approving the recommendations**

4.3 Minutes of the last meeting (1st October 2025) (previously circulated as Papers 4.3A and Confidential 4.3B)

Matters arising

Date Raised	Actions arising from the last and previous meetings	Action Owner	Current position
1/10/25	1. Vice Chairs to attend SDG meetings (may rotate)	IR / RBR	Complete: By 20/20/25
	2. Report to governors on forecast achievement for A-Levels as at the end of Year 1	MF	Carry forward to 10/12/25 (revised date) (after the first formative milestone)
	3. Confirm that ' <i>engagement / relationships with external organisations</i> ' is a KPI in the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.	AC	Complete: included in Paper 2.4
	4. Circulate an early update to the Board on staff movements (PES mobilisation)	SA	Complete: circulated 13/10/25
	5. Add Careers to the next CQG agenda	MF / SS	Complete: This has been diarised for the 19 January 2026.
	6. Report to CQG on the apprenticeship best case prediction for 2025/26	MF	Carry Forward to CQG on 10/11/25
30/4/25	3. Confirm that ' <i>engagement / relationships with external organisations</i> ' is a KPI in the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.	AC	Complete: included in Paper 2.3

Next Meeting 10th December 2025



Approved 10th December 2025
Ruby Parmar
Chair of Governors