

**Minutes of LSEC Corporation Meeting held on
Wednesday 26 March 2025 from 5.30-7.30pm
in person at Orpington Campus Room C1/C2**

Corporation Governors

David Eastgate (DE)	Chair
Louise Nadal (LN)	Vice Chair
Mark Burnett (MB)	Vice Chair
Dr Sam Parrett, CBE (SP)	Group CEO
Mark Trinick (MT)	Governor
Angela Hands (AH)	Governor
Vince Fihosy (VF)	Governor
Kate Shiner (KS)	Governor
Sarah Lewis (SL)	Governor
Darren Kirwin (DK)	Governor
George Ryan (GR)	Governor
Philip LeFeuvre (PL)	Governor
Julie Asher Smith (JAS)	Governor
Paul Thorogood (PG)	Governor
Elizabeth Funge (EF)	Governor
Teresa Langford (TL)	Staff Governors
Nicole Mundondo	Student Governor

Governance Professional & Clerk to the Board

Jennifer Pharo (JP)	Group Chief of Staff and Governance Director
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Executive Officers in attendance

John Hunt (JHu)	Group Deputy CEO & Group CFO
Asfa Sohail (AS)	Executive Principal & CLO
Louise Wolsey (LW)	Group Chief Strategy Officer

THE NOLAN COMMITTEE

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

SELFLESSNESS

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

INTEGRITY

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

OBJECTIVITY

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

OPENNESS

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

HONESTY

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

LEADERSHIP

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

MINUTES

Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

Apologies received from Governors Kate Shiner and Philip Le Feuvre.

No new declarations to record. Governor SL declared an interest in relation to the Tuition Policy for approval on Part B of the agenda.

Minutes of previous meeting held on 22 January 2025 were **APPROVED**.

PART 1: ABOVE THE LINE AGENDA ITEMS:

A1	Group CEO Update and Appendices
	<p>Group CEO presented the paper which covered key strategic and operational updates.</p> <p>The Board discussed a couple of key issues with regard to what is happening in FE in terms of the external policy environment. It was reported that FE appears to be fairing well under the policies and new government with £600m allocated for capital already. Based on the mission led government aspirations this is likely to support construction related trades, which could be good news for our plans for Holly Hill site.</p> <p>Funding allocation for 2025/26 is looking very positive together with NI contribution and other factors increasing the base rate we are anticipating around a £4m increase.</p> <p>It was reported that the Curriculum and Assessment Review findings interim report had been published which does recognise that pathways into FE and English and maths have been problematic and should be reviewed. Particularly changes to English and maths where it has been recognised that these qualifications may not be suitable for all young people. It was reported that the current system is not delivering fairness and equity to all young people and providing them with the equal opportunities.</p> <p>It was reported that the HE sector was facing significant financial threat. This was also the case for our HE provision but we have been pursuing some positive discussions and collaborations with HEI partners which could also support future plans for Orpington.</p> <p>It was reported that there is still a concern around SEND and SEND Capital funding which has not been discussed. The outcome of the SEND reforms is awaited.</p> <p>It was reported that staff in high demand areas are able to demand higher salaries but moving from college to college.</p> <p>It was reported that unless there was support for pay there was likely to be industrial action across the school and FE Sector.</p>
	Questions and Comments
	<p>In response to questions on the demographic declines and closing schools in London, it was reported that could support capital but unlikely to be the right type of estate.</p> <p>In response to questions on SEND it was reported that there was some anticipation that colleges would find some opportunities in this space. FE were used to being agile filling the voids, 14-16 provision was reported as any are that could be on the increase, with home elected pilot already being discussed at Greenwich Campus.</p> <p>In response to questions on English and Maths attendance it was reported that there had been some disruption to teaching and learning at Bexley and Greenwich campuses. A recovery plan was in place with catch up sessions being offered to learners both online and in person. Workshops would also be running throughout the Easter Break. It was reported that there had been a deep dive on English and Maths at the last C&S Committee and scrutiny of the recovery plans</p>

	<p>In response to questions regarding staff pay it was reported that there was likely to be some disputes across the education sector. Teachers pay was not likely to be funded. FE pay was not linked to national bargaining or standard terms and conditions. The gap between schools and FE pay had never been wider.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the update.</p>
A 2	DCEO & Principal Operational Update
	<p>DCEO & Principal presented the operational update to the Board.</p> <p>It was reported that the College underwent an Enhanced Ofsted Inspection from October 15 to 18, 2024, and received an overall rating of "Good."</p> <p>Board were advised that the College has developed a three-year Post Inspection Action Plan, titled "Journey to Outstanding" (J2O), to address key areas for improvement and ensure a high-quality learning experience. Both document were provided in the papers.</p> <p>It was reported that the key areas of development were level 1 courses, Apprenticeship training, attendance and learner conduct.</p> <p>The Board were advised of the following implementation strategies being put in place, which included collaboration with external consultants, visits to other colleges, developing in-house capacity across management and leadership levels, and running the J2O action plan alongside the College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).</p> <p>The Board received and update on students progress, it was reported that retention rates were high with overall retention rate of 97.5%, despite low attendance rates (79.2%). It was reported that most students were up to date on their assessment submissions, with robust monitoring in place for those at risk of not achieving.</p> <p>The Board was advised that overall student attendance was currently 79.1%. This is a slight decrease compared with the previous academic year (23/24: 81.1%). It was reported that an Attendance Working Group had been set up to look at different ways to improve attendance. There has been a renewed focus for the start of the second term centring on attendance and resetting behaviour re-emphasising the importance of Ready, Responsible and Respect.</p> <p>It was reported that extensive interventions and training have been provided to lecturers whose attendance levels fall below the 85% threshold. The quality and impact of tutorial sessions for study programme learners had been identified as an area of improvement. It was reported that Relevant staff have received training and support, and the quality team is leading the development of lessons to strengthen the consistency and impact of these lessons. .</p> <p>The Board received an update on the Behaviour which had been raised as an issue following the recent Ofsted Inspection. A team from the FE Commissioner had been asked to work with College Senior Leader to assess behaviour. From this review some proposed changes and actions to achieve a calm environment across all campuses had been provided. Behaviour is a key focus, and actions are monitored through a belonging and behaviour action plan which was now in place and the action plan was provided in the papers to the Board. ACTION: The Board requested that a Crisis Management Communication Plan in the event of a serious incident to be developed/updated.</p> <p>The Board were advised that English and Maths was in intensive support to ensure students stay on track.</p> <p>It was reported that lesson visits and learning walks had increased to ensure quality was being maintained. The IQR process had reported most study programmes had action plans which determined the areas for improvement.</p> <p>The Board was advised that attendance had decreased as was below that reported at the same period last year. Tutorial sessions were also being improved to support behaviour and attendance.</p>

	<p>It was reported that apprenticeship achievement rates and improved forecasting at least 58% for year-end supported by a and reduction in withdrawals.</p> <p>Board were advised that recruitment challenges in HE continue with efforts to enhance recruitment strategies and address low application numbers.</p> <p>It was reported that the Curriculum Strategy had been revised following the consultation event with the Board and Employers at the end of January. The Accountability Agreement would be prepared for approval.</p> <p>The Board were advised that recruitment in year to study programmes had exceeded target. Adult recruitment remains below target with a recovery plan in place. Applications for next year programmes were showing a mixed position across different curriculum areas. A detailed update on those areas where applications were not as strong was provided to the Board.</p> <p>It was reported that student feedback had been positive particularly on safety and support but with areas for improvement noted in English and maths.</p> <p>The Board received an update on Safeguarding which reported a significant increase in referrals, with mental health and wellbeing being the main reasons. It was also reported that criminal conviction declaration assessments had resulted in some students refused entry,</p> <p>The Board were advised that as requested the College had undertaken the Leaders in Safeguarding Audit in December 2024, which had been successful in achieved. The audit demonstrated that the College has very positive safeguarding procedures, processes and culture.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the Student Union are supporting charities this academic year and raised £388 for Air Ambulance in term one and are raising awareness for an Epilepsy charity in term 2.</p>
	<p>Questions and Comments</p>
	<p>In response to questions on the English and maths distance travelled table and graph provided, it was reported that some students did not progress and that the gaps for grades 3 and 4 were higher than in previous year.</p> <p>In response to questions on English it was reported that English grades had declined and that that the Board had received significant information around the changes in grade boundaries that had impacted on this.</p> <p>In response to questions on English and maths and tutorials, it was reported that the position was improving now, the tutorial model is working although it had been a bumpy at the start. It was reported that distance travelled forecast for current year were looking to be improved.</p> <p>In response to questions on English and Maths forecast achievements it was reported that it there was unlikely to be improvements due to teaching vacancies and recovery sessions were being planned and it was anticipated that these would be well attended.</p> <p>In response to questions on boundary changes this year it was reported that these are not yet known.</p> <p>In response to questions on the apprenticeships and the improvement in this area it was reported that the team had worked well on improvements and new leadership in the area was having an impact.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the update.</p>
A2.2	Safeguarding Update
	The Board received a detailed Safeguarding update.

	<p>It was reported that 100% of staff who are on site have completed their annual safeguarding training and read and understood KCSIE 2024.</p> <p>The Boards were advised that Term 1 has seen an increase in safeguarding referrals across all areas and particularly for mental health and wellbeing. January continued to be up on previous academic years but saw a slight dip in mental health and wellbeing referrals.</p> <p>Mental Health and Wellbeing remained the main concern recorded which has increased to 58% (from 53%) of referrals for September 2024 and the increase has continued in November 58% (from 45%) and December 52% (from 47%).</p> <p>It was reported that that the majority of learners access general mental health and wellbeing support, advice and guidance for daily management of low mood and anxiety. Self-harm and suicidal thoughts make up the second most common reason for referral.</p> <p>Board were advised that there had been three consultations with the LADO this academic year, one is open to investigation and the other two did not met threshold for referral.</p> <p>The Board were advised that whilst the SCR is compliant, the data input errors on the SCR can occur and relies on manual checking to identify any gaps or errors.</p> <p>It was reported that behaviour at Bromley Campus required urgent intervention as a result of the feedback from Ofsted as well as poor behaviours displayed by a significant minority of our students.</p>
	<p>Questions and Comments</p>
	<p>There were no questions the Boad NOTED the update.</p>
<p>A3</p>	<p>GCFO Update</p>
<p>A3.1</p>	<p>2024/25 Financial Update</p>
	<p>The Board receiving the financial update as presented by the Group CFO.</p> <p>It was reported that the Management Accounts for the period 6 to 31 January 2025 provided to the Board, showed an Education EBITDA full year forecast unchanged and in line with budget at £3.3m, although achievement of the Adult Skills Budget forecast remained a risk.</p> <p>Th Board were advised that the latest Future Greenwich cashflow forecast shows a material increase in cash outflows over the coming year and this is resulting in a forecast low cash point of £5.6m in June 2025. It was reported that further low points are projected between November 2025 and March 2026, when cash was forecast to be between £4.2m and £5m.</p> <p>It was reported that a tender for Hard FM services had been completed, and this was split into 7 lots, with 3 separate firms being appointed to 6 lots, with the 7th not being appointed.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the tender seeks to move the College to a more planned and technical approach to maintenance and statutory compliance, which should improve compliance, the life of assets and mandatory compliance.</p> <p>It was reported that contracts will be awarded for the fixed elements of works required in this regard and this has an annual total of £0.5m, with a total of £1.5m for the 3 year contract. Remedial works will be completed at contract rates and total expenditure for maintenance and remedial works is expected to be an average of circa £1.3m per year.</p>
	<p>Questions and Comments</p>
	<p>In response to questions on period 6 position it was reported that this was slightly below target.</p> <p>In response to questions on the L&Q payment it was reported that this was still to be finalised, but was expected in April.</p> <p>In response to questions on the changes to youth funding it was reported that base rates changes were planned nd funding to cover the increased employer NI contributions.</p>

	<p>In response to questions on the Hard FM and approach to preventative maintenance it was reported that currently it has been reactive rather than proactive, the new services costs should be reduced longer term.</p> <p>In response to questions on the Future Greenwich contract and L&Q overage it was reported that there had not been any further discussions on timing, planning, and SPV. The Boad had advised that there was to be no agreement on reducing the overage.</p> <p>The Boad NOTED the update.</p>
A3.2	Property & Capital Update
	<p>The Board received an update on the capital projects presented by the Group CFO.</p> <p>It was reported that the matter had been considered and reviewed at the Finance Committee.</p> <p>The Board were advised that he latest current forecast for the total scheme cost of the Plumstead was £45.329m, which is slightly lower than forecast last month, although Executives remain confident that the overall budget of £44.97m is achievable, and cash flow forecasts are based on this value.</p> <p>It was reported that there had been a material change in the forecast cashflows, with these being accelerated with good progress on site and with the need to amend the programme to remove the scaffolding early in line with L&Q requirements. The Board were advised that this will have a largely neutral impact by July 2025. It was reported that final instalment of the L&Q land sale is now expected to be April 2026 rather than October 2025, and this has reduced cash balances towards the end of this year.</p> <p>The Board received an update on FECTF project and were advised that the retendering these projects has generated considerable savings, with the total scheme cost for the FECTF project now expected to be circa £14m, almost £4.1m less than the previous tender and results in a related £3m reduction to the DfE Grant and a £1m reduction to our match funding requirement.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the reduced match funding is helping to improve our cashflow forecasts, although the DfE had now approved the College to add back circa £1.5 of works and this together with the related match funding of circa £0.4m will be taken into account in our net forecast.</p> <p>It was reported that the latest cashflow forecast shows that the position in June of this year has improved to circa £5.6m, but cash balances will be circa £5m or below between November 2025, and March 2026.</p> <p>It was reported that these changes to the major project cashflows have improved the position for our cash pinch points in January and February 2026, with these now forecast to be £5.3m and £5m, respectively.</p> <p>The Board were advised that a business case had been submitted to HMRC for the partial zero-rating of the new Plumstead campus. If successful, this could reduce project costs and cashflows by up to circa £2.5m.</p>
	Question and Comments
	<p>In response to question on the additional capital projects to be undertaken with the 1.5m FECTF project funds, it was reported that the toilets at Bromley could be replaced.</p> <p>In response to questions on the HRMC rating at Plumstead, it was reported that HRMC had raised some queries on the application, the application was for two floors to be zero rated</p> <p>In response to questions on the electric issues and if these had been resolved, it was reported that this was still an issue.</p> <p>In response to questions on the HH power outage, it was reported that this is being managed and UPIN are doing the work to repair.</p> <p>The Board NOTED the update.</p>

	<p>Orpington Boiler Dispute.</p> <p>The Board received an update on the Orpington Boiler Dispute presented by the Group CFO.</p> <p>The Boards were reminded that the Orpington Boiler Lease Dispute involved a long-standing disagreement between LB Bromley and the College over the lease of the boiler room at the Orpington Tower.</p> <p>It was reported that although the lease had expired, statutory continuation has kept it ongoing, and the Council's decentralization of heating systems has rendered the original boilers solution obsolete, the boilers themselves are end of life and unrepairable.</p> <p>It was reported that the professional advice suggested the Council's liability for repair could exceed £2m, while the Councils' legal advice indicates only one working boiler is required. The Board were advised that the Heating Agreement ended on 20 November 2022, relieving the College of repair and maintenance obligations.</p> <p>It was reported that Executives are working pragmatically with LB Bromley, it was decided to separate out the various elements of the dispute and work through each item separately, namely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The resolution of the boiler provision - The resolution of outstanding fuel usage invoices - The resolution of outstanding repair and maintenance costs <p>The Boards was asked to APPROVE the proposed settlement, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The College paying agreed fuel usage invoices - LB Bromley installing a low-temperature hot water system at their cost and removing the four existing boilers - LB Bromley surrendering their lease for weekend use of the Orpington car park <p>It was reported that at the time of the meeting, negotiations on maintenance and hire costs, due to being the responsibility of a different team in LB Bromley, will aim for a mutually agreeable outcome once this settlement has been agreed.</p>
	<p>Questions and Comments</p>
	<p>In response to questions on the whether one boiler would be enough for the site it was confirmed that this would be sufficient to provide heat and water.</p> <p>In response to questions on considerations for green energy solutions, it was reported that solar could be an option and the college could do more.</p> <p>In response to questions on the negotiations involving the car park and the current status of parking in Orpington, it was reported that if this could be achieved this would put the college in a stronger position for any potential future disposal.</p> <p>The Board APPROVED paying the agreed fuel usage invoices, LB Bromley installing a low-temperature hot water system at their cost and removing the four existing boiler and LB Bromley surrendering their lease for weekend use of the Orpington car park and 50% outstanding maintenance and repair.</p>
<p>A3.3</p>	<p>Risk Register</p>
	<p>The Board received the Risk Register presented by the Group CFO which was taken as read. There were no questions.</p>
<p>A4.</p>	<p>GCGO Update (</p>
<p>A4.1</p>	<p>Board Self-Assessment</p>
	<p>The Board received the Board Self-Assessment presented by the Group CGO.</p> <p>The Board were reminded that the new self-assessment framework aligns to the new AoC Code of Governance adopted from September 2024 and had been completed with the feedback received by the Corporation, as requested by the Group Chief Governance Officer reviewing feedback, LSEC Governance documentation and evidence and on current, future</p>

	<p>and emerging governance practice, policies and procedures. The self-assessment considered the overall effectiveness of the Board throughout six key principles.</p> <p>The Board were advised that outcomes from the recent Governance External Review conducted in 2024, Post Ofsted Inspection Action Plans following Inspection in October 2024, the implementation of the DfE College Handbook, and external policy changes, have all been considered within the Self-Assessment and Action Plan.</p> <p>RAG ratings had been applied to the self-assessment, to take into consideration the current status of various action plans and the development of the new Group Strategy and operating plans.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the actions outlined with the papers presented were proposed to be completed by beginning of January 2026. Some of these have already commenced and an update will be provided at the October 2025 Board.</p> <p>The Board were asked APPROVE the Board Action Plan as presented.</p>
	Questions and Comments
	There were no further questions on the action plan and RAG rating applied. The Board APPROVED the Action Plan.

PART 2: BELOW THE LINE (

Ref	Item
B1	Group CEO Update
B1.1	External Policy Update - NOTED
B1.2	Group Chief Strategy Officer Update NOTED
B2	DCEO Operational & Performance Update - NOTED
B3	Group CFO Update
B3.1	2024/25 Financial P6 Management Accounts - NOTED
B3.2	Group Risk Register Entries - NOTED
B4	Information or Recommendations from Committees
B4.1	Group Committees & C&S Summaries - NOTED
B4.2	Company Vehicle Policy
	Recommended for Approval by the Group Remuneration Committee. The Policy was APPROVED
B4.3	Value for Money Report
	Challenging – good value for money. NOTED
B4.4	LSEC Tuition Policy
	Recommended for Approval by the Group Finance Committee. Governor-SL abstained from the vote due to a declared interest. The Tuition Policy was APPROVED ..
B5	Governance / Statutory / Regulatory Updates
B5.1	Visit Reports – NOTED
B5.2	Board Assurance Framework – NOTED

AOB & Date of Next Meeting – 7 May 2025 at 4.30pm

Approved:



David Eastgate: Chair