

**Minutes of the meeting of the Northampton College Corporation
held at Booth Lane Campus on 26 June 2025 at 5.00 pm**

Governors	Julie Teckman (JT) (Acting chair) Laura Crandley (LC) Alexandra Owen (AO) Kiera White (KW) Steve Bunker (SB)	Jason Lancaster (JL) (Principal and CEO) Lynn Drinkald (LD) Megan Roberts (MR) Alric Pagon (AP)
In attendance	Joanne Philipott (JP) Rav Garcha (RG) Kay Sellick (KS)	Mark Owen (MO) Jan Hutt (JH) John Kirk (JK) (Clerk to the Corporation)
Apologies	Anne-Marie Kilday Mark Robbins Paul Nutter Chid Uleme	Rod Wood Neus Garrick Paul Beer

1. Governance and standing items

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Anne-Marie Kilday, Rod Wood, Mark Robbins, Neus Garrick, Paul Nutter, Paul Beer, and Chid Uleme. The meeting was declared quorate. Julie Teckman was elected to chair the meeting.

JT welcomed Megan Roberts, the newly elected Student Governor, to the meeting.

1.2 Declarations of interest

None received.

1.3 Minutes of the meeting on 1 May 2025

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

2. Governance Matters

2.1 To approve amended standing orders, Instrument of Government and Articles

The revised Standing Orders and Instrument and Articles were presented. JK explained that the changes were based on new national guidance from DfE and embedded into internal regulations. No objections were raised and the governors approved the amended documents.

3. Standing items

3.1 Student Voice

KW reported that the Culture Day has been rescheduled to the start of the new academic year to relieve pressure around exam time.

The student display board is being moved to boost engagement. MR reported that the Suggestion Box will be relocated to increase awareness, and students have requested that classrooms have clocks. This had been previously discussed with JL who would look into this.

JT thanked the students for their report.

3.2 Staff voice

SB reported issues had been raised around access control to teaching spaces and suggested one room be designated per block. JL agreed that teachers should have easier access to teaching spaces and agreed to review procedures.

SB noted that entering comments on ProMonitor was overly complex and suggested a shortcut be added. JL agreed to review this but noted the importance of high-quality comments in ProMonitor to ensure student progress is monitored and addressed.

SB requested clearer guidelines for staff on the student dress code for addressing inappropriate student clothing. JL noted that it is difficult to be specific in a policy about student dress code and noted that students must be allowed space for self-expression but agreed that the wording in the current policy will be reviewed. It remains the case that Student Services can provide support around these issues in extreme cases.

JT thanked SB for this helpful report.

3.3 Health and Safety (verbal update)

RG advised that there had been no incidents to report.

4. Strategic Matters

4.1 Principal's Report

The report was taken as read and JL highlighted the key updates:

- Bottom-up budgeting model has been implemented and curriculum planning has been improved.
- The effects of the pay review are being seen with the post for Teaching Assistant receiving over 80 applicants.
- Student success has been further recognised and expanded with the Principal's Awards and Daventry Student Awards.
- Retention is down slightly which is owing to transfers now being processed more accurately.
- Attendance for GCSE exams was 96%.

JT thanked JL for this report.

4.2 Key Performance Indicators 2024-2025

The KPI report was taken as read.

JL reported that financial performance remains strong, and apprenticeship achievement is on track.

GCSE attendance dropped slightly owing to a misunderstanding about the "Masterclass" sessions being optional, which will be addressed for next year. GCSE teachers will now be embedded within vocational areas, for example English teachers in Engineering.

There has been a slight increase in staff turnover, which will be covered in the HR report.

5. Finance

5.1 Monthly Management Accounts 2024-2025

The management accounts had previously been distributed and RG provided an overall summary.

RG noted that performance continues to exceed forecasts, with a projected outturn over £4 million. Cash reserves are strong, and growth is mainly owing to student recruitment, with an increase of 684 students.

Financial health is predicted to remain rated as "Outstanding."

Governors welcomed this very positive report and asked if there any concerns about underspending? JL noted the increased investment in equipment, staffing, and space, though there are challenges in recruiting quickly enough to meet demand. Planning is more strategic than reactive and JL gave an example such as not renting space too hastily.

MO reported that extra funds have been allocated across curriculum teams for spend before year-end on items such as engineering machinery, A-Level space upgrades, staff facilities, and digital resources.

Governors asked if student numbers will increase next year too? And if so, what preparations are in place? JL advised that there is the possibility of up to an additional 150 learners, but there are no plans to accept a further 600 again. Therefore, some oversubscribed programmes have been capped.

The report was received and JT thanked RG for the documents and the presentation.

5.2 Risk Register and Report

The risk register had previously been distributed RG highlighted the main changes:

- Risk 2 (Financial performance) score has been lowered to reflect strong performance.
- Risk 9 (Health & Safety) is now separated from Risk 11 (Cyber and data risks), with a task group formed for Health & Safety and a new Head of Estates brought in to reflect the heightened importance of compliance.

JT Thanked RG and noted that Health & Safety will now be a standing item at every Audit committee meeting with appropriate updates to the Corporation Board.

The report was received.

5.3 Budget and Financial Plan 2025-2026

RG presented the Budget and financial plan for 2025/26 and highlighted the main points:

- The budget shows an income of nearly £45 million, reflecting the growth in student numbers.
- Pay costs have risen but include cost of living and some discretionary uplifts.
- Capital projects include new furniture, upgraded Wi-Fi, and electric vehicles.
- £500k has been set aside for capital contingency, though this still sees cash balances grow to £23.6million, retaining 'Outstanding' health rating.

Governors asked if a vacancy discount should be factored in to more accurately reflect inevitable delays in recruitment? RG Noted that this has not historically been done at the College but is an option for future cycles.

JL noted that the purpose of the approach to date was to provide a proportionate and prudent contingency but, in the context of the rapid growth of the College, this had led to larger underspend than before and so the approach could usefully be reconsidered in future.

The Budget and Financial Plan 2025/26 were approved.

5.4 Treasury Management Policy

RG noted the one proposed change, to increase deposit limits per institution from £5m to £10m to allow better returns.

Governors asked if this maintains minimum cash cover. RG confirmed that several months' operating cash was always retained, which is approximately £6m.

The Revised Treasury Management Policy was approved.

6. Management Reports

6.1 Safeguarding / Prevent annual report

MO gave a verbal report, noting Safeguarding cases are slightly up year-on-year, mostly owing to improved reporting including through the new CPOMS system. Stronger triage measures and broader training have both been introduced. Prevent referrals are low and continue to be closely monitored.

JT thanked MO for his report.

6.2 SEND and High Needs report

The report had been taken as read.

JP reported the EHCP review processes have been streamlined, resulting in better feedback from students and families. Work continues on cross-campus consistency.

JT thanked JP for her report.

6.3 Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Report (including Gender Pay Reporting)

The report had been taken as read.

JH reported a number of EDI staff networks have been launched, with training sessions focused on gender identity, neurodiversity, and race. The gender pay gap has narrowed slightly. Work continues on data visibility and in embedding inclusion in curriculum.

JT thanked JH for her report.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Audit Committee – 12 June 2025

LC advised that the external audit plan has been reviewed and is recommend for approval. Validera internal audit reports show assurance levels as Substantial. Two final reports; Campus Management and Business Continuity are still to be received.

Finally, the Committee noted and thanked Mark Robbins for his service and contributions as he steps down as chair of the committee.

7.1.1 External audit plan

The external audit plan for 2025-2026 from RSM had previously been distributed and it was approved by the board.

7.1.2 RSM FE Emerging issues report

The report was not presented.

7.2 Quality and Standards Committee – 16 June 2025

The minutes had been circulated, and the report was received.

8. Closing Items**8.1 Any Other Business****8.1.1 To approve IT capital expenditure**

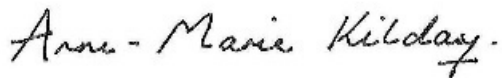
The proposal is £436,488 to the Banner Group for IT services and infrastructure. The IT capital was approved by the board.

8.1.2 To approve an overseas trip to Amsterdam

The proposal had previously been distributed to the board. The overseas trip to Amsterdam was approved.

8.2 Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 16 October 2025 5.00pm in the Boardroom



Anne-Marie Kilday
Chair of the Corporation

23 October 2025