

**Minutes of the meeting of the Northampton College Corporation  
held at Booth Lane Campus on 23 October 2025 at 5.00 pm**

<b>Governors (in person)</b>	Anne-Marie Kilday (AMK) (Chair) Rod Wood (RW) (Chair) Laura Crandley (LC) Steve Bunker (SB) (part of meeting) Megan Roberts (MR)	Jason Lancaster (JL) (Principal and CEO) Julie Teckman (JT) Kay Sellick (KS) Kiera White (KW)
<b>Governors (via Teams)</b>	Neus Garriock (NG) Lynn Drinkald (LD) David Bailey (DB)	Paul Beers (PB) Alric Pagon (AP)
<b>In attendance</b>	Joanne Philipott (JP) Julian Wood (JW), (DP FCA) Jan Hutt (JH) Andrew Pomeroy (AP)	Mark Owen (MO) Margot Stauntson (MS) Kathryn Berrill (KB) (Director of Governance) Asif Ahmad (observing)
<b>Apologies</b>	Alexandra Owen (AO)	

**1. Routine and Governance items**

**1.1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Alexandra Owen. The meeting was declared quorate.

**1.2 Declarations of interest**

1.2 Anne-Marie Kilday declared an interest in item 2.3 and 8.5 in the confidential section as it involves the University of Northampton.

**1.3 Minutes of the meeting on 26 June 2025**

1.3.1 AMK thanked JT for chairing in her absence. There is a requirement to clarify the date of the meeting and there is an amendment regarding the HR report which will be added. There was a query regarding the confidential minutes which had been attached in that it appeared that the minutes of 1 May and not 26 June had been added. KB will investigate.

1.3.2 A change is required to item 4.1 on page 2: the word 'technician' should be 'teaching'. KB confirmed that she will update the minutes accordingly.

**1.4 Outstanding Actions**

1.4.1 The action tracker had been taken as read. The staff badge access has had a slight delay because there have been some technical issues associated with it.

**1.5 Estates Masterplan Task and Finish Group**

1.5.1 JL reported that an external consultant has been appointed to produce a long-term plan to meet current and future needs for all three campuses. To ensure Governor oversight and input a Task and Finish group has been established and three meetings will be held during the year with the final proposal presented for approval at the Corporation meeting on 30 April. Those involved in the Task and Finish Group will be Julie Teckman, Paul Beers, Laura Crandley and Anne-Marie Kilday, who will chair the group. There were no objections to the proposed Task and Finish Group arrangements and terms of reference.

- 1.5.2 **Governors asked if students will be included in the group?** JL confirmed that they will be involved in the consultation process.

## **1.6 Governance**

- 1.6.1 KB advised that Paul Nutter has resigned from the Corporation. His departure has left the vacancy for the Safeguarding Governor. KB explained the statutory requirements for having a Safeguarding Governor and invited Governors to volunteer for the role. The role will include an annual activity in the DBS approach and more widely to work with Mark Owen and Jan Hutt regarding how the College handles safeguarding cases.

**Post minute note:** After the meeting Julie Teckman volunteered to take on the Safeguarding link role.

- 1.6.2 KB welcomed Asif Ahmad to the meeting and explained that he is a Co-opted Governor on the Board.

- 1.6.3 The proposal regarding Dr Alison Hoyle's appointment as Governor and member of the audit committee had previously been distributed and her appointment was unanimously ratified by Governors.

## **1.7 Student and Staff Voice**

### 1.7.1 Student Voice

It was reported that the furniture in the new Sixth Form Centre was not wheelchair accessible. The areas affected are the common spaces and there is a need to move the small tables and stools to support those in wheelchairs. MS agreed to address the issue.

- 1.7.2 A further issue in the Sixth Form Centre is that, at the start of the year when there were not enough classrooms, the upstairs library was used to add capacity which means that, at lunch and break, the library is crowded. Students are requesting a quieter space during these peak times. JP confirmed that this will be reviewed during study week.

- 1.7.3 KW reported that the Open Day had been a success, and many student ambassadors had signed up to support. MR explained that, at the end of the last year, the Student Union changed the way they updated their information board and that it is now updated termly. The constitution of the Parliament also changed because attendance was poor. There is now a clear separation between the parliament member and student ambassador role. Since then, they have tripled the amount of parliament members. Governors congratulated KW and MR on this achievement.

- 1.7.4 The Culture Day took place in October. Discussion took place with regards to more Governors being able to attend these events. It was agreed that dates of these events are sent out in advance to enable Governors to organise with their work commitments.

- 1.7.5 KW concluded the update by explaining that they are now working on the Christmas charity and campaigns.

### 1.7.6 Staff voice

It was proposed that, in sync with having two student governors, there are two staff governors. This will allow spreading the coverage and support with succession planning. The proposal was agreed and JL and KB will action.

- 1.7.7 The free breakfasts are popular and a significant number of students are arriving early but, owing to the queues, they arrive immediately at the start of their lesson still eating. The question was raised whether the breakfasts finish at 8.45 am instead. It was reported that the 9.00 am finish is to

support the later starting classes. However, JL confirmed that the process at all 3 campuses is planned to be reviewed.

- 1.7.8 With regards to CPD, the view from some staff is that, with the new term being busy and lengthy, whether CPD could be carried out in the second half of the Autumn term. JP and JL acknowledged that there needs to be a balance with staff capacity versus statutory training which must take place at the start of the academic year. Wednesday afternoon has been allocated for CPD and, it is clear from Ofsted, that training for teaching staff must begin at the start of the year so they don't lose their impetus.
- 1.7.9 It was also reported that notification tends to come late for CPD. It was advised that opportunities to take the online training sessions start in the summer but JH confirmed that more frequent prompts will be made via iTrent to support with staff planning their time.
- 1.7.10 It was proposed that, along with the birthday wishes each member of staff receives on their birthday, whether they could also receive a 'coffee and cake' voucher. It was agreed that this is a kind act and can be part of the well-being package.
- 1.7.11 Governors thanked KW, MR and SB for their feedback and suggestions which are greatly valued.

## **2. Strategy and Priorities**

### **2.1 Principal and CEO Report**

- 2.1.1 The report is taken as read and JL provided an overview of the main items.
- 2.1.2 In the first week of October there was a substantial failure of the water pump at the Booth Lane Campus which forced the site to close. The College closed on Tuesday and the pump was fixed overnight Wednesday. The College remained closed on Thursday to test the system. The College closed at 11.00 am on the Tuesday and online learning started at 1.00 pm. He reported on the lessons learnt and the that it has highlighted areas such as better oversight on planned maintenance and repair. There is also a review of other systems to see if there are any critical features and single points of failure.
- 2.1.3 ***Governors asked the Student Governor how the experience affected them ?*** For those who lived close to the College it was a simple process to log on at 1.00 for the start of lessons. From the A level perspective it went well and all students were present in lessons. For those who lived further away it was more difficult but they went to Weston Favell library and were set up online at 1.00 pm. There was also more difficulty for those students who had WIFI problems at home and some missed a tranche of lessons.
- 2.1.4 It was explained that, whilst all students have their own laptops, it was acknowledged that more contingency planning is required.
- 2.1.5 There has been success in securing OfS (Office for Students) funding to support with HNC in Construction, Engineering and Manufacturing, equipment for Level 4 fabrication and welding and equipment for film and games design.
- 2.1.6 There has also been a successful collaborative bid with West Northants Council and Moulton College for in-schools boot camps in the area; a first for Northamptonshire. This is being responsive to the adult upskilling route and will be start in March 2026. However, the College was not successful in becoming a CTEC (Construction Technical Excellence College) but it did raise our profile and, as such, we have been identified as the spoke for Derby College (who were the successful bidder).

- 2.1.7 With regards to the issues around recording of student transfers, the impact is a lowering of 3 pp. JL confirmed that the College has been clear with the DfE and they are happy with the changes made to ensure the process is now accurate.

#### Sector update

- 2.1.8 JL advised that the Post 16 Education and Skills Whitepaper has been published. Early indications are showing that further education and colleges are high profile but there are some potential pitfalls. He confirmed that he will review and reflect and bring back a summary to the next meeting.
- 2.1.9 ***Governors asked for clarification and asked does the White Paper include the assessment review.*** This will be separate and should be coming out shortly.
- 2.1.10 ***With regards to the TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework) consultation, Governors asked will the College be submitting a view?*** JL confirmed that the College's view will be submitted and that it will share the University's view. AMK offered to share the UoN response to the consultation.

## **2.2 Development of New College Strategic Plan**

- 2.2.1 JL advised that the current strategic plan concludes in 2026 and the new plan is currently being prepared. The plan sets out timescales and general approach, although some of the work has already started. The proposed approach is to bring the final strategic plan to the Corporation on 30 April for approval. The plan will also include the brand development. Governors discussed whether there will be a quality impact assessment and JL confirmed that this will be included.
- 2.2.2 ***Governors asked that, on behaviour and culture, how will you approach this?*** There will be significant collaboration with staff to drive the culture piece. It is important to harness the current strengths and what staff like about our culture. Also, there is a need to ensure ownership and have the desire to be better each day. The view is that this desire must be driven from the top and needs to be highlighted at every meeting.
- 2.2.3 The Governors noted the paper and approved the direction of travel.

## **2.3 Local Collaboration**

- 2.3.1 Through conversations with the University of Northampton and Moulton College leadership and in response to focus on skills, there is a common purpose to support our area. It is proposed that there is a Memorandum of Understanding, which is a non-binding agreement, working together for the common good. It sets the common objectives and principles of working together and will be a foundation document if other institutions wish to join.
- 2.3.2 AMK stated that with the Government pushing on skills, the University can learn from the further education sector and how it interacts with employers and prepares students for the world of work. As there is not a clear path to devolution the local educational establishments must be part of the leadership on skills. Governors agreed that this was essential and that working in silos is not the way forward. They agreed that it was a positive move and, in the context of devolution, ensures that the local education establishments are the key influential drivers.

All Governors voted in favour of the proposal. AMK did participate in the vote.

## **2.4 Health and Safety**

- 2.4.1 The Annual Report was taken as read. Since the audit of STEM and the RIDDOR incident, although there was evidence of health and safety practice, there were some systemic issues. This has resulted in an action plan and the key achievements have been noted to date.

2.4.2 Governors were pleased with the clear and coherent way it provided assurance. Governors thanked MS for the progress following the work with external consultants who had completed audit reviews of the highest risk areas and that high priority actions are complete or being addressed. Governors also acknowledged the KPIs relating to the drive in improving the health and safety culture.

2.4.3 Health and Safety Policy and statement was unanimously approved.

### **3. Curriculum and Student Experience**

3.1 The report was taken as read and JP provided key highlights.

3.2 There has been a realignment in structure and a new school for Automotive, Construction and Engineering was created, with a new assistant principal. There is also the new appointment of the Director of Improvement, Innovation and Skills.

3.3 The start of the year has been busy and purposeful. Curriculum planning has already started because of the successful Open Evening and the need to recruit staff to support growth. 500 students were unable to be placed and, as the White Paper states says that students will be allocated a place, this will include more E3 programmes. It is a challenging market for vacancies.

3.4 Enrolment is strong. Expected outturn is 88.5%. Analysis will look into quality and standards. The college is 4.2% above national achievement rate which is significant in the sector.

3.5 There was a small decline in GCSE achievement. Nevertheless, the college has been approached by the DfE to learn about our approach especially relating to those who come in with no GCSEs. The college is in the Top 27 of colleges for GCSE English. 360 more students sat GCSE maths than in previous years and there were improved results.

3.6 More focus is required on apprenticeships. Governors were advised of the staffing shortages along with the challenges with apprenticeships for hair and beauty.

3.7 ***Governors asked do you think grade boundaries affect apprenticeship numbers in that they need a grade 4?*** It was a strategy that improved our apprenticeship success. For those students who nearly achieved a 4 or had high attendance, they may be considered. The question to ask is, if their attendance is low at school, how confident are we that they are ready for an apprenticeship.

3.8 ***Student Governors asked about the 500 unplaced student and what happens to them?*** They are out of education because there are not enough places in the County. Other programmes are oversubscribed, and some other local colleges do not have the technical facilities to offer the variety of courses.

3.9 Current marketing campaigns are pushing that the college is oversubscribed and students are encouraged to come to the Open Events to sign up early. The Open Event attendance was 25% higher than in previous years.

3.10 ***Governors asked how do you ensure students are on the right course?*** Students understand the study programme before they arrive to ensure they are prepared for the programme. There is a strong induction and diagnostic period to make sure they understand the programme of study. Early referrals are put in place to make adjustments.

3.11 At this stage of the meeting AMK called for a short break at 6.00 pm and the meeting resumed at 6.10 pm.

#### 4. Finance

##### 4.1 Management Accounts

4.1.1 The reports were taken as read and AP confirmed that the College is in a stable and strong financial position. The final set of accounts will be brought to the December board meeting for approval.

4.1.2 **Governors asked that on the non pay costs of £1.5m – what does that mean for this financial year and, regarding the capital programme grant of £1.9m what are the plans are for this?** For the £1.5m this will be used for health and safety improvements, plus it provides room for the College to continue as before under controlled conditions to improve the student experience.

4.1.3 The £1.9m on the condition grant is to be spent by March 2028. MS has procured a full condition survey and a survey on lift, plant and equipment. Critical works will be prioritised. But, overall, the message of condition is positive. This is the first time there has been an external condition survey and further allocations from the DfE are also expected in future years.

4.1.4 JL added that they are mindful of changes in the White Paper which might affect the College. Therefore, balancing the spending, estates strategy and strategic plan will be key to this.

4.1.5 **Governors raised that they are aware that higher education has a debtor issue and asked have any steps been taken to address this or is the College shielded from it as opposed to universities?** Further education is in a different zone to universities because funding is on debt collection. A member of staff has been hired to improve the debt collection, to support students who need to fund their courses and employers who pay towards apprenticeships.

4.1.6 **Governors asked that, in terms of equipment updates, is there a strategy with the equipment that is replaced but is still usable?** It depends on its state when it is replaced. Equipment is not replaced too soon. If there is no net book value it is scrapped or donated but if there is value it is sold.

4.1.7 Governors thanked AP for the clear presentation of the papers.

##### 4.2 Subcontracting Arrangements

4.2.1 The College are required to advise the DfE if they sub contract. Governors were advised that, for this year, there will not be any subcontracting and the DfE have been advised.

4.2.2 Governors noted the information.

##### 4.3 Bus Pass Expenditure 2025 2026

4.3.1 In compliance with finance regulations and the value of the bus passes, permission is sought from Governors to delegate authority for JL to authorise. The impact on the college is small and the spend is £1.1m on bus passes which is an increase from last year owing to the number of students. However, 89% of this is recouped through the Local Authority. The net impact £131k which is within the budget framework.

4.3.2 There were no questions and Governors approved the delegation as described.

##### 4.4 Cleaning and Security contract tender

4.4.1 The cleaning and security contract is out for tender. Owing to the timescales with the tender, permission was requested for delegated authority to JL for authorise. JL advised that with the security aspect, the direction of travel is changing to 'behaviour support officers' which is a kinder approach to security.

4.4.2 There were no questions and Governors approved the delegation as described.

#### **4.5 Risk and Board Assurance Framework**

4.5.1 The management update on the board assurance framework will be reviewed prior to the Corporation meeting on 11 December. The risks and scores have been addressed and Governors were advised that four of the corporate risks are above the risk tolerance.

4.5.2 Governors noted the positive direction of travel with the health and safety risk mitigations and that they can see that, from the position in June to now, there is significant compliance. Whilst there is still more to be done, there is confidence that the risk will be brought into tolerance during the year.

4.5.3 Recruitment and retention: Owing to the implementation of new recruitment approaches, there was a 50% increase in applications per post from April to July. In terms of curriculum planning this will support with recruiting for next September. However, there has been a need to revert to agency owing of the larger number of students but there are plans to reduce the need to use agency staff. With regards to engineering recruitment there will be a targeted marketing campaign. At the Open Event for learning support assistants, 60 people attended.

4.5.4 ***Governors asked that, on risk 9, by the end of the year where are you targeting the residual risk to land. What will success look like?*** It will be an assurance rating of 'sufficient' and 4 or below.

4.5.5 ***Governors raised the issue of cyber security and that companies are urged to undertake cyber security drills. They asked if this is being considered.*** JL and JW are discussing this with IT colleagues. Having a protective crust is good but there is a need to move to the assumption that it will fail and to have wider organisational resilience piece. Considerations are running a simulation exercise and this will be reported back to the audit committee.

### **5. Organisational**

#### **5.1 Safeguarding / Prevent Policy**

5.1.1 Mark Owen ((MO) provided an update. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 was published on 1 September 2025 and, as there was limited change, there is very little change in policy owing to this. The update includes tweaks to names and contact numbers and a small element around working on AI. The caveat is that more significant changes in 2026 expected. MO confirmed that the College's policy is developed with staff in mind as an operational guide. The National Association of Student Services is using our policy as best practice. In addition, Virtual Schols use the policy as an exemplar for looked after children (LAC).

5.1.2 There were no queries and Governors ratified the policy.

#### **5.2 Safeguarding and Prevent Update**

5.2.1 As part of the filtering and monitoring requirements, monitoring software has been implemented on student devices to monitor content. It has provided a good addition to the support provided. It has resulted in 3 to 5 referrals a day with 1 every day that raised more concern. The support includes a conversation or education with that student.

5.2.2 MO explained the partnerships with youth services for those at risk of criminal exploitation and classed as young offenders. The team are also refreshing our relationships with the external organisation who support our young people.

5.2.3 With regards to work around vulnerable groups, the new inspection framework includes how the College supports young carers and looked after children. There is a dedicated team of staff who are building relationships with these students.

5.2.4 MO was thanked for his update and for his committed support for the students in our care.

## **6. Committee Reports**

### **6.1 Audit Committee – 9 October 2025**

6.1.1 LC provided an update and explained that the internal auditor had presented the audits of the year. The campus management audit was limited assurance and that business continuity was adequate. Payroll was a substantial assurance. LC confirmed that the actions from the previous audits had been completed.

6.1.2 The external auditor had attended the meeting and provided an update on the progress of the external audit.

6.1.3 MHA had attended to discuss the audit on student transfers. It was a thorough audit which and identified some other areas which have now been dealt with.

### **6.2 Governance and Remuneration – 23 October 2025**

6.2.1 This will be dealt with under the confidential section

## **7. Closing Items**

### **7.1 Any Other Business**

7.1.1 The paper on carbon reporting had been included for information and did not require discussion.

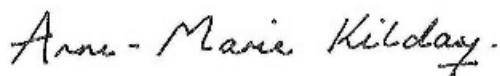
7.1.2 KB asked that, if any more Governors wanted to attend the Climate workshop on 6 November, to let her know. AMK and PB are already attending.

7.1.3 Governors were advised that if there had been any RIDDOR incidents they were to be updated. However, there have not been any since the last meeting. Following the incident in March the HSE have followed up, and they have been provided with information for their investigation.

### **7.2 Date and time of next meeting**

7.2.1 Thursday 11 December 2025 5.00pm in the Boardroom

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.45 pm**



Anne-Marie Kilday  
Chair of the Corporation

11 December 2025