

**Minutes of the meeting of the Northampton College Corporation
held at Booth Lane Campus on 11 December 2025 at 5.00 pm**

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

1. Routine and Governance items

1.1 Apologies for Absence

AMK welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Neus Garriock, Alric Pagon and Jane Deery. The meeting was declared quorate.

1.2 Declarations of interest

1.2 None.

1.3 Minutes of the meeting on 23 October 2025

1.3.1 4.1.2 should read: **In relation to the additional non-pay costs of £1.5m, Governors asked about the implications for 25/26 and, regarding the capital programme grant of £1.9m, what are the plans for this?** The additional £1.5m non-pay costs would not directly affect 25/26 expenditure as non-pay costs for this year will reflect the budget set in June. Additional expenditure had been prioritised in 24/25 to ensure effective use of available resources in year.

1.3.2 Subject to the amendment the minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

1.4 Outstanding Actions

1.4.1 There is one item which is still progressing (Item 1.7.6 second staff governor appointment). All other actions are complete.

2. Curriculum and Student Experience

2.1 Self-Assessment Report

2.1.1 The document was taken as read. Joanne Philipott (JP) explained that the annual self-assessment report (SAR) reflects the previous academic year to review the College against the new Ofsted framework. However, the SAR is not being graded at this point to reflect Ofsted refreshed developmental approach and to enable the College to see how the new Ofsted inspections pan out. The SAR has an honest overview regarding the areas for improvement.

- 2.1.2 There are strong achievement rates and, although there was a drop last year (due to change of approach to student transfers), the rates are still well above national. The College is working well with external stakeholders which has strengthened over the last year. Safeguarding continues to be effective and this was tested during the Ofsted inspection in 2024. Despite inclusion being a significant area in the new framework, inclusion has always been, and continues to be, a key priority at the College. The new framework will also focus on those who haven't achieved grade 4 in English and maths which is an area on which we will strengthen focus.
- 2.1.3 The SAR includes focus on apprenticeship provision to ensure there is robust delivery. A levels are also a high priority along with other programmes which weren't meeting our strong requirements.
- 2.1.4 With regards to staff performance, initiatives are place to ensure that effective teachers continue to improve. The How2 programme and central CPD offer has been launched. This has been captured in the QIP (Quality Improvement Plan) and has been cascaded throughout the organisation.
- 2.1.5 **Governors asked with the progression for students, do you get to see data of actual progression?** JP can provide information on how many students progress from level 1 to 2 and 2 to 3 and will bring this data to the next meeting.
- 2.1.6 **Governors asked whether the statistics could be provided in a table to support the narrative.** JL advised that there is a data pack which sits behind the narrative and is available if required.
- 2.1.7 The Governors confirmed that they appreciated the section on background context as it shows the value added provided by the College. There were no further questions and the document was approved.
- 2.2 **Curriculum and Student Experience (including enrolment)**
- 2.2.1 The document was taken as read. There has been a slew of updates in the sector over the Autumn term. Firstly, the new Ofsted inspection framework was introduced which now has a different report card with no single grade being awarded. The new report card combines at-a-glance grades with narrative summaries of strengths and areas for improvement.
- 2.2.2 The second is the curriculum assessment review which will result in substantial education reform over the next 10 years. This will affect vocational, GCSE and A level courses. There is a key focus on achieving stronger passes at level 2 in English and maths. There will also be some form of stepped qualification in level 1. There will be significant change at level 3 with either T levels of mix of A and V levels.
- 2.2.3 At Level 2, there will be two pathways; an occupational pathway to support students to progress into Level 2 occupations (apprenticeships etc) and a further one-year pathway (foundation) which supports progression into Level 3 programmes.
- 2.2.4 Areas which may prove challenging include college auto enrolment and NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) given that our provision does not currently have capacity to serve every young person. However, the College will look at alternative types of programme to meet their needs. Some of our feeder schools have low grades, especially Daventry and town schools, and pupils are unable to meet the admissions criteria.
- 2.2.5 Finally, work is ongoing to assess the implications of the Post-16 White Paper for the programmes and courses offered.

- 2.2.6 With regards to enrolments, the on-line process is working well and, as such, other Colleges have asked for support with how to implement a similar system. Extra work is taking place around non-standard entry ie those who were previously home educated.
- 2.2.7 The College is piloting fresh start NEET programmes. They start in January and February for Health and Social Care and Construction respectively. Arts courses will commence in March. Curriculum planning for the following year has already commenced to take into account realignment of rooms, resources, staff etc.
- 2.2.8 The Office for Students (OfS) capital project is to be completed by 31 March 2026. The College is still waiting to hear from WNC (West Northants Council) about the Skills' Bootcamps. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) are keen for the College to be involved in sector-based work academies. Adult allocations have dropped and there is a need to see if funds are available from DWP to provide further support.
- 2.2.9 The College is involved as a partner (not a lead) in CTEC projects in the East Midlands, East of England and nationally. EMT will review carefully how to be involved but are keen to be involved in the development of regional CPD for teachers and a resources platform.
- 2.2.10 Governors thanked JP for providing a very comprehensive and informative document.
- 2.3 **Climate Action Plan**
- 2.3.1 JP explained that the plan has been developed over the last year with contributions from external experts. Workshops have taken place with senior leaders, governors and students. It is a one-year strategy to tie it into the College's new strategic priorities. At this stage no firm targets have been set around net zero and decarbonisation.
- 2.3.2 The College has won several awards and has also become a beacon in the local community for green skills and sustainability. Work continues to develop new curricula in Hydrogen, EV training and Construction.
- 2.3.3 The core principles are threefold. The first relates to Estates and managing the physical environment to minimise environmental impact. The second relates to curriculum and skills by integrating sustainability into the curriculum and embedding it into teaching and learning. The third strand is community and social action.
- 2.3.4 ***Paul Beers (PB) attended the College's Climate Action Workshop on 6 November. He explained that the key challenge is successfully integrating the initiatives into the curriculum. He highlighted that business green skills are missing. Quoted and listed companies must now report on their carbon accounting and greenhouse gases. Therefore, sustainable leadership is a significant feature in business and should be captured in the curriculum. It was suggested that there are no hard targets because the baseline is not yet known. PB also advised that achieving net zero targets will be a significant project and the College will need to prioritise time to achieve this goal.***
- 2.3.5 The Governors confirmed that it was a good first year strategy and it is recommended for approval. JP confirmed that she will add the business green skills and the document was approved based on that change.

JP left the meeting at 5.25 pm.

3. Organisational

3.1 Safeguarding and Prevent Update

3.1.1 Mark Owen (MO) provided an update. He reported that a new system has been implemented called OnGuard. 64,000 alerts have been received to date and, through a series of monitoring checks, 120 of these alerts triggered actions for the safeguarding team.

3.1.2 OnGuard works in tandem with CPOMS, the internal child protection recording system.

3.1.3 The team are working with students who have a history of requiring support in previous settings. By working with, and gathering information from partner schools, this can be addressed earlier next year before the students join the College.

3.1.4 Professional boundary training is taking place with staff to support their work with students. Training includes understanding their concerns specific to their course.

3.1.5 Work is taking place with the Youth Offending Service and Northamptonshire Police. The aim is to share intelligence and understand young people's concerns and what support they might need.

3.1.6 The team are taking part in County Contextual Safeguarding Meetings where all schools and colleges in the County share concerns. It has proved to be a useful tool to enable understanding of the hotspots in the County towns where young people gather socially.

3.1.7 The College ran its first knife arch owing to a concern in the Booth Lane locality. Nobody was caught with weapons and support was provided to deal with any concerns or anxiety. The knife arch exercise will be rolled out to other campuses and it will take place 3 times a year.

3.1.8 Safeguarding training has been conducted by all staff.

3.1.9 **Governors asked that with OnGuard, from the 64,000 alerts how does it filter to 120 pupils?** It is a 3-tier system. The first two levels are AI driven and the third tier is monitored by a person. MO provided examples.

3.1.20 **Governors liked the idea of the professional growth boundaries training and asked when the training is created, do you capture student voice?** MO confirmed that they will.

3.1.21 **Governors raised that when teachers submit an entry on CPOMS they are unable to track what has happened.** The system provides an acknowledgement of the submission and a teacher would have to log into the system to see this. The acknowledgement is not sent via email. The outcome is not shared with staff but they are advised that it has been dealt with. Further training will be conducted with staff on managing alerts.

MO was thanked for his presentation and he left the meeting at 5.30 pm.

4. Strategy and Priorities

4.1 Student and Staff Voice

Student Voice

4.1.1 The Student Governor report was tabled for Governors to read at their leisure and included details of recent events. KW and MR highlighted the 3 most positive points from the report and any aspects where they would like to see improvement.

- 4.1.2 The highlights were the Christmas Jumper and Pyjama Day where there was significant involvement from staff and students. For the Christmas charity campaign, staff and students donated food and toiletries to be distributed to various local charities. The chosen charities were The Hope Centre, McCarthy Dixon, Northampton Domestic Abuse Service and Russell House Children in Care. On 11 November, staff and students took part in the Remembrance Service which was a positive highlight in the term and credit to Jade Miller and her team who brought everyone together.
- 4.1.3 JL had previously asked KW and MR to seek the student voice at the Lower Mounts and Daventry campuses. There were some issues which caused concern at Lower Mounts and these have been reported to and discussed with EMT. From the conversations with students, there is now a communication channel open for the Student Union to find out from what they need from their campus.
- 4.1.4 Governors were pleased that Student Governors had visited Lower Mounts as it helps unite the campuses. **Governors asked that with regards to the parking costs, the standard daily rate for Northampton town centre parking is £6.60 but could the council offer the top floor of St Michaels car park at a reduced rate?** Students are entitled to receive fare refunds; however, these are not being processed by the local authority in a timely manner.
- 4.1.5 **Governors asked whether there are Student Union representation at other sites?** There is an ambassador at both the Daventry and Lower Mounts campuses. However, the ambassador at Daventry can't attend the meetings and therefore there is a slight disconnect. JL confirmed that the College can support with setting up and holding virtual meetings to link all three campuses.

Staff voice

- 4.1.6 SB reported that the issue with the lift at Lower Mounts has also been brought to his attention. JW explained that the design of the building, having only one lift, is sub optimal and the lift has been subject to repeated maintenance for a number of years. It is being repaired again and is on the list for full replacement from the condition allocation funding within this academic year.
- 4.1.7 The staff area in the Booth Lane canteen is being used for meetings (both in person and on Teams) and, as such, is not being used as it was intended.
- 4.1.8 The smoking shelter in E block was closed off during Covid as a precaution and staff have asked if it can be reinstated because students gather in larger groups in shelters in the car parks. JL confirmed that this will be discussed at EMT.
- 4.1.9 SB reported on the amount of cover which is stretching staff through the first term. JL advised that owing to staff turnaround and the high number of DBS checks required at the start of term it is challenging to fill posts quickly. Discussion took place with regards to staff absence owing to illness and the fact that January inevitably leads to an increase in winter illnesses. Jan Hutt confirmed that she will look at year on year attendance data.
- 4.1.10 SB asked if there was a further update on having analogue clocks in the classrooms. JL confirmed that it had been discussed in consultation with colleagues and it was not deemed necessary as it is not educationally crucial.

4.2 CEO/Principal's Report

- 4.2.1 The report was taken as read and JL highlighted the main areas. The College lost the heating for most of a week at Booth Lane Campus following the failure of a water joint but learning was not interrupted. The incident illustrated the point about the need to accelerate the planned maintenance programme and address backlog issues. The design of the building, which although it

is a high quality learning space, has resilience issues in that one system failure can impact the whole building. JL wished to record his thanks to staff and students for the professional and supportive manner to keep learning live. The Estates team did well to source the parts and resolve the issue. The Estates team are now carrying out an investigation into any other risks.

4.2.2 There had been local concern about armed students in the area and the Police asked the College to carry out a campus lockdown. It was a useful exercise and it tested the resilience of procedures.

4.2.3 The future skills partnership with Moulton College and the University of Northampton has been launched and has had traction both locally and nationally. This model of partnership is about removing competition and working together for the sake of the community.

5. Finance

5.1 Management Accounts

5.1.1 Andrew Pomery (AP) provided the report on the management accounts, which was the financial position at the end of October (period 3). Year to date income is higher than budget owing to the 16-18 funding rate increases notified late in 24/25. Pay costs are running below budget. Non pay costs are above budget, partially because exam costs are running ahead of profiling.

5.1.2 The College is still ahead of budget with a strong position to end the year. Within the figures there is potential 300k net in year growth income but this is still not yet certain as it is dependent on DfE affordability.

5.1.3 The overall projected financial health rating remains in the outstanding range.

5.1.4 **Governors asked what are your plans for the additional surplus especially as there is a surplus so early in the year?** More is likely to be spent on capital and the fabric of the estate. IT purchases are also likely to be brought forward to support preparations for 26/27. Once further forecasting has been completed, if there is a significant surplus, further spending options will be discussed with Corporation. Outside the scope of this, £530k has been received from OfS to spend on student facing resources.

5.1.5 **Governors raised the slight shift in cash days in hand. Are we seeing a shift towards urgent cash expenditure and away from long term plans? Is that making life difficult or is there a plan?** JL responded in that the College is taking a different approach by using more agency teachers. In general, agency staff are being employed to cover a need not previously recognised.

5.1.6 **Governors asked for further information on the comments that the cash forecast is lower than budget because of higher supplier payments.** It is because additional spend was forecast and this will have an impact on cash in hand and supplier payments.

5.2 Annual Report and Accounts

5.2.1 Laura Crandley (LC), as chair of the Audit Committee, reported that Governors had spent time with RSM and reported that there had been a clean audit. **Governors raised that the only flag was the availability of some information on income sampling which was provided late. The committee was assured that plans were in place to ensure this would not happen again.**

5.2.2 The letters of representation, audit committee's own annual report and the annual financial reports will be submitted to the DfE by 31 December and published on the website by 31 January 2026.

5.2.3 The Audit Committee proposed that the annual report and accounts are approved by the Corporation. They were duly approved by unanimous assent.

5.3 Risk and Board Assurance Framework

5.3.1 Since October, the residual risk on Risk 9 has been reduced. It reflects the action planning carried out and confirmation that there will be no further action from the HSE. The risk is still above tolerance but the plan is to reduce the score by the end of the academic year.

5.3.2 Four risks are still above risk tolerance. At the Audit Committee meeting they discussed whether management were confident in the trajectory towards tolerance and whether this was realistic. The Risk Management policy is due for renewal at the next Audit Committee meeting.

5.3 Health and Safety

5.3.1 JW provided a verbal update. There have not been any RIDDOR incidents in this period. The H&S action plan continues to be implemented and a new health and safety management software is being brought in. There is a programme of Health & Safety training being finalised for managers.

5.3.2 Health and Safety is expected to be on each agenda of every internal meeting to ensure it remains in focus.

6. Committee Reports

6.1 Audit Committee – 27 November 2025

6.1.1 LC confirmed that the committee had received an update on the heating issues discussed previously. There were no internal audit reports to discuss. Discussion had taken place with how to ensure the whole board stays involved in the risk management processes.

6.1.2 In January the committee will review the process of tendering for the external auditor. It is a corporation appointment on the recommendation of the audit committee and a further update will be provided at the meeting on 19 March 2026.

6.1.3 JL explained that NCFE, which colleges use as an awarding body, have been the subject of a cyber-attack. This highlights that there are no guarantees with security and work on resilience is required on the assumption that the College will have an attack.

6.2 Quality and Standards – 24 November 2025

6.2.1 The committee looked at the Self-Assessment Review, Quality Improvement Plan and the new Ofsted framework. They also received an interesting paper on A levels, T level performance and staff development.

6.3 Governance and Remuneration – 11 December 2025

6.3.1 The remuneration section will be dealt with under the confidential section.

6.3.2 There were two items from the Governance section. The first was the Weston Report and the behaviour of governors at that college which led to inadequate governance. KB had looked at the 13 recommendations and the provided assurance that the practice at Northampton College operates at a significantly higher standard and in accordance with the recommendations in the Report.

6.3.3 Governors had completed the annual self-assessment questionnaire, to comply with the Governance Code of Practice. The areas for improvement are for Governors to visit the college more regularly and action is taking place to facilitate this. The findings from the survey were accepted on the recommendation of the Governance and Remuneration committee and a conclusion will be added to the governance self assessment report.

6.4 Governor Visit Feedback

- 6.4.1 RW had spent the day at the Daventry and Booth Lane Campuses. He was inspired by the presentation of the Principal's award to a student at Daventry. He visited 3 classes and he mentioned the high standard of teacher apprenticeships. The Inclusion and Progress Team were running their Christmas Fayre and it was a good opportunity to see the enrichment activities of the College at work.
- 6.4.2 LC visited on 23 October and visited a variety of lessons; from acting through to computer programming to an impromptu dance performance. She went into the catering kitchens and met the external provider where they discussed the skills which directly related to their future careers. She has recently attended musical performances and performing arts events. She has had the opportunity of talking to the students and it was joyous to see their enthusiasm.
- 6.4.3 PB carried out a tour of college and was impressed by the hygiene standards and knowledge of the students in food and catering in the restaurant and kitchens. He attended the Sustainability Day on 6 November and met many students who all came over well with innovative ideas.
- 6.4.4 ***Governors would like to attend the Principal's Awards and asked for the list of dates when these take place.*** JL will forward these to Governors.

7. Closing Items

7.1 Any Other Business

- 7.1.1 KB thanked Governors for completing their mandatory training and politely reminded Governors to carry out their training if they have not yet done so. The links to the training will be sent out again.
- 7.1.2 She explained that, in the New Year, a range of sound-bite training videos and accompanying training material will be prepared to build up a bank of resources.
- 7.1.3 AMK thanked the Governors who were leaving the meeting at this point for their attendance and sent best wishes for the festive season and new year.

7.2 Date and time of next meeting

- 7.2.1 The date of the next meeting is Thursday 19 March 2026 5.00pm in the Boardroom

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.30 pm

Anne-Marie Kilday.

Anne-Marie Kilday
Chair of the Corporation

19 March 2026