



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS – MAIN MINUTES

Wednesday 27 May 2026 – 8.30am to 9.15am

Governors	Type	Initials	Attendance	Apologies
Michael Williams	Chair / Independent	MW	X	
David Alexander	Principal / CEO	DA	X	
Martin Hedley	Vice Chair / Independent	MH		X
Aneela Ali	Vice Chair / Independent	AA	X	
David Brind	Independent	DB		X
Lisa Crichton-Jones	Independent	LCJ	X	
Carol Davenport	Independent	CD	X	
Darren Curry	Independent	DCu		X
Eamonn Toland	Independent	ET	X	
Maria Craig	Independent	MC		X
Peter Francis	Independent	PF	X	
Ryan Gibson	Independent	RG	X	
Suzanne Jobson	Independent	SJ	X	
Katy Malia	Staff Governor (Teaching)	KM	X^	
Rachel Leech	Staff Governor (Support)	RL	X^	
Dylan Smith	Student Governor (16-18)	DS		X
Anthony Gibbon	Student Governor (19+)	AG		X
Clerk				
Nicola Taylor-Mosley	Director of Governance and Compliance	NTM	X	
Attendees				
Nadine Hudspeth	Director of Brand and Learner Experience	NH	X^	

^Attended for part of the meeting.

3506 1. Chair's welcome, apologies, and declarations of interest

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. Apologies had been received from MH, MC, DC and DB. There was no attendance from DS or AG. **The Board agreed that the meeting was quorate.**

There were no additional conflicts of interests noted. Members were reminded to declare any conflicts which arose during the meeting.

The Chair highlighted the following:

- A confidential item would be covered under Item 3 relating to the recruitment of the Deputy Principal Finance and Resources. As this related to an individual staff matter, this item was to be heard by Independent Governors only.

- The College Strategic Plan was being presented for approval. This followed an extensive period of consultation, feedback and engagement across governors, learners, staff and partners. The final version of the strategy had now been drafted, building on feedback from the Board Strategy Day on 2 April. The Board were to be assured of the strategic direction, priorities and ambition.

The Chair highlighted the following events, due to take place in the coming weeks:

- Student Edge Awards - Thursday 18 June - Baltic Campus
- Staff Summer Celebration - Friday 26 June - Academy for Sport

3507 2. College Strategic Plan

DA and NH presented the report and some covering slides which set out the following:

- The process of engagement undertaken as part of the strategic review, highlighting the importance of the strategy being written collaboratively.
- The original challenge from the Chair to *craft a strategy that radiates passion and energy. A vision that speaks for itself, grabs attention and leaves people inspired. A message of bold ambition and real empowerment.*
- A reminder of themes tested across the academic year:
 - Employment Edge for Everyone, Poverty and Inclusion
 - Digital and Innovation
 - Regional leadership and Strategic Partnerships
 - People, Culture and Equity
 - Skills and Employment
- An overview of feedback from the College's annual Community Conversation, the biggest event of its kind with over 135 people in attendance. A summary of the feedback was:
 - Strong overall endorsement of the draft Mission, Vision, Ethos and Purpose, with attendees valuing the opportunity to contribute.
 - Clear preference for accessible, plain English and Gateshead College-specific language, with feedback where this was not evident.
 - Consistent view that digital transformation should enhance, rather than replace, human connection.
 - Recognition of the strategy's ambition, with a mix of enthusiasm and some caution regarding deliverability.
 - Clear support for maintaining the College's inclusive culture as a core priority.
 - Strong emphasis on addressing poverty, particularly digital poverty, for both learners and staff.
 - Desire for the strategy to provide clearer line of sight between current position and future ambitions.
 - Appetite for continued engagement and dialogue on next steps and individual/collective roles.
- There was no appetite to move away from the College's current priorities of Learners, People, Partnership and Sustainability, however there was recognition of the importance of Digital being a key focus across all areas, becoming a college-wide 'connector'.

- At the Board Strategy Day on 2 April, the Board fed back the draft strategy was:
 - Clear, simple, engaging and ambitious
 - Had a strong sense of belonging, community and collaboration
 - Had clear direction and a strength of underlying ethos
- The strategy was further refined following Board feedback to be strengthened in terms of its ambition for staff, sustainability to be broadened to the whole organisation, and to more clearly reference teaching, curriculum and real-world learning.

A video of College learners presenting the College Strategic Plan was then presented to the Board.

The Board fed back the following:

- Positive comments regarding the finalised strategy and the power of College learners bringing this to life.
- Recognition of the refinements made from the draft to the final version.

The Board **requested** their thanks be passed on to all those involved as part of the engagement and consultation process.

Action: NH to progress the Board's thanks to all those involved as part of the engagement and consultation process.

DA highlighted the following next steps:

- The College Strategic plan would be launched with staff at the Staff Celebration at the end of June 2026.
- A discussion would take place at the July 2026 Board Meeting on the College's ethos of Employment Edge for Everyone, and the approach to this, considering how the Board might want to oversee and have assurance of this.
- An engagement plan would be developed over the summer period to officially launch the new strategic plan.
- The Board and Committees would be asked to consider supporting strategies, what success would look like and how this could be measured at the start of the new academic year.

The Chair reiterated the importance of the College Strategic Plan, ensuring this remained a continuous key focus of everything the College does and chooses to do. The Board could expect reporting to continue to focus around the objectives of the strategy and strategic priorities.

The Board approved the College Strategic Plan and thanked everyone involved in the process and work on this.

The report was approved.

NH, RL and KM left the meeting.

3508 3. Permanent Deputy Principal Finance and Resources - Senior Post Holder Recruitment

Covered under a confidential item.

The Board approved the appointment of the candidate and salary as per the report, and provided thanks to the Selection Panel.

The report was approved.