East Coast College Finance and General Purposes Meeting

11th November 2025 9.15am Board Room L6FC

Present:	Committee Chair - Ian Lomax (IL) Paul Padda (PP Principal and CEO) Dawn Carman-Jones (DJ) Bill Farrow (BF) and on teams David Blake (DB Corporation Chair) and Peter Blackburn PB Associate Governor)
In attendance:	Urmila Rasan (Deputy Chief Executive) Lucy Wharry (Head of Finance) and Wendy Stanger (Director of Governance)

F/25/11/1	**Apologies and membership**	
No apologies as all in attendance. Dawn Carman-Jones and Bill Farrow were welcomed to their first Finance and General Purposes Meeting, and introductions were made.		
F/25/011/2	**Declarations of Interest**	
There were no declarations of interest.		
F/25/11/3	**To approve the Minutes of the last meeting 24 June 2025 and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the Agenda.**	
The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.		
F/25/11/4	**To review the post-meeting action log**	
It was noted that there were no outstanding actions.		
F/25/11/5	**Deputy Chief Executive Update**	
The Deputy Chief Executive presented the report, which included the Great Yarmouth Rebuild, Estates Strategy, DfE Financial Health Assessment and Cleaning Contract. Governors queried whether the design for Great Yarmouth had incorporated principles aimed at designing out opportunities for anti-social behaviour. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the design incorporate SALTO card access, non-isolated toilet facilities, measures to restrict access to the building, and staff rooms adjacent to student areas. When the Great Yarmouth building is handed over by the DFE in 2028, it will meet all the legal requirements, including Martyn's Law. The Principal added that a modern and well-designed building also has a positive impact on behaviour, and it was important that suitable social spaces for students were provided. Governors queried the placement of CCTV at the Great Yarmouth development and noted that positioning can influence behaviour. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that while the Department for Education is supplying a limited number of cameras, additional CCTV points are being installed to enable the College to fit further cameras if required. These measures are intended to monitor behaviour and meet insurance requirements. The College's existing policies already govern the use of CCTV.		

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the Department for Education's Financial Health Assessment confirmed the College is in a strong financial position. The Board's target of maintaining good financial health with strong cashflow will be achieved. The College must continue to generate sufficient EBITDA to support future investment. Governors asked whether EBITDA was assessed by campus. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that it was not, as the College operates as a single entity and all back-office costs are centralised. EBITDA is reviewed by department, using a calculation to allocate central costs. Curriculum planning considers efficiencies; however, these are constrained by cross-county issues, students' willingness to travel and transport availability.		
F/25/11/6	**Financial Forecast**	
The Deputy Chief Executive presented the updated financial forecast, reflecting changes since the budget was approved in July. The formal forecasting process includes performance management meetings with all departments, scheduled to take place at the end of November. Governors discussed the changes reflected in the forecast and their impact on EBITDA. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that in some departments, EBITDA had decreased because increased recruitment required splitting classes, resulting in smaller and less efficient group sizes. Where under-recruitment occurred, cost management was reviewed and corrective actions taken where possible. Governors asked whether the additional costs associated with The Place had been covered. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that, at present, existing provision has been relocated to The Place, and there is a need to expand provision and increase student numbers to offset the additional overheads. The Principal added that the College is working with the counties ahead of devolution to increase adult provision. The Place is strategically located in a central position in town, making it accessible to a wider market, which is expected to support growth. Governors noted that the Board would need to consider the whole estate when reviewing its new Estate Strategy.		
F/25/11/7	**Maritime**	
The Deputy Chief Executive presented the report and confirmed that the agreement with the University of West London (UWL) has been signed and courses approved. However, UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) has not yet granted visa approval. As a result, the September cohort was unable to start, and the January cohort remains at risk if approval is not received soon. The Principal advised that if the cohort does not commence, future progression recruitment will also be negatively affected. The College currently does not have a UK market for this provision, resulting in staff being underutilised. Governors challenged the issue of staff underutilisation and asked how staff could be redeployed to cover other areas. The Principal advised that a current staff vacancy had been put on hold and that staff were covering a small amount of commercial provision aligned to their skillset; however, there remains genuine underutilisation. The partnership is expected to drive growth, and UWL remains very positive about the opportunities given the College's reputation. However, there is still a risk until visa approvals are secured. Governors discussed the potential to develop a UK market for the provision and ways to raise interest among school students in the maritime sector. The Principal advised that the College had previously attempted to launch a maritime cadet programme, but it did not recruit.		

F/25/11/8	Management Accounts	
The Deputy Chief Executive presented the management accounts and advised that this represents an early financial position, showing a slight increase in forecast EBITDA following the recent review. There are no concerns or unexpected changes at this stage. Governors commended the presentation of the management accounts, noting that it provided a clear and comprehensive overview. The Head of Finance advised that the Deputy Head of Finance had led their development, introducing enhanced charts and additional automation to improve efficiency and accelerate production. Governors queried whether the current low level of EBITDA was sustainable. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that while the College can operate at the present level, an increase is necessary to generate funds for future development. The College is actively seeking additional funding through project bid income.		
F/25/11/9	**Health and Safety Annual Report**	
The Health and Safety Annual Report was reviewed, and the Chair commented that, considering the nature of the courses offered, the number of reported incidents was commendably low. Governors raised concerns about the number of near misses linked to incomplete trip paperwork and recommended that such cases be recorded as incidents rather than near misses. They emphasised that all required documentation must be completed before any visit, and where this does not occur, appropriate action should follow. The Principal confirmed that, in instances where trips proceeded without full paperwork, investigations had been undertaken and performance management measures implemented as necessary. Governors challenged what the underlying issues were with the trip's administration. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that an issue was receiving all the required information and approvals from students and parents, and carers. Changes had been made, and the process was now more automated, but this automation did not include the student and parents and carers' authorisation. Governors suggested that the student and parent elements of trip administration be moved online rather than remaining paper-based, as this would improve engagement and enhance record-keeping and was the norm at other colleges The Principal advised that the College was implementing a Parents Portal, and it could be explored if this could be used. Governors challenged whether additional controls were in place to prevent trips from proceeding without the required paperwork. The Head of Finance advised that finance would not process any trip-related expenses without a trip code, which is only issued once all documentation has been completed. If payment requests were made after a trip and the documentation was not complete, these would be reported. Governors queried if there was a site lockdown policy in place. The Principal advised that the College's campuses were open sites and this was being reviewed as part of the College's consideration of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 - Martyn's Law. The College did not have automated door locks or a staff notification system. There was, though, a Duty Principal in place to manage incidents with the Duty Principal and Estates contactable by radio.		

Governors agreed the following action • **Review the administration process for trips to identify areas for improvement.** • **Classify any trips undertaken without the required paperwork as an incident rather than a near miss.** • **Health and Safety Committee to consider the College's response to the requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 - Martyn's Law.**		SMG SMG SMG
F/25/11/10	**Finance Risk Register**	
1. Has the risk register been reviewed Yes, October 2025. 2. Is the Committee content that the risks are relevant and are being updated Yes, as set out in the report and it was noted that financial risk had reduced. 3. Is the Committee content that the risks are being mitigated Yes, the report had been updated and identified where changes in mitigation had been made. 4. Where a red risk is the Committee assured that appropriate action is being taken The College being dependent on project income was a red risk and the reduction in this affected the College's EBITDA. 5. Where does the Committee have significant concerns? None		
	Policies for approval and recommendation to the Board	
F/25/11/11	**QD214 Modern Slavery Statement - no material changes**	
The Director of Governance advised that the College was required to produce a Modern Slavery Statement as turnover exceeded £36 million. There were no material changes to the previous year's statement and the statement had been based previously on other college's statements. Once agreed it would be added to the government's Modern Slavery Statement Registry. **The Committee resolved to:** • **recommend the QD214 Modern Slavery Statement to Corporation for adoption.**		
F/25/11/12	**Data Protection Policies and Procedures - QD004 Data Protection Policy and QD087 Rights of Individuals Policy and Procedure - no material changes**	
The Deputy Chief Executive advised that there had been no material changes apart from the amalgamation of policy and procedure. **The Committee resolved to:** • **recommend the QD004 Data Protection Policy and QD087 Rights of Individuals Policy and Procedure to Corporation for adoption.**		

F/25/11/13	Annual Report	
The Director of Governance presented the Committee's Annual Report. All committees prepare an annual report for the Board using a standard format, and once approved, these reports are published on the College website to promote transparency. **The Committee resolved to approve the** • **Finance and General Purposes Committee Annual Report and its submission to Corporation and its subsequent publication.**		
F/25/11/14	**Agenda Planning**	
Cleaning Tender.		
F/25/03/17	**Review of Meeting**	
1. Confidential Items – none 2. Were Learners prominent in discussions? Impact on students discussed in terms of maritime, buildings, class sizes, facilities and health and safety. 3. Risk Management: any issues discussed which may require an additional Assessment – None 4. Equality & Diversity: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment – None 5. Health & Safety: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment – Trips and the risk where paperwork incomplete 6. Sustainability: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment – None 7. Media: any issues discussed to inform local media – None 8. How did the meeting go – a good and efficient meeting.		