Barnsley College Corporation Meeting Minutes

Date:	19 May 2026
Time:	16:00-18:00
Location:	A325 Old Mill Lane

Attendance (Governors)	**Role**
Marie Lang (ML)	Independent Governor – Chair
Leon Etherington (LE)	Independent Governor
Carol Cooper-Smith (CCS)	Independent Governor – Vice Chair
Sam Dixon (SD)	Independent Governor
David Akeroyd (DA)	Principal & CEO
George Graham (GG)	Independent Governor – Vice Chair
Kalam Neale (KN)	Independent Governor
Matt Mills (MM)	Independent Governor
Sue Horner (SH)	Independent Governor
Tracey Johnson (TJ)	Independent Governor

In Attendance	
Hayley Allsopp (HA)	Vice Principal - Curriculum and Student Experience
Jean-Paul Lawrence (JPL)	Vice Principal – Partnerships and Growth
Tony Johnson (TJo)	Vice Principal - Corporate Services
Laila Lawton (LL)	Chief Financial Officer
Jessica Melling (JMe)	Director of Governance

Apologies	**Role**
Jo Mallows (JM)	Independent Governor
Carrie Sudbury (CS)	Independent Governor
Gavin Day (GD)	Independent Governor
Kayleigh Bell (KB)	Staff Governor
Steven Burkinshaw (SB)	Staff Governor
Gavin Batty (GB)	Deputy CEO

Absence	
Megan Orrow (MO)	Student Governor
Leo Hibberd (LH)	Student Governor

Mentions	
Emma Dawson (ED)	Risk and Audit Committee Member
William Brown (WB)	Barnsley Reform Councillor
Stephanie Peacock (SP)	Labor MP Barnsley South
Sasha Beswick (SB)	Head of Sustainability

Procedural Matters	
1. Quoracy It was confirmed the meeting was quorate.	
2. Apologies for absence Apologies were received from CS, GD, SB, KB and GB.	
3. Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest	
4. Register of Interest The register of interest was noted. An amend for TJ was noted.	**Action**: JMe to update TJ register of interest.
5. Notification of Items of Any Other Business Following the Governance and Seach Committee, a number of resolutions were proposed to the Board. TJ Tenure Extension – A conflict of interest was declared for TJ. TJ was removed from the discussion and the decision making. The Board resolved to **APPROVE** that TJ's tenure on the Board is extended for a further term of 2 years. SD Appointment to the Risk and Audit Committee – A conflict of interest was declared for SD. SD was removed from the discussion and the decision making. The Board resolved to **APPROVE** that SD is appointed to the Risk and Audit Committee. ED Tenure Extension – A conflict of interest was declared for ML. ML did not take part in the discussion or decision making. The Board resolved to **APPROVE** that ED's tenure on the Risk and Audit Committee is extended for a further term of 4 years.	
6. Principal/CEO Report DA talked to the report shared with the Board. The Board **NOTED** the report and the updates provided.	
7. Sustainability Update LL talked to the report shared with the Board, highlighting the following points: • There has been significant positive work in this area over the last 6 months. • The SDG ready programme was presented to delegates at the EAUC Scotland Conference 2026. The team have also been invited to present at the EAUC Annual Conference which will be held in Swansea in June 2026.	

• As a result of the College's continued commitment to embedding Carbon Literacy into staff and student training, the College won the world's first Gold Carbon Literate Educator Award. The Board commended the work of SB in this area. The Board recognised the integrated nature of sustainability at the College and the work done to ensure that this is common practice, not an add on. Discussion explored the challenge with the ambition to eliminate the use of single use practice across the College, noting that the lack of progress is due to external factors, not lack of action taken by the College. The impact of removing plastic bottles for students was noted. It was recommended that the focus of reduction of single use plastic should not be centred around plastic bottles. The Board were content with the College's position against this objective. The upcoming sustainability strategy focus group session was noted, and Governors encouraged to attend. The opportunity for carbon literacy training for the Board was discussed, with Governors requesting this. DA noted that he had applied to become a Trustee with EAUC. The Board **NOTED** the report and **APPROVED** the assurance provided against objective 2.7 and 3.3.	**Action**: JMe to liaise with SB regarding Governor Carbon Literacy. **Action**: LL to share feedback on single use plastic for Sustainability Strategy.
8. National Achievement Rate Tables DA talked to the report shared with the Board and highlighted the following points: • The college has an overall strong position and continues to perform well compared to other colleges across the sector, however performance in apprenticeships is lower. • The College is currently ranked 97/152 General FE Colleges for apprenticeships. This is not a position that the College wants to be in and improvement action is needed. • There are only 12 Colleges in the country who achieve a 0 or positive value added score. ML expressed the importance of getting a holistic and transparent overview of the data, not just limited parts which could present a skewed picture of performance. Discussion explored if the NART rankings should be used to inform targets within the executive. The Board concluded that the targets should focus on the impact on students, not on the ranking. It was noted that progress scores may provide a more valuable metric to look at as a measure of success. The Board noted that should there be a significant change in the College's position on the national achievement rate tables, assurance would be needed	

by the Board on the reasoning for this and any resultant actions. The Board recognised the subjective nature of the tables, and the ability for rankings to be influenced through non-qualification outcomes. It was noted that the actual achievement rate is more important than the ranking It was highlighted that the College needs to be able to provide narrative to reassure external stakeholders of the College's value and performance. The Board **NOTED** the report and **APPROVED** the assurance provided against objective 1.3.	
9. BAF Q3 and Annual Risk Review TJo presented the Q3 BAF. The Board questioned the work being done to mitigate the risk of cyber incidents as a result of 3rd party supplier issues. LE highlighted the assurance gained during his recent link governor visit regarding the work the College is undertaking to ensure robust supply chain management. The Board highlighted the impact of Barnsley being recognised as a tech-town and the increased visibility of the College which may increase the risk of cyber-attacks. TJo noted that the College's Financial Handbook requires an annual review of the BAF, however it was highlighted that the BAF is also reviewed quarterly through the Board or Risk and Audit Committee. Discussion explored the risks contained within the BAF and their ratings. The Board completed the annual review of the BAF, noting that the BAF enables in depth conversation regarding key areas of risk. The Board **<u>NOTED</u>** the BAF and **<u>APPROVED</u>** the assurance provided against objective 4.1.	**Action**: TJo to ensure Q4 BAF reflects impact of election results on risk 9.
10. Subcontracting Arrangements JPL talked to the report shared with the Board highlighting the following points: • The subcontracting policy was approved at the Board meeting on 14 May 2026. • Proposed subcontracting delivery for 2026/2027 totals, a slight increase from 2025/2026. • Subcontracting equates to 3.56% of the College's total planned delivery. • Growth is seen in delivery through Betterweld and apprenticeships. The Board **<u>APPROVED</u>**: 1. The proposed subcontracting activity for 2026/27 2. That the report provides assurance against objective 2.5.	
11. Sixth Form Value Added Deep Dive	

SD talked to the deep dive conducted into the value added scores within the sixth form. It was noted that the deep dive sought to answer: • Are the actions presented by Leadership of 6th Form appropriate in significantly improving value-added outcomes? • Why did the Leadership team choose this intervention over others? Were other strategies raised for consideration and, if so, why were these not adopted? • How effectively were academic development sessions implemented? • What might be improved for the future – Recommendations The Board **<u>NOTED</u>** the assurance provided by the deep dive.	
12. Knowing our Students Deep Dive Report LE outlined that the purpose of the deep dive was to gain assurance that the College understands the current students and their needs, as well as that of students of the future and local needs. It was noted that to complete the dep dive the Governors conducted interviews with staff and students across the following areas: • Foundation Learning • Business • Childcare and Health • Wigfield Farm • Sport, Public Services and Travel and Tourism LE outlined that the Deep Dive provided satisfactory assurance that the College understands current community need and is preparing to meet demand as the local region develops into the future. Bridging the gap between current offer and future provision will depend on strategic decisions on estates capacity, investment (and funding) and management of the impending risks that unclear government reforms of FE pose. It was noted that evidence was clear that staff understand students and are attentive to their needs, with students reporting feeling supported and cared for in the College The value of the deep dive was emphasised, with it being noted that Governors should continue to take opportunities to meet with staff and students across the College to ensure that decision making at Board is informed. It was noted that knowing our students should be a recurring deep dive completed each year. It was noted that actions from each of the deep dives would be collated and tracked.	**Action**: JMe to add knowing our students as a deep dive area of focus for 2026/27. **Action**: JMe to collate actions from deep dives and share with Executive. **Action**: Governors to consider if a link governor for IAG is required and feedback on 7/7/2026. **Action**: HA to consider how to share feedback with staff and students as a result of the deep dives.

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It was questioned if there should be a link governor for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). The Board were asked to consider this and share their thoughts at the next meeting.

ML thanked all Governors involved in the deep dives. Thanks was also extended to the staff and students involved in the deep dives. It was noted that consideration needed to be given on how feedback to staff is provided.

13. GDPR, AI and Security Link Governor Report

LE talked to the report shared with the Board, outlining the assurance provided by his visit. The following points were highlighted:

- Discussion at the link visit explored supply chain security, the approach to Cyber and opportunities to consider and coordination between Information Governance and Cyber and AI Role
- Conversations evidenced strong knowledge of JISC best practice, data impact assessments and supply chain management, indicating an active Cyber and Information Security Culture and technology service.
- The Northern College Merger has brought an unforeseen benefit by enabling an Information Governance Partner relationship used by NC (‘Data Protection People’) to be leveraged with little to no cost across Barnsley College, this will bring opportunity for efficiency and effectiveness and was exciting to hear that this had been pursued.
- It was clear that there is a ‘One Team’ ethos of collaboration and support at Barnsley College and this should be applauded and emphasised as a critical ongoing requirement for success. This mitigates the risk often seen when separate departments running Information Governance, AI and GDPR compliance can sometimes fail to work effectively together to deliver Cyber, GDPR and AI controls.
- The desktop exercise to test cyber security was a positive step taken to understand and mitigate risk. This exercise should be annual.

ML thanked LE for his comprehensive report.

14. Annual Accountability Statement and Local Needs Duty Review Draft

HA outlined the purpose of the Annual Accountability statement and the Local needs Duty review.

It was noted that there had not been significant change since the last iteration of the documents, however there will be more change in line with the curriculum reform. It was noted that the curriculum strategy will also be updated in line with this.

HA outlined that the drafts would continue to be refined, and final versions will be presented to the Board in July 2026.

The Board **APPROVED** the draft Annual Accountability Statement and Local Needs Duty Review.

15. Principals Good News Stories

SD commended the quality of the speakers at the crime and justice week, and the opportunity this provided to the students.	
16. Any Other Business It was noted that a decision had been taken to pause the planned Turing study programme visits in the far east. This was deemed to be a proportionate approach to risk management. The Board resolved to **APPROVE** that JM act as Chair of the Northern College Integration Task and Finish group. The meeting was closed at 18:00.	