

Notes of the Corporation Development Event held on Friday 19th September 2025 at 11:00 hours in Conference Room 1, Broadway

Members Present:

Julius Adams	Nirmal Gupta
Kaynat Ahmad	Paul Hartridge
Liam Butler	Diana Martin (CE&P)
Matthew Collins	Mphathisi Ncube (Items 1 – 5 only)
Sally Cornfield	Paul Noon (Chair)
Wendy Davies	Sarah Wood
Mireille Digard	

In attendance:

- Rachel Corns (Vice Principal)
- Gill Darwood (Director of Corporate Governance)
- Susanne Davies (Director of IoT)
- Lynn Glazzard (Assistant Principal Curriculum & Standards) - *Item 4 only*
- Debbie Goode (Executive Director Public Affairs & Marketing)
- Steve Johnson (Executive Director Estates & Capital Projects)
- Kathryn Jones (Director of Human Resources)
- Louise Jones (Chief Finance Officer)
- Stacey Malone (Assistant Principal MIS and Data)
- Claire Millard (Vice Principal)
- Adrian Walker (Assistant Principal Quality)

1 **Apologies for absence and confirmation of quorum**

- 1.1 The DCG confirmed that the meeting was quorate. Apologies for absence had been received from Ian Austin, Liz Sithole, Tom Westley and Jason Parker.
- 1.2 Members noted the appointment of Mireille Digard as the nominated Professional Services staff member and welcomed Mireille to the meeting.

2 **Declarations of interest**

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest relating to matters on the agenda.

3 **Chair's welcome**

- 3.1 The Chair welcomed members to the development event.

4 **Focus on 14–16 pathway and tour of new facilities**

- 4.1 L Glazzard provided a presentation relating to the expansion of the College's 14-16 provision, which noted that:
 - 40 full time places commissioned from Mercian Trust.
 - 10 full time places available for schools and local authority.
 - 5 pathways: Automotive, Sport, Hair and Beauty, Animal Science and Construction. Each pathway includes English and maths and tutorial.
 - Dudley Academies Trust - 1 day per week Construction.
- 4.2 Resources in this area of provision had been increased including:
 - Increase of vocational pathways and lecturing staff from these areas.

- Increase in staff within the core team - lecturers, learning coach, Education Support Assistants (ESAs).
- Mercian staff support.
- 3 DSLs within the team and a trauma informed practitioner.
- Challenge Academy resources and visits.
- Development of FI suite into classrooms, activity/break out space, lounge area and office.

4.3 Following the presentation, Members undertook a visit to the new facilities for 14-16 provision, following which L Glazzard provided answers to members' questions on aspects of the provision and long-term strategic plans. Members noted the need to ensure that the risks relating to the Mercian Trust contract at the end of the three-year contractual period were adequately mitigated.

4.4 **It was resolved** to note the update on 14-16 pathway.

L Glazzard then left the meeting.

5 **Strategic Plan mid-term review and mission statement review**

5.1 Members separated into three groups to review progress against the key strategic priorities contained within the Strategic Plan with a focus on a number of cross-college areas. Discussions were then fed back to all members:

5.2 *Best use of Technology*

- A wide range of technology rolled out (Sharepoint, SENSO, Smart Boards) but still lots to do, noted fast pace of technology.
- AI, VR and motion capture – need to improve staff confidence through training.
- 15% capital expenditure for digital estate – was this sufficient? Need to review the digital strategy – currently being worked on for initial presentation to SLG.

5.3 *Supporting our Staff*

- Many areas completed – new induction implemented, long service awards, termly recognitions, work with charities,
- Areas for further action – hybrid and agile working, succession planning for future, skills shortage areas – need to further develop new ideas and share what has worked well.

5.4 *Careers and Employment*

- Positive progress against key priorities.
- Lots of tools to support curriculum areas in careers.
- SEND learners supported through internships.
- Meeting majority of Gatsby benchmarks although some were not fit for FE as they had been developed for schools.
- Further development of all staff engagement in careers advice and guidance.

5.5 *Learner Support, Enrichment, Safety*

- Many actions achieved.
- Areas for improvement – provision for wellbeing at Brierly Hill was a challenge due to lack of space.

- Students' Union budget expanded to support expansion of clubs and enrichment activities.

5.6 *Tackling the Climate Emergency*

- Sustainability agenda ongoing – employed new Sustainability Manager to drive this.
- Some substantial progress on the estate and buildings
- External funding accessed to support sustainability of the estate.
- Still to do – costed plan to achieve net zero, college vehicle replacements (although low numbers), social environmental spaces and bio diverse spaces.

5.7 *Teaching and Learning Practice*

- In progress – AI constantly a challenge and one of the highest risk areas.
- Achieved – induction for non-traditional teaching routes (6 week programme into teaching), teaching staff involved in PIP tutorial programme.
- AI is a strategic issue, not just an IT issue.

5.8 Consideration of whether the next strategic plan might be longer. Suggested setting the ambition for a longer term and then break this down on a shorter basis annually.

5.9 The CEP reminded members that the College's mission statement had been in place for the life of multiple Strategic Plans and it may be an appropriate time to revise it. Staff and student consultation would be held on this in the autumn term, followed by a vote by staff and students. Corporation members would have final approval of the revised mission statement in the Spring term.

5.10 **It was resolved** to note the mid-year review and review of the mission statement.

M Ncube left the meeting.

6 **Capital projects timeline**

6.1 S Johnson provided an update on capital projects which had been recently completed and those in progress or planned for the current year, noting that some projects had come in over budget due to contractor timescales and pricing. In order to balance this, some items had been dropped from the previously approved 2025/26 capital budget.

6.2 The three-year capital budget was noted and L Jones advised this would be brought to Corporation for approval in November. The total cost over the three years remained in line with the budget approved in July.

6.3 A number of longer term projects were noted for 2026/27 and it was reported that the potential CAT Centre projects were prepared and would be ready to progress once CTEC funds were confirmed.

6.4 In respect of the three year capital budget to 2028, N Gupta noted that external funding appeared to be reducing and College contributions increasing, which was clarified by L Jones, who advised that £2.1m of grant funding was currently available, but within a limited timeframe for expenditure, with further funding streams expected in future years which were not yet included in the forecast.

6.5 W Davies enquired about the HID project and received assurance that it remained on track for timely completion. L Jones further reported that the final lease agreement was now agreed, with the only outstanding matter being the project outputs. It was noted that the leases would be presented for final approval at the November Corporation meeting.

6.6 **It was resolved** to note the capital projects timeline and budget update.

7 **CTEC update**

7.1 The CEP presented an update on the award of Construction Technical Excellence College (CTEC) status. Dudley College was confirmed as one of ten CTECs nationally, operating on a hub-and-spoke model in collaboration with the Strategic Authority.

7.2 The CTEC initiative was underpinned by five policy objectives:

- Boosting construction skills provision in response to employer needs.
- Delivering high-quality teaching practice and curricula.
- Leveraging employer engagement and investment.
- Collaborating with other FE providers to strengthen provision locally and nationally.
- Creating clear learner pathways into employment or higher-level study.

7.3 The CEP reported on initial activity, including engagement with WMCA, the DfE, regional Principals and other CTECs during September, as well as participation in a fireside chat at National Construction Week with Richard Parker, Mayor of the West Midlands, and Tim Balcon, Chief Executive of CITB, on 2 October 2025.

7.4 Funding was confirmed as £500,000 revenue funding to be received in December for expenditure by 31 March 2026, with capital funding anticipated to be allocated via the Strategic Authority.

7.5 A timeline graphic was shared, setting out key milestones between September and December 2025, including delivery plan guidance, stakeholder engagement, programme plan approvals and the release of revenue funding to CTECs

7.6 Members noted the important role of the College in the hub and spoke model and the importance of being able to clearly evidence impact within other providers in the region.

7.7 Members noted the general challenge of getting a sufficient quantity of work experience places across all areas, and the importance of the Combined Authority being engaged in and supporting this challenge.

7.8 **It was resolved** to note the update on Colleges of Technical Excellence in Construction.

8 **Annual update – Keeping Children Safe in Education**

8.1 R Corns provided an update on safeguarding arrangements and in particular on the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 publication. Members were reminded of their duties to:

- Ensure safeguarding policies and procedures were in place, effective, publicly available and regularly reviewed.
 - Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with appropriate authority.
 - Monitor the implementation of safeguarding, holding leaders to account and embedding a culture of vigilance.
 - Review and approve the child protection policy and staff code of conduct, and ensure robust arrangements for allegations and whistleblowing.
 - Oversee safeguarding training, compliance with statutory guidance, and engagement with local safeguarding partners.
 - Ensure effective online safety measures, including filtering/monitoring systems, and support related curriculum content.
- 8.2 Key reflective questions for governors were highlighted, including how safeguarding was monitored, how concerns about staff/volunteers were managed, and how students were kept safe online.
- 8.3 It was noted that KCSIE 2025 introduced no major policy changes, but included technical updates for clarity and consistency. These covered the classification of misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories as safeguarding harms, and added links to DfE guidance on Artificial Intelligence.
- 8.4 Governors held a short table discussion on their safeguarding duties. The Lead Safeguarding Governor, M Collins, reported that he had undertaken a number of visits during the year and was assured as to the effectiveness of the College's safeguarding practice, highlighting the effective use of CPOMs across the College.
- 8.5 *It was suggested that it would be helpful in future safeguarding reports to Standards Committee to include the total number of staff completing safeguarding update training, rather than only reporting on new staff members.*
- 8.6 **It was resolved** to note the safeguarding update and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.
- 9 **Ofsted update**
- 9.1 C Millard provided an update on the new Ofsted inspection framework. Key points included:
- The current grading system would be replaced with new descriptors: Urgent Improvement, Needs Attention, Expected Standard, Strong Standard, and Exceptional.
 - A new Ofsted report card would be introduced, incorporating achievement data (16–18, 19+ and apprenticeships).
 - Safeguarding would be judged as either Met or Unmet.
 - For each type of provision (young people, adults, apprenticeships, high needs), three judgements would be made covering curriculum/teaching, achievement, and participation/development.
 - Providers would continue to be assessed on Contribution to Skills Needs using Ofsted's five-point scale, and a new Inclusion grade would be introduced to assess how well disadvantaged and underperforming learners were supported.

- The framework was intended to be more supportive and would take account of staff well-being.
- 9.2 In relation to governance, inspectors would evaluate the extent to which governors:
- Were knowledgeable about statutory duties and discharged them effectively.
 - Assured themselves of the quality of provision and impact of improvement actions.
 - Provided support and challenge to leaders, with a focus on outcomes for disadvantaged learners, those with SEND or care experience.
 - Understood their role in monitoring leaders' workload.
 - Maintained effective oversight of subcontracted provision.
- 9.3 **It was resolved** to note the Ofsted update.
- 10 **Any Other Business**
- 10.1 There were no items of other business.
- 11 **Chair's Closing Remarks**
- 11.1 The Chair thanked members for their attendance and contributions to discussions. He noted that the sector nationally was in a complex situation, for example with developments relating to Skills England, Combined Authorities and Ministerial changes. He noted that the College was nevertheless in a great position and was highly regarded by external stakeholders.
- 12 **Date of next meeting:**
- 12.1 The next meeting of the Corporation would be held on Tuesday 11th November 2025 at 16.30 hours.

The session closed at 14.35 hours.

Approved by members at the Corporation Meeting held 11th November 2025.