Notes and Minutes of the Corporation Development Event held on Friday 18th September 2026 at 11:00 hours at Accelerate, Zoological Drive, Dudley

Members Present:	Julius Adams	Diana Martin (CE&P)
	Callum Bonnar	Mphathisi Ncube
	Liam Butler	Paul Noon (Chair)
	Matthew Collins	Jason Parker
	Sally Cornfield	Liz Sithole
	Mireille Digard	Sarah Wood
	Nirmal Gupta	
	Paul Hartridge	

In attendance: Rachel Corns (Vice Principal)
Gill Darwood (Director of Governance)
Susanne Davies (Director of Employer & Commercial Partnerships)
Debbie Goode (Executive Director Public Affairs & Marketing)
Louise Jones (Chief Finance Officer)
Claire Millard (Vice Principal) (item 6 onwards)
Jonathon Wiley (Head of IT Services) (item 8 only)

External attendees: Duncan Adams, external consultant (item 4 only)

Before and after the event Governors had the opportunity to take part in a short tour of Accelerate, located in the building formerly known as the Institute of Technology. The tours provided an opportunity to meet learners and staff, gain an understanding of the provision delivered within Accelerate, and view the facilities and learning environment.

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

1.1 The Director of Governance confirmed that the meeting was quorate. Apologies for absence had been received from Wendy Davies and Gemma Linsley.

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 **Strategic Plan Development Workshop**

4.1 Duncan Adams joined the meeting via Teams to present feedback from the stakeholder interviews he had conducted to inform development of the College's next Strategic Plan. The key messages from stakeholders were noted as:

- The College is ready to become Dudley's defining civic institution.
- Employer relationships should become deeper, broader and more responsive.
- Future skills should define the College's identity.
- Position pathways, not programmes, at the heart of the learner experience.
- Exceptional facilities should become a strategic asset.
- The College has an opportunity to redefine its market and geographic reach.
- The College's reputation is stronger than its profile.
- As the College grows, its culture must remain a strategic advantage.

4.2 The CEP then provided a presentation providing feedback from the staff survey which had been conducted to inform development of the College's next Strategic Plan. Feedback from staff had also been overwhelmingly positive:

- Staff expressed strong pride in the College and its inclusive, supportive culture and commitment to transforming lives through education, skills and opportunity.
- The College was seen as an important anchor institution, supporting social mobility, economic development, regeneration and its communities.
- Its reputation was considered strong, particularly for technical education, facilities, learner support and inclusion, although its wider achievements and impact were not always sufficiently recognised.
- Staff identified the College's facilities, breadth of provision, inclusive ethos and SEND expertise as key strengths.
- Employer alignment was viewed positively, with opportunities to strengthen partnerships, respond to emerging skills needs and improve routes into employment.
- Future skills priorities included construction, engineering, digital and AI, health and social care and green technologies, alongside greater emphasis on employability skills.
- Staff were strongly aligned around a future identity focused on transforming lives through opportunity, skills and employability.

4.3 Overall, the feedback from both exercises highlighted culture and inclusion, civic leadership, strategic partnerships, future skills, and reputation and visibility as key themes for the emerging strategy.

5 **Governor strategic discussion of emerging themes**

5.1 Members took part in table discussions centred around the emerging themes of culture and inclusion, civic leadership, strategic partnerships, future skills, and reputation and visibility, and how these could be translated into 6 - 8 strategic priorities. Feedback from members would be used to inform development of the strategy.

5.2 Members broadly endorsed the emerging themes, emphasising the importance of remaining true to the College's culture, values and core purpose, and maintaining quality as its civic role develops. Partnerships should be mutually beneficial and extend to parents and smaller employers, while future skills planning should reflect developments in AI, alternative technologies and changing employment pathways. Members also highlighted the need for strategic communications to strengthen the College's visibility, employer reach and reputation, including its contribution to social mobility.

5.3 The CEP presented members with a range of options for the new Mission Statement, advising members that a poll would be circulated after the meeting to enable them to express their preference for one of the suggestions, or to propose their own alternative.

5.4 It was noted that the intention was to bring a first draft of the Strategic Plan to the Corporation Meeting on 17th November 2026.

6 **Confidential/commercially sensitive - formal Corporation business**

This matter is the subject of a separate and confidential minute.

7 **Board Effectiveness Review**

7.1 The Director of Governance (DG) presented a summary of the outcomes of the 2026 Board Effectiveness Survey providing an opportunity for members to reflect on the key themes emerging from this year's review.

7.2 The presentation recapped the feedback received through the 2025 review, outlined the actions taken during 2025/26 in response to that feedback, and considered the findings from the 2026 survey. It also provided a forward look at the emerging governance priorities for 2026/27 and the actions underway to support the Board's continued effectiveness and development.

7.3 The 2026 review confirmed that the Corporation remained highly effective, with strong governance, positive Board culture and a committed membership. The feedback also provided a clear focus for future development, particularly in relation to succession planning, digital governance, stakeholder engagement and assurance.

8 **Digital Update: Cyber Security and Artificial Intelligence**

8.1 Jonathon Wiley, Head of IT Services, joined the meeting to provide a presentation covering IT Governance, Cyber Governance Code of Practice and Digital/AI Strategy.

8.2 Members noted the update on key developments in information governance, including cyber security, data protection and the College's arrangements for managing information and associated risks. The update provided assurance on the controls and processes in place, together with areas of ongoing development and monitoring

9 **Annual Safeguarding Update**

9.1 R Corns provided a presentation on the September 2026 changes to *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)* and the actions taken by the College in response. Key changes were noted as:

- strengthened arrangements for DSL cover
- updated guidance on sport and single-sex spaces
- greater emphasis on information sharing, including where learners may present a risk to themselves or others
- new guidance on online safety and the use of generative AI
- strengthened expectations for filtering and monitoring
- greater recognition of the link between cyber security and safeguarding
- increased emphasis on early identification and support where mental health concerns may present safeguarding risks.

9.2 Members were assured that the College had reviewed its arrangements and taken action in response, including strengthening safeguarding capacity, updating procedures and documentation, communicating the changes to staff and providing training. The Safeguarding Policy was also being updated to reflect the revised guidance.

9.3 It was noted that, following the meeting, members would receive a KCSiE quiz to test and reinforce their understanding of the changes. All members were asked to ensure that they completed the quiz.

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 these important discussions.

12 **Date of next meeting:**

12.1 The next meeting of the Corporation would be held on Tuesday 17th November 2026 at 4.30pm at Broadway campus.

The session closed at 14.35 hours.

Approved at the Corporation Meeting held 17th November 2026.