



Croydon  
College



**COULSDON**  
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE



**Croydon**  
**University**  
**Centre**

**MEETING OF THE SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday 25 June 2025**  
**6.00pm to 7.15pm**

**Room 422, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Croydon Campus**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Michael Cutbill (Chair)  
Caireen Mitchell (Principal & CEO)  
Ian Valvona – online from 6.30pm  
Louise Cretton  
Maria Glasscock

**Clerk:** Jacqueline Mutibwa, Director of Governance

<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Frederick Law.</p>
2.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
3.	<p><b>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p>(i) <u>Minutes of the meeting on 5 March 2025</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2025 were agreed as a correct record.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Minutes of the meeting on 8 May 2025</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2025 were agreed as a correct record.</p>
4.	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</b></p> <p>The Committee noted the update on matters arising from the previous meeting and that some actions had been completed but most were ongoing and to be completed by the next meeting in November 2025. These included the amendment of Standing Orders to include the recommendations made by the internal auditors following the audit of compliance with the College Financial Handbook, role descriptions for Staff and Student governors and proposal for the completion of mandatory training by governors.</p>
5.	<p><b>RECRUITMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE GOVERNING BODY</b></p> <p>The Committee received an update on the recruitment process for the new Chair of the Board and the outcome.</p>

The Search and Governance Committee's approval was sought to recommend the appointment of Valerie Shawcross as Chair of the Corporation Board, for approval by the Board at its meeting on 2 July 2025.

The Vice Chair of the Board, who also chaired the Selection Panel gave a report on the second recruitment exercise to appoint a new Chair following an unsuccessful first round. The Committee discussed the recruitment and selection process undertaken and how the Selection Panel reached its decision to recommend Valerie Shawcross as the preferred candidate.

The recruitment process followed:

- The Search and Governance Committee had established a Selection Panel to oversee the recruitment process. Peridot an FE sector Search Agency was engaged to draw up a candidate brief and identify suitable candidates for interview for the position of Chair of Croydon College. The Selection Panel worked with Peridot to develop the criteria, identify and shortlist candidates.
- Five candidates were put forward; four were shortlisted for interview, with one subsequently withdrawing for personal reasons.
- The interview process included pre-interview discussions with the Principal and CEO, the FREDIE group and a student stakeholder group. Feedback from both groups was considered by the Selection Panel as part of its deliberations.
- Three candidates were interviewed by the Selection Panel on 20 June 2025. The Panel comprised the Vice Chair of the Board, Chair of the Audit Committee, Chair of the Learning & Quality Committee, Chair of the Remuneration Committee and the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee. The Principal & CEO and the Director of Governance attended as observers.
- Following the interviews, the Panel agreed that Valerie Shawcross was the most suitable candidate and recommended her appointment to the Search and Governance Committee on 25 June 2025.

Valerie Shawcross was selected for the following reasons:

- Met all essential and desirable criteria outlined in the candidate brief.
- A local resident with good knowledge of Croydon and a passion to meet the needs of its residents and community.
- Extensive experience serving on and leading high-profile boards.
- Proven leadership skills with a track record of delivering measurable outcomes and developing strategy.
- good understanding of corporate governance principles.
- Financially literate and strategically minded.
- Strong local connection and knowledge of local stakeholder networks.
- Good communication skills.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated enthusiasm for the College and commitment to its strategic plan.</li> <li>• Alignment with the College’s values and the Nolan Principles of Public Life.</li> <li>• Positive engagement with both the FREDIE and student groups, with the latter group particularly responsive to her interest in them.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee was satisfied with the recruitment and selection process and supported the Selection Panel’s recommendation to appoint Valerie Shawcross as the new Chair of the Governing Body.</p> <p>Valerie Shawcross would be appointed for a four-year term of office with a review after one year. It was noted that she intends to resign from her political affiliations to focus fully on her role as Chair.</p> <p>The Committee thanked the Selection Panel for the thorough work undertaken to find a new Chair.</p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>REAPPOINTMENTS AND RECRUITMENT</b></p> <p>The Committee discussed governors’ attendance. While overall performance was generally good, there were concerns regarding the attendance of some governors, which would be taken into account when considering reappointments. The attendance data provided in the report was helpful.</p> <p>(i) <u>Armaghan UI Haq - Term ends 2 July 2025</u></p> <p>The Committee discussed the reappointment of Armaghan UI Haq for a further three years of his first term of office.</p> <p>The Committee discussed Armaghan’s attendance, contribution, and overall performance as a governor. It was noted that the Chair of the Board, Chair of the Audit Committee and the Executive were supportive of his re-appointment to the Governing Body.</p> <p>The Committee recommended to the Board the reappointment of Armaghan UI Haq as a member of the Governing Body for a further three years from 3 July 2025 to 2 July 2028 (by which time he will have served a full four-year term of office).</p> <p>(ii) <u>Niral Patel - Term ends 19 October 2025</u></p> <p>The Committee discussed the reappointment of Niral Patel for a second term of four years.</p> <p>The Committee discussed Niral’s attendance, contribution, and overall performance as a governor. It was noted that the Chair of the Board, Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee and the Executive were supportive of his re-appointment to the Governing Body.</p>

	<p>The Committee recommended to the Board the reappointment of Niral Patel as a member of the Governing Body for a second term of office of four years from 20 October 2025 to 19 October 2029.</p> <p><u>(iii) Appointment of Martin Bentham as a co-opted member of the LQC with a focus on SEND</u></p> <p>The Committee noted that Martin Bentham would be stepping down as an External Governor at the end of the academic year and would be appointed as a Co-opted Member of the Learning and Quality Committee.</p> <p>The Committee discussed Martin’s attendance and performance and acknowledged his strong skill set and expertise in Safeguarding and SEND, and that he was highly knowledgeable and experienced in these areas. The Chair of the Learning and Quality Committee was supportive of Martin’s appointment as a co-opted member of the Committee.</p> <p>Martin Bentham was the Lead Governor on Safeguarding and SEND and would be replaced by Portia Kumalo the new governor.</p> <p>The Committee recommended the appointment of Martin Bentham as a co-opted Member of the Learning &amp; Quality Committee to the Board for approval.</p> <p><u>(iv) Update on the Appointment of External Governor</u></p> <p>The Committee received an update on the appointment of Portia Kumalo as an External Governor. It was confirmed that all due diligence requirements had been met and that Portia was currently undertaking the mandatory induction and governance training.</p> <p>The Committee recommended the appointment of Portia Kumalo as an External Governor for a four-year term of office to the Board for approval.</p> <p><u>(v) Update on the Appointment of the Director of Governance</u></p> <p>The Committee recommended the appointment of Jacqueline Mutibwa as the new Director of Governance/ Clerk to the Board for approval.</p>
7.	<p><b>COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP/LINK GOVERNORS 2025/26</b></p> <p>The Committee agreed the proposed 2025/26 Committee membership, Link Governor roles, and appointments and that these would be reviewed by the new Chair of the Board prior to final confirmation.</p>
8.	<p><b>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b></p> <p>Wednesday 19 November 2025  Wednesday 4 March 2026  Wednesday 24 June 2026</p>
9.	<p><b>OTHER BUSINESS</b></p>

	There was no other business.
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