CRAVEN COLLEGE
FULL GOVERNING BOARD
Minutes of the meeting held in College on:
THURSDAY 2 JULY 2026 AT 5.30PM

PRESENT:	Alison Birkinshaw - Chair	Anita Lall - Principal and Chief Executive
	Majid Bokhari (via Teams)	Mark Pettit
	Nicki Crail	Neil Roe
	Liz Jones	Rob Scott
	Judith Lancaster	Claire Thomas (via Teams)
	Ann Moralee	Sara Wright
	Chris Morgan	Steve Wroe
	Marnie Marshall	Amjed Zaman

IN ATTENDANCE: Gareth Dixon – Deputy Principal
Duncan Bulloch - Assistant Principal
Wesley McGlinchey – Assistant Principal
Susan Francis – Director of Governance
Stephanie McKay– Head of Department (until item 1)

0. Caring Professions Presentation

0.1 The Board received a presentation from Stephanie McKay on the Caring Professions curriculum.
It was reported that significant growth had been achieved, with improved learner number and outcomes. The breadth of provision across Early Years, Health and Social Care, Access to Higher Education, adult programmes and Higher Education were outlined. Strong alignment to local skills priorities and workforce needs were also noted.
The Board was advised that employer engagement continued to strengthen, particularly across the Healthcare, Social Care and Early Years sectors.
A question was raised regarding employer involvement in curriculum design. The Board was advised that employers actively contributed through employer forums and had influenced curriculum developments, including content relating to employability and end-of-life care skills.
The Board discussed the challenges posed from qualification reforms and changing funding requirements.
Thanks were given to Stephanie for the informative presentation and the significant progress made within the department was recognised.
Stephanie left the meeting at 5.45pm.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE **ACTION**

1.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Dean Langton, Judith Lancaster and Rachel Barratt.
The Chair welcomed newly appointed Governors to their first Board meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1
- Chris Morgan declared a potential conflict of interest in relation to his role as Director of Education – Employability and Skills/ Director of External Relationships with WEA (The Workers' Educational Association).
- Neil Roe declared that he was Chair of Skipton BID (Business Improvement District).
- Anita Lall declared that she was Vice Chair of Skipton BID (Business Improvement District).
- Wesley McGlinchey was a co-opted member of the Teaching and Learning Committee at Heart of Worcester College.
- Steve Wroe was Vice Chair of Skipton Girls High
- Sara Wright that her husband, Steve Wright had carried out a pro bono external HE Review (item 6.5).

Approved

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Governors reviewed progress against outstanding actions.
With regards minute 6.11, it was reported that the installation of the lockdown system would take place in September 2026 and that testing would be undertaken following installation.
Resolved: That the minutes, including the confidential minutes of the last Board meeting held on 26 April 2026 were agreed as a true record.

3.2 Actions
Completed: Most actions had been closed off or were integrated into the agenda.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

4.1 The Board discussed the publication of the Ofsted report and congratulated leaders, staff and students on the achievement. Governors recognised the significant amount of work that had contributed to the positive outcome and thanked all involved.

4.2 The Board was advised that curriculum reform remained one of the most significant strategic risks facing the sector and the College. Reference was made to qualification reforms, two-year programmes and the implications for future recruitment and funding.

4.3 Governors considered the information in the report and suggested that future reports could include a more concise executive summary, emerging risks and key strategic developments which the Principal agreed to review ahead of the next meeting.

4.4 A question was raised regarding Ofsted's safeguarding judgement. The Board was advised that safeguarding was assessed on a "met" or "not met" basis rather than through graded judgements and that the Inspection Team had provided very positive verbal feedback regarding safeguarding arrangements in College.

4.5 Governors discussed the interim Milburn Review and wider concerns regarding young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs). The Principal outlined current regional work and highlighted ongoing collaboration with schools and partners to identify and support vulnerable learners prior to post-16 transition.
A question was raised on whether there was an opportunity for the College to take a lead role in bringing together schools, local authorities and training providers to improve post-16 participation. To which the Principal confirmed that discussions were already underway with local authorities and that further opportunities for collaborative working would be explored. The Evolve (High Needs) provision at Ripon was a successful example but currently full.
The report was noted.

5. STRATEGIC MATTERS

5.1 **Item 5.1: Budget 2026-27 and Financial Forecasts 2027-28 CFFR (College Financial Forecasting Return) return**
The Deputy Principal presented the proposed budget and financial forecasts.
The budget had been scrutinised at length in the recent Finance, Resources and Investment Committee.
The Board was advised that since the budget had been prepared several significant government funding announcements, including additional funding relating to teacher pay awards, inclusion funding and changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme contributions had been announced. That the full implications for the College remained unclear as yet.
Governors recognised that a revised control budget would be required during the autumn term once further guidance had been received.

5.2 In scrutinising the budget assumptions, the Board challenged and discussed:

- Adult Skills Fund performance.

Approved

- Apprenticeship growth assumptions.
- Cash day targets and financial health.
- Contribution made by land-based provision.
- The impact of curriculum reform.
- Implications of future funding changes.
- Impact and costing of the horticulture provision changes.

It was agreed that a fully costed plan with regards the horticulture provision be provided at the next meeting once funding had been confirmed.
ACTION: Produce a fully costed plan for the horticulture provision for October 2026. **GD**

5.3 The Principal outlined the proposed uses of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund (IMF). With the Board being advised that this funding was ringfenced and intended to support inclusion and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) developments rather than general budget pressures. It was agreed that an update on this would be provided for the next meeting.
ACTION: Provide an update on IMF funding for October 2026. **GD**

5.4 Governors were satisfied that the budget represented the best available position based on current information and that the College remained forecast to maintain good financial health. The importance of maintaining financial resilience in an increasingly uncertain environment was emphasised.

5.5 Having discussed the report, and noting the recommendation for approval from the Finance, Resources and Investment Committee, and on the understanding that revised figures would be presented through the Control Budget, the Board approved the Budget for 2026-27.
RESOLVED: That the Budget 2026-27 and the Financial Forecasts 2027-28 CFFR (College Financial Forecasting Return) return were approved.
ACTION: Deputy Principal to provide revised figures in the control budget. **GD**

5.6 **Item 5.2: Strategic Plan and KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)**
The Board considered progress against the Strategic Plan and was assured that College was making good progress overall.
It was reported that strong progress had been made against the objectives relating to student outcomes, employer engagement, teaching and learning and the overall student experience. Further work was required in relation to people, culture and staff engagement. It was noted that the recent appointment of a new Director of People and Culture would be instrumental in driving this area forwards.

5.7 The Board challenged what "exceptional" performance would look like for the College and discussed whether additional strategic measures should be developed to demonstrate progress beyond current expectations.
A detailed discussion took place regarding the KPIs and it was agreed that the KPIs would be reviewed over the summer to define excellence and identify how this could be evidenced to strengthen strategic oversight and improve Board assurance.
ACTION: Principal to review the strategic KPI framework, to develop what exceptional performance means for the College and how it could be reflected in future KPIs and Board assurance reporting. **AL**

5.8 The Board held a discussion around staff survey participation rates and concerns regarding employee anonymity on completion of the survey. It was explained that the concern of anonymity was largely a historic one, that alternative approaches to solve this issue were being investigated.

5.9 **Item 5.3: Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)**
The Board received an update on progress against the College's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The Assistant Principal reported that most actions had now been completed and significant progress had been achieved since the start of the academic

Approved

year. The remaining actions, which had improved, would continue to be monitored through the Quality and Curriculum Committee.
The Board noted the substantial progress made and recognised the contribution this had made to the positive outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection.

5.10 The Board discussed whether work placement and work experience activities should be reported more explicitly within quality reporting, to which it was explained that considerable work had already been done to strengthen reporting in this area and that detailed scrutiny was provided through the Quality and Curriculum Committee.

5.11 Governors queried whether Higher Education performance and outcomes could be made more visible within routine reporting and performance tracking. It was agreed that this would be reviewed through the Quality and Curriculum Committee.
ACTION*:* Review opportunities to strengthen the visibility of Higher Education performance measures within quality reporting. **WM**

5.12 **Item 5.4 Annual Accountability Statement**
The Board reviewed the Annual Accountability Statement and welcomed its clarity. It was noted that it provided a comprehensive overview of the College's contribution to learners, employers and local communities.

5.13 The College advised that a formal Local Needs Duty review needed to be carried out every three years, the last one being undertaken in October 2023. Approval was sought and granted to look into engaging someone to carry out this work.
RESOLVED: Approval was given to explore external commissioning options for the Local Needs Duty review and bring recommendations to the Board in October 2026.
ACTION: Review options for the Local Needs Duty review and bring recommendations to the Board in October 2026. **AL**

5.14 A discussion took place regarding adding in further information on College provision in terms of local/regional/national priorities. and the requirement to ensure provision continued to align with local, regional and national priorities. It was explained that this would be looked at during the Local Needs Duty review and be considered for the 2027 statement.
RESOLVED: The Board approved the Annual Accountability Statement subject to final checks and agreed amendments.
UPDATE: Statement submitted.

5.15 **Item 5.5: Curriculum Plan 2026 – 2027**
The Curriculum Plan for 2026-2027 was discussed. Governors noted planned growth in learner numbers, changing curriculum demand patterns and the increasing impact of devolved funding arrangements. Assurance was provided that the curriculum planning assumptions aligned with the approved budget and strategic priorities.
The Curriculum Plan was noted**.**

6. REPORTS AND UPDATES

6.1 **Item 6.1: Curriculum and Teaching Excellence report**
The Assistant Principal presented the report to assure the Board about overall performance and progress towards targets, and key improvement actions.
The information emphasised the importance of high grades and progress measures.
Predicted achievement rates were reported as:

- 89% for 16–19 provision.
- 92% for adult provision.
- 73% for apprenticeships.

Governors noted positive predicted achievement outcomes, high levels of student satisfaction and continued improvements in learner progress together with a successful Higher Education revalidation activity by the University of Hull.

Approved

6.2 Assurance was given that the College was fully compliant with the Office for Students (OfS) regulations, including student access and participation plan commitments.

6.3 In terms of the student survey results, a 90% response rate together with 94 % satisfaction were reported, a 4% increase from the previous year. The survey also showed high levels of agreement across all areas.
The Board recorded that teaching effectiveness remained high (95%), with Ofsted validation supporting internal observations.

6.4 The Principal drew the attention of the Board to the NART (National Achievement Rate Tables) data and that College maintained a strong position across all provision types.

6.5 Governors commended the outcome of external Higher Education review which provided assurance that it remained financially viable, that leadership was competent and identified areas to consider for further growth.

6.6 **Item 6.2: Safeguarding Report**
The Assistant Principal presented the paper and affirmed the College was fully committed to the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors. It was reported that safeguarding arrangements remained fully compliant and that Ofsted had confirmed safeguarding requirements were being met effectively.

6.7 A question was raised regarding the increasing number of safeguarding and mental health referrals and whether this indicated rising levels of need or increased confidence in reporting concerns.
Governors were assured that safeguarding systems and processes remained effective and that higher referral levels reflected a positive safeguarding culture in which students and staff felt confident seeking support when concerns arose.
The Governor Link for Safeguarding provided additional assurance, drawing on their experience as a Designated Safeguarding Lead in the sector, they described the College's safeguarding arrangements as an example of good practice, particularly in relation to case management, recording systems and Power BI oversight.

6.8 In terms of what College was doing to support students to build their resilience, Governors were advised that from induction to tutorials, this was an embedded feature across College.
The report was noted.

6.9 **6.3 Inclusion Report**
The Board considered the Inclusion Report.
Governors were assured that inclusion and SEND support remained a strategic priority and noted continued investment in systems, monitoring and support arrangements. Members were advised that inclusion continued to be embedded within all aspects of College activity and remained a significant strength identified during the recent Ofsted Inspection.

6.10 A discussion took place around achievement gaps between learner groups, in particular the growing cohort of Free School Meal (FSM) students and assurance was provided that these were regularly reviewed, and outcomes remained above national benchmarks. That the College remained compliant with its statutory duties and continued to focus on reducing achievement gaps and improving outcomes for all students requiring additional support.
Governors welcomed the positive inspection feedback relating to inclusion.
The report was noted.

6.11 **Item 6.4: Estates and Technology Update**
The paper updated the Board on estates developments, technology infrastructure and capital investment activity much of which had been discussed in the earlier finance item.
Particular attention was given to:

- Horticulture development plans.
- Temporary accommodation proposals.
- Opportunities associated with the neighbouring property at Aireville.
- New transport routes from East Lancashire.

A question was raised regarding the risk of losing the neighbouring property opportunity due to funding delays. Assurance was provided that constructive discussions continued with the landlord.

6.12 Progress with strategic investments in Construction, Access to FE and Early Years provision, funded through grant income and property sale proceeds were noted. Members also received an update on the College's IT refresh programme and the resulting improvements in infrastructure and operational resilience.
The report was noted and assurance received.

6.13 **6.5 Staff Survey Results and Action Plan**
The Board considered the staff survey results and remarked that participation rates were consistent with the previous year and remained above the sector average. The discussion focused on confidence in survey anonymity, departmental response rates and opportunities to strengthen staff engagement.

6.14 It was advised that the incoming Director of People and Culture would undertake a review of staff voice arrangements and engagement mechanisms, including continued work with the survey provider to strengthen confidence in anonymity, which was welcomed by the Board.
ACTION: Director of People and Culture to review staff survey arrangements and staff voice mechanisms and report findings through PSG Committee. **PL**

7. FINANCE MATTERS

7.1 **Item 7.1: Funding Update**
The Board received an update on Adult Skills Funding (ASF) and apprenticeships. It was sated that adult provision remained under close review following delivery challenges during the year and that College was confident in the delivery plan for the forthcoming year, supported by strengthened staffing and planning arrangements.

7.2 The Board discussed risks associated with combined authority funding arrangements and potential restrictions on geographical location and expressed concern around further devolution. It was agreed that this would continue to be closely monitored.

7.3 Apprenticeship performance was reported to be strong and ahead of the same point in the previous year.
The Board welcomed the positive progress and noted the report.

7.4 **7.2 External Audit Strategy 2025 - 2026**
The External Audit Strategy was presented following recommendation by the Audit Committee.
RESOLVED: The Board approved the External Audit Strategy as recommended by Audit Committee.

8. GOVERNANCE
The Board considered the governance report.
8.1 Membership Matters
Following recommendations from the People, Search and Governance Committee, the Board approved the following:

Approved

RESOLVED:

- Steve Wroe was appointed to the Finance, Resources and Investment Committee.
- Ann Moralee was appointed to the Audit Committee.
- Mark Pettit, having successfully completed his 12-month probation continue for the remainder of their full term (to June 2029).

8.2 The recent resignations of two co-opted members, Emma Calvert (external commitments) and Sue Laycock (retiring) were mentioned. Thanks for the valuable contribution each had made to the work of the Board were recorded.

8.3 **8.2 – 8.4 External Board Review/Action Plan/KPIs**

The Board considered the outcomes of the recent External Board Review together with the proposed Action Plan and Governance KPIs. The Director of Governance explained that a summary of the review findings would be published on the College website. Governors noted the positive review and approved the proposed summary. Governors also welcomed the streamlined set of Governance KPIs.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the:

- External Board Review Action Plan.
- Governance KPIs.
- The publication of the website summary of the External Board Review.

8.4 **8.5 Written Resolution**

That the outcome of the written resolution be accepted:

Resolved: 9 June 2026 approval of the appointment of Amjed Zaman and Liz Jones as Independent Governors for a term of four years subject to a 12-month probation period as recommended by the People, Search and Governance Committee.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Board noted the key areas of assurance and scrutiny undertaken by committees and were satisfied that matters requiring Board approval had been appropriately considered and recommended.

The reports were noted.

9.1 **Audit Committee held on 8 June 2026**

The minutes reflected discussions around

- Audit Tracker/Update on Audit Recommendations
- Reviewed internal audit reports.
- Annual External Audit Report
- Compliance report including Freedom of Information Requests/Fraud/ Bribery/Whistleblowing/GDPR /cyber security breaches report.
- Risk Review
- Cyber Risk update
- Board Assurance Framework.

9.2 **Finance, Resources and Investment Committee on 18 June 2026**

The key points from the FRI minutes were noted which included the Budget 2026/27 and Financial Forecasts 2027-28 including CFFR, Strategic Operating Plan, Health and Safety Report, Management Accounts, Funding Update ASF/Apprenticeships, Applications Update 2025/6 FE/HE, Risk Review and commercial and other Income updates.

<u>Recommended for Board approval</u>

- Board Assurance Framework
- Sub-Contracting and Fee Schedule
- Adult Fee Setting Policy

9.3 **People, Search and Governance (PSG) on 21 May 2026**

The People, Search and Governance Committee minutes dealt with various areas such as:

Approved

- HR Report
- Membership Matters
- Governance KPI's and the External Board Review Action Plan
- Membership recommendations
- Board Assurance Framework
- Membership Matters
- Risk Review

Recommended for Board approval

- Governance KPI's and the External Board Review Action Plan
- Board Assurance Framework.
- SPH (Senior Post Holder) Remuneration Policy – updated following the last meeting.

9.4 **Quality and Curriculum Committee held on 4 June 2026**
The minutes evidenced discussion around the curriculum report, the QIP, student experience report including student engagement /careers/work experience, complaints and compliments report.

10. RISK REVIEW

10.1 **10.1 Strategic Risk Register**
The Board reviewed the Strategic Risk Register and were advised that SLT and the Director of Governance had recently reviewed risk descriptions, controls, assurance arrangements and risk ratings. Further updates would take place ahead of the autumn term.

10.2 The Board discussed Artificial Intelligence (AI) and challenged whether sufficient consideration had been given to both opportunities and associated risks.
It was reported that an AI Working Group had been established, AI had been identified as a strategic priority and incorporated within strategic risk discussions.
Governors recognised the potential of AI to improve efficiency and productivity, whilst emphasising the need for strong governance controls relating to data protection, ethical use and organisational oversight.

10.3 **10.2 Board Assurance Framework (BAF)**
The Director of Governance introduced the revised Board Assurance Framework. Governors welcomed the refined format and discussed the distinction between the Strategic Risk Register and the Board Assurance Framework.
Members agreed that further development work would support Board oversight and welcomed the Audit Committee's intention to undertake a more detailed review during the autumn term.
RESOLVED: The Board approved the Board Assurance Framework, subject to further refinement through the Audit Committee.
ACTION: The Director of Governance to arrange Board training on the Board Assurance Framework. **SF**

11. POLICIES

11.1 The Board considered the following policies as recommended by Committees:

- Sub-Contracting and Fee Schedule.
- Adult Fee Setting Policy.
- Senior Post Holder Remuneration Policy.

The rationale for the revisions was outlined and Governors received assurance that the policies reflected current requirements and best practice.

11.2 **Item 11.1: Senior Post Holder (SPH) Remuneration Policy**
Following the confidential SPH remuneration discussion at the Board on 26 March 2026, it was agreed to strengthen the policy by adding a clear set of principles. A light-touch review had also been undertaken to ensure alignment with the Employment Rights Act 2026. The Board also noted the position regarding the new Association of

Approved

Colleges' Remuneration Code and agreed to review the position of adoption or not in 2027.
RESOLVED: The Board approved the Senior Post Holder (SPH) Remuneration Policy as recommended by the PSG Committee.

11.3 **Item 11.2: Sub-contracting and Fee Schedule**
RESOLVED: The Board approved the Sub-contracting and Fee Schedule as recommended by the Finance, Resources and Investment Committee.

11.4 **Item 11.3: Adult Fee Setting Policy**.
RESOLVED: The Board approved the Adult Fee Setting Policy.as recommended by the Finance, Resources and Investment Committee.

12. REVIEW OF MEETING

12.1 Governors reflected on the effectiveness of the meeting.

- Members welcomed the curriculum presentation and agreed that it had provided useful strategic insight into an important curriculum area.
- Governors found the papers informative and helpful.
- All members confirmed they had sufficient information.
- There was adequate opportunity for discussion and decision-making.
- Training on the Board Assurance Framework was identified

The Chair thanked members for their contributions and wished them a pleasant summer. As this was the last meeting for the student Governor, the Board thanked her for her contribution and wished her luck for the future.

13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

13.1
- Thursday 22 October at 5.30pm in the Board Room.
- Thursday 10 December at 5.30pm in the Board Room.
- Thursday 21 January, Strategic Away Day, in College.
- Thursday 8 April at 5.30pm in the Board Room.
- Thursday 24 June, Strategic Away Day, in College.
- Thursday 1 July at 5.30pm in the Board Room

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.

Action Summary

Item	Action	Owner	Due
5.2	Produce a fully costed plan for the horticulture provision.	GD	October 2026
5.3	Provide an update on Inclusive Mainstream Fund (IMF) funding.	GD	October 2026
5.5	Provide revised figures through the Control Budget.	GD	Autumn 2026 / October 2026
5.7	Review the strategic KPI framework to define exceptional performance and reflect this in future KPIs and Board assurance reporting.	AL	October 2026
5.11	Review opportunities to strengthen the visibility of Higher Education performance measures within quality reporting.	WM/DB	October 2026
5.13	Review options for the Local Needs Duty Review and bring recommendations to the Board.	AL	October 2026
6.14	Review staff survey arrangements and staff voice mechanisms and report findings through PSG Committee.	Director of People & Culture (PL)	PSG Committee / Autumn 2026

Approved

10.3	Arrange Board training on the Board Assurance Framework.	SF	Autumn 2026

Approved