

Cirencester College Corporation Meeting Minutes

Meeting:	Corporation 4	Chair:	Fiona Galbraith (FG)
Date:	12 th May 2025	Clerk:	Suzanna Miles (SM)
Location:	T105		
Time:	17:02-19:08pm		
Corporation members (with voting rights):	Fiona Galbraith (FG), Libby Reed (LR), Brendan Brown (BB), Mikey Ezewudo (ME), Ping Li (PL), Susie Richards (SR), Andrew Tubb (AT), Gay Wales (GW), Catherine Simpson (CS), Nikki Webster (NW), Matt Reynolds (MR)		
Guests (no voting rights):	SLT: Giles Robinson (GR), Karen Fraser (KF), Matt Couzens (MC), Rich Stonebridge (RS) Student Forum: Summer Wooldridge, Jacob Parkinson, Ella Clark-Gleed Student governor-elect: Erika Badea (EB)		
Apologies:	Mahala Gleed, Sara Sharkey, Mike Cadman, Jane Fern		
Meeting theme:	Student Experience		
Pre-meeting training:	<i>'What is a strategy?'</i> session led by Fiona Galbraith Presentation to be circulated with minutes of meeting Update on Corporation SharePoint site (Suzanna Miles) Presentation to be circulated with minutes of meeting		

All meeting papers were circulated in advance of the meeting via the Corporation SharePoint.

ITEM	MINUTES	ACTION																
1.	<p>Welcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Introductions Members of the Youth Forum were welcomed to the meeting, as well as Erika Badea (new student governor) who attended as an observer.Apologies for absence Apologies were accepted from Sara Sharkey and Mike Cadman.Reminder of confidentiality FG reminded attendees of the requirement for confidentiality.Declaration of interests (as related to the agenda) No conflicts of interests were declared.																	
2.	<p>Approve minutes of the last meeting on 17th March 2025</p> <p>The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>																	
3.	<p>Matters arising from 17th March 2025</p> <table><tr><th>No.</th><th>Action</th><th>Lead</th><th>Status Update</th></tr><tr><td>7.</td><td>Write to AR, LT and FG confirming re-appointment</td><td>SM</td><td>Complete</td></tr><tr><td>4.</td><td>Write to AT to confirm reappointment as vice-Chair</td><td>SM</td><td>Complete</td></tr><tr><td>17.</td><td>Work with Chair of S&G committee to explore options for digitising self-assessment forms 2024/25</td><td>SM</td><td>In process: S&G 19/5/2025</td></tr></table>	No.	Action	Lead	Status Update	7.	Write to AR, LT and FG confirming re-appointment	SM	Complete	4.	Write to AT to confirm reappointment as vice-Chair	SM	Complete	17.	Work with Chair of S&G committee to explore options for digitising self-assessment forms 2024/25	SM	In process: S&G 19/5/2025	SM
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	18.	Send IT report and risk register from Audit committee to Digital Focus governor	SM	Complete	SM														
	20.	Confirm approval of policies with policy owners and Principal's PA	SM	Complete															
	21.	Finalise approved amendments to standing orders	SM	In process: SM to do some further work on Standing Orders															
4.	Student Forum FG explained that the Student Forum had been invited to the meeting to provide feedback to governors on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do students feel is the best thing about Cirencester College and why?• What would students like to improve and how? Student Forum attendees consisted of two current students and one former student/ student governor. The student forum is an unelected group that are not formal representatives of any particular college area or course. They shared the following personal perspectives and opinions on studying at college: <table><tr><td>Induction day</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities tailored to specific courses should be considered.• More time could be given to training on the use of technology (CCO, Moodle, Unifrog, Teams) as this training is relatively limited.</td></tr><tr><td>Tutor Programme</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technology training could be integrated into Tutor times (e.g. use of Excel, how to reference correctly).</td></tr><tr><td>Personal Development Plans</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• PDP reviews might be more effective if more frequent.• Greater links with Pastoral would be helpful.• Conducting individual PDP reviews takes up a considerable proportion of Tutorials. If these were scheduled for another time, Tutor times could be used for more engaging discussions.• Greater links with Careers might be helpful, particularly if these could be done with a Careers Advisor.</td></tr><tr><td>Pastoral</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• More support for students at different points of menstrual cycle, particularly around nutrition and during exams.• Students noted the HRT working group currently run for staff and suggested a similar forum for young women might be beneficial.• Pastoral team are not necessarily known or available to all students.</td></tr><tr><td>Teaching</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• The curriculum offer and quality of teaching is excellent.• Students reported a variety of support following periods of missed lessons.</td></tr><tr><td>Enrichment</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrichment offer has a very positive impact on students.</td></tr><tr><td>Use of social media</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is done well and creates a helpful link between the College and students.</td></tr></table> <div>**ME and MR arrived at 17.16**</div> <p>Questions from governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Would induction be improved if there was a course-specific element and enrichment orientation? <p>Yes, this would support students in supplementing their learning in their own time. The students agreed that a schedule of enrichment activities would also be useful.</p>				Induction day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities tailored to specific courses should be considered.• More time could be given to training on the use of technology (CCO, Moodle, Unifrog, Teams) as this training is relatively limited.	Tutor Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technology training could be integrated into Tutor times (e.g. use of Excel, how to reference correctly).	Personal Development Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PDP reviews might be more effective if more frequent.• Greater links with Pastoral would be helpful.• Conducting individual PDP reviews takes up a considerable proportion of Tutorials. If these were scheduled for another time, Tutor times could be used for more engaging discussions.• Greater links with Careers might be helpful, particularly if these could be done with a Careers Advisor.	Pastoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More support for students at different points of menstrual cycle, particularly around nutrition and during exams.• Students noted the HRT working group currently run for staff and suggested a similar forum for young women might be beneficial.• Pastoral team are not necessarily known or available to all students.	Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The curriculum offer and quality of teaching is excellent.• Students reported a variety of support following periods of missed lessons.	Enrichment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrichment offer has a very positive impact on students.	Use of social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is done well and creates a helpful link between the College and students.	
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	<p>- <i>How well are you supported as an individual? Is your experience built around you?</i> The consensus was that students are well-supported and are mostly able to build their own experiences but that more support might be required for some students. There was some discussion around the support available for students in sourcing work experience placements and networking opportunities. Students recognised that T-level students have more opportunities for work experience than A-level students.</p> <p>- <i>Do you think longer tutor sessions would be well-received by students?</i> Students might be more likely to attend Tutorials if they were more clearly linked to life skills or employability.</p> <p>- <i>It seems that support is available but that it can be difficult to navigate for some?</i> The students agreed that it can be difficult to find support but that once it has been found, it is normally very good.</p> <p>Governors thanked the Student Forum for their contribution. Student Forum members left the meeting at 17.27.</p> <p>ACTION: FG to write to students to thank them for their contribution</p> <p>Further discussion continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing from students is helpful for governors, particularly when considering strategy. • A recognition that this was feedback from three students out of a population of 3000. • Setting expectations and the scope of what College can do for students might be helpful. • Could there be a need to consider the signposting of available support and how to access it? • Could there be a need to consider the consistency of communication between students and teachers, and setting expectations around how long students and parents can expect to wait for a response? • Could there be a need to communicate more around changes made and the reasons why? • The digital feedback should be easy to resolve. <p>MR commented that both the student and parent surveys regularly return outstandingly positive results but recognised that not everything will work perfectly for all students. KF added that some of the points relate directly to areas that have been changed in response to previous feedback from students, particularly around PDP and tutor time.</p> <p><i>Questions from governors:</i></p> <p>- <i>Are the surveys anonymous?</i> Yes.</p> <p>- <i>Who should students go to if they have an issue?</i> There are three points of contact available as well as the 'quick button' on CCO.</p> <p>MR emphasised that the key goal is to curate an environment where students feel at home, welcomed and respected whilst also recognising that the variety and number of students means differing approaches suit some better than others. MR added that the induction programme is revised every year.</p> <p>ACTION: MR to consider feedback further and pick up operational issues raised</p> <p>Post-meeting note: MR met with members of Student Forum on the following day and listened in further detail to some of the issues and suggestions raised.</p>	<p>FG</p> <p>MR</p>
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5.	<p>Chair's Report to Corporation</p> <p>FG commented that the strategic conversation with the DfE had focussed on the strategic vision and direction as well as the considerable changes made under Project Apollo.</p>	
6.	<p>Focus Governance</p> <p>FG thanked all those governors who had visited college since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeships (AT) No further comments. • Careers guidance (CS) CS confirmed that the Student Forum feedback around work placements aligns with the feedback from her visit. This continues to be an area requiring focus although CS recognised that it is not easily resolved. <i>Questions from governors:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What is the remit of the College regarding work experience and is this explicitly shared with students?</i> It depends on the course. T-level placements are organised by college, but A-levels are different because there is no funding or resourcing, so students need to find placements themselves. • Curriculum (GW) GW commented that the main points of challenge continue to be student retention, attendance, work experience placements but that lots of work is being done particularly around feedback and assessment methods and staff training. • Faculty Heads annual visits (FG) No further comments. • Health and Safety (ME) ME confirmed that, following an incident in the car park, the estate management team have made appropriate changes to prevent a similar issue recurring. • Finance (BB) • Safeguarding (LR) LR made the following comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Prevent referral has been made but this does not meet threshold. • Safeguarding referrals have reduced since Covid. The team are conducting a safeguarding audit of the wider team to ensure a common approach. ACTION: LR to continue to monitor • The Pastoral team are very available, so the Focus governor feedback does not necessarily align with that provided by the Student Forum. • LR asked for clarification on the Fit to Study programme and how it links to safeguarding. KF confirmed that this applies to new applicants and is a tool to help ensure that new students can cope with the rigour of the courses that they are applying for. <p><i>Questions from governors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>How do you manage the safety of staff and students when making a Prevent referral?</i> Staff follow the procedure to record any concerns. If a referral is made and it does not meet threshold, college will ensure that staff and students are safe. There are 	LR

	<p>different options depending on the circumstances such as exclusion, multi-agency referral, documentation on Journal. All referrals are also documented on Journal.</p> <p>- Have the KCSIE changes this year raised any issues? KF confirmed not.</p>																								
7.	<p>Principal's Report</p> <p>MR gave an additional verbal update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Attendance Attendance figures have been calibrated against two Outstanding colleges (figures for w/c 5th May 2025): <table><tr><td></td><td>Benchmark</td><td>Cirencester College</td></tr><tr><td>In-class attendance</td><td>82%</td><td>87.8%</td></tr><tr><td>Attendance including authorised absences (e.g. trips/ work experience)</td><td></td><td>94.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Tutorial attendance (in-class)</td><td>62%</td><td>75.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Tutorial attendance including authorised absences</td><td></td><td>83.8%</td></tr></table> <p>MR confirmed that the team are monitoring attendance regularly and take steps early to support students to attend.</p> <p>Post-meeting note: MR added the following data for governors' awareness:</p> <table><tr><td>Maths GCSE in-class</td><td>75.7%</td></tr><tr><td>English GCSE in-class</td><td>76.5%</td></tr><tr><td>High Needs in class</td><td>91.9%</td></tr><tr><td>High Needs authorised</td><td>96.75%</td></tr></table> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ofsted The Ofsted review date has passed (due 12 months from the 2nd week in March). The information is ready, so the college team are focusing on business as usual. Every fortnight MR and MC review the Ofsted information to update data.University connections Good relationships are being built with Birmingham and Gloucester universities.Employer Boards Reviews have taken place, and the team are making full use of breakfast meetings and online meetings to encourage engagement. In addition, the concept of key stakeholders per faculty is being developed. <p><i>Question from governors:</i></p> <p>- Are you seeing any benefits? Yes, course teams were tasked with contacting key universities and employers and used that feedback to review the curriculum. Our schemes of work and curriculum intent now reflect this. RS added that the impact of this is now being fed back to employers directly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Buses (Confidential minute) <p><i>Additional question from governors (confidential minute)</i></p>		Benchmark	Cirencester College	In-class attendance	82%	87.8%	Attendance including authorised absences (e.g. trips/ work experience)		94.7%	Tutorial attendance (in-class)	62%	75.2%	Tutorial attendance including authorised absences		83.8%	Maths GCSE in-class	75.7%	English GCSE in-class	76.5%	High Needs in class	91.9%	High Needs authorised	96.75%	
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8.	Receive annual report on student careers guidance and personal development CS confirmed that her visit aligned with all the information in the report as well as the feedback from the Student Forum. The enrichment programme is excellent and has clearly moved forwards. MR added that attending enrichment activities has a positive impact on attendance.	
9.	Receive 16-19 study programmes report GW confirmed that the framework of assessment is having a positive impact, as well as the mentoring of new staff. <i>Questions from governors:</i> - <i>Digital literacy is important. What is college doing to support all students? Does BYOD have a part to play?</i> KF confirmed that 85% of students have their own laptop. RS confirmed the following initiatives to support digital literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laptop lockers are arriving shortly which will allow students to book out a laptop for a lesson and then return. If students are on a bursary, college can provide a laptop. From September, students will have access to a 'help to buy' scheme. - <i>Will the laptop lockers be available for everyone? Yes.</i> - <i>Do all students have devices at home?</i> 85% confirmed that they do and all students have a phone. RS added that the digital strategy needs reviewing more broadly to ensure all students have access to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This is currently a mixed economy, but it may be more efficient if we opted for one platform. EB confirmed that, from a student perspective, a singular platform would be much easier.	
10.	Receive Quality of teaching and learning report No further comments.	
11.	Receive College performance report <i>Questions from governors:</i> - <i>It would be helpful to know the headline action plan for each measure to include the policy/measure that has addressed the gap.</i> ACTION: KF to review report format	KF
12.	Receive Pastoral support report <i>Questions from governors:</i> - <i>Is it manageable for one tutor to be responsible for 250 students?</i> Staff present agreed that this is manageable based on what is asked of tutors. There are also multiple people around each student to share the load. - <i>Is there any sector guidance?</i> No, but the college is typical in this arrangement. MR informed governors that visitors always comment on the exceptional student behaviour in college.	

13.	<p>Receive Student Induction Survey 2024</p> <p><i>Governor comments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>It is interesting that the top five considerations for applying to Cirencester College in the survey have remained constant, and that quality of teaching as a factor has risen. This could be something to emphasise in our marketing.</i> - <i>These are a very positive set of results.</i> 	
14.	<p>Receive Attendance and Retention Report (Spring Term 2025)</p> <p><i>Questions from governors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Is there a strategic issue to consider regarding average class size? When does class size start to matter and what does the current research say?</i> <p>MR confirmed that performance statistically begins to deteriorate from 28 students, otherwise it makes no real difference to achievement. Class sizes currently average 17 although some A-levels are bigger. Rooms can hold up to 24 students.</p>	
15.	<p>Receive Financial Report and Accounts, extended to 2027/28 , including approval of loan repayment</p> <p>GR explained that he has changed the format of his written report to make clearer the story behind the numbers. This includes waterfall graphs and information about the assumptions made. GR added that cash balances are currently c.£5m so the monthly cashflow data is not provided in this report; instead, this information sits in the spreadsheets behind the report which BB and GR discuss in detail regularly at their Focus governor meetings. GR has included the dates that these meetings take place for assurance.</p> <p>GR gave an update on the highlights from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surplus was forecast to be £623k and is now £653k • The budget is back on track with NI contributions and pay rises being fully funded • Savings have been made across the board as previously the budget was 'fat' in relation to costs • £350k has been added to this year's budget to provide a bonus to staff • The budget will be on track even allowing for that additional payment • Cash balances equal c. £5m <p>Loan repayment (confidential minute)</p> <p>Pay proposals (confidential minute)</p> <p>Bus tender (confidential minute)</p>	
16.	<p>Approve operating budget (2025-2026)</p> <p>Information shared with governors includes the final summary sheet with the current year's forecast alongside the summary forecast for next year and up to 2028-2029. GR confirmed that the cash profile is set out in the documents alongside the surplus, which is being forecast in spite of the additional transport costs required.</p> <p><i>Questions from governors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Has BB as Focus governor seen the detail of the proposed budget?</i> <p>BB confirmed that he has reviewed the figures and assumptions with GR and confirmed that the excel spreadsheet is fully summarised in the waterfall chart. He added that the external auditor will go through the usual processes, and the budget has been recommended by SLT.</p>	

	DECISION: Corporation unanimously approved the operating budget for 2025-2026															
17.	Accountability Agreements and the Local Needs Duty MR commented that he is in the process of incorporating elements of the draft strategy document into the accountability statement. The requirement is for this to be submitted to the DfE by 30.6 so the action plan for 2025-2026 will be ratified at the meeting on 23.6.2025. ACTIONS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Add to the next meeting agenda- Agree a date to meet to discuss before next Corporation meeting <i>Questions from governors:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>What is the latest on Local Skills Improvement Plan?</i> This is being incorporated into County Councils but is on hold due to the devolution debate. MR attended a meeting about the Gloucestershire 5-year plan but nothing concrete agreed.					SM CS/ MR										
18.	Gender Pay Gap report <div>**EB left at 19.05pm**</div> <i>Questions from governors:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Where does our return sit compared to sector benchmarks?</i> ACTION: MG to provide response SM confirmed the report is on the website as required.					MG										
19.	Receive annual Statutory Duties report (Safeguarding, Prevent, EDI, GDPR and FOI) No further discussion.															
20.	Policies No policies for this meeting															
21.	Approve Corporate membership appointments There were no nominations for this meeting, but FG confirmed that EB was in attendance as the student who received the next highest number of votes in the student election this year. ACTION: Add to next meeting agenda					SM										
22.	Standing Orders No Standing Orders for this meeting															
24.	Date of next meetings <table><tr><td>Monday 23rd June</td><td>Corporation</td><td>5pm</td><td>AI training led by Matt Reynolds</td><td>Reports to include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of teaching and learning – progress on at-risk areas• Student retention and attendance report• Destination report• Results of staff, student, and parent surveys• HR report</td></tr><tr><td>Monday 7th June</td><td>End of year event</td><td>6pm</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>					Monday 23 rd June	Corporation	5pm	AI training led by Matt Reynolds	Reports to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of teaching and learning – progress on at-risk areas• Student retention and attendance report• Destination report• Results of staff, student, and parent surveys• HR report	Monday 7 th June	End of year event	6pm			
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FG thanked MR and the SLT for their written reports and contributions.																

Actions from the meeting on 12th May 2025:

ITEM	ACTION	LEAD
3	Explore options for digitising self-assessment forms 2024/25	SM
3	Finalise approved amendments to standing orders as part of work on standing orders	SM
4	Write to members of Student Forum to thank them for their contribution	FG
4	Consider student forum feedback and pick up any necessary operational actions	MR
6	Review audit of safeguarding team in relation to reduction of safeguarding referrals	LR
11	Review college performance report template	KF
17	Add Accountability Statement to meeting agenda for 23 rd June	SM
17	Focus governor to meet with MR to discuss Accountability Statement	CS/ MR
18	Confirm how the gender pay gap report compares to sector benchmarks	MG
21	Add confirmation of appointment of student governor to meeting agenda for 23 rd June	SM