

**REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting on Thursday 13 November 2025 at 2pm**

**FF01, Centre for Horticulture, Environment and Sustainable Technology (HEST), Reaseheath College**

- Present        Jane Artess (independent)  
                   Ashley Austin (independent)  
                   Atlas Brigden (student)  
                   Charlotte Brooks (student)  
                   Jan Chillery (independent)  
                   Marcus Clinton (principal)  
                   Jane Cowell (independent) (Chair)  
                   Jared Erskine (independent)  
                   Phil Gibbon (staff)  
                   Mike Gorton (independent)  
                   Peter Green (independent)  
                   Elizabeth Harrison (independent)  
                   Sean Houlston (independent)  
                   Martin Mellor (independent)  
                   Paul Weston (independent)
- Attending     Graeme Lavery (vice principal, finance and resources)  
                   Paul Spearritt (vice principal, curriculum and quality)  
                   Sharon Yates (assistant principal, business hub and apprenticeships)  
                   Jackie Schillinger (head of governance)

*Morning Activities – 10am – 1pm. Governors in college to focus on teaching, learning and assessment - 5PEDs and Leadership of Learning: Separate schedule provided. Morning college activities to include learning walks, curriculum area manager/programme leader panels*

**PART A unless stated**

Item	General business
1	Apologies: Apologies were received and accepted from Claire Blancard, Gary Crowe and Eunice Simmons. The meeting was quorate and remained quorate throughout.
2	Appointments: RESOLVED: Student governors for the 2025-26 academic year were appointed and committee roles approved: Eli Broadhurst Quality and Standards Committee; Charlotte Brooks Curriculum Skills and Stakeholders Committee and Atlas Brigden HE Committee.
3	Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest made regarding agenda items.
4	Minutes of last meeting: RESOLVED: The minutes of the held on 18 July 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.
5	Matters arising: The following matters were recorded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lockdown Drill: Significant progress has been made. Plans have been approved, training scheduled, and communication cascades are underway. A full drill will follow staff and student briefings.</li> <li>• Safeguarding and Prevent governor training: Governor training was part of the 18 July 2025 meeting and training is also scheduled for the December meeting.</li> <li>• External Governance Review: Planned for spring term.</li> <li>• Digital Feedback Solutions: A working group is exploring options, including AI tools, with</li> </ul>

	initial findings expected shortly.
	<b>Strategic Priority 1 Excite</b>
6	<p>Feedback from September strategic away day: Discussion took place following the away day at Myerscough College, which had been cut short due to the Ofsted progress monitoring meeting. Context: Both colleges face similar challenges in staffing and specialist provision. Collaboration aligns with government emphasis on partnership and efficiency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives: Joint curriculum development, particularly in agriculture and land-based sectors. Shared marketing initiatives to raise the profile of technical education and attract new learners. Resource sharing to reduce duplication and improve cost-effectiveness.</li> <li>Discussion Points: Governors queried strategic rationale beyond White Paper compliance. Emphasis on student recruitment, cost savings, and joint R&amp;D opportunities. Risks of confusion in external messaging noted; The principal confirmed he will lead the strategic partnership coordination.</li> <li>Clarifications: The focus is on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to set out the vision and aims for strategic collaboration on land-based technical excellence provision in the region, with each college remaining separate, with no merger planned. Governors requested clear boundaries, scope, and measurable benefits to be evidenced in the draft MOU.</li> <li>Timeline: Draft MOU expected in spring term, with an aim to finalise this for the reciprocal visit in summer term.</li> </ul>
7	RESOLVED: The college to continue the exploratory work on strategic collaboration with Myerscough College on land-based technical excellence provision in the region with a draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) to set out the vision and aims with clarity on boundaries, scope, and measurable benefits, to be presented for review in the spring term 2026.
	<b>Strategic Priority 3 Engage</b>
8	<p>College Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan: The meeting received assurance from the quality and standards committee that it had considered the report and plan at its recent meeting along with the recommended targets/KPI for 2025-26. Governor engagement across the committees, not only within quality and standards committee had been excellent this year, with many governors attending the college area self-assessment panels. This had given a good understanding of strengths and areas needing improvement, as well as opportunities for governor test and challenge. The committee reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-Assessment Report (SAR): Overall effectiveness rated 'Requires Improvement', consistent with Ofsted grading. Positive trends include retention improved by 4%, achievement up by 7.5%, and T-level achievement above national average.</li> <li>Key priorities: Strengthen teaching quality and feedback mechanisms, embed ambitious curriculum design and enhance learner support, particularly for high-needs students.</li> <li>Governors requested benchmarking against sector norms and regular KPI monitoring during the year, via the quality and standards committee monitoring role.</li> </ul>
9	<p>Feedback from learning walks/staff panels on embedding of 5 principles of effective delivery and leadership of learning by managers: Governors visited multiple curriculum areas and reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengths: Strong behaviour management and housekeeping routines; Improved engagement and questioning techniques; Evidence of the Reaseheath Way being embedded in teaching practice; Individual learning support increasingly integrated for high-needs learners.</li> <li>Feedback to Executive: Executive to consider manager feedback for greater flexibility in compliance processes where this is working well; Stronger integration of maths and English into vocational learning.</li> <li>Notable Examples: Practical sessions demonstrated good health and safety compliance; Peer-to-peer learning observed in engineering and animal management; Positive student feedback on support and progression.</li> </ul>
10	Initial KPI 2025-26: The vice principal curriculum and quality updated governors on early signs of

	<p>performance against relevant KPI at this stage in the year and any actions required, as reported to the quality and standards committee at its recent meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention: The overall retention picture for 2025-26 post the 42 days initial period not yet available; Retention on the 2-year level 3 courses 4% increase on the previous year. Curriculum areas have retained more learners on 2-year programmes in the last year and are on track to achieve the 85% target.</li> <li>• Attendance: Attendance rates are below the College target of 93% in several curriculum areas. Leaders are working to identify reasons for absence for learners with rates between 50% and 80%, as this group are having the greatest impact on the overall attendance rate. Figures have also been impacted by early transfers and other college initiatives such as Future Tracks and Super Induction.</li> <li>• Provisional Achievement: Unvalidated achievement data, excluding T Levels, for full-time courses shows an increase of 7.5% against a 3-year trend, and now just below benchmark for specialist colleges in 23-24. Core aim only achievement shows an increase (11.42%) against a 3-year trend. T-Level achievement is provisionally 6% higher than expected national averages. Provisional achievement for our learners who have an EHCP is in line with our overall achievement. Achievement of learners with high needs is higher than the college overall. Apprenticeship achievement has fallen in 24/25, but we expect this to remain above the national average achievement rates for apprenticeship provision.</li> <li>• Teaching and Learning: A significant number of learning visits have taken place over the last half-term, giving leaders a much clearer picture of teaching and learning performance to inform CPD themes and activities. Themed learning walk windows have focused on Housekeeping and Questioning. These areas have been identified as areas for development and have formed the basis of CPD at the start of the year. The Performance Committee monitoring 4 teachers who are in informal capability and 3 teachers who are in formal capability.</li> </ul>
11	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive triangulation on teaching and learning quality from morning learning walks and staff panel meetings, with encouraging early signs on KPI in year, but with leaders needing to fully understand and take action to bring attendance back on track.</li> <li>• Approval of the Self-Assessment Report, Quality Improvement Plan and targets/KPI for 2025-26, for monitoring by the quality and standards committee.</li> </ul>
12	<p>New Ofsted framework: The vice principal curriculum and quality provided an initial briefing on the implications for the college of the new Ofsted framework. Key changes include new judgement categories, greater emphasis on inclusion, governance impact, and staff well-being. Governors agreed to schedule development sessions to prepare for inspection under the new framework.</p> <p><b>ACTION.</b> Governors had access to the presentation slides and noted key points were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Judgement System: Exceptional, Strong, Meets Expected Standard, Needs Attention, Urgent Improvement.</li> <li>• Key Changes: Greater emphasis on inclusion, governance impact, and staff well-being. Focus on evidence of impact, not just process.</li> <li>• Governance Implications: Governors must demonstrate understanding of curriculum intent, quality assurance, and safeguarding. Ability to challenge and monitor leadership effectively. Development sessions scheduled to prepare for inspection under new framework.</li> </ul>
<b>Concluding business</b>	
13	Part B confidential item.
14	RESOLVED: The Board supported the proposed staff recognition action of a £200 non-consolidated voucher for staff before Christmas as a gesture of appreciation, funded within the approved budget.
15	Congratulations were recorded on the appointment of the principal as deputy lieutenant of Cheshire.
16	<p>Review of meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is valuable to have an opportunity to discuss strategic items and to feedback on governor</li> </ul>

	experience of learning walks and staff forums. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Request that finance approval items should go via appropriate committee structures in future.</li><li>• Time was a factor for the Ofsted briefing, which would be picked up again in sessions during the year.</li></ul>
17	Date, time and venue of next meeting: The next meeting was confirmed as 16 December 2025 at 10am Room D4/5 Food Centre <i>[post meeting note – venue moved to FE Lecture theatre]</i>

The meeting closed at 5.20pm.

Approved as a correct record 16 December 2025

Jane Cowell OBE (Chair)