

LUMINATE EDUCATION GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEEDS CITY COLLEGE BOARD HELD ON MONDAY 17 MARCH 2025

Present

Bill Barton	Co-optee
Colin Booth	Group CEO and Governor
Claire Broodie	Co-optee
Peter Fletcher	Co-optee
Ann Forsaith	Co-optee
Julie Hyde	Co-optee
Linda Littler	Staff Member
Kate Lodge	Co-optee
Ken Morton	Governor and Chair
Andrew Roach	Co-optee
Qasim Shaik	Student Member

The quorum for the meeting was three members (including at least one governor).

In Attendance

James Broadhurst (up to item 8)	ELT Project Coordinator
Matthew Hodgson (up to item 9)	Head of Sustainability & Motor Vehicle
Stuart Jolley (from item 9)	Chief Financial Officer
Bill Jones	Deputy CEO & Exec Principal of LCC
Carol Layall	Director of Quality
Phil Mark	Principal, Leeds Sixth Form
Lee Pryor (up to item 9)	Principal, Printworks Campus
Michelle Ritchie	Governance Manager
Gemma Simmons-Blench	Deputy CEO Curriculum and Quality
Ann Marie Spry	Group Vice Principal Adults
David Warren	Group Vice Principal Development
Natalie Wilson	Group Vice Principal Curriculum & Skills

The meeting took place at Printworks Campus starting at 4pm.

MEETING ADMINISTRATION

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed board members and attendees to the meeting and reflected on the sustained good work of the college over a lengthy period as evidenced by the Ofsted visit, February 2025. Apologies for absence were received from Abigail Marshall-Katung (Co-optee).

2. Determination of Observers/Attendees at the Meeting

The board agreed attendees/observers at the meeting as per the above attendance list.

3. Declaration of Interests in Agenda Items

Board members were reminded of the requirement to declare their interest in any agenda items; there were none but standing declarations as per the Corporation's register of interests were noted.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 November 2024, Rolling List of Actions & Matters Arising

The board considered and approved the draft minutes and confidential minutes of its meeting held on 18 November 2024. With regards the rolling list of actions/matters arising from previous meetings, it was noted that many items were planned to be addressed at today's meetings.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the board held on 18 November 2024 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

5. Communications

a) Update from Chair including feedback from Group Board

On the Chair's behalf, the Deputy CEO and Executive Principal LCC updated the board on the discussions and key decisions from the Group Board meeting in December which included the approval of the 2023/24 financial statements, several HR policies, Livingstone House acquisition and a preferred bidder for the University Centre Disposal.

At the World Café event in January, discussions commenced about a refreshed Group Strategy. Following on from this, in February, the Group Board reaffirmed Luminate's values, its educational character and commitment to inclusive education at their strategic seminar.

b) Update from Students' Union (SU) President

The SU President confirmed three candidates (himself included) were running for SU President 2025/26. Canvassing was underway and the elections close on 24 March. As part of a NUS training opportunity, the current SU President would attend the House of Parliament, Supreme Court and House of Lords on 25 March.

With regards student activity, the Students Union was negotiating with campus Principals on the planning details and funding for a Culture Week in April.

Board members were invited to attend Student Parliament (December 2025) and any student parliament working groups before this date. The Governance Manager undertook to circulate dates.

c) Feedback from Link Governors

Eight Link Governor visits had taken place since the November board meeting, including SEND, Safeguarding, Sport, Printworks Campus, Mabgate Campus, TLA, Leeds Sixth Form and Skills. Key comments included:

- The SEND Link Governor highlighted the significant facility improvements observed at new The Vine and opportunities for further enhancement. The board recognised that with more funding The Vine could go from strength to strength.
- The Printworks Link Governor commended the Principal of Printworks on a successful culture shift. The campus was observed to be operating in a focussed and relaxed

manner. This sentiment was mirrored by the TLA Link Governor who had spent a morning onsite with the Quality team.

- The Mabgate Link Governor met with the Group Vice Principal Development and Director of Curriculum and Quality at Mabgate campus, which is currently a busy construction site. It was relayed that the change management plan for Enfield was impressive and that the overall development will be transformational for the area.

The Chair thanked all Link Governors for their feedback and gave special mention to those that supported during the OFSTED visit i.e. Link Governors for Leeds Sixth Form, 14 -16 & 14+ Academies and Skills.

d) Feedback from Leeds Employer Board

To recap, the Skills Stakeholder Board had evolved and was now reporting to Luminate Group board and a new Employer Board had been formed. Julie Hyde, Chair of the Skills Stakeholder Board, relayed that they had met in February to confirm the new terms of reference and discuss sector updates. The first Leeds Employer Board meeting was scheduled for 23 May. Bill Barton would Chair and feedback at future LCC Board meetings.

The Chair welcomed the evolution to two boards and highlighted the importance of both networks to Leeds City College and the wider group.

6. Governance Arrangements

a) Outcomes of Board Effectiveness Review

The board received a paper with a summary of outcomes from the board effectiveness review meetings held in January and February this year and several follow up actions. The actions were focussed on continuous improvement to the Link Governor scheme, refining board papers and related discussions.

Overall, members were satisfied that the board operates effectively. In terms of future focus, some members felt that discussions were insular and the board would benefit from sector briefings and more opportunities for strategic discussions. The transition to Pudsey Sixth Form College was also regarded as important strategically.

RESOLVED:

Board members agreed to approve the actions identified.

b) Appointment of Vice Chairs

The Governance Manager reminded board members that the 2024/25 terms of reference allow for up to two Vice Chairs. In December 2024, all board members received an email inviting expressions of interest in a Vice Chair role. Vice Chairs would receive a standing invite to observe Group Board meetings. Two expressions of interest were received from Bill Barton and Andrew Roach.

RESOLVED:

The board agreed the appointments of Andrew Roach and Bill Barton to LCC Vice Chair.

c) Membership of Pudsey Oversight Committee (Oversight Committee)

The board received a paper containing proposed appointments to Pudsey Sixth Form College Oversight Committee. The appointments included representation from each project partner plus LCC Board (Ann Forsaith), and the Lead Governor for Pudsey Sixth Form College (Cath Lennon) would also attend Oversight Committee meetings. The Ex-Officio member was confirmed as Bill Jones, Deputy CEO and Executive Principal LCC.

The first Oversight Committee meeting was scheduled for Monday 28 April at Crawshaw Academy. It was noted that the Staff and Student members would be sought from when the college opened in September 2025.

RESOLVED:

The board approved the following appointments with effect from 1 April 2025, externals subject to interview with the LCC Chair:

- Ann Forsaith as LCC Board member (interview n/a)
- Cath Lennon as Co-opted member (interview n/a)
- Louise Pratt as a Co-opted member
- Iain Addison as a Co-opted member
- Ann Reed as a Co-opted member
- Richard Jagger as a Co-opted member

STRATEGY AND POLICY

7. LEG Annual Accountability Agreement 2025/26 – proposed targets.

The ELT Project Co-ordinator provided the board with a briefing paper outlining the purpose of the Annual Accountability Agreement and changes to DfE requirements, which include new national skills priorities and a focus on employment in key growth areas such as green jobs and net zero, creative industries and science and technology (including AI and quantum computing). An accompanying presentation explained the proposal to move to a singular group document and rationalised set of targets. This approach meant the Luminate FE colleges would no longer have bespoke Annual Accountability targets.

Board members sought to understand if this was a compliance document and within the discussion queried if the new rationalised approach had been tested. They were reassured by ELT that the DfE had favourably received the proposal for a group level document. In response to a question about the omission of the Construction sector, it was explained that LCC does not directly compete with Leeds College of Building. Board members supported the proposal and requested that the final version be shared with the Leeds Employer Board and/or Skills Stakeholder Board as appropriate.

8. Strategic Deep Dive: Sustainable Technologies & Motor Vehicle

The Head of Department and Principal of Printworks Campus delivered a presentation on market assessment and explanation of curriculum need. The department was established in 2024, and its courses aim to prepare students for jobs in renewable markets and new carbon net zero technologies. The department holds a vast amount of potential for students and employers seeking CPD courses but was currently constrained by space and funding challenges. The courses are expensive to fit out and whilst weighted funding applies it does not cover all costs. A recent move to D Block supported classroom-based learning but an example based on 'wind energy' highlighted the additional space challenges facing the department. It was noted that staff recruitment in motor vehicle was difficult due to market forces.

The Group VP Curriculum and Skills referenced a funding uplift for 'green' standards; however, the funding timeline was not known.

The Chair summarised that the space issue was echoed across all college departments and that the Sustainable Technologies & Motor Vehicle department presented a strong case given the

sector employment opportunities (for example, West Yorkshire rapid transit) and potential for more CPD courses.

9. Principal's Reports

a) College update

The Deputy CEO & Executive Principal provided a paper detailing a summary of public relation events, developments and student & staff achievements since the last board meeting, the highlight of which was a visit from Rachel Reeves MP to Pudsey Sixth Form College. Furthermore, on Monday 10 February Printworks campus had hosted a Microsoft Staff conference to 200 external delegates. The day was led by the Microsoft CEO, also featured the Chancellor and was a huge success.

b) Progress against Strategic Priorities

The board was informed that the college continued to make good progress against its range of strategic priorities. The Deputy CEO and Executive Principal reported that group board had commenced its 2025/26 Luminate group strategic priority discussions. Three new strategic priorities were presented as relevant to LCC Board in 2025/26: Pudsey Sixth Form College, Post-16 capacity issue in Leeds and student attendance. The board was reminded that the LCC Away Day in May would provide an opportunity for discussion on LCC specific Strategic Priorities 2025/26. A strategic discussion on attendance was planned the outcome of which would determine 'attendance' as a possible LCC Strategic Priority 2025/26 or for it to remain business as usual activity.

c) Risk Register

The board received a cover paper and copy of the current college risk register. The previous approval to merge the risk of Industrial Action with the Staff Recruitment & Retention risk was now reflected on the Risk Register.

The Deputy CEO and Executive Principal explained the two red risks (failure to realise accommodation requirements and failure to recruit qualified/experienced staff) remain on the 2024/25 risk register and are expected to be red for the foreseeable future. With regards the former, the board challenged thinking on cohabiting in space owned by other providers, however, the Executive Leadership Team felt there would be legal constraints prohibiting sharing buildings. With regards the latter, board members speculated on how staff skills/knowledge gaps could be filled by guest lectures and other similar means. The Deputy CEO and Executive Principal confirmed that this was in the strategy and forms part of the solution. The Group Vice Principal Curriculum and Skills undertook to approach industry via the Chamber of Commerce.

RESOLVED:

The board approved the latest iteration of the college risk register.

9d) Capital Projects Update

The Group Vice Principal Development provided a paper with updates on each of the Leeds City College capital projects including the revised DfE funding arrangement for Park Lane C Block; affordability issues and related decisions pending on Rose Lodge at Temple Newsam; sale progress of both University Centre Leeds and Livingstone House.

Board members were informed that the sewerage issue at Enfield House remains unresolved. More recently Yorkshire Water have appointed a new contractor to move things forward. With regards the new Enfield FECTF funded building at Mabgate, issues with the District Heating

Network were expected to cause a programme delay and the December 2025 completion date was likely to be impacted.

The Chair offered that the large capital project programme was complex with many variables. The newly completed Park Lane C Block would be of great benefit to staff and students.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND SCRUTINY

10. Quality of Education

a) In Year Student Data & On Entry Survey Results

Board members received a paper prepared by the Director of Quality that contained in-year student data and On Entry Survey results. The In Year student data indicated that overall retention at 96.3% is 6.3% points above the national rate and one percentage point higher than at the same point last year. Attendance for 16–18-year-old students remains a key focus at Leeds City College and is being closely monitored at all levels with interventions, incentives and parental contact in place.

The On Entry survey ran for a period of three weeks in October 2024. 8,460 students responded which was an increase of 25.3% points from 6,749. Results were strong and broadly in line with the previous year across all ages and categories.

b) Progress against Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

The board received a paper prepared by the Director of Quality that gave a progress update on the college quality improvement plan. Close monitoring of underperforming departments takes place through Rapid Improvements Meetings and focused Monitoring Visits in the areas of Engineering, Digital and IT and the Supported Engagement Provision.

All QIP actions are on track. Board members asked that the report format be reviewed (specifically the progress measure and indicator) as it was felt BRAG rating did not work in the context of this report.

As requested at the November meeting, the Principal of Leeds Sixth Form College attended and provided insight and assurance around *Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Action1: Further focus is needed to ensure consistent learner outcomes on A Level and AS programmes that align with or exceed national rates*. It was understood that the provision was on a positive trajectory, but it was going to take another couple of years to work through into results. In response to a query on quality of predicted grades, the Principal reassured the board that teachers' prediction skills were improving. The Deputy CEO and Executive Principal referenced potential recruitment challenges whereby Pudsey Sixth Form College as part of an FE Corporation cannot match the salaries of other school sixth forms. However, the new T4 posts (teaching roles paid at the same rate as programme manager roles ensuring good teachers with specialist skills and knowledge do not have to undertake management duties to improve their salary and can remain in the classroom) have really helped.

The Chair sought and received assurance that the Pudsey project partners were aware of the Leeds Sixth Form College performance data.

c) Subcontractor Monitoring Report

The Deputy CEO & Executive Principal explained that the college continues to engage with several training providers to deliver aspects of education and training or apprenticeships. West Row were cited as exemplar in their quality and reputation for supporting people into hairdressing. The total subcontracted value across all companies was circa £2m. This provision is for widening participation or inclusivity purposes not profitability. In some instances,

the college has assisted the ESFA when other providers have failed. The board received a paper containing the year-to-date performance of those subcontractors and no issues or questions were raised.

11. Financial Performance

a) Financial position & Forecast 2024/25

The Chief Financial Officer talked through the financial dashboard and highlighted that apprenticeship recruitment was lower than planned for the year to date. Board members sought to understand the high impact funding challenges such as imminent changes to Adult Funding – of which LCC has most students across the group – and the impact of National Insurance payments. Overall, LCC's individual financial performance raised no concerns.

b) Draft Operating Budget Assumptions 2025/26

The Chief Financial Officer presented a paper outlining the budget setting process and the major budget assumptions for the group. Most of the budget assumptions apply to LCC given its scale and breadth of activity that the college delivers. The assumptions included a cut of 3.5% to the adult education allocation, an increase in HE student fees, an increase to the Real Living Wage, increased pension contributions and student number growth achieved from capital projects.

ASSURANCE REPORTING

12. Careers Guidance & Actual Destinations Report 2023/24

The board was informed by the Group Vice Principal Adults that the Careers Guidance Annual report was now combined with the Actual Destinations report, as the two data sets are intrinsically linked. Leeds NEET (Not In Education, Employment or Training) figures were discussed and the board challenged the Executive Leadership Team on why Leeds had double the national average NEET. The many influencing factors were discussed for example. lack of physical capacity and individuals previously reported as 'Not known' were now 'Known'.

The Group Vice Principal Adults went on to explain that the transition from being NEET at 18 years old to a 19+ learner came with its own challenges as Adults funding was expected to be cut.

13. Mid-Year Assurance Reports 2024/25

The following assurance reports were received: SEND, Safeguarding, Health & Safety and People Services. The new reduced report format was well received. Board members raised questions about staff sickness rates and the imbalance of low health & safety near misses to actual RIDDOR incidents - ELT undertook to explore this outside of the meeting. The EDI report is no longer reported at member level due to EDI data limitations. Annual EDI Reports will go direct to Group Board in 2025/26.

The meeting closed at 18:45