

GOVERNING BODY

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY HELD
AT THE GANTS HILL CAMPUS ON THURSDAY 4TH JUNE 2026 AT 6.00PM**

PRESENT: Lesley Seary (Chair), William Pickford (Principal), Malcolm Crichard,
Mark Foulds, Olive Hamilton-Andrews, Caroline McGlynn and Mo Rahee.

Also in attendance: David Coleman, Assistant Principal Student Services
Maria Sotiriou, Assistant Principal Curriculum
Liz Hannam, LA Representative

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Julian Ellerby (Vice-Chair) and Janis Lane (Clerk to Governors).
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - There were no declarations of any personal and/or pecuniary interests in any of the agenda items of this meeting.
3. **MINUTES** - The Non-Confidential Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on 12th March 2026 were confirmed and signed as a true record of the meeting.
4. **MATTERS ARISING** – there were no matters arising that were not agenda items.
5. **CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE GOVERNING BODY** - Governors
 - (a) received the resignation of Stephanie Webber, Learner Interest Governor due to personal commitments.
 - (b) noted terms of office ended in May 2026 for Councillor N Chaudhry, Councillor Joyce Ryan and Councillor Anne Sachs and due to end in July 2026 for Olive Hamilton-Andrews.
 - (c) noted updated membership and that there was 1 vacancy for Learner Interest Governor, 1 Co-opted Governor and 3 vacancies for Local Authority Governors.
 - (d) the record of Governors' Attendance to date.
 - (e) Noted that recruitment to the vacancies would continue and intention to recruit by the end of the Summer term.

Governors were updated of the Instrument & Articles, that had been with the Local Authority for the past 2.5 years for ratification by the Cabinet, were still awaited and expected by July 2026. Liz Hannam updated Governors on the organisational situation in the Borough and that the position was improving but did not anticipate that the Cabinet would ratify before September 2026 and that she would pursue further to update Governors in the Autumn term. The Instrument & Articles were not expected to change since submitted but needed the Cabinet ratification.

Governors gave their sincere appreciation to Councillor Joyce Ryan, Councillor N Chaudhry and Councillor Anne Sachs for their contribution to the work of the Governing Body and to Olive Hamilton- Andrews after 12 years of commitment to the Institute. Governors gave their well wishes to Councillor Sachs for a good recovery.

ACTION: Governors to receive updates at the next FGB meeting in the Autumn term 2026

(i) on recruitment to the vacancies

(ii) progress with the Cabinet on ratification of the Instrument & Articles.

6. STRATEGIC UPDATE

(a) Governors' Dashboard: Governors discussed current Amber ratings

Funding Performance – The Assistant Principal Student Services updated Governors that currently the Institute was below target for total learning aims for Tailored Learning but still on target to achieve GLA grant as the increase in value of qualifications would achieve the funding target with less learners. Governors discussed target setting going forward for next year for realistic targets that related to the amount of funding and the projected number of potential learners. The GLA Delivery Plan (5 year plan) was submitted yesterday.

Financial Performance – The Link Governor, Mo Rahee, related to the balanced Budget 2026/27 and updated Governors that from April 2026 in respect of Commercial Income (Amber rated) that there had been changes made to include room hire, Learner Loans and course income. At the end of March 2026 commercial income should have been £25,000 and only £17,091 was received. Governors discussed this and profiling of income across the year to enable more accurate monitoring. The balance to date for lettings and other small items of income was £2,282.

There was optimism this time last year for achieving more through course fees and was not achieved but will try again this year. Governors discussed using the building and facilities over the Summer months as the building was not closed during July and August and further promotion was underway for hire of the premises. Governors noted that tenants were using the facilities and generating additional income. Governors discussed potential hirers of the facilities including NHS/Mental Health and training facilities for teaching/education organisations. Liz Hannam gave feedback of her corporate area using the facilities at the full cost and that more information could be promoted in their Business Newsletter and she would follow up with the Institute's Marketing team. The Institute had the advantage of having car parking facilities and being near the underground tube station.

Attendance & Retention – The Assistant Principal Curriculum gave feedback on attendance and retention that were on the cusp of Amber rating as the attendance was slightly below target of 93% currently. There was no particular reason and just a huge fluctuation this year and hopeful to meet the target of 96% for retention by year end and above last year in comparison and above other providers in benchmarking.

Average Class Sizes – Governors discussed the different levels of targets across Adult Skills Level 1 and 2 and Tailored Learning that indicated the average number of learners in classes. On enrolment now 22 learners would be enrolled but if retention fell then the class size would fall further particularly whereas not being able to enrol new people if they are on qualification courses. Level 2 however was fairly stable and consistently did better than the lower levels for retention and similarly for Tailored Learning. Comparison with other Local Authority providers and benchmarking indicated comparable figures and Governors had a full discussion and acknowledged larger class were expected to be more efficient and less cost per learner. Governors raised that a few years ago there was a review carried out by the Further Education Commissioners Office and related to the attrition rate of

individuals enquiring about courses, applying for courses, joining courses, assessment and retention and that the Institute could have been losing enrolments due to this process. The Principal informed that this was monitored at each stage. Governors asked of the average compared to external data and informed the Institute was a member of a benchmarking group but there were only a few London providers in the group and they were running with low numbers and more benchmarking would be carried out.

Caroline McGlynn gave feedback from her role with UEL and pre-entry service and related to enquiries about courses, particularly pre-entry preparation courses where a third of enrolments could be lost at every level and every stage from enquiry to eligibility test, to enrolment to actually starting the course and retention on courses. Close contact was maintained with the students to keep on the course and a lot of hard work, but research undertaken indicated that there were a lot of issues that caused this. Major issues such as unstable housing, mobility, health and disadvantage that were beyond the remit of any educational setting to resolve.

Alumni Story – At the Leadership & Governance Conference last year Governors discussed long term impact after learners had left the course and how lives could be transformed and set a target to get 5 impact studies this year. The Principal confirmed that 5 had been achieved and Governors received the report of one of those and the others would be presented by the end of the current academic year. The Alumni student gave a compelling account from her distressing start in the UK in 1999 when arriving from Albania not being able to speak English and joining the Institute, learning English and further study in childcare that changed her life. She went on to have her own Preschool Nursery as a business in one of LBR's Children's Centres and was inspired by the Institute to reach her dreams.

Caroline McGlynn gave positive feedback from some of the Institute's previous learners who attended the University event to undertake further studies and gave their stories on how the Institute had impacted on their lives. Governors wanted to be assured that all the alumni stories would be shared at the next Awards Evening and that the presentation could include alumni giving their learner voice in this way particularly learning English and going on to degree studies.

(b) Stakeholder Engagement – Goodmayes, Loxford and Hainault

The Principal updated Governors of a different approach that was more about working with Stakeholders and engaging with Stakeholders and seemed to be having a more positive impact working with more Stakeholders and a closer relationship. Being part of the LBR Engagement Group also had positive outcome. There had been greater engagement particularly in the priority wards. Governors discussed in relation to those wards and noted more work being done in the Loxford area and less in the Town Centre – the loss of Mildmay had been a huge issue and it was always hoped that another venue would be found. Residents in the South of the Borough needed the most support and working with the stakeholders in the Loxford area has had a lot of impact in the community and really improved engagement. Data indicated that enrolments had not increased in the priority ward areas and it was not clear why Hainault was still a priority ward. Governors further discussed the reasons that people found it difficult to access and then stay in any kind of training and raised that to travel to Gants Hill Campus from Loxford would mean travel costs and be an affordability issue for those in the Loxford area and an issue for parents having to travel back to Loxford to meet children from Nursery and school. Another venue was needed that would be known to people and provide some stability without having to travel. A more permanent education facility was needed in Ilford Town Centre and this was being acknowledged within the Local Authority and over time other

priorities considered. Liz Hannam would pursue with Vision and the Local Authority such as top floor of the Exchange and the Voluntary Sector Hub in Ilford Town Centre that could be used for at least a couple of sessions for a presence in Ilford. Lynton House, Ilford would be a good location but there was no space available. There was a new Facilities Manager in LBR who was looking at the wider options. Liz Hannam would look at the options further. It was hoped there would be more progress to report in September 2026, and Governors would receive further updates.

It was crucial to build confidence for students to want to sign up to courses just as the Alumni stories illustrated and to go on and do other courses. It was important to be mindful that learners did not want or be able to afford travel and consider this in relation to engagement. Liz Hannam informed Governors of work being planned with the 4 primary schools in the South of the Borough and that there could be some alignment in this respect and there could be some space in one of the schools. The Institute still offered a family learning service in schools including South Ilford but offer would depend mainly on entry level into learning. Stakeholder engagement with parents in some schools South of the Borough would be worth exploring and some of those parents could already be in classes at the Gants Hill Campus. Once learners were past Level 1, they were more likely to have confidence to travel.

Governors further discussed physical programmes at different venues and consideration of streaming online with digital access as there was a significant online offer but a level of reading ability was needed to be able to access online courses and digital skills and appropriate internet connection were barriers to level entry learners. Governors noted the project two years ago with the Immersive suite, that unfortunately could not be rolled forward because of license costs.

Governors appreciated the very useful update and that Liz Hannam would continue to pursue options with the Local Authority.

(c) Inclusive Learning Register – underperforming groups

Governors received the full report since the Inclusive Support Register and Pastoral Team were introduced last year. The Report included all data, and impact so far in that there were 2 particular groups supported by the Pastoral Team and included those who were disadvantaged and those in the awarding gap categories. 34 Learners with disadvantage were referred and 62% had improved and 21% receiving ongoing support but back on track with their learning and 18% of those withdrew. There were various reasons for needing extra support but there had been improvement with wellbeing and with completion of coursework. Additional support was intended to improve retention and attendance. Those being monitored included 25 males and those from black ethnic groups. The current retention rates, which was all that could give an indication at this stage, was that retention for those males was 85% and black ethnicity 80% and from this would indicate that the gap may be closed slightly, but would not be confirmed until learners achieved their qualifications and completed the year.

Those underperforming groups had been a persistent issue for the Institute over the last four or five years and the pastoral system was another way of trying to do the right thing and also to provide much needed extra support to those who might need it even though the Institute was not funded for this in comparison with a 6th form college where the College would receive funding to have a pastoral system to support every student.

The intention was to make a difference this year that would also align to Ofsted's new Inclusion strand and to focus on the disadvantaged group more, including any individual who did not have Level 2 English and Maths. There was no previous benchmark to compare with this year as this system had not been tried before and impact would be seen more fully at the end of the academic year.

(d) Projects & Partnerships

Mary Ward - Governors were updated that Mary Ward offered payment of £10,000 rental (paid termly in advance) and this was what they could afford. Mary Ward was in the process of a complicated merger with Newham FE College. It was hoped that the offer would have been higher but Governors understood their current financial difficulties. In the meantime, a broader conversation would be sought with LBR for other options to use the space and another 12 months would give more time to explore and consider further.

London Talent Pathways Funding – The Institute had been awarded £200,000 pounds per year for 2 years possibly 3 years and this was to cover building training capacity in priority sectors including childcare, being one of the Institute's main specialisms; the project would build capacity within the local area to train Level 2 and Level 3 childcare practitioners, and to run an additional Level 3 fast track course getting a learner through a level pre-qualification of the year and into employment quicker. No other local provider offered the Level 3 pathway.

Governors commended the additional funding and to be able to run those courses. Childcare offered a real boost for productivity as it enabled more parents to work by providing a strong foundational economy, which should be updated in the Redbridge Economic Growth Strategy. Liz Hamman mentioned that the Local Authority had some funding this year to offer employer incentives and would see whether this could be utilised to incentivise some of the employers to release staff for further training to support the Early Years sector.

Accountability Statement.

There was a slight change in the GLA funding in that grant funding of free courses for jobs used to be separate but from February 2026 was moved into the core Adult Skills Fund. This had changed the Institute percentage figures and Governors discussed the impact of this. It had been planned to reduce the proportion of ESOL anyway next year to 40% and replace with more vocational skills pathways, but this shift would start earlier from September 2026. Skills for Life was also increasing with more English, Maths and digital being planned in. Governors had already discussed the large percentage of learners who did not have Level 2 English and Maths which meant that more funding needed to be provided in these areas. With the additional funding of £200,000 per year, it may be possible to release back a little more into ESOL to provide more capacity across the Borough.

ACTION: Governors noted the current Accountability Statement.

Awards – Quality Professionals Award was noted; this year the Institute had again been shortlisted for collaboration with Workers Education Association; also shortlisted for the Local London Vista Awards, which were new, and being held in the House of Lords; the Institute was also entering 2 categories this year in the Great Get the Nation Learning Award.

Solar Panels - Governors were updated of the Solar Panels which costs £57,000 and were doing better than predicted currently producing 59% of the Institute's electricity in sunny months.

Leadership & Governance Conference 10th July 2026 - the Conference was due to start at 9.00am followed by lunch, and the Full Governing Body meeting. As part of the Conference, Thurrock Adult Community College would be attending to share the experience of their re-inspection as one of the first local authorities to be inspected under the new Ofsted framework. The remainder of the Conference would be for the Institute to focus on skills, physical place of skills, and in the Redbridge context, revisiting the Ilford model and hub bespoke model first discussed a few years ago. The four year vision was around employment, learning and skills. Governors wanted the LBR Director of Education and SEND to attend the Conference to give the Council's perspective over the next 4 years and how the Institute could play their part in delivering the agenda.

7. STATUTORY POLICIES

Fees Policy Scale of Charges - Governors approved amendments to the Fees Policy, noting that the fees for access to the Equal platform used for online CPD courses had increased to £45 from £35.

ACTION: Governors approved the Fees Policy Scale of Charges.

8. LINK GOVERNOR ACTIVITY

Governors were informed of monitoring visits carried out since the last meeting.

The Link Governors reported on areas covered including Green Week, the Solar Panels, recycling awareness, energy usage, installation of an outdoor gym for wellbeing, and book swaps that were continuing. In IT, full migration to the icloud had taken place which would also reduce some energy costs of hosting its own servers. The Institute was eventually looking to replace the old gas boilers possibly with heat pumps or electric boilers.

The catering service at the Institute continued to recycle coffee grindings and oil, offered a percentage for use of reusable drinks cups, achieved no food wastage, and used natural wooden stirrers and cutlery, food containers were made of a paper type material and no longer plastic. The menu mirrored seasons and this helped support local farmers, using organic dairy products and poultry. The Gardening Club was evolving even more and there was lots of planting and produce. A pond was also being created for biodiversity.

Classes were continuing to embed sustainability in its curriculum, for example as discussion topics within speaking and listening. An energy cafe also gave learners advice on sustainable practices at home.

Green Week was partly funded by the National Lottery to help the community garden, and helped to try and foster a culture of sustainability. Green Week was a five day programme of interactive workshops and training sessions, well attended by learners.

Carbon Literacy training would be available to start from the 25th to the 26th of August.

Plans for beekeeping had also been progressing, and a theory session had taken place to train Institute beekeepers. Governors had an interesting discussion on beekeeping and noted local honey would be produced. Activities also included linking to Redbridge Food Banks and awareness raising for pre-loved

clothing. Governors discussed a scheme that would help learners access clothes for going to interviews and this would build their confidence.

Other activities were being followed up including appointing community climate champions and working with other education institutions.

Governors thanked Olive Hamilton-Andrews for everything she had done for the Institute and as Link Governor for Sustainability.

Mo Rahee, Link Governor Finance, had met with the Principal and Assistant Principal Student Services and there were no areas of concern and the budget for 2026-27 was looking more positive now particularly with £200,000 additional funding that had been confirmed. The financial position was good, but caution was still needed to mitigate for future funding changes. Access to the budget management system with the Council was an improvement.

1. The number of vacancies on the Governing Body had reduced the number of Link Governors and would need to be reviewed when new Governors were appointed.

ACTION: Governors to consider allocation of Link Governors at the first meeting of the new academic year, when new Governors were appointed.

9. FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

- (a) Governors noted the final FGB meeting for the Academic Year 2025/26
Friday 10th July 2026 – Leadership & Governance Conference/FGB Meeting (9.00am to 2:00pm)
- (b) Governors noted forthcoming events.

10. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS – there were none.

Signature Chair of Governors..... Date.....