



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD COLLEGE
FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

SEARCH COMMITTEE

Approved minutes of a meeting
Held on Tuesday 3 February 2026
Via Microsoft Teams

Present: Laura Boutle (Chair)
 Lynne Craig (Corporation Member)
 David Withey (CEO & Principal)

In attendance: Sharon Glover Clerk

The Chair opened the meeting by reporting that Paul Appleby would be joining the committee to replace Claire Charlemagne.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Matt Atkinson.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interests raised.

3. **Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business raised.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the meetings held on 13 November 2025 were approved as a correct record, ready for signing by the Chair.

5. **Matters Arising From Those Minutes**

- a) Corporation approval of the following was noted:
 - (i) The appointments of Margaret Farragher and Paul Appleby for an initial 1-year term of office.
 - (ii) An increase in Corporation membership from 18 to 19.

- b) **Action log** – The Clerk reported that having spoken with Laura she was willing to continue as Chair of the Search Committee, if the Corporation

so wished. Members noted that all actions had now been completed and there were no actions remaining on the log.

6. **Succession Planning**

Members received a report that included an 18-month look ahead of terms of office due for review. Members noted that currently there were no external member vacancies on the Corporation and that the recent strong appointments made complement the existing board members.

Chair of the Corporation – Members noted that the term of office of the current Chair of the Corporation, Matt Atkinson, expires on 31 March 2027. Members referenced the collated skills audit form, on which some governors had expressed future aspirations of fulfilling the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Corporation roles.

Following detailed discussion, which focused on scenario planning, it was suggested that a conversation is had between the CEO & Principal and Chair to determine whether the Chair would be prepared to continue in this role with the option of a shorter term of office, if this proved more attractive, and to ease his workload by making more use of the Vice-Chair. Any such extension will also help to support the implementation of the new college strategy and succession planning of a possible internal candidate. It was recognised that the Chair's contribution and commitment had been exceptional, and his hard work had been appreciated.

Should the Chair wish to step down, then it was suggested that he speaks with the other internal candidates to clarify the expectations and commitment required of the role. It was noted that there is a Chair's role description that can be shared with the internal candidates, and the Clerk was asked to share this with the Search Committee. Lynne Craig, Vice-Chair of the Corporation, advised that she would be happy to step down from this role if needed. The Clerk advised that there is provision in the Standing Orders for two Vice-Chairs to be appointed should the Corporation so wish. The Clerk reported that the ideal scenario is that a Chair Designate is appointed at the 2 July 2026 Corporation meeting to allow time to shadow the Chair of the Corporation.

Diversity of the Corporation – The Chair noted that the gender balance on the Corporation is reflective of the learner base but pointed out that the female gender ratio for staff is higher. It was also recognised that the Ethnicity and Disability balance on the Corporation are lower than for the learner base. The Chair advised that the focus for the committee is that opportunities are offered to all. Members considered governor location in relation to college campuses and noted that some governors live in other areas outside the college localities and that an additional column is needed to reflect this. The Clerk was asked to share the updated data outside of the meeting. Members raised that there are two roles of governors, those that bring a specialism or community knowledge and there is a need for more community representation on the board.

Co-Opted members – Members noted that Phil Eames, external co-opted member of the Audit Committee, term of office ends 31 July 2026. Members asked that the Clerk invites feedback from the Chair of the Audit Committee, Audit Committee members and Deputy CEO & CFO on whether Phil should be approached to see if he would be amenable to continue in this role, if needed.

Committee membership – It was reported that there are no current vacancies.

The report was noted.

Action: Clerk.

7. **Re-appointment of Corporation Members**

a) Char Lawrence – The Clerk advised that Char was keen to continue as a Corporation Member and referenced the re-appointment matrix which provided an update on Char's commitment, contribution and expertise/experience. Confirmation was received that all training and development had been completed and was up to date. Also shared with the Committee was the positive feedback received from other Corporation members, which was endorsed by members of the Search Committee.

b) David Nutt – The Clerk advised that David was keen to continue as a Corporation Member and referenced the re-appointment matrix which provided an update on David's commitment, contribution and expertise/experience. Confirmation was received that all training and development had been completed and was up to date. Also shared with the Committee was the positive feedback received from other Corporation members, which was endorsed by members of the Search Committee.

Members noted that both Char and David had self-assessed themselves lower on the skills audit form, but both brought valuable skills and experience to the Corporation. In particular, the community engagement that Char brings to the Corporation.

Although not always vocal in meetings, it was recognised that it can take 12-18 months to become confident in the role and that their skillsets should be maximised through committee membership.

The Committee concurred that it would be helpful to stagger the terms of office of Char and David to assist with future succession planning.

It was resolved to:

a) **Recommend Corporation approval of the re-appointment of Char Lawrence, at the end of her current first year term of office, for a further 3-years to complete her first 4-year term of office.**

- b) **Recommend Corporation approval of the re-appointment of David Nutt, at the end of his current first year term of office, for a further 2-years.**

8. **New Governor Induction**

The Clerk updated the committee on the positive feedback and suggestions for future consideration received from the governors that completed the Induction satisfaction questionnaire. The CEO & Principal raised that the new induction programme had provided a better use of governors' time but recognised that there is further development needed, in particular for Student Governors and how they can contribute at meetings. The CEO & Principal advised that tours of the other campuses should be arranged and all governors invited. The Clerk confirmed that these were in hand and would be linked with future Corporation meetings. The CEO & Principal offered to accompany governors on these tours.

9. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business raised.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 22 June 2026, 10.00am, via Microsoft Teams.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am.

The meeting closed at 11.14am.

The meeting was quorate.