



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg / This document is available in Welsh

11 December 2025 at 4.30pm

Bridgend Boardroom and via Google Meet

PRESENT:

Emma Adamson - Chair

Viv Buckley - Principal/CEO

Joe Castle

Jo Creeden

Lisa Dobbs - Staff Governor

Marion Evans - Staff Governor

Claire Marshall

Jo Oak

Tomos Owen

Lloyd Powell

Emma Roblin - Student Governor

Susan Smith

Helen Verity

Mihindi Wimalasoma - Student Governor

IN ATTENDANCE

Joe Baldwin - Deputy Principal (Future Generations)

Nicola Eyre - Clerk

Andrew Gibbs - Deputy Principal (Resources)

Kevin Punter - Head of Finance

Matthew Rees - Vice Principal (Work Based Learning and Commercial Activity)

The meeting opened at 4.30pm.

Generative AI (Google Gemini) was used to help draft these minutes.

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were noted from Hatti Bluff (Student Governor), Ceri Dixon, Stephne Puddy and Shelley Wyatt-Williams.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. COLLEGE POLICIES

3.1 Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

The Head of Additional Learning Services presented the policy and the following were noted:

- There are no major changes to the policy. It was first introduced two years ago and as there have been no changes to legislation, the amendments are for changes in job titles, grammar and updates to working practices.
- A section on the ALN Inclusion Panel has been added and the role of this panel was explained to the members.
- A section on 'Reasonable Adjustments for Assistance Dogs and Therapeutic Animals' has been added due to increased requests for these.

The Chair thanked the Head of Additional Learning Services for the overview and invited questions/comments.

The Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee explained that at the latest meeting, the committee reviewed the ALN Annual Report. He explained that this report evidenced the growing demand for support for learners with ALN due to the College's excellent reputation in meeting these needs.

The student governors were asked for any feedback. One of the student governors informed the Governing Body that the College has been very supportive in meeting her needs.

The Governing Body APPROVED the Additional Learning Needs Policy.

4. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 6 NOVEMBER 2025

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 6 November 2025 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. MATTERS ARISING

5.1 ACTION TRACKER

The Clerk gave an overview of the actions on the Action Tracker:

- [REDACTED]
- Action 2 - 'Presentation on Sustainability' - not yet due. Due to be presented on in March 2026
- Action 3 - 'Presentation on the work of Clwb Coffi/ILS Teams' - not yet due. Due to be presented on in May 2026
- Action 4 - 'Financial and wellbeing support' - see agenda item 5.3
- [REDACTED]
- Action 8 - 'Sharing of the student governor videos' - these were circulated in mid-November.

The Chair thanked Joe Castle for meeting with the Deputy Principal (Future Generations).

The Governing Body noted the Action Tracker.

5.2 Feedback from Learner Walks

The following members had taken part in the learner walks held during week commencing 10 December:

- Bridgend - Lloyd Powell, Susan Smith, Mihindi Wimalasoma, Hatti Bluff and Joe Castle
- Pencoed - Helen Verity

The members provided very positive feedback with the key areas of praise being:

- Many learners commenting that they love College and 'how it is better than school.'
- Staff are very helpful and supportive.
- How settled learners were at College and that they have a strong sense of belonging.
- The positive impact that the College is having on the learners and how this is helping with their confidence.

One area of concern for learners was the cost of transport and the recent transport strikes by First Cymru.

There was also an issue with accessibility of one of the blocks visited on the Cowbridge Road campus which the Estates Team has been made aware of to investigate and resolve

5.3 Financial and Wellbeing Support to help learners attend and stay in college

The Deputy Principal (Future Generations) gave an overview of the support available:

- Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) - the increase in the household income thresholds and weekly contributions has been very helpful for FE learners.
- Financial Contingency Fund - there is a discretionary small pot of Medr funding (xxx in 2024/25) available to support learners. It was noted that an application process is in place at the College to ensure fairness and transparency.
- Travel - this had been a cause for concern when BCBC announced that they were withdrawing free travel for post-16 learners. However, the introduction of £1 fares for 16-21 year olds has helped. It was noted that the College contributes approximately xxxx towards travel costs.
The recent First Cymru bus strikes had caused disruption for learners, both accessing College and their ability to claim EMA, but these are now over as a pay deal has been agreed.
- Care experienced learners - small payments are made to these learners over the holidays as they are unable to access free school meals during these times. It was noted that the College sits on the BCBC Corporate Parenting Board and is a signatory of the Welsh Government Corporate Parenting Charter.
- The Poverty and Deprivation Strategy summarises the approach adopted by the College and its impact is measured through the Quality Improvement Plan and Self Evaluation Report.

- [REDACTED]

The student governors were invited to feed back on the support available to them. One of the student governors said that the increase in EMA has been essential for her and covers the cost of transport to and from College. She explained that it is very well advertised by the College but the application system is "fiddly". She added that she wishes that more of her fellow students would apply for it. The Deputy Principal (Future Generations) explained that EMA doesn't affect household benefits but there is a belief amongst some learners that it may. He added that for this academic year, applications had moved to an online system and that the College was able to roll forward returning students eligibility rather than new applications having to be made.

A member asked about how the College is influencing policy makers. It was noted that there is a strong relationship with Medr and the College was able to secure a small increase in FCF this year. The Principal

informed the members that Luke Fletcher MS had held workshops with learners at the College and it was a direct result of this that the EMA thresholds were increased.

The Governing Body noted the update.

6. PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

The Principal informed the members that the College's rugby team had won the WRU Schools and College B League Final against Gower College the night before and would be promoted to the A League next season.

The Principal highlighted the following from her report:

- Worldskills:
 - Wales came top out of the four nations and the College was placed fourth overall.
 - The College came first in the Inclusive competitions which reflects the true ethos and values in place at Bridgend.
 - The College won Gold, Silver and Bronze in the Industrial Robotics competitions.
 - Over 1,000 school children attended events throughout the week which has given them an insight into the world of vocational education.
 - Rhun ap Iorwerth MS attended the event and it was fantastic to showcase the College to him and his colleagues.
 - The week demonstrated the breadth and depth of provision of vocational qualifications available at the College.
 - The feedback from competitors and visitors was that the College was very welcoming and friendly.
 - The catering team were thanked for their hard work co-ordinating all of the refreshments for the week.
- Medr Consultation - the deadline for submission of comments on the second round of the consultation on the regulatory framework is 17 December. ColegauCymru is submitting a response on behalf of the sector and Bridgend College will also submit their own independent response. It was noted that the consultation document is still very lengthy **REDACTED**
It was noted that the Clerk is now chairing the FE Governance Network in Wales and discussions on the role of Medr are being held by this group.
- Other events - the Real Food and Farming Conference was hosted on the Pencoed campus and Matthew Rhys performed 'Playing Burton' at the Sony Theatre which was attended by 350 students from the College and local schools. It was discussed that the impact of holding these events can't be underestimated as some young people wouldn't get to experience these types of events otherwise.

The Chair thanked the Principal for the update and commented that there is a lot to celebrate in the report.

7. SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

The Deputy Principal (Future Generations) gave a brief overview as the Safeguarding Annual Report for 2024/25 had only been presented at the meeting held on 6 November. The following were noted:

- There has been a slight decline in the number of cases compared with the prior year but there isn't an explanation for this.

- The number of cases don't provide the details about the complexities and number of agencies involved.
- The uptake for the self-service Wisdom app has been good this academic year.
- [REDACTED]

The members noted the update.

8. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Matters for Ratification

The Clerk presented the following matters that had been approved electronically:

1. The appointment of Lloyd Powell, Tomos Owen and Helen Verity onto the Selection Committee.
2. The appointment of Neil Robinson onto the Governing Body, Curriculum & Quality and Audit Committees for a term of four years. The Clerk explained that she was meeting with Neil on 15 December to discuss committee membership and that he might decide to sit on just one committee.

The Governing Body ratified the above appointments.

{Clerk's Note - Neil Robinson has opted to sit on the Curriculum & Quality Committee only}.

Matters for Approval

The Clerk presented the following for approval:

1. [REDACTED]

The Governing Body approved the above two matters.

Matters for Noting

The Clerk presented the following for noting:

1. Shelley Wyatt-Williams stepped down from the Audit Committee immediately after the Audit Committee meeting held on 27 November 2025 due to a professional conflict that had arisen.
NOT IN MEETING PACK - since the papers were issued, the Clerk had met with Shelley and she would like to take a sabbatical until the start of the 2026/27 academic year.

The Governing Body APPROVED this sabbatical and that it would take immediate effect.

2. Donna Ali resigned from the Governing Body on 12 November 2025.
Donna was thanked by the Chair for her contribution.

The following were not in the meeting pack

3. Dates for diaries:
 - a. 25 June 2026 - Awards Ceremony
 - b. 17 October 2026 - HE Graduation Ceremonies
4. Trish D'Souza will be rejoining the Governing Body from 1 January 2026 and will sit on the Audit Committee. Trish's appointment onto the Audit Committee was approved at the November 2025 Governing Body meeting.
5. Training:
 - a. ColegauCymru - Learner Engagement in FE - 15 December at 4pm online

- b. BLG opportunities circulated via email (running January to June 2026)
6. Lloyd Powell's article in the Western Mail citing the hosting of WorldSkills in Wales and Bridgend College.

The Governing Body noted the items above.

A short comfort break was held

9. STATUTORY ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2024/25

The Deputy Principal (Resources) explained that the joint Audit and Resource Planning Committees had met at the end of November and recommended that the Financial Statements and associated documents for the College Group and its subsidiary companies are approved by the Governing Body

The following information was provided:

- Audit Findings Reports - there are three reports, one for the College Group and the two subsidiaries which summarise the audit findings of the external auditors. There have been no issues identified and the external auditors are now in a position to sign off the 2024/25 Financial Statements.
- There is a Management Representation Letter for the College Group that the Chair of the Governing Body will be asked to sign when the Governing Body is comfortable with the assurances being provided to the external auditors.
- The three sets of Financial Statements require approval by the Governing Body. Since the joint meeting, the external auditors have made one adjustment to the College Group's to include a paragraph on page 25 for the update on the Virgin Media v NTL Pension Trustees High Court ruling. It was noted that all organisations who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme are required to include this in their Financial Statements.
- [REDACTED]
- The College Group must provide Letters of Support for Engage Business Wales Ltd and Bevan College Ltd to provide an additional level of assurance to the external auditors.
- As part of the signing of the Financial Statements, the Governing Body must confirm that the College is a going concern for the next 12 months and will be able to meet its liabilities as they fall.
- The contents of the Audit Committee's Annual Report and the Internal Audit Annual Report should be considered prior to approving the Financial Statements.

The Governing Body confirmed the going concern basis of the College Group and its subsidiary companies and APPROVED the following for the 2024/25 academic year:

Bridgend College Group

1. Audit Findings Report
2. Management Representation Letter
3. Financial Statements (including the additional pension clause)

Engage Business Wales Ltd

1. Audit Findings Report
2. Financial Statements
3. Letter of Support from the College Group

Bevan College

1. Audit Findings Report
2. Financial Statements
3. Letter of Support from the College Group

The Deputy Principal (Resources) thanked the Head of Finance, the Finance Team and Forvis Mazars for such a smooth audit process.

10. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS 2025/26, NOVEMBER FORECAST AND KPIS

The Head of Finance presented the following highlights from the financial report:

- [REDACTED]

The Chair thanked the Head of Finance for the positive update. There were no questions from the members.

The Governing Body APPROVED the Management Accounts, November Forecast and KPIS.

11. RISK REGISTER REVIEW

The Deputy Principal (Resources) explained that the Risk Register had been through a thorough review both by the SLT and the Audit Committee. The recommendation from the Audit Committee was that the proposed amendments presented are approved by the Governing Body:

- The introduction of a risk appetite assessment for each risk ranging from "hungry" to "averse".
- The cross-referencing of each of the risks to the 4P's in the new Strategic Plan.
- Changes to Risks 1, 8 and 12 and the removal of Risks 7 and 14. Risk 14 has been combined into Risk 9.
- Risk 9 has been completely rewritten to widen its scope.
- Risk 16 has been introduced to cover risks caused by external factors.

Details of the amendments to the Risk Register are set out in the Audit Committee minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2025.

The Governing Body APPROVED the updated Risk Register.

12. TOWN CENTRE CAMPUS UPDATE

[REDACTED]

13. BALANCED SCORECARD

The Governing Body noted the improvement in that the Balanced Scorecard is now all green, indicating on track and achievement. It was highlighted by the CEO/Principal that despite the increase in the number of FE learners this year, the number of forecast withdrawals are below the actual number of withdrawals for 2024/25 which is very pleasing.

14. COMMITTEE MINUTES

14.1 Curriculum & Quality - 13 November 2025

The Governing Body RECEIVED the minutes of the Curriculum & Quality Committee meeting held on 13 November 2025.

14.2 Joint Audit and Resource Planning - 27 November 2025

The Governing Body RECEIVED the minutes of the Joint Audit and Resource Planning Committee meeting held on 27 November 2025.

14.3 Audit - 27 November 2025

The Governing Body RECEIVED the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 27 November 2025.

14.4 Search & Governance - 3 December 2025

The Governing Body RECEIVED the minutes of the Search & Governance Committee meeting held on 3 December 2025.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Deputy Principal (Future Generations) invited expressions of interest from the Governing Body members for the Governor Director vacancy that has arisen following the approval for Shelley Wyatt-Williams's sabbatical leave for the remainder of the 2025-26 academic year.

16. VALUES CHECKER

The members were thanked for attending and asked to complete the online Values Checker.

The meeting closed at 6.34pm. A reserved business meeting was held immediately after this meeting for eligible members.