

**Joint meeting of
EEGT NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
WSC NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 8 October 2025 at 2.00pm

**Present
physically:**

Present virtually: C Higgins, EEGT Trustee and WSC Governor – **Vice Chair**
E D'Souza, EEGT Trustee and WSC Governor – **Chair**
M Chatt, EEGT Trustee and WSC Governor
S Daley, EEGT Trustee and WSC Governor
S Snowdon, EEGT Trustee

In attendance: J McDonnell, Trainee Clerk and EA to the Governance Professional
N Savvas, CEO
S Gales, Governance Professional

Apologies: S Howard, EEGT Member and WSC Governor

Absent:

1. **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair(s)**

The Committee recognised E D'Souza as the Chair and C Higgins as the Vice Chair of the joint EEGT and WSC Nominations and Governance Committee for 2025/26 as appointed by the Corporation and Trust Board in July 2025.

2. **Declaration of Interests and Apologies for absence**

Members recognised the standing declarations. No other conflicts of interest in relation to the items of the agenda were declared.

Apologies were received from S Howard.

3. **Committee Terms of Reference Agenda Planner & Committee Skillset**

Members received and considered the Terms of Reference, Committee Skillset and Agenda Planner provided.

Members requested an additional responsibility be added to the Terms of Reference, linked to the Committee's role in considering the removal of governance members.

Members **approved** the Terms of Reference, Committee Skillset and Agenda Planner provided, subject to the amendment above.

4. **Minutes of the meetings on 18 June 2025**

Members reviewed and **agreed** the minutes of the meeting on 18 June 2025 as an accurate record.

5. **Matters arising from the meeting on 18 June 2025**

One of the five matters arising were complete, three were closed, and one is ongoing.

The Governance Professional informed that compliance with the new Companies House requirement that Trustees/Directors verify their identify is high, however Richard Murray has not yet provided evidence that he has registered. It is an offence to continue to act as a Trustee/Director without verifying after it becomes a legal requirement on 18 November 2025. As such if Richard Murray does not provide his Companies House personal code by the deadline, we will need to remove him from his post before his current term of office expires. Members agreed with this action and asked the Governance Professional to continue to reach out to him.

Action

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6. Progress Against Governance Action Plan

i. Succession plan

ii. KPIs

Members received and considered a paper reporting on progress against the EEG Governance Action Plan as approved by the Corporation and Trust Board in July 2025. It included reports linked to two items due for autumn term.

Members discussed the confidential succession plan document created following discussions of the Chair, CEO and Governance Professional in August, which outlined suggested succession plans for the roles of Chair, Vice Chairs, WSC's representative EEGT Member, EEGT Members, longstanding governance members, and Governance Lead roles.

Members recognised that succession plans are subject to individual's willingness to serve, appropriate Board-level approvals and to change responding to the needs of the Group.

Members did not discuss their potential re/appointment other than to confirm whether they would be willing to serve if it was decided to be the right course of action by the Board(s).

The Governance Professional explained that the paper considers feedback received from governance members about their future ambitions/plans via the Chair's annual 1:1 discussions and from any ad hoc discussions with the Chair/CEO/Governance Professional.

Members reviewed the term served of members of the Corporation and Trust Board, and of 'dual' appointments to both Boards.

Members discussed succession plans for the Chair and Vice Chair roles.

Members discussed the underlying principles for Chair and Vice Chair roles:

- They should be individuals who have retired from work/is due to retire imminently
- They should have the ability, aptitude, interest and availability to fulfil the role
- They should have experience of governance within EEG (ideally at WSC as the most complex part)
- They should have experience acting as a Chair/Committee Chair
- If possible, given the skillset of suitable candidates, there should be diversity and complementary skills/ behaviours between the Chair and Vice Chairs

The Governance Professional explained that in 2024/25 the roles of Chair and Vice Chair were advertised to all governance members at the Board meetings in March, in addition to discussions with the Chair in their annual 1:1 where future ambitions is a standing discussion item; however no new governance members applied for the roles.

The CEO explained that our Appointment and Term of Office policies permit the Chair to serve an additional term if duly appointed, reflecting the legacy impact of the pandemic which led to difficulties recruiting/on-boarding new governance members.

Members discussed that utilising the additional term for the Chair would provide time for us to develop internal candidates and/or appoint and train new governance members to fill the Chair role in the future.

E D'Souza, as Chair, confirmed that he would be willing to serve an additional term or for another person to serve as Chair; whichever was decided to be the right course of action by the Boards.

Members discussed the need to ensure stability by not changing the Chair and Vice Chairs at the same time, and E D'Souza reflected from his experience how critical it was that there were established Vice Chairs in post when he took over as Chair.

Members discussed the benefits of the Vice Chairs standing down as Vice Chairs before the end of their governance term, to enable them to mentor the new Vice Chairs. Members voiced that this could be beneficial, but a 'nice to have' rather than an 'essential'; emphasizing the need for the right people to fill the Vice Chair roles, rather than aiming for a deadline to safeguard a handover period.

Members reflected that having two Vice Chairs has been highly successful and asked that this be added to the 'principles'.

S Daley and C Higgins, as Vice Chairs, confirmed that they are willing to continue to serve until the end of their governance term or to stand down early to enable another person to serve as Vice Chair; whichever was decided to be the right course of action by the Boards.

Members queried why 'external recruitment' was not listed as a suggested action for the Chair/Vice Chair roles. The CEO noted that due to the complexity of our Group and of our regulatory environment, we feel that the Chair needs prior experience of our governance within our Group, ideally starting at WSC as the most complex element. E D'Souza added, feeding back sector intelligence from his national governance role in the FE Commissioner's team, that colleges are struggling to recruit Chair/Vice Chairs externally due to lack of available candidates with the time and experience required. E D'Souza noted that we need to grow your own Chair/Vice Chairs.

Members discussed whether potential Chair/Vice Chairs should be required to serve on WSC first or not and agreed that it was the strong preference.

Members supported the 'suggested actions' for Chair.

Members discussed the 'suggested actions' for Vice Chair and reiterated the need to ensure that fair, open and transparent processes are maintained; whereby current governance members feel able to express their interest in the roles.

Members discussed the importance of the relationship between the Chair/Vice Chairs, CEO and Governance Professional, and acknowledged that any election for the role of Chair/Vice Chair should consider the feedback of the CEO and Governance Professional.

Members suggested that the Governance Professional, as a neutral role, should be the person to liaise with governance members and provide support to them to submit their application for Chair/Vice Chair roles.

Members suggested that interested governance members should also meet with the CEO, before applying to ensure they understand the remit of the role before applying.

Members discussed that while this Committee proposes the role descriptors for the Chair and Vice Chairs, interviews and *proposes* the appointment of governance members and can make recommendations on the suitability of appointments to governance leadership roles, the Board(s) remain responsible for electing the Chair and Vice Chairs.

Members queried if the succession plan paper will be shared with the Boards. The Governance Professional explained that this version is confidential to facilitate discussion at this Committee.

Members asked the Governance Professional to produce a paper to be shared with the Boards in December, without named individuals, detailing the framework and

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core principles for our proposed approach to succession; and outlining how interested governance members can express their interest for the Chair/Vice Chair roles.

Members discussed succession plans for WSC's representative EEGT Member and for the Members.

Members discussed the remit and skillset required of the WSC's representative EEGT Member role and queried whether a 'dual' appointment could serve in the role. The Governance Professional explained that it was permissible for an EEGT Trustee to serve as an EEGT Member, however they may feel it is a conflict of interest and choose not to serve as both Trustee and Member. Members supported the 'suggested actions', noting that the role requires an experienced governance member with strong chairing skills.

Members discussed succession plans for long standing members and supported the 'suggested actions'.

Members supported the proposal to keep under review the member ratios on (non-LGB) joint Committees, as part of succession planning.

The Governance Professional informed that a panel of this Committee interviewed one new prospective governance member on 7 October and another is due to be interviewed on 10 October, after which a proposal will be circulated electronically to the Committee for consideration.

The Governance Professional summarised succession plans for existing governance members which may look to take on additional roles/responsibilities. Members discussed and supported the proposed actions; and **authorised** the Governance Professional to speak to the named individuals and report back to this Committee.

Members **agreed** to nurture current governance members and to look to appoint new governance members (both from direct approaches, referrals from current governance members and through external adverts) as part of succession planning.

Members discussed the proposed KPIs and noted that they are evolutions of KPIs currently looked at within our committees. The Governance Professional explained that she is working with senior leaders to produce similar KPIs for the Primary and SEND Educational Excellence Committees.

Members queried the next step for the KPIs. The Governance Professional explained that they will be shared with the appropriate Committee, alongside their agenda planner, committee skillset and terms of reference, for review and comment. Members **agreed** with the approach and KPIs.

7. **Membership**

Members received and considered a paper on the membership as at 17 September 2025, including analysis of the Governance structure, Constitution, Committee membership, Attendance in 2024/25, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion analysis, Skillset analysis and the proposed Training and Development plan for 2025/26. The paper also provided information on two prospective governance members being interviewed in October 2025.

Members **noted** the resignation of James Gazzard as WSC Governor and EEGT Member in July 2025.

Members **noted** the appointment of Ruby-Rose Head as WSC Student Governor in July 2025 w.e.f. 1 September 2025.

Members **noted** that Tony Stroud declined to serve as an EEGT Primary Educational Excellence Committee member.

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Members **noted** that, in September 2025, we advertised for EEGT Parent Committee members at Stanton Primary School, Duke of Lancaster School, Abbeygate Sixth Form College and One Sixth Form College. The Governance Professional informed that 17 applicants have been received for two roles on the Sixth Form Educational Excellence Committee (9 from Abbeygate parents and 8 from One parents), however no applications were received from Stanton or Duke of Lancaster. The Governance Professional informed that we will re-advertise these roles after half-term.

Members commended the interest received for the Sixth Form Educational Excellence Committee and discussed the reasons for this. S Daley, as Committee Chair, reflected that it can be difficult to retain parent, student and staff members. Members discussed ways to support these roles to contribute and engage.

Members discussed the 2024/25 attendance data and analysis. Members noted that while attendance overall is very good there are pockets of concern. Members considered and supported the 'proposed actions'.

Members discussed the EDI data analysis and noted that diversity has improved.

Members discussed the 2025/26 skillset analysis and the proposed training and development plan. Members noted that the skillset remains overall very strong.

The Governance Professional reflected that we have made multiple changes within the past 18 months to our governance structure e.g. establishing and then winding down 3 Academy Councils, establishing and then changing the remits of the Primary and SEND Educational Excellence Committees, changing the remits of the Sixth Form and Adult/Apprenticeship/HE Educational Excellence Committees, establishing a joint Finance Committee and expanding the remits of the two Audit and Risk Management Committees and Resources Committee, plus onboarding governance members transferring from SENDAT/Exning/Stanton and appointing new parent, student and staff governance members. The Governance Professional explained that following this period of change, our focus remains on:

- Developing a collaborative governance 'team'
- Developing a shared understanding and vision which empowers governance members to contribute
- Strong inductions for new/transferring governance members
- First hand visits to our schools and colleges to see what we do
- Mentoring (where requested)
- Whole board development on Safeguarding, the new Ofsted framework, understanding what our schools and colleges do (especially linked to how they engage/work with stakeholders and develop their curriculum)

Members **agreed** the 2025/26 training and development plan and **agreed to recommend to the Corporation and Trust Board**.

Members discussed the members whose term is due to expire against the reappointment criteria in our Appointment and Term of Office policy and **agreed to recommend to the Corporation/Trust Board/Members** that:

- Richard Murray's term as an EEGT Trustee be allowed to end
- Alexandra Duffety, Conrad Chua and Karen Chapman be reappointed as WSC Governors for a further 4-year term of office
- Sarah Howard's term as a WSC Governor and therefore also as WSC's representative EEGT Member be allowed to end
- Debbie Wildridge and Karen Points be reappointed as EEGT Trustees, though the term of office was not discussed/proposed.

Members did not discuss the reappointment of Sue Daley as an EEGT Trustee beyond the discussions above (agenda item 6).

8. **External Governance Review (WSC)**

Members received and noted the paper which confirmed the dates for WSC's external board review and date for the Chair, CEO and Governance Professional to confirm the scope of the review.

Members noted the typo within the report which should read 'EEG Sixth Form Educational Excellence Committee'.

9. **Governance Documentation**

- i. **EEGT Standing Orders**
- ii. **WSC Standing Orders**
- iii. **EEGT & WSC Role Descriptors for Governance Lead**
- iv. **EEG Scheme of Delegation**
- v. **Committee Terms of Reference and Committee Skillsets**

Members received and considered the paper provided which included a summary of the proposed changes compared to the previously approved versions.

Members **approved** the above documents and **agreed to recommend** them to the Boards.

10. **Any Other Business**

- **Thanks to Suzannah and Jade**

Members thanked the Governance Professional and the Trainee Clerk for their ongoing thoroughness and support.

- **Referrals**

The Governance Professional asked members to consider and let her/Jade know of any people who could be potential future governance members.

- **Additional Remuneration Committee meeting**

Members provided their availability to the Governance Professional for the additional meeting in spring term.

The meeting closed at 3.51pm