The FGB Chair, CEO, and Group Director of Governance have been given delegated authority by FGB to review confidential minutes on an annual basis. The following minute was released for publication following the review panel meeting held on 7 September 2026.

Business Committee Meeting of 20 November 2025 Confidential Part A

	ITEM	COMMENTS	ACTION
	6. Capital Programme Update: Extra Care Facility at Folkstone	<u>Extra-Care Facility at Folkestone</u> DS provided an update on the proposal to establish an extra care training facility in Folkestone, similar in concept to the Yarrow Hotel, but focused on social care. The initiative was previously endorsed by the Full Governing Body (FGB) and Folkestone Local College Board at a Strategic event. Key points: • The Group is working with NEST, a small, specialist construction consultancy to explore a funding model involving an institutional investor under a sale and leaseback arrangement: o Investor purchases the land and builds the facility. o EKC Group receives a 30-year lease and regains ownership for £1 at the end of the term. • Kent County Council has indicated in-principle commitment to fund the facility for 30 years. • The facility would include approx. 600m² of college space for training in health and social care, hospitality, hair and beauty, and other student engagement activities.	

		• Risks identified include payment profiling and Department for Education (DfE) approval, given potential concerns about overage clauses on the Folkestone property. Business Committee are invited to consider whether further discussions can now take place with the Department for Education (DfE). Governors queried if this will be a commercially run care home, similar to the Yarrow Hotel model. DS confirmed it would be operated by a third-party provider, with EKC Group using the facility for training and work experience. Governors queried whether the operator would be required to employ students and whether this could create reciprocal obligations for the Group. DS confirmed student employment would be encouraged, but care would be taken to avoid contractual obligations that restrict curriculum flexibility. Governors asked if NEST have delivered education-related projects before. DS confirmed this would be NESTs first education-linked development, though they are exploring similar opportunities with other local authorities. Governors queried if there are any other UK institutions with similar facilities we could learn from. DS confirmed EKC Group would be the first to implement this model. Governors supported progressing discussions with the DfE.	

	12 . Report on HR Matters	The Chief People Officer (KH) provided a verbal update on HR Matters: • One active ET case remains open. A preliminary hearing scheduled for October was postponed at short notice due to court service delays and is now rescheduled for March. • Three grievance investigations and one appeal are ongoing. • Sickness absence has increased slightly compared to last year, with 87 employees currently absent, including several long-term cases linked to surgery requirements. • Staff turnover stands at 12.7%, up 1.1% on last year. It was reported that five members of staff sadly passed away during the course of the last year. • There are 25 live vacancies, with hard-to-fill roles in plumbing and carpentry, reflecting national trends. Agency costs have risen slightly to maintain this service delivery. Governors queried whether funding private medical treatment for staff with delayed surgeries could reduce long-term absence and agency costs. Following discussion, Governors agreed the potential challenges of prioritisation, fairness, appeals and also unpredictable escalation of costs would be very difficult to navigate. It was also noted by a Governor that there are Group legal implications to consider. KH agreed to explore if a salary sacrifice scheme could be utilised or negotiated staff discounts with providers. Occupational health interventions (e.g., physiotherapy) have previously been used in special cases. • KH reported the current HR and Payroll system is due to expire on 1 April 2026. An extension has been secured until October 2026 to allow additional time to carry out the tendering process and implementation of a new system.	

		DS confirmed a paper will be presented to Full Governing Body at the 9 December 2025 meeting outlining the maximum cost implications, but noted it will be an increase to current costs. NOTED: Report on HR Matters	

East Kent Colleges Group