

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2025

PRESENT:

Arif Patel	Chair
Dr Fazal Dad	Principal and Chief Executive
Asif Ali	Member
Paul Morris	Member
Ridwaan Omar*	Member
Bryan Welch	Member

IN ATTENDANCE:

Corinne McMillan*	Co-opted member
Jennifer Eastham	Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services
Rachel Tarplee	Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality
Nicola Clayton	Executive Director of Business Development and External Engagement
Laine Morris	Executive Director of People & Culture
Sarah Horeesorun	Director of Governance

The meeting commenced at 5pm and was quorate.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, the first Committee for this academic year. There followed round table introductions for the benefit of Laine Morris, the new Executive Director of People and Culture. The Committee gave Laine a warm welcome.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received in advance from Michael Lee.

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chair advised those in attendance that should members of the Policy and Resources Committee become aware of any potential conflicts of interest, they should be disclosed at the earliest opportunity during the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 16 JUNE 2025

The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 16 June 2025 as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Committee noted the updates on the actions from the previous meetings and the Director of Governance added that the reports on carbon emissions raw data, and staff-costs:income benchmarking data had been shared on Members' One Drive folders.

5. PRESENTATION ON A TOPICAL THEME

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services talked the Committee through a presentation on student recruitment, reflecting the current position and the potential impact on funding and staffing.

In discussion, the following was covered:

- Funding arrangements differ for FE and HE
- DfE targets and performance against predictions
- Potential impact of student over/under recruitment on staffing, courses and financial position
- Marketing opportunities
- Local demographics and skills need
- Challenges of delivering HE in an FE College and sector wide concerns
- Planning for the future, local and national politics

The Chair thanked the Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services for the presentation.

The Chair proposed that Items 13,14,15 be presented by the Director of Facilities and Estates before returning to the Agenda. This was agreed by the Committee, but for the purposes of the recording of these minutes, items reflect the agenda order.

6. **CAPITAL BUDGET 2025/26**

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services reminded the Committee that the College had been particularly successful in securing capital grants throughout 2024/25.

The Vice-Principal talked through the detail of the Report and the business planning cycle, listing the projects listed in Agenda Item 15.

Members noted that capital budgets may need to be revisited once the major projects had been costed; that members would receive regular updates and additional approvals requested, as required, on the larger projects.

The Policy and Resources Committee **AGREED** for this Report to be recommended to the Corporation Board for approval at its meeting 17 October 2025.

7. **TUITION FEES POLICIES**

- i) FE & HE Tuition Fees Policy 2026/27
- ii) Bursary and Scholarships Policy 2026/27
- iii) HE Tuition Fees for 2027/28

- i) FE & HE Tuition Fees Policy 2026/27

The Committee were reminded that the Government requires that Tuition Fees are published a year in advance as Colleges are promoting September 2026 student intakes.

The FE Tuition Fees continue to be linked to the national rate published by Government, with basis of funding determined by funding allocation rules issued by the DfE.

Having considered the Report and attachment, the Committee **APPROVED** the FE & HE Tuition Fee Policy for 2026/27.

- ii) College Funded Bursary and Scholarships Policy 2025/27 (amended) and 2026/27

The Report referred to the College Funded Bursaries and Scholarships Policy in relation to both FE and HE for 2025/27.

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained that small changes had been suggested to the policy, and these were highlighted on the attachment.

Having considered the proposed changes to the College Funded Bursary and Scholarships Policy 2025/27, the Committee **AGREED** to accept the changes and **APPROVED** the policy.

(i) HE Tuition Fees for 2027/28

A member enquired about repayment of student loans and the Vice-Principal explained that were different policies and processes to follow depending on the debtor and amount of debt.

Having considered this Report the Committee **AGREED** that the HE fees for 2027/28 remain at £8,750 for September 2027 starts.

8. SUBCONTRACTING ARRANGMENTS FOR 2025/26

The Executive Director of Business Development and Employer Engagement presented a Report updating the Committee on the subcontracting arrangements for 2025/26. The delegated responsibility to monitor the subcontracting arrangements falls within the remit of the Policy and Resources Committee, and reports were also considered by the Learning and Quality Committee and Audit Committee.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Subcontracting Arrangements for 2025/26.

The Committee thanked the Executive Director of Business Development and External Engagement for this Report.

9. GOVERNOR EXPENSES POLICY 2025/26 AND ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

The Committee noted that the Governors' Expenses Policy, at Appendix 2, had not changed from the version approved last year and that the expenses paid in 2024/25 at Appendix 1, were for travel reimbursement claims by the Governors.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Governors' Expenses Policy for 2025/26, and the Annual Report of Governors' expenses claimed in 2024/25.

10. MODERN SLAVERY ACT (BOARD STATEMENT)

To ensure continued compliance with the Modern Slavery Act, the Committee considered the Board statement to be published on the College website.

There was some discussion of ensuring compliance with the statement in supply chains, using reputable contractors, compliance with legal obligations and ethical training initiatives. The Executive Director of People and Culture added that she was unsure if the College could audit the recruitment agencies used by the College but would make efforts to check declarations and contracts.

The Committee **AGREED** to recommend the statement to the Board for approval and the continued adoption by the College.

11. ANNUAL REPORT ON GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY 2024/25 INCLUDING REVIEW OF POLICY

The College's Gifts and Hospitality Policy is presented each year for its annual review by the Committee and is accompanied by the register of gifts and hospitality received during the year. During 2024/25 there were three entries on the gifts and hospitality register.

The Committee noted the entries declared in 2024/25.

There was one change proposed to the policy agreed last year, and that was to increase de minimis for declaring any gifts and hospitality from £25 to £50.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Gifts and Hospitality Policy for 2025/26.

12. FREEDOM OF SPEECH POLICY UPDATE

The Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality updated the Committee on a few small revisions now confirmed to the policy since the new legislation came into force 1 August 2025. The changes mainly impacted on HE but for this College, FE too as it did both.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** the policy to the Board for approval.

13. HEALTH AND SAFETY (H&S) ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

The Director of Facilities and Estates talked the Committee through this Report highlighting that performance on health and safety (H&S) was generally positive.

The Committee noted the content of the Report.

17.30 Corinne McMillan left the meeting by prior arrangement.

14. NET CARBON ZERO

The Director of Estates and Facilities Management provided an update on progress towards the 40 step FE Climate Change Roadmap. Some progress had been made, and this was detailed in the Report, however there was much more to do and lots of activity planned for the autumn term.

Members acknowledged the findings of the Reports and the difficulties in getting a handle on Scope 3 and natural gas baseline data. There was discussion of electricity and the needs of the curriculum being met, for example, the recent change to modern electric hobs from gas in the learning kitchens. The Director confirmed that there was a focus on increasing sustainability in the curriculum.

15. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

The Director of Facilities and Estates summarised the content of the Report, highlighting the creation of 10 new teaching spaces, new outside bricklaying space, new unisex toilets in the Beacon Centre and a likely delay to the completion of the Victoria Building refurbishments.

The Committee thanked the Director of Estates and Facilities Management for his Reports.

Steve Nunwick left the meeting at 17.43pm

16. ANIMAL CARE COURSE UPDATE

The Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality elaborated on the update within the Report, summarising the current position and adding that the:

- Animal Care course had started at the College from 1 September and was proving very popular
- Advertising the Level 1 Animal care course had stimulated a lot of commercial interest in, for example, pet first aid and grooming
- £6k had been spent on adapting a classroom and providing resources
- Two groups on course completing either City & Guilds or SEG Award
- Course Leader ex Witton Park so knows many of the students, has a useful network and is a qualified veterinary nurse
- Using links with Witton Park farm to experience livestock and animal husbandry
- Small and low maintenance animals in College regularly and many volunteers to help care for them during, for example, Christmas holidays

The Committee thanked the Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality for the update.

17. STUDENT RECRUITMENT 2025/26 – UPDATE

The discussion on Student Recruitment had taken place earlier on the Agenda in the presentation at Item 5.

18. DRAFT MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS JULY 2025

The Pre-finalised Accounts to 31 July 2025 were discussed, with the caveat that these were pre-final and with the External Auditors, Beever and Struthers as part of their year-end activities. The final position would be shared with the Committee at its November meeting.

The Committee **AGREED** to recommend the Management Accounts, pre-finalisation to 31 July 2025 to the Corporation Board for approval.

19. GOING CONCERN STATEMENT/CONSIDERATION OF GOING CONCERN

The Committee considered the current 'going concern' situation of the College in line with the fundamental accounting concept in the preparation of the Financial Statements.

To comply with the Committee's Terms of Reference and under the Scheme of Delegation, the members were satisfied, given the information received, that it was reasonable to prepare the College's Financial Statements on a 'going concern' basis.

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services confirmed that there were no material uncertainties leading to significant doubt about the College being a going concern. 'Going concern' would be assumed whilst preparing the financial statements and a statement included therein to this effect.

The Committee **AGREED** recommendation of this report to the Board for approval.

20. VALUE FOR MONEY REPORT 2024/25 AND PRIORITIES FOR 2025/26

The Report outlined the purchasing activities for 2024/25 and provided the priorities and objectives for cross-College procurement for 2025/26. The Report was produced on an annual basis to update Governors on the progress and plans for delivery of Value for Money.

The Committee noted the content of the Report.

21. COLLEGE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs):

- i) update as at 31/07/25 (prefinalisation)
- ii) 2025/26 proposed targets

- (i) update as at 31/07/2024 (pre-finalisation)

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services introduced this Report. The Committee noted that the status, pre-finalisation, of the KPIs for 2024/25.

Members noted the status on the KPIs 2024/25.

- (ii) 2025/26 proposed targets

The Committee considered the proposed KPI targets for 2025/26 as set out in the Report and supporting Appendix.

The Committee **AGREED** to recommend the KPIs for 2025/26 to the Board for approval.

22. STRATEGIC PLAN – ANNUAL OPERATING STATEMENT

- i) 2024/25 update as at 31 July 2025(pre-finalisation)
- ii) 2025/26 proposed targets

- (i) 2024/25 update as at 31/07/2025

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services talked through the Report and highlighted the detail within the attached Appendix. This was the pre-finalisation Report and as at 31 July 2025.

The Vice-Principal explained that the not yet reportable targets were informed by the ILR which was due at the end of October. The Committee noted that progress was positive on, for example, investment in facilities and the estate, and an area to watch was Apprenticeships.

- (ii) 2025/26 proposed targets

Following on from the Item above, and mindful of the new College Strategic Plan 2025-28, the Committee considered the proposed targets for 2025/26 and **AGREED** to recommend the KPIs proposed for 2025/26 to the Corporation Board.

23. COMMERCIAL AND EXTERNAL FUNDING REPORT

The Executive Director of Business Development and Employer Engagement elaborated on the detail within the Report.

The bids and funding had contributed to the significant investment in the estate, covered by other Items on the Agenda, and areas of focus included the Cyber Hub located in the Industry Collaboration Zone, the Turing Fund scheme supporting students' educational experiences abroad and DfE Lancashire Skills Bootcamp Wave 6 for Levels 3 and 4 Electric/Hybrid vehicle delivery.

The Committee noted the content of the Report and thanked the Executive Director of Business Development and Employer Engagement for the update.

24. HUMAN RESOURCES ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

The Executive Director of People and Culture summarised this Report and supporting Appendix providing the core Human Resources (HR) data for the period 1 August 2025- 31 July 2025.

The Committee noted the content of the Report thanked the Executive Director of People and Culture.

25. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Director of Governance updated the Committee on the changes to the Scheme of Delegation.

The Committee was reminded that an exercise to review the Terms of Reference for each Committee was completed annually. This had implications for the Scheme of Delegation, and these were detailed in the report. Some were minor changes, such as amends to a Report title, others more significant, for example, the inclusion of references to the College Financial Handbook and AoC Code of Good Governance.

The Committee noted the changes and **AGREED** to recommend the changes to the Schemes of Delegation to the Board for approval.

26. OVERSEAS VISITS ANNUAL REPORT

The Report on the Overseas Visits for 2024/25 for Staff, Students and Governors was for information.

The Committee noted that there had been:

- No overseas business trips by any staff
- No trips funded through the Research and Scholarships Committee/Staff Development
- Five educational visits to an overseas destination.

27. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

The Report was for information and provided members with analysis on the volumes and types of Freedom of Information Requests received in 2024/ 2025 to date.

The Committee noted the content of the Report.

28. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair canvassed attendees and there were no Items of Any Other Business.

29. REVIEW OF THE MEETING

The Chair thanked the Executive Team and Director of Governance for their Reports.

30. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT POLICY AND RESOURCES MEETING

Monday 24 November 2025 at 5pm in the Exchange Boardroom and via MS Teams.

The Committee then considered the Part II agenda items – minutes recorded below.

Members of staff left the meeting ahead of PARTII.