MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2025

PRESENT:

Arif Patel	Chair
Dr Fazal Dad	Principal and Chief Executive
Asif Ali	Member
Michael Lee	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
Nicola Clayton	Executive Director of Business Development and External Engagement
Laine Morris	Executive Director of People & Culture
Sarah Horeesorun	Director of Governance

*Denotes joined the meeting via MS Teams

The meeting commenced at 5pm and was quorate.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, the second Committee for this academic year and advised that there was a lot to cover in a packed Agenda, including a PARTII for members.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received in advance from Rachel Tarplee.

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 22 SEPTEMBER 2025

The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 22 September 2025 as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Committee noted the updates on the actions from the previous meetings and that some matters would be covered by Items on this Agenda.

5. PRESENTATION ON A TOPICAL THEME

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services presented the slides to support this Item and provided the additional narrative. The slides and verbal update covered:

- Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023
- New corporate offence effective from 1 September 2025, Failure to Prevent Fraud

- Affects all large organisations (>£36m turnover, >250 staff)

The Committee discussed the potential risks and impact on the sector, particularly around areas of subcontracting, funding, exam results and student number mismanagement, and potential impact on reputation.

Failure to Prevent Fraud was a strict liability offence and could incur criminal prosecution and unlimited fines. The Committee discussed fraud prevention rather than detection and what were reasonable steps to prevent fraud. The College had a suite of Counter Fraud, Anti-Bribery, Whistleblowing policies, strict Financial procedures and policies, and annual staff communications as reminders to read new/revised policies. There were several layers of payment authorities to ensure safe and legal payments

A member asked how prevalent fraud in the sector was, and the Vice-Principal explained that, to her knowledge, this was not a serious problem in the sector, but the potential remained, and the point was to deter and prevent it. The Principal and Chief Executive added that the College was pro-active, doing everything that was reasonable and had strong policies and procedures in place. All staff were aware and vigilant, and Managers trained.

There followed some discussion of the broad spectrum and what might constitute or be perceived as fraud.

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

The Chair proposed that Items 8, 9, 10 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. FINANCIAL POSITION

To set the context for the Items that followed, the Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services provided an overview setting out the process for the Annual Report and Financial Statements and explaining that each component was presented here as a separate Report, rather than one large unwieldy Report. This approach, or bite size bits of the process, made it easier for the Committee members to consider each individual element.

(i) Management Accounts to 31 July 2025 (FINAL)

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services presented this Report reminding members that the pre-finalised Management Accounts had been considered in the September meeting and had only changed marginally since due to a change in the treatment of Pensions surplus and capital funds associated with Launchpad, in the Accounts.

All FEC metrics were met, and a member commented that all income/budget thresholds had been met. The Chair thanked the Finance Team and asked if finances remained as outstanding.

The Policy and Resources Committee **AGREED** to recommend the final Management Accounts 31 July 2025 to the Corporation Board for approval.

(ii) Annual Report and Financial Statements

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained that all colleges completed the same pro-forma and exercise as this every year. The figures therein, were the same as those within the management accounts and the Draft Management letter and documents had also been scrutinised by the Audit Committee at its meeting 18 November 2025.

The Committee agreed to **RECOMMEND** the Annual Report 2024/25 and Financial Statement to the Corporation Board for approval at its December meeting.

(iii) Related Party Transactions and Register of Interests

This Report was produced to ensure transparency in and probity in conducting the College's business with any organisation or business with which any of the Governing Body members may have a relationship. The DfE do review this information, and members were asked to review the content.

Committee members noted the disclosure information and that this would be approved as part of the Financial Statements.

(iv) Review of Financial Objectives

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services reminded members that these objectives were agreed last year and all bar objective 6 had been met, and that Governors were aware of the challenges around the FEC metric to ensure that the staffing cost to income ratio remained below 65%. For 2024/25 the College had a staff to income ratio of 65.03% against a target of 65%

The Committee agreed the performance against the Financial Objectives 2024/25 and the Financial Objectives for 2025/26 and that these be **RECOMMENDED** to the Corporation Board for approval.

(v) Annual Review of Accounting Policies

Having reviewed the minimal changes to the Accounting Policies for the Financial Statements 2024/25, highlighted in the Appendix, the Committee **AGREED** to recommend these to the Corporation Board for approval.

(vi) DfE Finance Record

As part of the DfE College Accounts Direction the College is required to submit a Finance Record return to the DfE by 31 December 2025. This is basically the Financial Statements information entered into a standard template and uploaded to the DfE portal for them to analyse and provide sector benchmarking information.

Subject to Board approval of the Financial Statements on 5 December 2025, the Committee approved the submission of the Finance Record to the DfE.

7. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2025 AND BUDGET MONITORING UPDATE

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained that the current budget position was behind target due to some costs from the Launchpad centre over-running into 2025/26.

8. ANTI-BRIBERY ANNUAL REVIEW 2024/25 AND UPDATE

The Committee considered the College's current Anti-Bribery Policy and noted that there were no amendments, and that the Policy remained current, pertinent, and represented the expectations of behaviour for those connected with the College.

There had been no reported instances of bribery in 2024/25, and under its Scheme of Delegation, the Committee **APPROVED** the College's Anti-Bribery Policy.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

The Director of Facilities and Estates explained that the College Health & Safety Policy Statement had been reviewed and updated to incorporate a minor change on line (j) to ensure that the policy statement wasn't perceived to expire.

This had been reviewed and agreed by the Health and Safety Committee.

The policy statement was **APPROVED** by the Committee and would be signed by the Principal and Chief Executive and Chair of the Corporation Board.

10. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE 2025/26

The Director of Facilities and Estates summarised the content of the Report, highlighting the delay to the completion of the Victoria Building refurbishments. A member asked if the delay would cause any problems to the College and the Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained that DfE was the client, and that the College would continue to make use of the temporary classrooms.
The first partial handover occurred on 7 November with the College receiving the Elizabeth Building Lower Ground Floor toilets.

The Committee were keen to have an update on the Campus Masterplan and the Director said that final work was being done on this with a view to bringing this to the December Board. The Chair enquired if this would be the long-term campus and capital investment strategy for the future, linked to the new Strategic Plan 2025-28, and the Director said that it was focusing on immediate need for development and expansion in Construction and Engineering, and that a review of room utilisation was part of the process.

11. 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.

A list of 12 areas to progress and 3 not to progress had been recommended by Commercial in their Net Zero Road Map and Glide Path report. Progress had been made 9 of the 12 areas and the Director explained the rationale for the 3 areas not to progress.

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

Steve Nunwick left the meeting at 17.23pm

12. HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) UPDATE AT 31 OCTOBER 2025

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 October 2025.

Management Coaching sessions would be introduced from January 2026 to improve and make more effective, back to work meetings.

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

13. STUDENT RECRUITMENT UPDATE 2025/26

Members noted the content of this Report.

14. STRATEGIC PLAN – ANNUAL OPERATING STATEMENT

(i) 2024/25 Final Actuals
(ii) 2025/26 progress at 31 October 2025

(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 final Report and as at 31 July 2025, the status of the targets was:

- 13.3 - on target
- 6.2 - on target in part
- 2.5 - under target
- 1 - not yet reportable

The Committee noted the content of the Report and **AGREED** that this could go to the December Board for approval.

(ii) 2025/26 progress at 31 October 2025

The Committee noted the content of the Report and **AGREED** that this could go to the December Board for approval.

15. COLLEGE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

(i) 2024/25 Final Actuals
(ii) 2025/26 progress at 31 October 2025

i) update as at 31/07/25 (prefinalisation)
ii) 2025/26 progress at 31 October 2025

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

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

- 9 - on target
- 4 - on target in part
- 6 - under target
- 3 - NYR

Members noted the final status on the KPIs 2024/25.

(ii) 2025/26 progress at 31 October 2025

The Committee noted the first snapshot of performance on the KPI targets for 2025/26 as set out in the Report and supporting Appendix.

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

16. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY 2025/26 TERMLY UPDATE

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

The College's commercial delivery continued to focus on Trades with Gas and Electrical as these were popular and performing well. In addition, development initiatives were actively progressing, including Motor Vehicle and Low Carbon sectors, reflecting ongoing efforts to commercially grow the areas meeting employer demands.

Partnership work was underway to support the digital and cyber eco-system in Blackburn.

The College had various bids supporting significant investment in accommodation, kit, staff/staff development and delivery. Current projects of particular focus at that time included: UK Shared Prosperity - Cyber Hub located in the Industry Collaboration Zone, the Turing Scheme supporting student education experiences abroad and the DfE Lancashire Skills Bootcamps Wave 6 for Levels 3 and 4 Electric/Hybrid Vehicle delivery.

Work continued to maximise opportunities from previous funding bids providing significant investment in cyber, digital, e-sports, film, for example.

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

17. DfE COLLEGE FINANCIAL HEALTH LETTER

This letter was shared for information and provided the Committee with assurance regarding the College's Financial Health. Based on the forecasts, the College Financial Forecasting Return generated an auto-score of 'Outstanding' financial health, and this was concurred by the DfE.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

19. REVIEW OF THE MEETING

The Committee acknowledged that there had been a lot of technical detail in the accounts Reports. The Chair thanked the Executive Team for their Reports.

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

Monday 2 March 2026 at 5pm in the Exchange Boardroom and via MS Teams.