



MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 3 MARCH 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:

Jennifer Eastham	Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services
Nicola Clayton	Director of Business Development and External Engagement
Sarah Horeesorun	Director of Governance
Dail Maudsley-Noble	Director of Marketing and Communications (for Item 5)
Steve Nunwick	Director of Facilities and Estates (for Items 9,10,11)

*Denotes joined the meeting via Teams.

The meeting commenced at 5pm and was quorate.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and for the benefit of the new member, Asif Ali, there followed roundtable introductions. The Chair informed members that he planned to introduce a short break mid-way through the meeting for those observing Ramadan to break their fast. This was agreed by members.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received in advance from Governor, Steve Waggott, Co-opted member, Corinne McMillan, and from Rachel Tarplee, Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality.

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 25 NOVEMBER 2024

The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 25 November 2024 as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Committee noted that an agenda item on Martyn's Law would feature on the Agenda of a future meeting when timely to do so, and the Director of Governance confirmed that this

appeared on the Calendar of Business. Members were content that this action be marked as completed.

An update on Capital Projects was on the Agenda for this meeting and it was agreed that this action could be marked as completed as a suite of documents existed that contributed to a 'Campus Masterplan' as such rather than a single standalone document.

5. PRESENTATION ON A TOPICAL THEME – MARKETING THE COLLEGE OF CHOICE

The Director of Marketing and Communications presented slides and videos to showcase the College marketing activities, and demonstrate the impact, plus explain the strategy and approach.

The Chair thanked the Director of Marketing and Communications for the comprehensive presentation and invited questions from the Committee.

A member had recently attended a College open evening with his daughter and had a very positive experience. The support offered was impressive.

The Committee thanked the Director of Marketing and Communications.

Dale Maudsley-Noble left the meeting.

The Chair suggested that Agenda Items 9-11 be taken next. This was agreed and for the purposes of these minutes, Items are recorded in Agenda order.

6. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 JANUARY 2025

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained that the December 2024 Accounts were included in the pack of meeting papers for transparency but were superseded by the January Accounts to be discussed.

The Chair commented on the healthy financial position and the Committee asked that thanks be passed onto the Team.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** the Management Accounts to the Corporation Board for approval.

7. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2024/25

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained that the Financial Regulations set the rules by which the College finances were operated and how they were governed. The regulations were reviewed on a biennial basis or when there was a change to the control environment, in this instance, minor changes in terms of ESFA changed to DfE, updated Committee Terms of Reference, and impact of the new Procurement Act. The proposed changes were highlighted using track changes.

The Committee **AGREED** to recommend the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations to the Corporation Board for approval.

8. CODE OF PRACTICE ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH

The Committee considered the Colleges' current Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech, noted that there were no amendments and that the Code remained fit for purpose.

The Code would be reviewed again when the implications of the Freedom of Speech legislation were realised.

The Committee **AGREED** to recommend the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech to the Corporation Board for approval.

9. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE 2024/25

The Director of Facilities and Estates provided an update on the progress of campus projects. The renovations of the Victoria Building continued and photos of the roof and scaffolding shared with members. The roof was in better conditioned than first thought and the project itself, had little impact on the College's day to day activities.

The Director provided an update on the projects within the programme of works for 2024/25 and reported:

the new Construction Barn would be completed over the February half-term
replacement of the heating pipework in the Beacon Centre would complete by Easter
16 classrooms had been refurbished in the St Pauls building and would provide an eSports Gaming Arena, Podcast Recording Room, Marketing Room, Legal Room and Business Suite.

Looking ahead to summer works, potential projects being considered included refurbishment of:

- eight science labs. in St Pauls;
- remaining hair salons on the ground floor in the Elizabeth building;
- remaining beauty salons on the first floor in the Elizabeth building;
- and creation of hospitality kitchens;
- relocation of staff offices out of teaching areas;
- building lockdown system, and;
- additional space for Brickwork.

These projects were being explored in further detail and costed, following which decisions would be made regarding which projects progress.

The Director of Facilities and Estates added that a campus survey was already underway to identify opportunities for raising capacity using existing space and provide the case, where needs be, for future expansion and development.

10. NET CARBON ZERO - UPDATE

The Director of Facilities and Estates explained that the Government had released an updated FE Climate Change Roadmap and tracking tool for Colleges to monitor progress against each action. Commercial Consultants had been engaged to measure the Scope three emissions.

The College was utilising the ESFA grant to be spent by the end of March and introducing LED lighting, to bring the renewable energy kit back into full working order where possible and renew the Elizabeth Building heating plant.

The Director confirmed that once historic information has been uploaded to the new tracking tool, an example was supplied with the Report, then the College would be in a position to identify what more it could do to reduce carbon emissions. This would inform future reports to the Committee.

17.55-18.00 a short break.as agreed.

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

This report provided information on key health and safety activities during the academic year 2024/25 including incident statistics, Health & Safety Committee, off-site trips and visits (Evolve), and legislative changes.

A new Health and Safety manager would start on 1 April 2025, and the trips abroad had all been risk assessed and authorised using Evolve.

Steve Nunwick left the meeting at 6.05pm.

12. PEOPLE STRATEGY PROGRESS AND HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE AT 31 JANUARY 2025

The Report and supporting Appendix provided the core Human Resources (HR) data for the period 1 August 2024 - 31 January 2025 and benchmarking data against other institutions and the local Council.

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services highlighted the success of the 'Gateway Project' whereby jobseekers had a three-week intensive training course about getting back into work, followed by a three-week work placement in the College. Eighteen people had completed the Gateway so far and some had been taken on to fill hard to fill vacancies, as sickness/maternity cover or added to a bank of those to cover future absences. The Gateway experience had proved valuable and worthwhile for participants who could add this experience to their CVs and had helped the College fill hard to fill vacancies. The Committee was impressed with this initiative, pleased to learn that it was well received throughout the College and boosted the confidence of jobseekers involved. The Chair remarked that this was a true reflection of an anchor institution, helping support the community and providing valuable experience and opportunity to jobseekers.

An update on the actions in the People Strategy was provided in Appendix 2.

The Gender Pay Gap Report 2024 was included with the Report at Appendix 3.

13. STRATEGIC PLAN – ANNUAL OPERATING STATEMENT PROGRESS AT 31 JANUARY 2025

Members noted the progress made so far in year and the updates within the attachment. The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained that at this stage in the year, some of the targets were not reportable and the data was not available until the end of the year.

No further comments were made.

14. COLLEGE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) :

The Committee reviewed the progress made to 31 December 2024 on the KPIs for 2024/25 and noted:

- 8 - on target
- 6 - on target in part
- 6 – under target
- 2 – not yet reportable

The Committee noted the progress made so far on the KPIs for 2024/25 and there followed some discussion around staff survey and staff appraisals. The outcomes of the last staff survey were being implemented, and the majority of staff appraisals had been completed but were delayed by the cyber incident and unfamiliarity with the new staff appraisal system.

15. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY 2024/25 TERMLY UPDATE

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

The College continued to focus on the Blackburn College Trades Centre and Motor Vehicle provision, together with developments in low carbon and Engineering.

The continued investment made in HEAT through SDF and LSIF funding, provided opportunities for commercial income, Skills Bootcamps, and business engagement.

The DSIT Cyber Local bid was delivering on the aim to strengthen existing relationships and forge new partnerships with local and regional employers, and stakeholders. The first successful CyberFest took place in College on 8 February 2025. Working with local charities and industry partners, the CyberFest sought to raise awareness of the local cyber industry and future opportunities and attracted over six hundred visitors of all ages to participate in a range of activities and competitions.

The Committee were interested to hear about the Mums In Data programme. The College, working with BwD Council, were delivering a 12-week intensive programme in data and digital skills for those not currently working or actively seeking work.

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

16. FE FUNDING UPDATE 2024/25

This Report was supplied for information and updated members on the position regarding the ESFA (to be DfE after 31 March 2025) FE Funding contracts 2025/26. The DfE Funding announcement on 13 February was postponed and the College awaited news on the allocations to support decision making.

17. LANCASHIRE COLLEGES HEADLINE BENCHMARKING 2023/24

This Report was provided for information. The Annex supplied compared the headline financial position of nine Lancashire Colleges showing movement for the last three years.

It was noted that eight of the Colleges' income had increased and eight had made a surplus.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of any other business.

19. REVIEW OF THE MEETING

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal: Finance and Corporate Services for her Reports and members for the interesting discussions.

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

Monday 12 May 2025 at 5pm in the Exchange Boardroom and via MS Teams.