

TRAFFORD & STOCKPORT COLLEGE GROUP

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the Corporation
held on Wednesday 14 May 2025 at 10.00am in the Boardroom at the Altrincham Campus**

Present:	Graham Luccock	(Chairperson)
	Jill Bottomley	
	Olivia Bussey	
	Sarah Drake	
	Heather Lang	
	Michelle McLaughlin	(Staff Governor)
	*Jonathan O'Brien	
	Lewis Ormston	
	Shaun Parker	
	Marcia Reynolds	
	Louise Richardson	
	Aisha Shabbir	(Student Governor)
	Blerta Shira	(Student Governor)
	Catherine Thomas	
	Nick Wroe	
In Attendance:	Rebecca Clare	(Corporation Secretary)
	Carmen Gonzalez-Eslava	(Group Principal)
	Henry Taylor-Toone	(Chief Finance and Operations Officer)
	Michelle Leslie	(Chief People Officer)
	Yvonne Riley	(Assistant Corporation Secretary)
	Tracey Wood	(Chief Commercial Officer)

*attendance at the meeting via Microsoft Teams

Minute No.**COR/30/25 Apologies for Absence**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) reported that apologies for absence had been received from, Alison Hewitt, Emily McIntosh and James Scott.

It was noted that Charlotte Barratt would be taking a period of sabbatical with timings to be confirmed.

It was confirmed that the Chief Commercial Officer would be in attendance at the meeting for consideration of item 2.1 Draft Annual Accountability Statement 2025/2026.

The Chair welcomed Nick Wroe to his first Board meeting.

The Chair thanked BS for her contribution as Student Governor. It was noted that it was her final meeting and the Chair wished her well in the future.

COR/31/25 Declarations of Interest

Minute No.

There were no declarations of direct or indirect interests in any of the business items.

COR/32/25**Minutes of the Board of the Corporation Meeting held on 26 March 2025**

There were no issues raised by members and it was resolved that the minutes of the meeting be approved and accepted as a correct account.

COR/33/25**Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The Chair referred members to the previously circulated summary and progress update concerning the actions arising from the minutes and earlier meetings of the Board of the Corporation.

It was noted that most actions had been closed.

The following matters were raised by members.

COR/05/25 Market Intelligence and Insights Report 2024/2025 Report

It was confirmed that as part of the Group's approach; to strengthen marketing and recruitment strategies for target schools, the Group would look to include more case studies in the information that was circulated in the future.

There were no further issues raised by members arising from the minutes.

COR/34/25**Draft Annual Accountability Statement 2025/2026**

The Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) referred members to the previously circulated report and final draft of the Trafford & Stockport College Group (TSCG) Accountability Statement 2025/2026 in advance of formal approval.

It was confirmed that the Statement outlined how TSCG aimed to fulfil its Local Needs Duty and contributed to regional skills priorities by delivering an employer-responsive, inclusive, and future-focused curriculum.

The CCO reported that this year's submission reflected a step change and has been developed through extensive engagement with local authorities, employer bodies, and the GMCA.

Key updates included:

- Tight alignment to Stockport and Trafford's economic plans, including priorities for regeneration, inclusive growth, green economy and workforce resilience.
- Robust curriculum planning informed by LSIP engagement, LMI, and Skills Advisory Boards across key sectors: construction, health, digital, education, aviation/logistics, and early years.
- Enhanced governance mechanisms including the formation of a new Skills Accountability Committee to support monitoring and compliance.
- Ambitious growth targets including increased HTQ and adult L3 enrolments, new supported internships, employer-designed provision in Airport City and Trafford City, and wider integration of sustainability and green skills across all study programmes.

Minute No.

It was confirmed that the statement set out seven strategic objectives with SMART targets as detailed in the report. It was noted that the objectives were measurable, aligned with local needs, and embedded into business planning and budget forecasts.

Progress made against the 2024/2025 statement included:

- Delivery of new adult courses
- Growth in employer partnerships through Skills Hubs, LSIF/FEIF, and SABs
- Increased adult participation and new Level 3 provision
- Pilots in green skills, aviation pre-employment, and digital CPD
- Engagement with over 100 SMEs via the FEIF innovation project
- Completion of a mini LSIP for Manchester Airport Skills Hub
- Expanded facilities including Cyber Lab, Clinical Suite, and EV Training Space

Challenges included static adult L3 funding allocations, brand recognition of HTQs, and green skills adoption. The CCO confirmed that these areas were being actively addressed through the 2025/2026 objectives.

Next steps included:

- Publication of the Statement on the website following Board approval
- Submission to the Department for Education (DfE)
- Circulation to Stockport and Trafford Councils for monitoring and alignment
- Internal dissemination
- Termly monitoring and review through the Skills Accountability Committee
- Annual refresh aligned to the curriculum planning cycle and LSIP updates in Spring 2026

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member expressed concern in the overall decline in apprenticeship growth targets and sought clarity in relation to the performance criteria and the targets set for apprenticeships. The Group Principal (GP) reminded members of the pause in enrolments in some critical areas last year to improve quality and address staffing issues which had impacted growth. It was confirmed that the targets for next year were based on curriculum plans and reflected a more realistic position of the Group current position. The GP confirmed that the Group were confident that they had the resources to deliver the growth.

Action: Chief Commercial Officer

Following due consideration, it was agreed that the CCO would add narrative to provide context around the apprenticeship growth targets.

A member praised the work and progress undertaken by the Group over the last few years regarding the Skills Accountability Statement and emphasised the need to communicate the breadth and impact of the work to the community, highlighting the importance of showcasing achievements and initiatives. The member also raised a question in relation to the Group's position against other FE colleges and whether the Group was trailblazing. The CCO advised that every college is different in the way that they display their Local Needs Duty. The CCO highlighted considerations around producing a further report at the end of the year that would focus on achievements, retention, and performance. It was

Minute No.

noted that this report would include case studies to provide evidence and that the aim would be to create a document that not only highlights financial aspects but also showcases the Group's contributions to skill needs and social value.

The GP highlighted the Skills Accountability Agreement and the requirement for all colleges to publish their statements on their websites. The GP noted the importance of transparency and honesty in public documents and emphasised the need to display accurate information and context. The GP highlighted the Group's approach to presenting local needs and performance data, ensuring that it aligns with national priorities whilst also reflecting the specific context of Stockport and Trafford. The GP reported that the work that the Group undertakes with the two Local Authorities (LAs) has been commended by the DfE at strategic conversations.

A member raised a question in relation to the business section in local online papers and suggested that the Group's contributions to industry priorities should be highlighted in local news. The CCO concurred with the member's suggestion and highlighted that whilst work has been undertaken in relation to articles around supporting industry and working with employers, the focus also needs to be on embedding education skills with civic partners.

In response to a question the GP noted the importance of promoting the Group's offerings to schools, emphasising the need to demonstrate the value of vocational education alongside traditional academic routes. It was confirmed that the Group is on a journey to improve this perception and is working on strategies to better engage with schools and showcase the benefits of vocational education.

Action: Chief Commercial Officer

The CCO confirmed that following approval and publication of the Skills Accountability Statement on the Group's website, it would be circulated to all stakeholders and schools.

The Corporation Secretary extended the Board's congratulations to the Chief Commercial Officer on her Board appointment of the Greater Manchester Learning Provider Network (GMLPN).

There were no further questions or issues raised by member and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Draft Annual Accountability Statement 2025/2026 be approved in advance of its publication on the Group's website.

COR/35/25**Strategic Conversation with External Agencies 29 April 2025 – Meeting Outcomes**

The Chair of the Corporation reported that a meeting had been held with the DfE and members of the FE Commissioners Team on 29 April 2025 at which the Executive Leadership and the Corporation Secretary were also in attendance.

It was noted that member (OB) had also been in attendance at the meeting as an observer following completion of the Chair's Leadership Programme to support succession planning.

Minute No.

The Chair reported that discussion had been positive with a key focus on the Group's achievements and challenges.

The Chair highlighted the contributions of the Executive Leadership and the Corporation Secretary, who presented various aspects of the Group's performance and strategic direction.

Action: Corporation Secretary

It was noted that the letter arising from the meeting had not yet been received but that once it becomes available it would be shared with members accordingly.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the verbal update in respect of the Strategic Conversation held with external agencies on 29 April 2025 be received and noted.

COR/36/25**Subcontracting Provision 2025/2026**

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated reports and an update on the proposed subcontracted and partnership activity for 2025/2026 for consideration in advance of their formal approval.

It was noted that in recent years the amount of subcontracting had been reduced in line with guidance from the ESFA but also taking into consideration the intent of the Group's curriculum and strategic reasons for working with partners.

There was confirmation that in line with ESFA guidance, the Group had submitted a request for approval to continue with programme subcontracting for 16-19 provision during the 2025/2026 academic year. It was noted that there were no proposals in relation to subcontracting for adults in 2025/2026 and further that the Group was well below the requirement of the ESFA for subcontracting, by funding stream, to be less than 25% for 16-18 provision.

An overview of the proposed subcontracting arrangements and partnership arrangements for 2025/2026 was presented.

The GP highlighted the following key points:

- Conclusion of the subcontracting arrangement with Flixton Girls' School following phased exit.
- Conclusion of the subcontracting arrangement with Carrington Riding School.
- Continuation of the same partnerships with volume in line with similar years.

Questions and Comments were invited from members.

A member raised a question in relation to Working Wonders and asked whether the numbers were static and the GP advised that Working Wonders specialises in the logistics sector and has been flexible in responding to demand. It was noted that it was a key priority area and that the Group does not have the infrastructure to deliver the provision.

Minute No.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the arrangement with OLC was due to be concluded in the next few weeks.

In response to a question, the GP advised that the contract with Xyrius Training was at the request of Trafford Local Authority and there were no current plans for 2025/2026.

A member sought clarification as to whether the distinction between subcontracting and partnerships arrangements had been defined. It was confirmed that subcontractors deliver the services, whereas the Group owns the delivery of the partnership activity.

In response to a question in relation to Ofsted, it was confirmed that the Group is responsible for all aspects of quality assurance and improvement, capacity, capability, and monitoring of the subcontracted and partnership provision. The GP reported that it was important for governors to be fully aware of the reasons for working with partners and how this supports the Group's strategic aims and contributes to meeting the local skills needs. It was noted that it was the responsibility of the Board to ensure the provision is monitored and controlled appropriately as it presents a greater risk than college-based provision, both reputational and financially.

Action: Group Principal

Following due discussion, it was agreed that the GP would highlight the distinction between partnership and subcontracting arrangements in future reports.

A member raised a question in relation to Code Nation and the GP advised that Code Nation was a strong partnership, particularly in the digital space, and that they had been performing well in their apprenticeship programs. It was reported that the combined authority was supportive of this partnership due to the significant demand in the digital sector.

A member raised a question in relation to Stockport County and the potential positive impact of the success of the club and the Group's subcontracted provision. The GP highlighted Stockport County's ambitions and the potential to explore further collaboration through community development areas.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the proposals for subcontracting activities for 2025/2026 be approved.

COR/37/25**Curriculum and Assessment Review Update**

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated Curriculum Assessment Review Interim Report March 2025 which provided an overview of the current national curriculum and assessment system.

The GP highlighted the significance of the review from a sector perspective. It was confirmed that the review covered the primary sectors to FE providers but not universities.

Minute No.

The GP noted that the review emphasised the importance of staff workload and highlighted the unintended consequences for teachers, such as learning new methods and dealing with awarding bodies following qualification changes. It was advised that the review aimed to avoid increasing staff workload.

In relation to the FE sector, The GP emphasised that the review was evolution rather than a revolution. The GP highlighted the significant focus on equality and inclusion, aligning with the broader agenda of social mobility and addressing performance gaps. Further reference was made to recommendations in relation the importance of progression for vulnerable learners and the indication of the potential retention of applied general qualifications (BTECs), which may not be phased out as previously thought.

It was confirmed that the final recommendations were expected later in 2025.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

The Chair expressed optimism in the review's direction and its alignment with the Group's priorities, and drew attention to the reference, 'Meanwhile, young people and their parents or carers have been clear that they would like to see more applied knowledge in certain areas, to support young people to be ready for life and work'.

The Chair highlighted the importance of vocational education and the need for better career advice and guidance before students arrive at college. The Chair commented that schools often focus on the academic side without adequately preparing students for vocational paths.

The GP commented that the review was a hugely ambitious undertaking and highlighted the acknowledgement that the breadth was not there at the moment, noting the focus on exams, which do not align with the work environment where skills were demonstrated through performance and application. Concerns in relation to inclusion were highlighted, with some learners unable to take formal exams effectively. The GP advised that it was unlikely that English and maths exams would go.

A member commented on the importance of preschool curriculum and the challenges faced by children who arrive at school without basic skills and the impact this has on their education. The CS highlighted co-opted member (JC) and their primary education experience, which had provided valuable insights into curriculum development and strategy during a recent FE Curriculum and Quality Committee meeting.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Curriculum and Assessment Review Update be received and noted.

COR/38/25**Management Accounts P8 24 25 and High Level FY25 26 Budget Assumptions**

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and financial position which included the P8 management accounts, financial position and a high-level view of FY25/26 Budget as considered in detail by the Resources Committee on 30 April 2025.

Minute No.

It was confirmed that the following was attached to the covering report:

- A copy of the CFOO's presentation
- Period 8 Management Accounts

The CFOO made a presentation in relation to the key issues from his report and the management accounts under the following headings:

FY24/25 P8 Management Accounts

- Underlying Ed. EBITDA
- Risks and Opportunities
- Cash
- Financial Health and Covenants
- Financial year 25/26 Outlook

High Level FY25/26 Budget

- Underlying Ed. EBITDA
- Profit and Loss
- Cash and Contributions

The CFOO provided a comprehensive overview of the current financial status, risks, and future budget considerations, within which the following was highlighted:

- Current Financial Position: Positive Ed. EBITDA and contingency indicating a healthy financial position and opportunity to invest.
- Main Risks: Adult Skills Fund, which needs to be fully delivered.
- Cash Position: Inflated cash position in relation to the new build, with about 4m expected to be spent.
- Financial Health and Covenants: No significant concerns were reported regarding financial health and covenants.
- FY25/26 Budget: It was advised that base rate increases for 16 to 19-year-olds were expected to mitigate FY24/25 shortfall. Further information was provided in respect of the assumed pay award for staff and anticipated spend on new roles to support growth.

In summary, the CFOO highlighted the Group's strong financial position and the positive outlook for the next fiscal year. It was confirmed that the 3 year plan was on track.

A member raised a question in relation to the interest on the cash reserve and the CFOO confirmed that the Group was earning interest on this amount by placing it in short-term deposits, typically for one or two months at a time. It was advised that this approach ensures liquidity whilst still generating interest.

A question was raised in relation to High Needs funds and the risks with regard to ensuring that the Group could claim back the funds from the local authorities. The CFOO advised that the Group had received written confirmation from Trafford of payment by 12 June 2025.

In response to a question on 2025/2026 student numbers, the CFOO reported that applications were up, but that there was caution about counting on these numbers until actual enrolments had been confirmed. The CFOO advised that there was a focus on improving conversion rates from applications to

Minute No.

enrolments, with specific strategies in place to manage this. It was confirmed that the Group were preparing for growth, particularly in areas like construction and engineering, and was investing in staff to support this anticipated increase. It was also advised that there was a realistic approach to estimating the actual number of enrolments based on historical conversion rates.

The GP outlined the measures in place and the key factors that impact recruitment, emphasising that applications were only one part of the process and that it was also important to put strategies in place to support conversions rates and to provide a positive experience for students once they started to attend college.

A member asked a question in relation to the financial projections for next year and the risks associated with achieving the projected EBITDA. The CFOO advised that the projections were on track with the Group aiming for a 3.6m EBITDA with a 1.5m contingency.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was resolved that:

- a) the Chief Finance Officer's Report and presentation be received and noted;**
- b) the P8 Management Accounts be duly approved; and**
- c) the High Level FY25/26 Budget Assumptions be approved**

COR/39/25**Board Assurance and Risk Management Framework**

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and information in respect of the monitoring of the Group's Board Assurance and Risk Management Framework (BARMF) and to provide assurances therein.

There was confirmation that the BARMF had been considered in detail at the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 31 March 2025.

It was confirmed that there were 37 total risks, of which 35 had a gross score over 15 and were therefore monitored by the Audit Committee and of the risks there were 4 with a net risk over 15. It was reported that the framework had been updated to align with new strategies, resulting in an increase in strategic risks from 27 to 37. It was noted that some risks have been combined or split into multiple risks to better reflect the current strategic priorities.

The CFOO recommended the removal of the following risks:

SP4/7 - Risk relating to the declining numbers at Marple campus as the risk is now covered under SP1/5 and SP4/1. It was confirmed that, given the size of the risk, a separate Marple specific strategic risk was not required.

O1/6 – Risk relating to the managing the post-merger impact and integration of Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College (CAMSFC). It was confirmed that, given the length of time since the merger, it was now deemed appropriate to remove the risk and focus on SP2 risks.

Action: Chief Finance and Operations Officer

Minute No.

The CFOO advised that the Executive Team were currently working on defining the risk appetite and that it would be presented to the Audit Committee at the next meeting.

A member raised a question in relation to the risk relating to the Cheadle project and the CFOO advised that the risk remains high due to the tight timeline for transfer of the new build and potential impact on the start of the academic year. It was reported that Executive Leadership were closely monitoring this risk and that the project was on budget and currently one week ahead of schedule.

A member raised a question in relation to new risk SP33 regarding the failure to respond effectively to the new proposed Ofsted Inspection Framework and it was confirmed that this risk was currently marked high whilst awaiting confirmation of the framework.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the update in respect of the Full Framework be received and noted and further that the Summary Framework and visual heat map as presented be approved.

COR/40/25**DfE 23/24 Financial Statement Review Letter**

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated 2023/2024 Financial Statement Review letter from the Department for Education (DfE) dated 28 April 2025.

The CFOO reported that the letter confirmed the following:

- Confirmation that the Group's, Finance Record 2023/2024, financial health score was Outstanding against a forecast (CFFR submission) of Good. It was advised that the reason for the variance was due to the CFFR which included a risk reserve that went unused and crept into Outstanding once the financial statements had been submitted.
- That the DfE had not identified any significant financial control concerns.
- The Group to be informed separately of any triggers for intervention. The CFOO advised that it was believed that the Group had met any triggers.
- That the Financial Dashboard information reflected the data that was submitted in the Group's Finance Record for FY23/24.

Action: Chief Finance and Operations Officer

It was confirmed Financial Dashboard and Curriculum Efficiency information would be incorporated in FY25/26 Budget and 3-year financial plan and presented to the Resources Committee on 18 June 2025 and the Board of the Corporation on 16 July 2025.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was resolved that the DfE Financial Statement Review letter dated 28 April 2025 be received and noted.

COR/41/25**Business Continuity Policy and Plan**

Minute No.

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and information in relation to the Business Continuity Policy and Plan.

Members were directed to the highlighted changes therein.

It was confirmed that, following the Executive Leadership Transformation Programme, the responsibility for the Business Continuity Policy and Plan had moved under the remit of the CFOO and had been reflected in the updated policy and plan along with other personnel changes.

The CFOO commended the Business Continuity and Plan for approval.

There were no questions or issues raised by member and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Business Continuity Policy and Plan be approved.

COR/42/25**Governor Links and Protocols for 2025/2026**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) referred members to the previously circulated report and Governor Links and Learning Activity Programme for 2025/2026.

The CS reported that a working group had been established to conduct a comprehensive review of the Governor Link and Learning Activity Programme for 2025-2026. The objective of this extensive review was to align the Governor Links and Learning Activity Protocol with the implementation of the new Strategic Plan 2024-2030, incorporating redefined areas of focus at a strategic level. It was noted that the review was supported by an evaluation of a survey conducted through the FE Clerks Network that included 53 responses from FE Colleges regarding suggested Governor Link areas and the benefits of enhancing governor visibility, familiarising governors with the Group, and obtaining deeper insights to support Board discussions and decisions.

The following substantive changes were proposed to the protocols for 2025-2026:

- Strengthening links to Strategic Priorities and considering the Executive Leadership Transformation Programme (ELTP).
- Incorporating new staff members and role/title changes to reflect the ELTP.
- Ensuring all members have been assigned an area, with mentoring provided as needed.
- Ensuring equitable distribution of governor workload, taking into account existing commitments, such as those serving as Committee Chairs.
- Agreement that relevant staff members would be invited to Link Governor meetings on a 'needs basis' directed by the leadership to ensure a strategic focus.
- Introducing a new section on utilising AI to assist governors with the production of link governor reports.
- Providing greater clarification of the protocols, such as link governor attendance at an internal committee need not complete an additional link meeting unless required or requested.
- Updates to reflect all link governor activities.

Minute No.

- Changes to support succession planning.

It was confirmed that a draft of the Governor Links and Learning Activity Protocol for 2025/2026 had been emailed to governors in advance of the meeting to enable governors to provide individual feedback in advance of the Board meeting.

The CS recommended the adoption and implementation the proposed link governor arrangements for 2025/2026.

There were no questions or issues raised by member and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Governor Links and Protocols for 2025/2026 be approved.

COR/43/25 Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 31 March 2025

The minutes of the Audit Committee held on 31 March 2025 were received and noted.

COR/44/25 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Chair of the Committee presented a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee at its meeting.

The Chair confirmed that Governor (SP) had been unanimously elected as the Vice Chair of the Audit Committee for the Academic Years 2025/2026

The report covered the following:

- Data Protection Progress Update
- OfS HE Data Action Plan
- Internal Audit Reports
- Internal Audit Progress Report 2024/2025
- Internal Audit Tracker – Management Actions Arising from Audit Reports March 2025.
- Board Assurance and Risk Management Framework

The Chair drew the Board's attention to the following:

- Positive assurance provided on data Protection and improvements in handling subject access requests.
- Internal audit report discussion in relation to Performance Management, Student Disciplinary, Insurance and Treasury/ Cash Flow Management. In relation to Performance Management discussion focused on appraisal completion and improvements needed in this area
- Internal Audit Tracker and the Committee's close monitoring of the implementation and recommendations from internal audits.
- Future Audit Plans and discussions with internal auditors in relation to the planning the audit cycle for the 2025-2026.

Internal Audit Reports recommended and approved by the Board of the Corporation included:

- **Business Critical Controls - HR Performance Management**
- **Student Disciplinary Process**

Minute No.

- **Insurance**
- **Business Critical Controls - Treasury/Cashflow Management**

In relation to the Board Assurance and Risk Management Framework 2024/2025, it was confirmed that the that the Summary Framework and visual heat map had been considered under item 4.2 of the meeting's agenda

A member raised a question in relation to the performance management system, specifically regarding the relevance and effectiveness of the current appraisal process. The member enquired as to whether the system was too focused on forms and processes rather than actual performance and development. Questions were raised in relation to planned changes to develop a system that would be more forward looking and less bureaucratic.

The Chief People Officer (CPO) acknowledged the need for improvements in the current system but advised that whilst the audit had been titled Performance Management, it primarily focused on compliance. The CPO highlighted that the current system involved agreeing and reviewing objectives on a six-monthly basis and emphasised the importance of living the KPIs continuously rather than just checking them periodically. The CPO noted that performance management was a key part of the People and Culture Strategy and that the Group were currently considering a more employer development and progress led approach.

Action: Chief People Officer/ Link Governor (JB)

Link Governor (JB) and Chief People Officer to consider performance management at their next Link meeting.

There were no further issues or comments raised by members following the update and it was resolved that the minutes be received and noted.

COR/45/25**Minutes of the Resources Committee Meetings held on 30 April 2025**

The minutes of the Resources Committee Meetings held on 30 April 2025 were received and noted.

COR/46/25**Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The Chair of the Resources Committee presented a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee at its meeting:

The report covered the following:

- People and culture Update
- EDI Annual Plan 2024/2025 Progress update
- Sustainability Update
- Learner Numbers and Funding Update
- Partner Subcontracting
- P8 Management Accounts and High Level FY25/26 Budget Assumptions
- OfS/DfE Capital Funding Update

The Chair of the Committee drew the Board's attention to the following:

- People and Culture Update: It was advised that key metrics and strategic initiatives had been presented, highlighting improved staff utilisation, positive trends in turnover and absence rates, and upcoming employee voice survey

Minute No.

results. It was noted that further work would be undertaken to analyse absence rates.

- EDI Plan 2024-2025 Progress Update: it was highlighted that progress against the Plan, emphasised the integration of EDI into the Group's strategic direction and efforts to support vulnerable students.

Action: Chief People Officer

It was confirmed that the new EDI Strategy would be presented to the Board of the Corporation in the Autumn Term 2025.

The Chair of the Committee advised that the following items were recommended for approval and would be considered under item 7.1 of the meeting's agenda:

- Supply Chain and Fees Charges Policy 2025/2026
- Fees Policy 2025/2026
- Treasury Management Policy
- Redundancy Policy
- Resources Committee Terms of Reference
- Procurement Strategy

It was noted that the P8 Management Accounts and the High Level FY25/26 Budget had been considered and approved under item 4.1 of the meeting's agenda (Management Accounts P8 24/25 and High Level FY25 /26 Budget Assumptions).

A member commented on the significant number of High Needs and EHCPs and enquired as to whether there would be any resource issues. The GP confirmed that the Group was confident in its current staffing levels for High Needs students, with no more vacancies in this area compared to others. It was confirmed that leadership had been strengthened through the appointment of the Assistant Principal Student Support, Safeguarding and Inclusion who had significant expertise in this area. The GP further advised that the Group had increased the percentage of permanent staff, which would support retention and professional development. It was confirmed that this decision had been made during budget planning for the next year.

The GP expressed the Group's ambition to become a Centre of Excellence for High Needs.

There were no issues or comments raised by members following the update and it was resolved that the minutes be received and noted.

COR/47/25**Key Issues of the Health & Safety Committee 5 March 2025**

The key issues of the Health & Safety Committee meeting held on 5 March 2025 were received and noted.

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) shared the following key points:

- Accidents increased by 26%. It was highlighted that many incidents involved individuals who were already ill or injured upon arrival at work.
- A focus on promoting the reporting of near misses and improving departmental health and safety audits and risk assessments.

Minute No.

- That the Group has been awarded the RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) award.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the key issues, actions and matters arising be received and noted.

COR/48/25**Key Issues of the Sustainability Committee 12 March 2025**

The key issues of the Sustainability Committee meeting held on 12 March 2025 were received and noted.

The Chief People Officer (CPO) shared the following key points:

- Progress Against Annual Plan: The Committee reviewed progress against the annual plan, with significant advancements in energy efficiency projects, including lighting upgrades and waste management improvements.
- Green Week Initiative: There was a strong engagement in the Green Week initiative, which was recognised by the AOC for its positive impact.
- Green Gown Awards: That the decision had been to focus on submitting a strong application for the Green Gown Awards in 2026.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the key issues, actions and matters arising be received and noted.

COR/49/25**Key Issues of the Skills Accountability Committee 28 April 2025**

The key issues of the Skills Accountability Committee meeting held on 28 April 2025 were received and noted.

The Link Governor (JB) shared the following key points:

- The meeting included discussions on local skills needs and initiatives with stakeholders from Stockport and Trafford. The Chief Commercial Officer provided detailed insights into the technology and activities with stakeholders.
- That an external member (Sharp) had provided insights and discussed potential synergies between the Group's work and his role in the community.
- Discussions covered apprenticeship challenges and the importance of strategic conversations with larger employers.
- That the Committee had reviewed the work of the Skills Advisory Boards and their impact on local skills development.
- The airport project was highlighted as a key initiative, with discussions on its strategic importance and potential for modelling similar initiatives elsewhere.
- A mini-Ofsted was commissioned to analyse the skills needs and requirements for the Greater Manchester Group, emphasising the Group's role as a key player.
- The Committee discussed the need for more work with SMEs and highlighted the success of the Innovation Fund and engagement with local businesses.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the key issues, actions and matters arising be received and noted.

Minute No.**COR/50/25****Policy and Strategy Approvals**

Resources Committee recommendations for approval included:

- Supply Chain and Fees Charges Policy 2025/2026
- Fees Policy 2025/2026
- Treasury Management Policy 2025/2027
- Redundancy Policy 2025/2027
- Revised Resources Committee Terms of Reference 2026/2026
- Procurement Strategy 2025/2027

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the below named policies and strategies be approved subject to any minor required amendments:

- a) Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy 2025/2026**
- b) Fees Policy 2025/2026**
- c) Treasury Management Policy 2025/2027**
- d) Redundancy Policy 2025/2027**
- e) Revised Resources Committee Terms of Reference 2024/2026**
- f) Procurement Strategy 2025/2027**

COR/51/25**Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2025/2027**

The Chief People Officer (CPO) referred members to the previously circulated report and information in relation to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy 2025/2027.

It was confirmed that the policy reflects the Group's statutory responsibilities and commitments in relation to EDI.

The following key points were highlighted:

- Only minor changes made to update titles and the titles of supporting policies and procedures.
- A further review to take place to ensure that the policy was consistent with the updated strategy and EHRC Code of Practice on gender and gender reassignment.
- That the Group was not anticipating any significant required changes to existing policies and procedures. It was noted that the Group had taken actions consistent with the Equality Act 2010, which includes gender reassignment as a protected characteristic.
- That the Group would continue to take all reasonable actions to safeguard the safety and dignity of all and be reflective of requirements associated with biological gender and gender reassignment.

Next steps and timeline included:

- Policy to be shared with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee on 25 June 2025.
- Policy to be published.
- Further policy review to take place to reflect the updated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (December 2025) and EHRC Code of Practice following the Supreme Court ruling on gender and gender reassignment (summer 2025). It was confirmed that any proposed changes as a result of the above would be taken to the Board of the Corporation for consideration and approval.

Minute No.

In relation to the Supreme Court ruling, the CS advised that the Group's solicitors had provided an update to the CEO. It was confirmed that a review had also been conducted in relation to governance and students. It was noted that a report would be presented at the next HE Curriculum and Quality Committee.

The CPO advised that the Supreme Court ruling was also considered at a recent JNCC meeting in relation to employment. It was noted that there were no challenges or concerns raised by staff indicating the open, supportive and pragmatic approach at the Group.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the below named Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy 2025/2027 be approved.

COR/52/25**FE and Skills Strategy 2024/2030**

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated report and information in relation to the FE and Skills Strategy 2024/2030.

It was noted that a draft of the FE and Skills Strategy had previously been considered by Governors at the Strategic Development Day held in March 2025.

The GP reminded members that the FE and Skills Strategy sets out the Group's long-term curriculum intent, aligning provision with local, regional, and national skills priorities. It ensures that the Group remains responsive to economic demands whilst supporting inclusive progression for all learners. The GP advised that this strategy supports and works alongside other strategies such as Higher Education and Skills Strategy, Employer and Stakeholder Responsive Strategy, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy, Student Experience Strategy and SEND and Vulnerable Learners Strategy.

The GP drew the meeting's attention to the strategic objectives and key sector priorities as outlined in the report and strategy.

It was noted that a member had sent some minor amendments and that these would be incorporated into the Strategy.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the below named FE and Skills Strategy 2024/2030 be approved.

COR/53/25**Any Other Business**

The Chair advised that the scheduled training event to be held on the 2 July at 3.00pm would now be held in person and would be followed by a social event. It was noted invitations would be extended to ex-members of staff, governors, employees and community partners.

The Chair extended the Board's congratulations to the Corporation Secretary on her achievement of the Level 7 FE Governance Professional Qualification.

Minute No.

There were no further matters raised under any other business.

COR/54/25

Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting will be held on 16 July 2025 at 4.00pm

The meeting closed at 11.45am