

TRAFFORD & STOCKPORT COLLEGE GROUP

**Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting
held on Wednesday 18 June 2025 at 4.00 pm
via Microsoft Teams**

Present:	Louise Richardson James Scott Graham Luccock Jonathan O'Brien Lewis Ormston Nick Wroe	(Chair) (Chief Executive Officer)
In Attendance:	Rebecca Clare Carmen Gonzalez-Eslava Michelle Leslie Yvonne Riley Lyndsay Sheridan Henry Taylor-Toone Mark Watson Kelly Wright Rick Farrow	(Corporation Secretary) (Group Principal) (Chief People Officer) (Assistant Corporation Secretary) (Director of Finance) (Chief Finance and Operations Officer) (Director of Estates) (Assistant Principal Planning, Funding and Performance) (Chief Technology Officer)

Minute No:**RES/32/25 Apologies for Absence**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) reported apologies for absence from Jill Bottomley and Alison Hewitt.

The Director of Human Resources and Performance was not in attendance at the meeting.

Rick Farrow (Chief Technology Officer) was welcomed to his first meeting.

RES/33/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of either direct or indirect interest in any of the meeting's business items.

RES/34/25 Minutes of the Resource Committee Meeting held on 30 April 2025

The minutes of the meeting were approved and accepted as a correct account of the proceedings.

RES/35/25 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Chairperson referred members to the previously circulated summary and progress update concerning the actions arising from the minutes and earlier meetings of the Resources Committee.

It was confirmed that most actions were future actions or would be considered as part of the meetings agenda.

Minute No:

It was confirmed that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the Digital Strategy would be presented at the October Board meeting.

It was noted that a Governor training session would be scheduled to take place on the new Procurement legislation during 2025/2026.

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

RES/36/25 Learner Numbers and Funding Update

The Assistant Principal Planning, Funding and Performance (APPFP) presented a report which provided a summary update in relation to the current position with recruitment in relation to learner numbers and predicted learner funding income.

The APPFP drew the Committee's attention to the following:

- 16-19 currently at 99.3% of allocation, with a slight decrease since previous reporting period.
- T Level recruitment against target, slightly reduced to 56%.
- Apprenticeships planned starts against internal department tracker (including pipeline activity) are in line with the expected delivery plan.
- HE numbers excluding the subcontracted provision are below target, with no change expected for remainder of year.

The APPFP reported that T Level clawback for the next academic year had reduced to 0% and would be closely monitored during the recruitment period.

The APPFP further reported that the Group had received notification from the DfE in relation to an increase in various elements of the funding allocation formula, which had resulted in an indicative increase to the EFA allocation and the DfE 16 to 19 allocation.

It was confirmed that, at this point in the year, there were no concerns to raise, and income was expected to be in line with budget expectations. The APPFP advised that work continues to ensure that the Adult Skills Fund budget is maximised to its full potential.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member raised a question in relation to T Level recruitment, and it was advised that the Group were monitoring the application data closely and that it was looking positive, with tracking on a weekly basis in preparation for the active recruitment period in August.

A member raised a question in relation to the growing number of 16-19 learners needing additional support and resources due to their educational background and enquired whether provisions had been made to ensure that the necessary support was available for these learners. The APPFP advised that meetings had taken place with managers to review the expected increase in learner numbers across different campuses, and that the managers had been modelling the staffing resources to ensure they were prepared to support the learners.

There were no further questions or issues raised from members arising from the report and following due discussion and consideration it was resolved that the Learner Numbers and Funding update report be noted.

Minute No:**RES/37/25 Partner Subcontracting Mid-Year Update**

The Assistant Principal Planning, Funding and performance (APPFP) referred members to the previously circulated report and update on the current position in relation to the Group's Partnership and Subcontracting activity during 2024-2025.

The APPFP advised that there were no changes to note since the previous reporting period and that everything remains in line with budget expectations.

The following areas of activity were highlighted in the report:

16-19 Subcontracting

- Carrington Riding School, Debut Academy and Stockport County remain slightly under target. The Carrington Riding School arrangement is to conclude at the end of the academic year.
- Flixton Girls' School remains on target, with the arrangement concluding at the end of the academic year.
- Learner numbers remain under plan for most programmes (-38), which results in a saving in non-pay expenditure.

16-19 Partnerships

- Altrincham Football Club remain on target.

Adult Skills Fund and Higher Education Subcontracting

- Xyrius Training commenced and is progressing well and remains on target
- OLC to conclude at the end of the academic year as planned.

Adult Partnerships

- Working Wonders remain on target, with an expected contribution to the Group of £414k.
- Code Nation below target by £163k, with an expected contribution to the Group of £164k. An increase since the previous reporting period.

An update of the planned funding and learner numbers for 2025/2026 was included in the report.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following consideration it was resolved that the Partner Subcontracting Mid-Year Update be received and noted.

RES/38/25 Chief Finance and Operations Officer Report and P9 Management Accounts

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and financial position which included the P9 management accounts.

In relation to the P9 management accounts and financial position, key issues highlighted included:

P8 Education EBITDA Forecast

- On track for a 3.6 million education EBITDA, with one million of contingency left for the last three months.

Minute No:

Risks and Opportunities

- Risk reserve increased to £1,038k due to NI funding opportunity and reduction in HE risks due to receipt of final student loan instalment for FY24/25
- Healthy position and opportunity to exceed £4 million EBITDA by the end of the year.
- Main risks – Adult Skills Fund and Non-Pay

Cash

- Running above budget due to underspend of TSCG funds for Cheadle. VAT exempt (£4m) and assumed clawback.

Financial Health and Covenants

- Financial Health – forecast Outstanding. It was reported that if £4m VAT element of Cheadle was removed the forecast would fall to a Good (underlying position)
- Covenants – All forecasting to pass with significant headroom.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member raised a question in relation to risks and opportunities and sought clarification in relation to the high needs underpayment and the CFOO clarified the position in respect of the local authorities and outstanding payments.

A member raised a question in relation to the Cheadle Project and the assumed four million clawback, and it was advised that the Group were awaiting clarification from the DfE.

There were no further questions or comments from members and following consideration it was resolved that the P9 Management Accounts be recommended to the Board of the Corporation for approval.

RES/39/25 OfS/DfE Capital Funding update

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and capital funding update.

Reduced since previous report with due to the conclusion of some of the grants.

Key points highlighted included:

- **T-Level Specialist Equipment:** The Creative and Design T Level did not run in FY24/25, so an extension until December 2025 was requested and granted. It was noted that the £141,960 deferred relates solely to this T Level stream.
- **Apprenticeships Growth:** £45,000 allocation for the purchase of Lathing and Milling machines used in the delivery of engineering apprenticeships and contingent on confirming fifteen new starts before the end of the year.
- **FE College Condition Allocation:** Grant agreement signed and returned to DfE with funds expected by the 20 June 2025. The CFOO reported that the grant is required to be spent by 31 March 2028 and advised that the Group were currently working on a 3-year capital plan (that will accompany the FY25/26 Budget and 3-year financial plan) to show how this grant would be used.

Minute No:

The Chief Executive Officer advised that the Group were considering a new bid for the next round of OfS Capital funding to complete additional projects at Stockport.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following consideration it was resolved that the Capital Funding update be received and noted.

RES/40/25**Higher Education Fees 2026/2027**

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and information in relation to the proposed Higher Education Fees for 2026/2027.

The CFOO advised that as an approved fee cap HE provider, TSCG was required to develop an Access and Participation Plan (APP). The CFOO reported that the current APP finishes at the end of FY25/26 and that TSCG has engaged a consultant (David Hiller) to develop the new HE APP. It was confirmed that the final draft of the APP (FY26/27 to FY29/30) had been recommended by the HE Curriculum and Quality Committee (HECQ) to the Board of the Corporation for approval in July 2025.

The CFOO reported that, as part of the APP, a Fees, Investment and Target (FIT) schedule had also been developed (with oversight from HECQ) for fees and the fee projections to calculate the funding required for equal opportunities activities.

The proposed fees were as follows:

- Education and Training (Part Time) to remain unchanged at £3,750
- HND/HNC (Full Time) to remain unchanged at £8,000
- HND/HNC (Part Time) increase of £250 to £4,250
- BA (Hons) Degree increase of £250 to £8,450
- Foundation Degree increase of £250 to £8,250

In relation to the Group' competitors, the CFOO provided details of how the proposed fees compared to the fees published FY25/26 fee. It was noted that the fee information for FY26/27 had not yet been released.

A brief discussion took place on the proposed fees in relation to competitors, and it was confirmed that the Group, whilst not the lowest, remained competitive across the offering.

In relation to financials, it was reported, that the Group's HE courses currently run on an average 30% margin, so the change in fee (using FY25/26 planned enrolment, and assuming no increase in the cost base) would result in the margin increasing by 3%.

There were no questions or comments from members and following consideration it was resolved that the Higher Education Fees for 2026/2027 be recommended to the Board of the Corporation for approval.

RES/41/25**Financial Regulations 2025/2026**

The Director of Finance (DoF) referred members to the previously circulated report and presentation of the new financial regulations.

The following changes to the financial regulations were proposed:

Minute No:

- General – remove all references to ESFA and replace with DfE
- Page 4 – new ELT/LT structure referenced, and changes also reference throughout
- 16.8 – change responsibility from CFOO to DoF
- 26.49 – limiting trip cash advances to bank transfers only or currency cards
- 28.12 – time limit for travel expenses to be processed
- 29.13 – requirement to carry out stock count exercise at every quarter end
- 29.17 – update to signpost asset disposal form on Financial Services SharePoint area
- 29.18 – proceeds from Asset disposal regulation
- All budget holders to be issued a copy of the Financial Regulations to sign to confirm that they understand their responsibilities and obligations.

The DoF further advised on the updated quotes and tender thresholds in section 26.6 of the financial regulations that had been revised to align with the new Procurement Act. It was confirmed that the internal threshold has been increased from £100,000 to £200,000, providing greater scope for procurement activities.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following consideration it was resolved that the financial regulations be recommended to the Board of the Corporation for approval.

RES/42/25 Insurance Renewal

The Director of Finance (DoF) referred to members to the previously circulated report and information in relation to the insurance products and prices for AY25/26.

It was confirmed that the Insurance Renewal had been added to the reporting cycle in line with financial regulations requirement.

Supplementary documentation included:

- Renewal Report 2025/2026 provided by Gallagher.

The DoF drew the Committee's attention to the following:

- The overall cost for 2025/26 £208,244 inc all fees and IPT. It was noted that this was an increase of £13k on the previous year, with the main increase on Commercial Combined.
- All buildings to be revalued this year, with a separate quote received and due to be processed.
- Further valuation on Cheadle to be undertaken following handover.

The DoF highlighted that Business continuity cover had been listed in the report but would be removed as the Group has a separate provider for this.

A member commented that the overall increase in the insurance renewal seemed to be well above inflation. The DoF advised that the Group were in the final year of 3-year deal with the broker. It was noted that the Group would be looking to tender for the next renewal or broker LTA. The DoF advised that discussions with the procurement consultant would be undertaken to gauge insurance market conditions.

Next Steps and timeline included:

- Approve insurance renewal with cover in place from the 1 August.
- Scope for 2026-27 tender to commence.

Minute No:

The CS confirmed that the Terms of Reference for the Committee had been updated to include the insurance renewal process. The CS advised that this change had been made following an internal audit recommendation. It was confirmed that the updated terms of reference had been approved at the Board meeting in May and would be reflected in the cycle of business to ensure that the insurance renewal was reviewed on an annual basis.

There were no further questions or comments raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Insurance Renewal be recommended to the Board of the Corporation for approval.

RES/43/25 Digital Plan Update Report

The Chief Technology Officer (CTO) referred members to the previously circulated report and update on progress against priority digital plan actions.

The CTO provided an overview on the work that had been undertaken since commencing at the Group as detailed in the report.

It was confirmed that several improvement areas had been identified in the Group's cyber, data, project delivery, and asset estate.

The CTO confirmed the assessment, realignment, and performance of TSCG's technical services and products over the coming months, against the demand for Curriculum and Non-Curriculum Innovation.

Action: Chief Technology Officer

It was confirmed that the Digital Data and Technology (Ddat) Strategy 2025/2030 was currently under development and would be presented to the Board for approval in the autumn term.

The CTO advised that actions were ongoing through the Information and Governance Group to close out the Digital Action plan for 2025 (Currently at 85% complete).

In relation to the current strategic pillars, a comprehensive summary of the progress and outcomes was provided.

The CTO drew the Committee's attention to the following:

- **Digital Action Plan:** Currently 85% complete, with a target close date of October, in line with the new Ddat Strategy.
- **Digital Skills for Students:** Reporting a 3% year-on-year increase in digital skills and efficacy amongst students, with a focus on basic Microsoft products and improving AI literacy.
- **Curriculum Support:** Including the expansion of the two-minute Tuesday videos and ongoing Cave projects. In relation to Cave, it was noted that the construction functional skills content includes a 3D walkthrough model of a residential property for various trades.
- **AI in Teachermatic:** Seventy curriculum members part of the pilot, with a reported saving of 3.9 hours a month through IA generated content and resources.
- **Enabling Team Digital Programme:** Use of IA with forty members of enabling teams part of a Copilot pilot with positive feedback.

Minute No:

- **DFE Guidelines on Generative AI:** Guidelines are currently being reviewed to ensure that the Group remains within the prescribed guidelines whilst utilising AI technology effectively.
- **ERP Program:** Scoping commenced for the replacement of software covering multiple systems that facilitate core capabilities in Finance and HR.
- **Information Security (Cyber):** Risks highlighted, including the need for a 24/7 service and a Security Information and Event Management system. The CTO reported that this was a particular focus and referred to a proposal to partner with the GM community for a cyber service.
- **Microsoft Score:** The Group's Microsoft score continues to improve and now stands at 88% in line with the KPI, providing a high-level of assurance around the Microsoft estate.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member raised a question in relation to the statistics in the student survey, specifically focusing on the 69% of students who stated they understand how AI can and cannot be used in their qualification and enquired about the 31% of students that were not quite sure and what work can be done to improve this statistic. The CTO acknowledged the challenges and highlighted ongoing work to ensure that students understood the context of their learning and the appropriate use of AI. The GP and the APPFP highlighted the importance of mandatory tutorials and workshops to educate students on responsible AI use and to guard against malpractice cases.

In relation to regulations, the APPFP advised, that the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) released information and guidance for staff and students on a regular basis. It was noted that this helped to ensure that all organisations were aware of the rules and regulations around the use of AI and to address any increases in malpractice cases.

The member emphasised the importance of reducing the percentage of students who were unsure about how AI could and could not be used in their qualifications. It was noted that, by closing this gap through tutorial and workshops, malpractice cases could be reduced, and students would develop the necessary AI skills that were valuable in college and beyond into the workplace.

A Chair thanked the CTO for the update and all the work that had been undertaken, particularly in relation to cyber security, highlighting the impact and the disruption on a school that had been the subject of a cyber-attack.

There were no further questions or comments raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Digital Plan Update be received and noted.

RES/44/25

FE Workforce Data

The Chief People Officer (CPO) referred members to the previously circulated report and information in relation to the headline data from the Further Education Workforce Data Collection (FEWDC).

The CPO reported that the Department for Education (DfE) published the annual statistics on the further education workforce in England on 29 May 2025.

Minute No:

It was confirmed that the information in the release was based on data collected in the FEWDC and covered the 2023/2024 academic year.

The FEWDC collects information on the FE workforce and vacancies from the following providers:

- General Further Education Colleges (GFECS), including tertiary colleges.
- Sixth form colleges.
- Private sector public funded providers, including Independent Training Providers (IPTs).
- Other public funded providers. It was confirmed that this included some Higher Education providers, some Local Authority (LA) providers and a small number of University Technical Colleges (UTCs), specialist colleges and 16-19 free schools.

It was noted that the FEWDC also collects data in relation to governors from GFECS (including tertiary colleges) and sixth form colleges, including designated institutions.

The CPO highlighted that not all providers in the scope had been able to return data for the collection and advised that the released figures were therefore estimates based on known data and should be treated with caution. It was noted that 85.2% of providers in the scope returned the data for 2023/2024.

A summary of the Headline Facts and Figures 2023/2024 were provided in the report.

The CPO advised that the median annual FE salary for teachers for the sector was £36,300, whilst the Group's median salary was £43,686, meeting the KPI of being above the most recently published data.

It was highlighted, that whilst the Group remains competitive against other FE providers, it is still behind sixth form colleges in terms of salary and that this is a consideration in the context of budgets and funding.

There were no questions or comments raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the FE Workforce Data update be received and noted.

RES/45/25**Amended Treasury Management Policy**

The Director of Finance (DoF) referred members to the previously circulated report and information in relation to a further amendment to the Treasury Management Policy which would be effective from 1 August 2025.

The DoF advised that, Section 2.1 referred to the placement of cash on deposit to be authorised by the Resources Committee and proposed that this be changed to DoF to reflect the operational reality.

There were no further questions or comments raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Treasury Management Policy be amended as detailed and recommended to the Board of the Corporation for approval.

RES/46/25**Any Other Business**

There were no matters raised under any other business.

Minute No:**RES/47/25 Date of Next Meeting**

The Corporation Secretary advised that the proposed date of the next meeting was 12 November 2025 at 4.00pm.

It was confirmed that the Schedule of Board and Committee meetings would be presented to the Board of the Corporation at the meeting in July for approval.

The meeting closed at 4.48pm.