

TRAFFORD & STOCKPORT COLLEGE GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the Corporation
held on Wednesday 16 July 2025 at 4.00pm in the Boardroom at the Altrincham Campus

Present:	Graham Luccock	(Chair of the Corporation)
	Jill Bottomley	
	Olivia Bussey	
	Sarah Drake	
	Alison Hewitt	
	Heather Lang	
	Emily McIntosh	
	Michelle McLaughlin	(Staff Governor)
	*Jonathan O'Brien	
	Lewis Ormston	
	Shaun Parker	
	Marcia Reynolds	
	Louise Richardson	
	James Scott	
	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)

*attendance at the meeting via Microsoft Teams

Minute No.**COR/55/25 Apologies for Absence**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) reported that apologies for absence had been received for Catherine Thomas.

COR/56/25 Declarations of Interest

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

COR/57/25 Minutes of the Board of the Corporation Meeting held on 14 May 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/58/25 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.

Minute No.

It was noted that most actions had been closed, and the following actions remained open:

- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to be presented to the Board of the Corporation in the Autumn Term 2025.
- Link Governor (JB) and Chief People Officer to consider performance management for the Group at their next Link meeting.
- A further review of Risk to take place and be reported to the Audit Committee in the Autumn Term 2025.
- That the Group Principal highlight the distinction between partnership and subcontracting arrangements in future reports.
- There were two actions for the Chief Commercial Officer that would be considered in future reports.

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

COR/59/25**Annual Strategic Conversations Letter**

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) provided the meeting with a copy of the letter that had been received from the DFE following the annual conversations that had taken place on 29 April 2025.

It was noted that the Chair and the Executive Team had provided a verbal update to the Board on the outcomes of the conversations at the previous meeting held on 14 May 2025.

The CEO reported that a particular focus of the meeting had been on the Accountability Statement and Meeting Local Needs. It was confirmed that the meeting had been constructive and positive with a detailed report received.

The CEO highlighted an action at the end of each annual conversation for the FE Commissioner's team to discuss with the Group the offer to provide further support. It was noted that this was standard practice.

The CEO advised that the Group had accepted the offer and that the FE Commissioner's team would be undertaking a piece of work focused on curriculum efficiency and profitability at the start of the new academic year.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Annual Strategic Conversation letter be received and noted.

COR/60/25**Key Performance Indicators 2024/2025 – Term 3**

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) provided an update in relation to the Term 3 Key Performance Indicators for 2024-2025.

Members were referred to the Executive Summary and RAG rated supporting information in relation to the Term 3 position against the Group's KPIs.

It was noted that the current position across most KPIs was still subject to final reconciliation.

Minute No.

The CEO reported a positive picture indicated by the number of KPIs RAG Rated Green.

The CEO drew the Board's attention to the following key issues:

- The strong financial position, with financial stability indicators currently green.
- Positive developments in people and culture over the past 12 months.
- Challenges with learner numbers, particularly in areas such as young people, apprenticeships, and Higher Education, which were short of targets. It was noted that financial mitigation measures had been implemented, including risk contingencies in the budget. The CEO advised that Government funding had positively impacted the budget and three-year plan and had helped to offset the shortfall in learner numbers. The CEO reported on the work undertaken to ensure that resources were in place for FY25/26 to better meet demand in September. It was confirmed that the Group were targeting an additional 330 young people.
- Student outcomes expected to improve with final confirmation following exam results in August. It was noted there was some underlying risk in the 16-19 age group.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member raised a question in relation to FE lecturer pay at 21% above the median and whether there was a point where this would be considered too high. The Chief People Officer (CPO) advised that the Group had recently received the updated benchmark data and that the figure now stood at 20.35%. It was confirmed that the Group aimed to remain competitive to attract and retain staff but recognised the need to balance competitiveness with financial sustainability. The CPO confirmed the intention was to remain at around 20% going forward.

A member enquired as to whether the higher salary levels were linked to the age profile of staff, given that longer serving staff may be on higher pay due to incremental scales. The CPO confirmed that there was an incremental pay scale, and those with more years of service were likely to be on higher salaries, contributing to the overall higher average. However, it was noted that whilst length of service contributed to higher salary levels, the Group also faced challenges in recruiting for certain roles where market competition was strong.

The CPO referred to the FE Workforce Data report as considered at the Resources Committee and highlighted the Group's staff pay position relative to education providers and the target to get closer to sixth form colleges. The Chair also made reference to competition from local sixth form colleges.

The CPO emphasised that the Group does go beyond offering competitive salaries to attract and retain staff, such as creating a positive work environment and providing additional benefits but highlighted the challenges where other colleges offer higher salaries and noted the need to build a comprehensive offer to staff. It was noted that the goal was to ensure staff felt valued and have reasons to stay beyond pay, but that financial competitiveness remained essential.

Minute No.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Key Performance indicators 2024/2025 Term 3 Report be received and noted.

COR/61/25**FE Quality Improvement Plan and Key Performance Indicators 2024-2025**

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated reports in respect of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2024-2025 update. There was confirmation that the reports had been discussed in detail at the most recent meeting of the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee and that there were no fundamental changes.

The GP stated that the QIP and accompanying summary were also an extension of the report made by the CEO under the last agenda item.

Supplementary Documentation included:

- Quality Improvement Plan
- Key Performance indicators including Apprentice Accountability Framework

A summary and progress against the eight key objectives or Areas for Improvement (Afls) were presented in the report.

The GP highlighted that retention rates for young people were above the KPI and an improvement on last year.

Positive predicted achievement rates for young people were also reported with adults and apprenticeships also performing well.

The GP reported strong student satisfaction, positive progression and destination data, and ongoing work to improve the recording of personal and professional development.

A member sought clarification in relation to the KPI and challenges around work related learning. The GP clarified the KPI was an ambitious target due to funding requirements and highlighted the challenges in recording exceptions i.e. learners who were not ready for work experience and documenting alternative activities. It was emphasised that whilst all learners develop personally and socially, the recording of bespoke activities was more complex, and improvements were being made to ensure compliance and the recording of skills development over time.

Members provided additional context and advised that this was a sector-wide issue post-COVID, with employer availability and hybrid working affecting opportunities. The Staff Governor (Head of Personal and Professional Development) advised that a new Work Experience Framework had been developed to address challenges and improve work related learning outcomes and recording.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the FE Quality Improvement Plan and Key Performance Indicators 2024-2025 Update Report including Accountability Framework be received and noted.

Minute No.**COR/62/25 HE Quality Improvement Plan 2024/2025**

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated reports in respect of the HE Quality Improvement Plan. There was confirmation that the reports as presented had been discussed in detail at the most recent meeting of the HE Curriculum and Quality Committee.

A summary and progress against the seven key objectives or Areas for Improvement (Afls) were presented.

Positives highlighted included the National Student Survey results, strong quality improvements and positive student feedback, especially regarding support for HE students.

It was highlighted that over 30% of HE students had declared a disability, and that the Group were working to ensure that support was universally accessible, including new mental health and counselling services available to all students.

The CEO and GP noted that HE student awareness of mental health services was identified as an area needing improvement and it was hoped that the above changes would lead to better feedback and increased awareness amongst HE students.

A member enquired as to whether there was any work being undertaken to educate employers in relation to inclusion and supporting learners, especially those with additional needs and it was confirmed that the Group was developing courses for employers focused on understanding adversity and making adjustments in the workplace to be more employee focused and inclusive. The GP advised that the Group was also working with parents to help them support students, particularly around mental health during transitions and breaks from college.

The Chair of the HE Curriculum and Quality Committee (HECQC) expressed appreciation of the positive student engagement, highlighting the high participation in the National Student Survey and the impact of the HE student representative on the Committee. The Chair of the HECQC also highlighted the link between increased student engagement and improved student satisfaction and positive outcomes.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the HE Quality Improvement Plan Update Report be received and noted.

COR/63/25 CFOO's Report and P9 and P10 Management Accounts 2024/2025

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and financial position which included the P9 and P10 management accounts.

It was noted that the financial position and P9 management accounts had been considered in detail by the Resources Committee on 18 June 2025.

Minute No.

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

- A copy of the CFOO's presentation
- Period 9 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 P10 Management Accounts

- Underlying Ed. EBITDA P10 versus P8
- Risks and Opportunities
- Cash
- Financial Health and Covenants

FY24/25 P9 Management Accounts

- Underlying Ed. EBITDA P9 versus P8
- Risks and Opportunities
- Cash
- Financial Health and Covenants

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

- Ed. EBITDA forecasted to be above the budgeted target of £3.6 million.
- Main movements included restructuring costs, positive outcome from the National Insurance Grant and a one-off non-consolidated payment.
- Positive P9 and P10 accounts.
- Financial health remains outstanding, with strong cash reserves and significant headroom on covenants.

In summary, the CFOO highlighted the Group's strong financial position and the positive outlook for the next fiscal year.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member raised a question on the difference reported on potential redundancy payments in the P9 and P10 management accounts and the CFOO clarified that the difference was due to reporting for different periods, with the amount increasing as the months progressed and as more information became available.

A member sought clarification on the doubling of loan interest cost and the CFOO advised that this was part of a risk adjusted cash scenario to highlight that even if interest rates doubled or capital expenditure increased, the Group would still have sufficient cash reserves.

The Chair extended the Board's gratitude for all the work that had been undertaken and the Group's strong financial position.

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;
and
- b) the P9 and P10 Management Accounts be duly approved.

Minute No.**COR/64/25****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 23 June 2025.

It was confirmed that there were 38 total risks, of which 36 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.

The CFOO reported that, following the challenge at previous Audit Committee meetings, the Executive Team had reviewed Risk Appetite and that as a result the number of risks outside appetite had increased from 14 to 25.

The CFOO recommended the addition of the following risk:

- **OTH/5: Failure to protect systems from unauthorised access**

The CFOO advised that although Business Continuity was already a separate risk this new risk related wholly to protection of our systems and had been added following input from the Chief Technology Officer (CTO). It was noted that the CTO was currently looking at cyber security and 24-7 monitoring.

The CEO advised of the costs associated with 24/7 coverage and reported that the CTO was working with other colleges and JISC to explore a more cost-effective consortium solution.

A member enquired as to whether the reputational aspect had been considered should a cyber incident ever materialise and questioned whether there should be a review of the processes in place to manage communications with external stakeholders.

The CFOO advised of Business Continuity processes and the meeting considered the need for appropriate media training and scenario planning. A member shared their experience of a recent cyber-attack and supported the idea of planning and preparation but emphasised that such situations are highly dynamic and plans may not always go as expected.

Action: Chief Technology Officer

It was confirmed that an update on cyber security, 24/7 monitoring and scenario planning would be provided to the Board as part of the new Digital Data and Technology Strategy to be presented in the Autumn Term.

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/65/25**Governing Body Finance Dashboard**

Minute No.

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and update in relation to recently released governing body financial dashboard and letter from the FE Commissioner dated 11 June 2025.

It was confirmed that the dashboard allowed for comparison of the Group's financial data against sector benchmarks.

The CFOO reported that the letter confirmed that the financial benchmarks would be changing as follows:

- **Cash in days from 25 to 40**

The CFOO confirmed that cash days were currently above 40 days and as such there was no impact for the Group.

- **Operating surplus as a % of income** – changed to EBITDA as % of Adjusted Income > 6%

It was confirmed that this already aligned with the Group's internal target.

- **Staff pay as a % of income** – unchanged at 65% for GFE Colleges

The CFOO reported that the Group was slightly below this in FY23/24 but were forecasting to be above for FY24/25 and beyond. The CFOO advised that the Group would stick to 65% as the Group remained profitable and continued to generate cash.

The CFOO reported disappointment that the Staff pay as % of income had been left unchanged. It was noted that the recent, funded, pay awards (particularly the 6.5% pay award in FY23/24) had directly increased this ratio for the majority of colleges with 100% of the funding (and in some cases more) directly used for increased pay.

It was highlighted that failure to meet the benchmarks would not result in intervention but that the FE Commissioner may use the benchmarks as a guide in relation to challenging performance and offering support.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was resolved that the changes to Governing Body Finance Dashboard and letter from the FE Commissioner 11 June 2025 be received and noted.

COR/66/25**Financial Handbook and Managing Public Money Updated Guidance**

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and overview in relation to the College Accounts Direction 2024/25 and the Financial Handbook and Managing Public Money (MPM) updated guidance.

Supplementary Documentation included:

- College Accounts Direction 2024/25
- Summary of 2024/25 Accounts Direction Changes
- Guidance for the approval of senior Pay

College Accounts Direction 2024/25

Minute No.

The CFOO advised that the Group was satisfied that they were in a good position to include all changes with no additional processes or procedures required.

Financial Handbook and MPM

It was confirmed that updated Guidance for the Approval of Senior Pay was released (and took effect on) 26 June 2025.

The CFOO provided a summary of the changes as highlighted in the report.

In relation to the impact on the Group, the CFOO advised that the thresholds would only need to be considered in relation to Senior Post Holder Pay, at the present time based on the Group's current salary bands.

It was highlighted that there was slightly conflicting guidance between what had been contained within the College Financial Handbook and the HM Treasury Senior Pay Controls guidance. The CFOO advised that issues were being raised by the sector and that the Group would continue to monitor any guidance that was published.

Next Steps included:

- College Accounts Direction 2024/25 – accounts to be completed, approved, signed and submitted to the DfE (with the finance record) by 31 December 2025
- Financial Handbook and MPM – to be noted and followed going forward as effective from 26 June 2025.
- Remuneration Committee recommendations in relation to Senior Post Holder Pay to adhere to the new thresholds and be proactive in ensuring that any future updates were considered and adhered to.

A member raised a question in relation to potential delays in the approval process for Senior Post Holder salaries and the CFOO advised that the expected delays could range from 3 to 6 months, depending on the level of approval required and whether it is a query or a formal approval request. It was noted that the process involved contacting the local DfE representative for queries, but that formal approvals would go through to the Treasury, and the timeline could vary.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was resolved that the Financial Handbook and Managing Public Money Updated Guidance be received and noted.

COR/67/25**Governor Links Update – Term 3**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) referred members to the previously circulated report and summary of the Governor Link activity during 2024/25.

It noted that the report presented an overview of Governor Link activities conducted during 2024/25 and highlighted key themes.

The CS reminded members that detailed individual reports were available on TeamEngine for governors to access throughout the academic year.

Minute No.

It was noted that a copy of the previously approved Governor Links for 2025/26 had been provided for reference.

The CS reported that governors had actively participated in Link activities throughout 2024/25, including learning walks, observing meetings to gain familiarity with new areas, attending internal and external meetings, and conducting in-depth reviews of curriculum areas or campuses. Additionally, it was noted, that experienced governors had supported new members by jointly attending meetings to support new proposals for 2025/26.

Action: Corporation Secretary

The CS to circulate the approved Governor Links for 2025/26 to relevant Leadership members in advance of, and preparation for, the new academic year.

AoC Governance Summit Update

The Corporation Secretary invited Governor (LO) to share an update on the recent Governance Summit that he had attended.

It was noted that the summit had been valuable and covered subjects such as driving college success, financial resilience, regional collaboration, economic development, the role of the triumvirate, T levels, and employer engagement.

The Chair thanked Governors and staff for the work undertaken as part of the Governor Link programme and advised that the Link reports and the summary produced by the CS provided strong evidence of governor involvement and highlighted the significant progress made.

A member made reference to the importance of inclusion being considered in all curriculum Link meetings and that the responsibility of issues related to students with additional needs should not be limited to the designated SEND Link but should be reflected in all relevant Link reporting.

The CS highlighted that Inclusion was part of the key areas that Link Governors should explore and was detailed in the Link Governor Protocol.

The GP commented that it was an important point raised by the member, given the new Ofsted framework and the importance of inclusion. The Chair added that it was important that governors have an up to date understanding of how inclusion is embedded within the curriculum and at the Group.

Action: Corporation Secretary

It was confirmed that the CS would update the Link Governor report template to highlight inclusion considerations further.

There were no further questions or comments raised by member and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Governor Links Term 3 Update be received and noted.

COR/68/25**Business Items Timetable and Schedule of Meetings 2025/26**

Minute No.

The Corporation Secretary (CS) referred members to the proposed schedule of Board and Committee meetings and the Business Items Timetable for 2025/26.

It was noted that all governors had completed a survey in December 2023 in response to the Governance External Review and that the purpose of the survey was to support succession planning, explore timings of meetings and gather interest in future roles. The CS advised that the outcome of the survey had been shared with the Search Committee for review, and that an action had been agreed to create a new Schedule of Board and Committee Meetings for 2024/25 that identified availability for alternative meeting times to support increased governor engagement and visibility. It was agreed that at the end of 2024/25 a further review of the success of the new meeting structure and timings would take place. It was confirmed that a further survey had been shared with all members to complete and feedback collated.

The CS reported that 10 members had completed the survey and had confirmed they were happy with current meeting times. However, it was noted, that three members had commented that the morning Board meetings were more difficult to attend.

It was confirmed that attendance at the end of term 2 had been positive at 90% for Board and 92% overall.

It was advised that a draft version of the Business Items Timetable and Schedule of Board and Committee Meetings for 2025/26 has been shared with the Chair of the Corporation, the CEO and members of the Executive Team for comments. It was noted that a copy had also been included in the meeting pack for review.

The CS advised, that following a review of the governor survey and recognising the business needs for 2025/26 the following changes had been made:

- All Board meetings for 2025/26 to take place in the afternoon at 4.00pm.
- A remote option to remain in place where in person attendance is difficult.
- The Resources Committee to take place termly in line with all other committees and in conjunction with the completion of the Cheadle Project. The CS advised that a further meeting could be arranged in relation to further development projects or Land Disposals should the need arise.
- The Board of the Corporation to meet four times across the academic year. It was noted that the Schedule of Business has been reviewed and updated to reflect the structure.
- Training to continue to include the use of iHasco to complete certified training in specific areas.

Action: Governance Team

It was confirmed that once approved the schedule of meetings would be confirmed in outlook calendars for the academic year.

There were no questions or issues raised by member and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Business Items Timetable and Schedule of Meetings 2025/2026 be approved and implemented.

COR/69/25

Draft Scheme of Delegation

Minute No.

The Corporation Secretary (CS) referred members to the previously circulated report and draft Scheme of Delegation.

The CS reported an action from the Governance External Review was to create a Scheme of Delegation.

It was confirmed that the purpose of the Scheme of Delegation was to ensure clear delegation, appropriate decision making, with matters clearly brought to the Board of the Corporation to alleviate Board agenda congestion.

The CS advised that a letter had been received on 22 May 2025 from the FE Commissioner in relation to promoting 'Good Governance' and that one of the recommendations within the letter detailed, *'The importance of boards having a scheme of delegation, or similar document, which lays out what the full board must approve and what can be delegated to committees.'*

It was confirmed that the Scheme of Delegation included:

- **Purpose of the Scheme of Delegation**
- **The responsibility of the Board of the Corporation** (as set out in the Instruments of Government and Standing Orders)
- **The responsibility of the Chair of the Corporation, the CEO and Corporation Secretary** (as set out in the Instruments of Government and Standing Orders)
- **Delegation of functions** (as set out in the Instruments of Government and Standing Orders)
- **Committee responsibilities** (as set out in the Terms of Reference)
- **Documents requiring approval** (as set out in the Quality Spreadsheet)
- **Process for Policy Review** – Flowchart

The CS highlighted that the Policy Review process was transitioning to a digital format for greater efficiency and clearer accountability. It was confirmed that once the new process was finalised the flowchart within the Scheme of Delegation would be replaced to highlight the new process.

The CS recommended the adoption and implementation of the new Scheme of Delegation.

It was confirmed that, once approved, the Scheme of Delegation, in line with all other Governance Documentation, would be reviewed every two years by the Search Committee and recommended to the Board of the Corporation for approval.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member commented that some of the Committee responsibilities listed in the scheme of delegation may require a sense check as some of the policies may no longer be in circulation. Following the meeting it was confirmed that the policies as listed under committee responsibilities were correct, but a final review would take place prior to the new digital process being launched.

Minute No.

There were no questions or issues raised by member and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Draft Scheme of Delegation be approved and implemented.

COR/70/25**Letter from the FE Commissioner – Good Governance**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) referred members to the previously circulated report and FE Commissioner's letter in relation to Good Governance dated 22 May 2025.

It was noted that the report provided an overview as to how the Trafford and Stockport College Group met the recommendations within the letter.

The CS advised that, within the letter, the FE Commissioner had thanked Governors for the huge contribution and time given on a voluntary basis to enable excellent outcomes for students. However, as a result of recent failings in governance in a small number of colleges, the FE Commissioner highlighted some key requirements for boards and effective practice that should be followed.

The CS drew members attention to Appendix 1 and the response to each point raised within the letter and comparison with the Group's current position. It was confirmed that the comparison provided the Board with assurance around the points raised in the letter in relation to effective practice.

The CEO advised the Board that the FE Commissioner would be visiting the Group in September.

There were no further questions or comments raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was resolved that the letter from the FE Commissioner 22 May 2025 be received and noted.

COR/71/25**Voting Rights for Student Governors under 18**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) advised that the DfE had shared a letter on 17 June 2025 relating to four matters.

Voting Rights for Student Governors under 18

The instruments and articles of some college corporations contain a provision which restricts student governors under 18 from voting on financial and contractual matters. This provision is a legacy from the former prescribed model instrument and articles. The Charity Commission has agreed with the DfE that the clause is incompatible with charity law as it prevents student governors under 18 from fully exercising their role as charity trustees. Trustees on a charity board have equal responsibility and must all be able to participate in all aspects of governing and directing their charity (except for specific matters where they may need to step back because of a conflict of interest). It has therefore been advised that boards amend their instrument and articles so that student governors under 18 can vote on all matters and suggested that this amendment is made ready for the next academic year. The CS confirmed that the Group were not impacted by the suggested amendment and there was no change required to the Instruments and Articles of Government and Standing Orders.

Minute No.**Quorum**

It was also highlighted that some instruments and articles still contain an outdated clause regarding the Secretary of State's role in the absence of a board quorum. The CS confirmed that the Group were not impacted by the suggested amendment and there were no changes required to the Instruments and Articles of Government or Standing Orders. It was noted that rules relating to quoracy are clearly set out in both documents.

UK Corporate Code of Governance

It is a current condition of funding that the organisation follows at least one of three governance codes: the Charity Governance Code, the Further Education Code of Good Governance or the UK Corporate Code of Governance. The DfE consulted the sector via representative bodies about the removal of the UK Corporate Code of Governance from the list of prescribed codes. This was because this Code is designed for companies listed on the stock exchange and is less appropriate for education charities. It has been confirmed that the UK Corporate Code of Governance will be removed from the list with effect from 1 August 2026. This does not impact the Group as TSCG follows the AoC Code of Good Governance.

Broader update

A thank you to governors and Executive Team was extended for the opportunity to discuss successes, challenges and opportunities during the Annual Strategic Conversation.

There were no questions or comments raised by members and it was resolved that the update be noted.

COR/72/25 Minutes of the HE Curriculum and Quality Committee held on 5 June 2025

The minutes of the Committee held on 5 June 2025 were received and noted.

COR/73/25 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Chair of the HE Curriculum and Quality Committee referred members to the previously circulated Chair report and brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee at its meeting.

The report covered the following:

- Draft Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2026/2027
- Data Management Action Plan and Internal Audit Report
- Higher Education and Skills Strategy Action Plan Update
- HE Performance Update and Quality Improvement Plan 2024/2025
- Student Success and Outcomes Report 2024/2025
- GM Vice Chancellors Principals Update
- HE Regulatory Update including OfS capital funding, annual statements, and compliance with new regulations.
- Student Engagement and Impact Statement 2024/2025 Q3
- Office for Students Risk Register Update
- HE Student Terms & Conditions 2025/2026:
- Student Protection Plan

Minute No.

In relation to the APP, the Chair advised of the scrutiny that had been undertaken by the Committee and highlighted that the number of objectives had been reduced to four and was in line with sector guidelines. The Chair thanked the consultant alongside HE colleagues for the work undertaken in the production of the APP.

A member observed that the format of the APP was very dense and detailed, making it difficult to easily find the objectives. The member acknowledged the significant amount of work involved and it was noted that the complexity of the document was driven by OfS regulatory requirements which mandated detailed analysis and specific language.

The Chair commented that the burden of Office for Students (OfS) regulation on small HE providers was significant, especially in the drafting of key documents such as the APP.

Action: Group Principal/ Vice Principal Apprenticeships and Adult Skills
The Access and Participation Plan was recommended and approved by the Board of the Corporation prior to submission to Office for Students (OfS).

The CEO reminded Board members of a piece of work that was being undertaken to apply the principles of the APP to FE provision. It was confirmed that the consultant would be leading on the work over the summer.

Action: Group Principal/ Vice Principal Apprenticeships and Adult Skills
A member enquired as to whether the adapted APP for FE could be made more user-friendly, given that it would not be subject to mandated requirement. It was also suggested that a summary document highlighting the key objectives from the HE APP would be helpful for internal use.

The Chair highlighted items approved by the Committee which had been shared for information only.

Committee approvals included:

- HE Student Terms & Conditions 2025/2026
- Student Protection Plan

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/74/25**Minutes of the Resources Committee Meetings held on 18 June 2025**

The minutes of the Resources Committee Meetings held on 18 June 2025 were received and noted.

COR/75/25**Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The Chair of the Resources Committee referred members to the previously circulated Chair report and brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee at its meeting.

The report covered the following:

Minute No.

- Learner Numbers and Funding Update
- Partner Subcontracting Mid-Year Update
- Chief Finance and Operations Officer Report and P9 Management Accounts
- OfS/DfE Capital Funding Update
- Higher Education Fees 2026/2027
- Financial Regulations 2025/2026
- Insurance Renewal
- Digital Plan Update Report including proposed improvements in cyber security and the development of the Digital Data and Technology Strategy 2025/2030
- FE Workforce Data and the Group's competitive median salary.
- Amended Treasury Management Policy

Action: Chief Finance and Operations Officer

Key documents recommended and approved by the Board of the Corporation included:

- **Higher Education Fees for 2026/2027**
- **Financial Regulations**
- **Insurance Renewal**

It was confirmed that the P9 Management Accounts had been considered and approved under item 4.1 of the meeting's agenda (CFOO's Report and P9 and P10 Management Accounts 2024/2025)

The Chair of the Committee advised that a slight amendment to the Treasury Management Policy had been recommended for approval and would be considered under item 7.1 of the meeting's agenda.

Action: Chief Technology Officer

In relation to the Digital Data and Technology Strategy 2025/2030, it was advised that it would be presented to the Board at its meeting to be held on 1 October 2025.

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

COR/76/25**Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 23 June 2025**

The minutes of the Audit Committee Meetings held on 18 June 2025 were received and noted.

COR/77/25**Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The Chair of the Audit Committee referred members to the previously circulated Chair report and brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee at its meeting.

The report covered the following:

- Data Protection Progress Update Report
- OfS HE Data Action Plan
- Internal Audit Reports:
- Internal Audit Progress Report 2024/2025

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- Draft Internal Audit Plan 2025/2026 (Needs Assessment covering three years)
- Board Assurance and Risk Management Framework 2024/2025 Update:
- External Audit Strategy Year Ending 31 July 2025 and Future Going Concern Assessment:
- National Updates including the framework and guide for external auditors, College Accounts Direction 2024-25, and the Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2024-25.

Key documents recommended and approved by the Board of the Corporation included:

- **Internal Audit Reports:**
- **Business Critical Controls – Assets & Inventories Management**
- **Student Attendance**
- **Audit Needs Assessment 2025-2028**
- **External Audit Strategy for Year Ending 31 July 2025 and future going concern assessment**

In relation to the External Audit Strategy Year Ending 31 July 2025 and Future Going Concern Assessment, the Chair highlighted that there was sufficient headroom to support the Going Concern assumption for at least 12 months from the signing of the financial statements. It was highlighted that the Financial Statements and Regularity Auditor had presented to the Committee the proposed Audit Strategy Memorandum, highlighting key risks and areas of focus.

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.

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

COR/78/25 Minutes of the FE Curriculum & Quality Committee held on 25 June 2025

The minutes of the Committee held on 5 June 2025 were received and noted.

COR/79/25 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Chair of the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee referred members to the previously circulated Chair report and brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee at its meeting.

The report covered the following:

- Predicted Achievement and Value Added 2024/2025
- Quality Improvement Plan and Performance Indicators 2024/2025 Update Report including Apprenticeship Accountability Framework
- Quality of Education Update including T Levels:
- Careers Update including Gatsby Benchmarks and Student Destinations Report
- Student Governor Report

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- Student Experience Report including Learner Voice and Student Digital Entitlement
- Student Support Report
- Governor Ofsted Ready Group – High Needs Link Report
- FE Admissions Policy 2025/2027

In relation to the Governor Ofsted Ready Group Link report, the Chair advised of the work involved in the Single Central Record (SCR) for DBS checks and the CPO reported on the addition of a dedicated resource to maintain the SCR going forward.

In relation to the FE Admissions Policy, it was noted that the Policy had been recommended for approval and would be considered under item 7.2 of the meeting's agenda.

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

COR/80/25**Key Issues of the Health & Safety Committee 4 June 2025**

The key issues of the Health & Safety Committee meeting held on 4 June 2025 were received and noted.

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

- Consolidation of the health and safety management system, with increased activity levels.
- Upcoming fire safety training planned for September and October.
- 28% year-on-year increase in display screen assessments.

It was noted that at the time of the Committee meeting, the Group was awaiting the appointment of a preferred contractor for the RAAC and the CFOO advised that a contractor had now been selected and that work was expected to commence soon.

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/81/25**Key Issues of the Sustainability Committee 11 June 2025**

The key issues of the Sustainability Committee meeting held on 11 June 2025 were received and noted.

It was confirmed that the meeting had focused on capturing the progress to date and planning for the next academic year.

Action: Chief Finance and Operating Officer/Head of Health, Safety and Sustainability

A member highlighted that a slight amendment was required in respect of the Chief People Officer title and it was noted that the minutes would be updated accordingly.

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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/82/25**Key Issues of the Safeguarding Committee held on 18 June 2025**

The key issues of the Safeguarding Committee meeting held on 18 June 2025 were received and noted.

The Interim Link Governor (SD) provided a brief overview of the items considered which included:

- Training and consistency
- National and regional updates
- There was feedback on the attendance audit
- Discussions about the Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and the new Care Experienced Care Leavers and Vulnerable Groups Policy, which were scheduled to be considered later in the meeting.

The Link Governor advised that the Committee serves as a valuable opportunity for members to focus on key safeguarding matters and to touch base on key issues.

Action: Group Principal

A request was made to include a list of the Committee members names under attendance for future meetings.

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/83/25**Key Issues of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee held on 25 June 2025**

The key issues of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee held on 25 June 2025 were received and noted.

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

- The review of the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy
- The multi-faith procedure with a review of room arrangements
- EDI as a strategic objective and work to embed in all supporting strategies.
- Staff disclosure with initiatives underway to encourage more complete disclosures through briefing and community sessions drafted with Unions.
- Pay gap data shows a higher proportion of females than males, with certain curriculum areas and roles showing gender differences.

Action: Chief People Officer

- **The use of the term 'BAME' and the need to break down data by specific groups for accurate reporting.**
- Review of retention rates

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- Community engagement initiatives included Community College Kitchen Breakfast Club, Welcome Wednesdays, intergenerational skills exchange, and safe walking routes designed by students, Care Experienced new partnership GM Youth Network.
- STAR Inclusion Award

It was confirmed that the Committee were starting to plan the new EDI strategy 2025/2030.

In relation to the multi-faith rooms, a member raised a question as to whether students had been consulted. The CPO advised it was agreed to consult with students who use the space to gather their ideas on how to share it more effectively and foster ownership, aiming to prevent recurring issues. It was noted that the main purpose of the procedure was to monitor and safeguard activities in the room, especially from a prevent perspective. The GP highlighted that an issue was noted at one campus, whilst other campuses manage the space more effectively.

In relation to retention rates, the GP commented that there was previously a gap in the performance, retention, and achievement of Black Caribbean students, but after targeted work, this gap had now closed, with Black Caribbean learners performing equally well compared to others.

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/84/25**Resources Committee Policy approvals**

The Resources Committee recommended the amended Treasury Management Policy for approval.

It was 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 questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the amendment to the Treasury Management Policy 2025/2027 be approved.

COR/85/25**FE Curriculum and Quality Committee Policy Approvals**

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated report and information in relation to the FE Admissions Policy 2025/2037.

It was confirmed that the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee had recommended the FE Admissions Policy 2025/2027 for approval subject to some minor amendments which had now been undertaken.

The GP drew the meeting's attention to the summary of the key changes which included:

- Group name updated to Trafford and Stockport College Group

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- Further clarity on roles and responsibilities for different teams across the Group following feedback.
- Further detail and clarity for applicants on the applications process and on 'entry requirements', particularly specific requirements for oversubscribed programmes.
- Clarification for students who may not be able to provide proof of existing qualifications and/or haven't lived in the UK for a certain period of time.
- Clarity on admissions for progressing students where there have been performance concerns that haven't been addressed.
- Incorporated references to entry requirements and the need for these to be regularly reviewed and updated in response to qualification reform and the changing needs of the labour market.

It was confirmed that following Board approval the Policy would be published on the Group website.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the FE Admissions Policy 2025/2027 be approved.

COR/86/25**Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy 2025/2026**

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated report and Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy 2025/2026.

It was confirmed that a summary of the key changes had been presented in the supporting report and further that the appended Policy included the proposed changes highlighted in yellow.

The GP reported that the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance had been released, pending publication of the final version which comes into force in September 2025. The GP reported that the Policy had been updated to reflect any changes in the guidance alongside some other minor additions as highlighted in the report.

The GP recommended the Policy for approval subject to any minor amendments following final publication of the KCSIE Guidance.

It was confirmed that following Board approval the Policy would be published on the Group website and circulated to staff and governors, together with (Part 1 KCSIE) to confirm that they had read and understood the content.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy 2025/2026 be approved subject to any minor amendments following final publication of KCSIE in September.

COR/87/25**Care Experienced Care Leavers and Vulnerable Groups Policy**

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated report and Care Experienced Care Leavers and Vulnerable Groups Policy (CECLVG) 2025/2027.

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It was advised that the CECLVG Policy had been developed to ensure that vulnerable learners, including Looked After Children (LAC), Care Leavers (CL), Young Carers (YC), Estranged Students (ES), Unaccompanied Minors (UC), Military Children (MC), Young Parents (YP), those with criminal convictions (CC), and those who have or have ever had a social worker (SW), were given every opportunity to receive an education that promoted achievement and progression.

It was highlighted that the policy aimed to remove barriers for learners who had been subject to negative life experiences by offering the education, understanding, guidance, and support they needed.

The GP advised, that due to the renewed NNECL status, the Group felt that this was the right time to ensure that the Group captures the commitment to young people who are Care Experienced, Care Leavers and Vulnerable.

The GP advised that the Group was part of a pilot around Service Children and Military Families and highlighted the need to ensure that this 'Due Regard' is also captured. It was highlighted that the Armed Forces Act and Armed Forces Covenant gives very specific guidelines for colleges to follow and that legislation is due to change in 2026, which will make this a statutory responsibility.

Main Points of the Policy were outlined in the report.

The GP advised that the CECLVG Policy sits alongside the SEND and Vulnerable Learners' Strategy as a demonstration of the Group's commitment to vulnerable learners.

It was confirmed that following Board approval the Policy would be published on the Group website and shared with key stakeholders. It was noted that staff training would be provided to ensure that the Policy is implemented effectively.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the below named Care Experienced Care Leavers and Vulnerable Groups Policy 2025/2027 be approved.

COR/88/25**Any Other Business**

Governor attendance was acknowledged at recent events, including Student Awards and SummerFest. The CS expressed the Group's gratitude to governors, for their contribution and active participation throughout the academic year.

Congratulations were extended to the Deputy Student Governor (Miracle Mbokela) on receipt of the Student of the Year Award.

The Chair expressed gratitude to both staff and governors for their contributions over the year and commented on the Group's growth and confidence. and asked that governors' appreciation be passed on to all staff.

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The Chair thanked governors for their participation in the annual individual governor reviews that had recently taken place.

There were no further matters raised under any other business.

COR/89/25**Date of the Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting will be held on 1 October 2025 at 4.00pm

The meeting closed at 5.50pm