CALDERDALE COLLEGE
FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 March 2026 at 5.00pm held via MS Teams

Present:

John-Paul Yates	External Governor & Committee Chair
David Malone	Principal & Chief Executive
Suzanne McGladdery	External Governor & Corporation Chair

In Attendance:

Andrew Harrison	Vice Principal – Corporate Services
Jane Taylor-Holmes	Clerk to the Corporation
Katie Walker	Head of University Centre & Sustainability Lead (for agenda item FR/26/105)

Agenda: No items of other business were added to the agenda.

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
	FR/26/101 - Apologies for absence	
1	No apologies were received, all present.	
2	Committee members noted that Suzanne Dunkley had resigned from the Governing body following a change in job and had therefore also resigned from the Committee. Committee members noted the work ongoing in the Search and Governance Committee to recruit new Governors and to discuss Committee membership with current Governors.	
	FR/26/102 – Confirmation of eligibility, quorum and declarations of interest	
3	No notice had been received of any member becoming ineligible to hold office. The meeting was quorate and there were no declarations of interest in agenda items.	
	FR/26/103 – Minutes of the meetings	
4	**Resolved -** The Finance & Resources Committee minutes of the meeting held 1 December 2025 and the Joint Audit and Finance & Resources Committee were approved as a true and accurate record.	

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5	**FR/26/104 – Matters arising** There was one matter arising from the previous meeting; the response to which was as an item on the agenda – climate action plan.	
6	**FR/26/105 – Sustainability – Climate Action plan** The Committee welcomed Ms K Walker, Sustainability Lead, to present the first iteration of the College's Climate Action Plan, a working document structured around four core elements required of all schools and colleges.	
7	Ms Walker outlined the four sections of the plan—Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency; Climate Adaptation and Resilience; Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure; and Climate Education, Green Skills and Green Careers.	
8	Ms Walker commented that Section 2 (Climate Adaptation and Resilience) had not been fully developed at this stage, which reflected national practice where this aspect was typically addressed only after more progress has been made in the other three areas.	
9	The Committee was informed that the plan was a live, unpublished working document, monitored by the Planet Group, and would continue to evolve as new activity was undertaken or collaborative opportunities arose. An example of the continued review of the plan was the suggested move to a more sustainable bank. Ms Walker explained that other Colleges had explored this option unsuccessfully and this was not deemed feasible at this time.	
10	1. Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency Ms Walker described actions already in progress and the rationale for future developments, including: • Educating staff and students on carbon footprint and behavioural changes. • Improved estate utilisation, with further scope to reduce building operating hours. • Establishment of accurate carbon baselines to support measurement of impact. • Future replacement of end-of-life assets (e.g., boilers, College van) with more sustainable alternatives such as renewables or electric vehicles. • Embedding sustainability considerations into procurement decisions, including local sourcing and lifecycle environmental impact.	

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
	• Operation of a new industrial composter, enabling all food waste to be composted and used across College grounds to support biodiversity.	
11	Committee members queried the College's digital carbon footprint, noting that "paperless" systems could increase energy demands. Ms Walker highlighted the significant energy consumption associated with email traffic and AI usage.	
12	Mr John-Paul Yates, General Member and Committee Chair asked about existing and planned renewable installations, including ground and air source heat pumps; Mr D Malone, Principal and Chief Executive confirmed that both systems were already in use; ground pump air source in the Inspire building (which heated four large classrooms).	
13	Mr Yates and Mr Malone also commented that previous capital projects such as the Percival Whitley refurbishment incorporating cladding, solar panels, and rainwater harvesting had already contributed to reduced energy usage, and the capital investment had already been made.	
14	Mr Malone emphasised the clear impact of these measures on reducing energy costs.	
15	2. Climate Adaptation and Resilience This section was not yet developed and would be expanded in future iterations of the plan, particularly should local environmental risk factors increase (such as flood risk).	
16	3. Biodiversity and Green Spaces Ms Walker reported on progress through the Green Spaces Project, funded to create four new outdoor areas including: • An outdoor classroom and dedicated student social/eating space. • Rotating student-designed sculpture installations. • Water capture from roofs and polytunnels for growing food for the College canteen and cultivating local plant species, including sphagnum moss. • Work toward achieving Hedgehog Friendly Campus status. • Engagement with Education Nature Parks to establish a biodiversity baseline and measure improvements over time.	
17	Ms Walker explained that this element was designed to be student-led, ensuring relevance and active participation.	

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18	4. Climate Education, Green Skills and Green Careers Ms Walker confirmed that: • All curricula would embed Education for Sustainable Development, supported by CPD for staff • The College had already launched a Level 1 Sustainability course, with plans to broaden provision (e.g., air/ground source heat pump training). • Careers advice would more explicitly promote green career pathways, with a Green Careers event planned as part of Futures Week. • Carbon literacy training was being rolled out to staff and Governors. • A newly appointed Sustainability Officer would support delivery and development of this area.	
19	Mr Malone highlighted collaborative work taking place through the West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges, with institutions sharing Climate Action Plans and identifying opportunities to align activity for greater impact and efficiency. Ms Walker added that this collaboration had already resulted in agreement to incorporate the UN Sustainable Development Goals within the plan.	
20	Mr A Harrison, Vice Principal Corporate Services drew attention to the establishment of a carbon tonnage baseline, noting that historic data from 2013 indicated levels around twice the current figure due to the former estate footprint (older buildings and use of other leased buildings off campus). He emphasised the importance of robust measurement to evidence progress.	
21	The Committee agreed that the College was progressing well and moving in the right direction. It was suggested that an update on progress made in this area could be presented to the Board as part of a Governor Development Day. This would be considered.	**Action: Mr Malone / Mrs Taylor-Holmes May 2026**
22	The Committee thanked Ms Walker for her detailed presentation and the comprehensive action plan. The report was received.	
23	**Resolved** – Committee members received the Climate Action Plan.	

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	FR/26/108 – Vice Principal Report	
24	Mr Harrison presented the Vice Principals Report. highlighting the College's current financial, operational and strategic position.	
25	Mr Harrison explained that the financial position remained strong, with the College still forecasting an approximate £500,000 year-end surplus. The February management accounts, which had just been finalised and would be presented to the Board meeting in April, showed a £172k surplus, slightly below forecast but still fully on track to achieve the year-end position.	
26	Student numbers for 16–18 provision remained healthy, supporting lagged funding into next year. While no in-year growth funding was expected, Mr Harrison noted there remained a possibility of a positive adjustment.	
27	The Committee noted that project income from the Combined Authority had not materialised, creating pressure in that area. Although Skills Bootcamps had performed well, Committee members were advised that bootcamp funding was expected to reduce in future.	
28	Updates were provided on staffing changes designed to improve Estates operations, including the appointment of: a Health & Safety Administrator, an evening receptionist, and a weekend commercial officer.	
29	The return of the substantive Facilities Manager had helped the College regain oversight of catering operations, and improvements continued to be made.	
30	The Committee received an update on several IT developments including the appointment of an additional junior IT technician to support growing learner and staffing numbers and progress on telephony replacement and wider network robustness and security projects.	
31	Mr Harrison provided an update on progress in relation to the VMware matter which had been raised at the previous meeting. Mr Harrison explained that support costs had risen sharply from £5,000 to £85,000 per year, a tender exercise had identified an alternative solution costing £266,000 but with longer term savings had been progressed and approved via Chair's action. Mr Harrison explained that however, following notification of award, the preferred bidder stated a 30% increase in costs, later revised to 10%,	

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
	prompting the College to reopen the tender. Mr Harrison advised that if costs rose significantly, the College may need to remain with the current VMware provider for a further year. Committee members acknowledged the difficulty of the situation. Mr Harrison agreed to keep Committee members updated.	
32	Mr Harrison referred to the HR dashboard and explained that this showed a headcount of 534 staff, reflecting increased student numbers and targeted recruitment in priority areas.	
33	In relation to projects and external funding; Mr Harrison commented that a recent student trip to Morocco had been successful under the Turing scheme. Mr Harrison also referred to the ongoing uncertainty around Skills Bootcamp funding nationally.	
34	In relation to data protection, one minor data breach, involving personal email details in an email was recorded; this was not reportable externally but addressed internally.	
35	Mr Harrison also confirmed that business support areas continue to complete Self-Assessment Reports and Quality Improvement Plans.	
36	The Committee discussed the recent national funding announcements, with several members raising questions and concerns:	
37	Mr Malone outlined that the headline 1.6% funding uplift was misleading; in practice, the increase equated to approximately 0.5%, contrary to previous Government indications and manifesto commitments.	
38	Mr Malone also confirmed that the T Level early-adopter uplift was being withdrawn, which disadvantaged early-implementing colleges such as Calderdale.	
39	Committee members noted the disappointment and surprise felt across the sector, with the Association of Colleges (AoC) applying pressure for reconsideration.	
40	Mr Harrison agreed that the announcement had been disappointing and confirmed the discrepancy between rate increases and the practical impact when applied to volume.	

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
41	Mr Yates referred to recent AoC communications and indicated that the sector did not expect a reversal of the decision.	
42	Ms McGladdery provided an update on Combined Authority funding pressures, reporting that the Authority has itself been subject to cuts. It was explained that whilst the Authority intended to protect grant providers (of which the College was one) there would be a renewed focus on defunding provision deemed not impactful.	
43	Mrs McGladdery agreed to circulate slides from a recent briefing, including details of provision no longer funded under the new integrated settlement model.	
44	Mr Malone confirmed that the College's current provision appeared to remain aligned with expectations.	
45	**Resolved:** Committee members noted the Vice Principals report and received the Management Accounts and the HR dashboard.	
	FR/26/107 – External Assurance Report **Internal Audit Report – New Finance System**	
46	Mr Harrison presented the recent internal audit report of the review of the College's new finance system, undertaken midway through its first year of operation. It was noted that a system change of this scale inherently presented potential control risks, particularly as the reliability of management accounts, statutory accounts and external audit processes was dependent on the accuracy and integrity of the system outputs.	
47	The Committee was advised that the internal auditors had issued a Strong Assurance rating, which was welcomed. Only one minor recommendation had been made, relating to the need to update procedural documentation to remove legacy references to the previous finance system. All key checks had been completed, including verification of balances brought forward and review of control structures, confirming that the new system was operating appropriately.	
48	Mr Yates remarked on the minor nature of the finding. Mr Harrison explained that the College had not prioritised immediate amendment of the financial regulations, which would be reviewed annually at the June meeting.	

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
49	It was noted that the report would be shared with Audit Committee meeting next week.	
50	**Resolved:** Committee members received the Internal Audit report.	
	FR/26/108 - Capital project update	
51	Mr Harrison presented an update on current capital projects. The Committee noted that almost £1 million of capital funding had been earmarked, comprising approximately £300,000 for the Football Foundation pitch project and £700,000 for wider College estate works. This followed earlier investment secured through the 2019 condition survey, which led to a £5.5 million grant for the cladding and refurbishment of the Percival Whitley Campus (PWC). A recent condition survey had identified remaining areas requiring investment, most notably the replacement of the College lifts, which were ageing and increasingly unreliable. Mr Harrison reported that the College hoped to secure an additional £1 million through the next capital allocation announcement expected shortly.	
52	Mill Studios Refurbishment and Relocation of Arts Provision	
53	Phase one of the estates masterplan; relocating elements of the arts provision from Francis Street into refurbished Mill Studios space was progressing. Mr Harrison explained that Chair's approval had been granted to proceed with the refurbishment, with costs currently at £688,000, forming part of the allocated £700k for wider College estates works. The work would be delivered by the same contractor who led phase one, noted for their expertise in heritage building work, and for achieving cost savings through close collaboration with consultants and quantity surveyors. The project team intended to complete the works in time for the new academic year.	
54	Mrs McGladdery praised the extensive improvements made across the estate in recent years, noting the significant positive transformation already visible to staff, students and visitors including the reception area at PWC.	
55	Mr Harrison referred to, and the Committee confirmed ongoing governance oversight through monthly payment approvals, which Mrs McGladdery and / or Mr Yates agreed to continue providing.	
56	The next stage was conversion of vacated art rooms into workshop space. Mr Harrison explained that this expected	

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
	to begin in the summer following the relocation of the art rooms.	
57	Football Foundation Pitch Development – Mr Harrison provided a detailed update on the Football Foundation project, which was progressing at speed, with the contracted company, Lano (Belgium), already close to completion of the refurbished pitch and well underway on a new second pitch. A forthcoming £630,000 payment would shortly require approval.	
58	However, a significant issue had arisen relating to the project costings provided by the Football Foundation. Although the College was originally informed that the total project cost was £1.66 million, with a required College contribution of £300,000, later documentation referred to a cost of £1.86 million, suggesting an unexpected £200,000 increase to the College's contribution.	
59	Mr Harrison explained that it took the Football Foundation six weeks to respond to queries, eventually asserting that the higher figure was correct and should be met by the College.	
60	He challenged this vigorously, stating that the College had been misinformed, as had the Football Foundation assessment panel, and indicated a willingness to issue formal complaints if necessary.	
61	A further meeting resulted in confirmation that the matter was being reviewed at a senior level.	
62	Mr Malone referred to the minutes of an earlier Football Foundation meeting which clearly recorded the Football Foundation's assurance that project costs would not increase, reinforcing the College's position.	
63	Ms McGladdery and Mr Yates agreed that while the project continued to offer value for money, the situation did not reflect what was agreed and the original contribution figure must be upheld.	
64	Committee members speculated on how the discrepancy had arisen, with Mr Harrison suggesting it may have stemmed from legacy figures relating to an earlier proposed partnership with Halifax Town Ladies.	
65	The Committee acknowledged the sensitivity of the issue and agreed that, due to the pace of movement with the	

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
	matter, this would be discussed at the next Board meeting when more information was expected in the context of a potential amendment to the risk register.	**Action: Mr Harrison April 2026**
66	Despite the cost issue, Mr Harrison emphasised the positive pace and community interest in the pitch project. Members supported the College's role in enhancing community facilities and recognised that the additional contribution of £200,000, if incorrectly imposed would have otherwise supported further planned estate improvements.	
67	The Committee noted the completion of the clawback agreement associated with the Department for Education funded works.	
68	**Resolved:** Committee members received the capital projects update.	
	FR/26/109 - Policies	
69	Mr Harrison presented the following Policies; Tuition Fees and Refund Policy 2026-27 and the Staff Code of Conduct and Malpractice Policy 2025-28 for approval.	
70	Mr Harrison confirmed that changes were minor and reflected an increase in Early College Transfer (ECT) fee, (14- to 16-year-old provision). It was noted that it was reasonable for schools to pay a reasonable rate.	
71	Staff Code of Conduct, Mr Harrison confirmed that there had been no significant update or key changes; this was part of a regular review of the Policy.	
72	**Resolution:** The Committee approved the Tuition Fees and Refund Policy 2026-27 and the Staff Code of Conduct and Malpractice Policy 2025-28.	
	FR/26/110 – Risk Management	
73	Mr Harrison presented the extract from the Risk Register covering the 13 risks overseen by the Committee, confirming that the summary had been prepared prior to the emergence of recent issues with the Football Foundation.	
74	Mr Harrison highlighted the one continuing high-level risks related to the recruitment and retention of suitably skilled staff, with particular pressures in engineering, where	

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
	specialist staffing remained difficult to secure. It was noted that that had been discussed in great depth by the Board.	
75	The Committee also discussed risks associated with pay competitiveness. Mr Harrison and Mr Malone noted concerns that pay levels in the FE sector risk falling further behind schoolteachers, particularly given the disappointing recent funding announcements. This could increase the probability of union action, which was already being discussed nationally.	
76	Mr Harrison acknowledged that, before the funding position became clearer, he had proposed a reduction in the rating associated with industrial action; however, in light of the evolving landscape, this may need reconsideration at a future point.	
77	In relation to the Football Foundation project risks, Mr Harrison advised that the potential risk uplift from the cost discrepancy would be considered further at the Board meeting, when more information was expected to be available.	
78	**Resolved:** The Committee reviewed the risks and confirmed that no changes were proposed to the current ratings or the Risk Register at this stage.	
	FR/26/111 – Internal Audit strategy	
79	Mrs Taylor-Holmes outlined the forthcoming process for agreeing the 2026/27 Internal Audit Strategy with the Audit Committee Chair and internal auditors and invited feedback from the Committee on priority areas for inclusion.	
80	Mrs Taylor-Holmes summarised areas already under consideration based on the existing three-year plan: • Procurement and financial systems, potentially linking to the sustainability-related procurement focus referenced earlier in the meeting. • Apprenticeship funding compliance, given sector-wide scrutiny • HR themes, including EDI, staff recruitment and retention, and staff wellbeing, with possible alignment to Ofsted's Leadership and Management focus for senior staff.	
81	The Committee discussed the potential inclusion of GDPR compliance; however, members noted that; only minor	

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
	breaches had occurred in recent years and the College continued to engage an external specialist GDPR consultant; Therefore, GDPR may not require a full internal audit review at this time.	
82	Mr Yates and Mrs McGladdery suggested that, given the volume of current developments, a more valuable area may be a capital projects review, particularly in light of: • Multiple capital projects running concurrently; • The need for assurance around governance, procurement and delivery; and • The emerging concerns relating to the Football Foundation pitch project.	
83	This suggestion was supported by Mr Harrison and Mr Malone who agreed that an internal audit review covering capital project management could be beneficial and timely, this would be discussed further with the Internal Auditors in reviewing the Internal Audit Strategy.	
84	**Resolved:** It was agreed that Mr Harrison would discuss the feedback from the Finance & Resources Committee with the Internal Auditors.	
	FR/26/112 – Items to be reported to the Board:	
85	**Action:** Mr Malone agreed to provide an update to the Board meeting on all curriculum reforms and apprenticeship reforms and will include information on funding.	**Action: Mr Malone April 2026**
86	To consider the risk around the Football foundation project. Further update to be provided to the Board meeting.	**Action: Mr Harrison April 2026**
87	**Assurance:** 1. Sustainability – Climate Action Plan - The Committee received strong assurance that the first iteration of the College's Climate Action Plan was comprehensive, actively monitored, and progressing across all four pillars (decarbonisation, adaptation, biodiversity and curriculum).	
88	2. Financial Performance - The College remained on track to deliver a forecast £500k surplus, with February management accounts showing a £172k surplus, just below profile but consistent with year-end expectations. 16–18 funding outlook remained stable, supported by strong student numbers and lagged-funding protection.	

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
89 90 91 92 93 94	3. Internal Audit – New Finance System - Internal audit provided Strong Assurance on the new finance system following its mid-year review. Only one minor recommendation (documentation update) was identified. 4. Capital Projects – General Progress - Mill Studios refurbishment and arts relocation project progressing positively, with value-for-money assurance strengthened by use of an experienced heritage contractor and previous phase benchmarking. Football Foundation pitch works were advancing ahead of schedule, with strong community interest. 5. Risk Management - Committee reviewed all 13 risks within its remit and confirmed no changes to current ratings. 6. Internal Audit Strategy - Committee endorsed a structured approach to shaping the 2026/27 Internal Audit Plan with a view to proposing to replace the GDPR scheduled audit. **Alert:** 1. Football Foundation Pitch Project – Cost Discrepancy - A material issue had arisen: Football Foundation documentation shows project costs £200,000 higher than previously agreed. College maintains the original expectation of a £300,000 contribution, as minuted in earlier Football Foundation discussions. A formal challenge had been submitted. The Foundation was reviewing at senior level. 2. Sector Funding Announcements - Government funding uplift was significantly lower than publicly presented (actual approx. 0.5%, not 1.6%). Withdrawal of T Level early-adopter uplifts presents a disadvantage to early implementers such as the College. Combined Authority funding expected to tighten further, with reduced support for low-impact provision. Risk of future pay constraints and industrial relations challenges noted. Growing national pressure around pay parity with schoolteachers and risk of future union action.	
  95	**FR/26/113 – Dates of Future Meetings** 25 June 2026 at 17.00 at the College.	

Approved as a true and accurate record at the Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 25 June 2026