CALDERDALE COLLEGE
FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 December 2025 at 5.35pm held via MS Teams

Present:

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

In Attendance:

Naz Mukhtar	External Governor – observer
Andrew Harrison	Vice Principal – Corporate Services
Jane Taylor-Holmes	Clerk to the Corporation

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

Min Ref.	Minutes	Action
1	**FR/25/122 - Apologies for absence** No apologies were received, all present	
2	**FR/25/123 – Confirmation of eligibility, quorum and declarations of interest** 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.	
3	**FR/25/124 – Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair** **Resolved:** Mr John-Paul Yates was appointed as Chair of the Committee for 2025/26**.**	

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4	**FR/25/125 – Minutes of the meetings** **Resolved -** The Finance & Resources Committee minutes of the meeting held 26 June 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.	
5	**FR/25/126 – Matters arising** There was one matter arising from the previous meeting; the response to which was included within the Vice Principals report.	
6	**FR/25/127 – Vice Principal Report** Mr A Harrison, Vice Principal – Corporate Services presented the Vice Principals Report. **Management Accounts to October 2025 (Period 3)**	
7	Mr Harrison presented the management accounts up to Period 3.	
8	The Committee noted the operating surplus of £297k, ahead of the budgeted position of £226k, with a forecast year-end surplus of £756k, approximately £250k above the approved budget. The College remained on track to retain a 'Good' financial health rating, supported by a strong EBITDA margin.	
9	Mr Harrison highlighted the increase in the 16–18 allocation and the AoC recommendation of a 4% backdated pay award. It was noted that Management accounts were appended to the paper.	
10	Estates Update: Refurbishment works had been undertaken, including improvements to D Floor (PwC) and an additional staff room at TEC. Master planning and feasibility work continued, focusing on three areas: • Completion of the underdeveloped Mill Studios area • Workshop space development • Student social space enhancements	
11	Changes in estates team personnel were noted.	

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12	Procurement & Value for Money: Mr Harrison referred to the fact that nine key service procurement exercises were underway (e.g., waste management, sports pitch maintenance), supported by the Crescent Purchasing Consortium to support on the technical side of the procurement exercise.	
13	Catering Services: The Committee discussed the potential outsourcing of catering to improve management efficiency and maintain affordable, healthy food provision. In response to a question from Mrs S McGladdery, External Governor & Corporation Chair regarding redundancies, Mr Harrison confirmed that TUPE regulations would apply, and no redundancies were anticipated.	
14	Mr Harrison provided an update on the progress of the FA project. It was noted that there had been delays in the planning process, but the College remained hopeful that this would be completed by Christmas with project completion in April / May 2026.	
15	IT Infrastructure: Fibre optic cabling had been installed to improve resilience, and core network switches had been replaced. The Committee noted the significant increase in annual costs for the current network operating system (VMware, rising from £5k to £85k). Mr Harrison confirmed that the College would go out to tender for alternative solutions looking for options to balance cost and functionality.	
16	Mrs McGladdery and Mr John-Paul Yates, External Governor & Committee Chair commented on the ongoing financial implications and risks of vendor dependency, noting similar challenges across the sector and wider business community.	
17	HR Update: The HR dashboard showed an increase in staff numbers and a slight reduction in sickness absence. Mr Harrison commented that Mrs S Dunkley, External Governor had suggested reviewing the link between sickness absence and agency staff usage and had kindly offered support in developing improved monitoring. This would be reviewed in future meetings once developed.	

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18	Projects & External Funding: Mr Harrison commented that following a successful Turing programme trip to Bali, a visit to Morocco was planned, attracting significant student interest (231 applications for 38 places). Mrs McGladdery commended the success of the Turing initiative.	
19	Skills Bootcamps: Development continued across multiple areas; Calderdale Council had halted procurement in this area however this was now being re-procured in the area of health and social care.	
20	South Yorkshire Skills Bank: Mr Harrison explained that following a number of successful years delivery of the project, the decision had been made by South Yorkshire, Mayoral Combined Authority that this project would now be delivered in-house, with two staff transferring under TUPE.	
21	Sustainability: The first draft of the College's Climate Action Plan was nearing completion, supported by Let's Go Zero. Work continued on the Green Spaces project.	
22	Calderdale College Education Fund: £66,000 had been awarded for enhancing learner social spaces and outdoor areas.	
23	No data protection breaches were reported.	
24	**Resolved:** Committee members noted the report and received the Management Accounts and the HR dashboard.	
	FR/25/128 - CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - Staff Pay Award	
25	Mr Harrison presented the Pay Award paper, outlining the proposed offer to be made to the trade unions. The Committee was reminded that delegated authority to approve the pay award offer had been provided at the October Board meeting.	
26	Mr Harrison explained that the original budget, approved by the Board in July assumed a 2% pay award; however, since then there had a been a number of developments; School teaching staff had received a 4% award (September 2025); the Association of Colleges (AoC) had recommended a 4% pay award, acknowledging that colleges with high adult funding may face affordability challenges; the national	

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27	Minimum Wage would increase by approximately 4% from April 2026. Mr Harrison confirmed that employer NI support remained assured until 31 March 2026, with no indication of withdrawal.	
28	Union Pay Claim; UCU and NEU submitted a claim for 10% (or £3,000) plus a reduction in teaching hours, which would cost approximately £2m for pay and £750k for reduced hours.	
29	Additional funding allocations had improved affordability, and Mr Harrison confirmed that a 4% award was considered affordable.	
30	Mr D Malone, Principal & Chief Executive highlighted that a national ballot had resulted in 43 colleges voting to strike; the College was not balloted, which was viewed positively. Two local colleges (Bradford and Kirklees) had voted for strike action. Mr Malone stressed the importance of concluding negotiations promptly to avoid being drawn into wider disputes.	
31	Mrs McGladdery noted the risk of static adult funding and queried the implications for integrated settlements. Mr Malone confirmed that the AoC had launched a national campaign for adult funding uplift, noting that national rates had not increased for decades and adult providers remained under financial pressure.	
32	The Committee acknowledged the need to monitor funding developments and plan accordingly.	
33	The Committee approved the recommendation to make an offer of a 4% pay increase, backdated to August 2025, in line with AoC guidance.	
34	Mr Harrison confirmed he would email the trade unions that evening, with an outcome expected by Friday, aiming for implementation in January pay.	
35	**Resolved:** Committee members granted approval to progress the 4% pay award offer to the trade unions.	
	FR/25/129 – External Assurance Report **DfE Letter – College oversight**	

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	DfE Governor Dashboard	
36	Mr Harrison presented the letter received from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Governor Dashboard.	
37	The Committee noted that the College's financial health rating was confirmed as 'Good' for both the current year and forecast position. The DfE analysis aligns with the College's own assessment.	
38	It was noted that the DfE dashboard provided comparative data for the previous four years and two forecast years, focusing on three key measures: Adjusted Current Ratio – liquidity and cash position EBITDA – adjusted operating surplus Borrowing Levels – indebtedness	
39	Current scores indicated strong liquidity (green), improving borrowing position (due to the pay down of the loan), and EBITDA in the amber range due to modest surpluses (5–6%).	
40	The dashboard also illustrated trends in income growth, staff costs, cash flow, and balance sheet movements. Notably, fixed assets had increased from £22.9m to over £30m, reflecting significant capital investment. Cash days remained slightly below 50 but within acceptable limits (including those higher aspirational targets from the FE Commissioner).	
41	Mr Yates observed the usefulness of the data, level of detail provided and remarked on the effort involved in compiling the analysis.	
42	Mr Harrison confirmed that the DfE used automated processes to generate the dashboard from College returns and noted the additional value for internal monitoring.	
46	**Resolved:** Committee members received the DfE letter on College oversight and the Governor Dashboard.	
	FR/25/130 – Data Protection	

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47	Mr Harrison provided the Data Protection Annual Report for 2024/25 which provided a summary of information provided to the Committee during 2024/25.	
48	Mr Harrison confirmed that there had been 17 data requests in the period which was updated within the report with no data breaches reported.	
49	Mr Harrison referred to the significant improvement in this area with lots of green rated progress.	
50	Committee members referred to potential legislative changes to Data Protection in the next 12-18 months and asked about the College preparedness for any change.	
51	Mr Harrison confirmed that the College continued to be supported by specialised external company; Naomi Korn Associates.	
52	**Resolved:** Committee members received the Data Protection Annual Report 2024/25.	
	FR/25/131 - Policies	
53	Mr Harrison presented the following Policies; Staff Disciplinary Policy, Staff Grievance Policy and Staff Pay Framework Policy and commented that all were for recommendation to the Board for approval.	
54	Mr Harrison confirmed that changes were minor and reflected changes in relation to job titles etc.	
55	In response to a question around staff awareness and notification of changes to Policies, Mr Malone commented that any change to working conditions would be submitted to the Trade Unions for consultation.	
56	Staff were made aware of changes to Policies and Staff access Policies through the intranet (i-Trent) when needed and therefore only access the most up to date Policy.	
57	**Resolution:** The Committee approved Staff Disciplinary Policy, Staff Grievance Policy and Staff Pay Framework Policy for recommendation to the Board.	

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	FR/25/132 – Risk Management	
58	Mr Harrison presented the extract from the Risk Register detailing those 13 risks which are overseen by the Committee.	
59	It was noted that the risk register had been presented to the Board on 23 October.	
60	Mr Harrison referred to the additional risk around the delivery of the FA project and the one high red risk around failure to attract and retain suitable staff which had been discussed at the October Board meeting as the substantive item.	
61	Mr Harrison confirmed that there were no proposed changes to the risks.	
62	In relation to the red risk around staffing, Mr Malone shared some good news; that after nine months, the College had appointed a curriculum area leader for electrical, plumbing and motor vehicle and engineering who was due to start before Christmas.	
63	Mr Harrison referred to the irony in the financial model; the timing of vacancies supported financial performance, if more vacant posts were filled, this would challenge a bit more financially.	
64	Committee members were referred to the work being undertaken to review agency spend and how this linked to staff absence / vacancy management.	
65	**Resolved:** The Committee reviewed the risks and confirmed that there were no changes proposed to the ratings and risk register.	
	FR/25/133 – Committee Self-Evaluation	
66	Mrs Taylor-Holmes presented the Committee self-evaluation.	
67	Committee members discussed performance of the Committee and noted that the Committee had discharged the delegated responsibilities and provided good challenge.	

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68 69 70 71	Terms of Reference – Committee members reviewed the current Terms of Reference and noted that no amendments were proposed. Schedule of business – Committee members noted that this had been reviewed in line with new guidance; including the financial handbook, Code of Good Governance and FE and sixth-form college corporations: governance guide. Mrs Taylor-Holmes explained that this had been discussed with Mr Yates and Mr Harrison. It was agreed that the Carbon action plan would be presented to the Committee when this was available, to further the discussion around sustainability – cost versus benefit and the progress made to date. **Resolution:** The Committee approved the Terms of Reference for recommendation to the Board.	**Action: To be confirmed**
  72 73 74 75	**FR/25/134 – Items to be reported to the Board:** **Key Actions** Staff Pay Award: Committee approved the recommendation to make an offer of a 4% pay increase backdated to August 2025, in line with AoC guidance. Vice Principal to email trade unions and confirm outcome by Friday, aiming for implementation in January pay. Policies: Committee approved Staff Disciplinary Policy, Staff Grievance Policy, and Staff Pay Framework Policy for recommendation to the Board. Terms of Reference: Committee approved the Terms of Reference for recommendation to the Board. Action: Carbon Action Plan to be presented to the Committee when available for further discussion on sustainability. **Key Assurance** Financial Health: Management Accounts to October 2025 show an operating surplus of £297k, ahead of budget, with a forecast year-end surplus of £756k. College remains on track for a 'Good' financial health rating.	

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76	External Assurance: DfE letter confirmed College's financial health as 'Good' for current and forecast years. Dashboard analysis supports liquidity, improving borrowing position, and modest EBITDA surpluses.	
77	Data Protection: Annual report confirmed 17 data requests and no breaches in 2024/25. Significant improvement noted; College supported by external specialists.	
78	Risk Management: Committee reviewed 13 risks overseen by the Committee. No changes proposed. One high red risk remains (staff recruitment/retention), but appointment of a curriculum area leader for electrical, plumbing and motor vehicle and engineering reported as positive progress.	
79	**Key Alerts** IT Costs: Significant increase in annual costs for VMware (from £5k to £85k). Tendering for alternative solutions underway to mitigate financial risk.	
80	Staffing Risk: Recruitment challenges remain a critical risk despite recent appointment. Link between sickness absence and agency spend under review.	
81	Sector Context: National industrial action risk noted (43 colleges balloted; two local colleges voted to strike). Importance of concluding pay negotiations promptly highlighted.	
82	Funding Pressure: Static adult funding and uncertainty over future uplifts flagged as ongoing concern. AoC national campaign for adult funding uplift noted.	
	FR/25/135 – Dates of Future Meetings	
83	19 March 2026 at 17.00	

Approved as a true and accurate record at the Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 19 March 2026