FULL CORPORATION MEETING

7 July 2026

16:00 - 19:00

Boardroom, Warrington Campus

INTRODUCTION

The meeting opened at 4pm. It was AGREED that the agenda items be taken out of turn.

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT
Peter Scott - Member
Andy Atkin – Vice Principal: Curriculum
Amanda MacKinnon – Vice Principal: Curriculum
Andrew Bainbridge - Chair
Andrew Dainty - Member
Andrew Ellams – Vice Chair
Andrew Ross - Member
Anne Ryans - Member
Anthony Sit - Member
*Ben Brady – Staff Member
Debbie Warren – Staff Member

Kirstie Simpson – Member
Laura Churchill - Clerk
Lucy Gardner - Member
Michelle Seeley – Deputy Principal: Finance and Resources
Nichola Newton – Principal Member

*Nidi Etim - Member
Paula Rowland - Member
Rebecca Anderson-Moss – Vice Principal: Business Development and Growth
Rebecca Welch – Vice Principal: Quality and MIS

ABSENT
Caroline Rowley - Member
Geoff Spencer - Member
George Huang - Member
Lily Jones – Member

Sam Naylor- Member

*Remote attendance

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Information item Speaker: Chair Time: 4:00

To note any apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from George Huang, Lily Jones, Sam Naylor, Caroline Rowley and Geoff Spencer.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Information item Speaker: Chair

To note any declarations of interest from members in any item on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest from members in any items on the agenda.

3. *CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Information item

Unless otherwise stated, the following items will be taken as read, with no further comment or discussion. Where an item has been requested to come off the consent agenda for discussion or debate, this will be reflected in the minutes and covered in AoB.

4. *MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision item Speaker: Laura Churchill

For resolution: to consider and if so minded, approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 26th March 2026.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the minutes of the meeting held on the 26th March 2026.

5. *MATTERS ARISING

Discussion item Speaker: Laura Churchill

For discussion: to consider progress against actions from the meeting on the 26th March 2026

Members CONSIDERED progress against actions from the meeting on the 26th March 2026.

6. *CHAIR'S ACTIONS

Decision item Speaker: Chair

For resolution: to approve any actions taken by the Chair on behalf of the Corporation since the last meeting

There were no actions taken by the Chair on behalf of the Corporation since the last meeting.

6.1 *POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

Decision item Speaker: Michelle Seeley

For resolution: to consider and if so minded, approve the following policies, procedures and plans:

a) Counter Fraud Strategy.pdf 49
b) Data Protection Policy.pdf 58
c) Rights of Individuals Policy 26-27.pdf 74
d) Rights of Individuals Procedure 26-27.pdf 84
e) FoI Procedure 26-27.pdf 93
f) Gifts and Hospitality Policy.pdf 110
g) Critical Incident Management Plan 25.26 V24.4.26.pdf
h) Subcontracting Policy
i) Subcontracting arrangements for 26/27
j) HE Student Protection Plan
k) Tuition Fees
l) HE Tuition Fees
Reserves Policy (to follow)
m) Equality and Diversity Policy
n) Compliments and Complaints Policy
Teaching, Training, Learning and Assessment Strategy - to follow
o) Student Disciplinary Procedure
p) Risk Management Strategy
q) Travel Subsistence Policy Update
r) Reserve Forces Training & Mobilisation Policy
s) Learner Involvement Procedure
t) Social Values Policy
u) 16-19 Discretionary Learner Bursary Fund
v) HE Discretionary Learner Bursary Fund
Fraud Response Plan
Not on consent agenda - to be discussed - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
w) Freedom of Information Policy

To follow:

Student Privacy Notice
Reserves Policy
Teaching, Training, Learning and Assessment Strategy
DRAFT Safeguarding Policy for implementation from September 2026 (subject to any updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education)

It was RESOLVED that members approved the following policies:

a) Counter Fraud Strategy.pdf 49
b) Data Protection Policy.pdf 58
c) Rights of Individuals Policy 26-27.pdf 74
d) Rights of Individuals Procedure 26-27.pdf 84
e) FoI Procedure 26-27.pdf 93
f) Gifts and Hospitality Policy.pdf 110
g) Critical Incident Management Plan 25.26 V24.4.26.pdf
h) Subcontracting Policy
i) Subcontracting arrangements for 26/27
j) HE Student Protection Plan
k) Tuition Fees
l) HE Tuition Fees
Reserves Policy (to follow)
m) Equality and Diversity Policy
n) Compliments and Complaints Policy
Teaching, Training, Learning and Assessment Strategy - to follow
o) Student Disciplinary Procedure
p) Risk Management Strategy
q) Travel Subsistence Policy Update
r) Reserve Forces Training & Mobilisation Policy
s) Learner Involvement Procedure
t) Social Values Policy
u) 16-19 Discretionary Learner Bursary Fund
v) HE Discretionary Learner Bursary Fund
Fraud Response Plan
w) Freedom of Information Policy

7. STRATEGIC MATTERS

Time: 4:05

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

Time: 4:05

For discussion: to receive and discuss the college's top strategic risks and risk register and the RSM emerging risks document

The Deputy Principal: Finance and Resources (DP:FR) commented that there were 11 strategic risks, as per the previous meeting, with the threat of a cyber attack remaining the most severe risk. Members heard that the Director of IT had attended some Committee meetings to discuss the risk in detail. Members noted that the insurance cover for cyber had been increased from £1m to £2m, following benchmarking activities against other colleges.

It was explained that good practice meetings had been attended by the DP:FR to explore approaches to board assurance frameworks and work was being undertaken during the summer on the board assurance framework.

It was flagged that there was risk around the adult budget and devolution, and the college had submitted 5 bids to support a pilot scheme. It was discussed that the college had heard that Warrington had passed their allocation to Cheshire West and Chester, which was a concern.

Lucy Gardner joined the meeting at 16:08.

Members were reminded that the highest risks from a financial point of view were a cyber attack, maintaining good financial health through recruitment (which was positive in the short term but more risky in the medium to long term), the viability of Winsford, as well as the retention of high quality staff.

Members RECEIVED and DISCUSSED the college's top strategic risks and risk register and the RSM emerging risks document.

9. PRINCIPAL'S PRESENTATION - VERBAL

Discussion item Speaker: Nichola Newton Time: 4:10

For discussion: to receive and discuss a presentation from the Principal, including the finishing position for the academic year 2025/26 and looking ahead to 2026/27.

The Principal reported that the main focus was bringing in the end of the year both from a quality and financial point of view. Concerns about retention for 16–18-year-olds was flagged.

For adult skills, the first test pilot from Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) had been issued and the college had put in a bid for £190k, although it had been highlighted that the maximum allocation would be £80k. The risks around this were discussed.

Paula Rowland joined the meeting at 16:12.

The Principal reported that she had attended meetings in London with the National Pay Group.

Members heard the new executive leadership team were making changes to the internal structures and that going forwards there was going to be a push in reducing the amount of bureaucracy.

Members were informed that the college were unsuccessful in the bid for the clean energy skills - it had been awarded to Liverpool City College despite the college's strong bid.

The Principal highlighted the changes to the strategic aims and commented that in the previous year, there were four aims and for 26/27, it was proposed that there would be 2 strategic aims about quality, a 3rd about investment (how the college could invest in areas of importance: SEND and the level 3 picture) and a 4th around strong presence across the region with stakeholders. It was reported that the aim around inclusion had been removed because it was now part of business as usual. Members noted that there would be a 5th aim around the college's future which would be presented to the Board early in the Autumn term for discussion.

Members RECEIVED and DISCUSSED a presentation from the Principal, including the finishing position for the academic year 2025/26 and looking ahead to 2026/27.

11. *QUALITY AND ACHIEVEMENT CLOSING POSITION FOR 25/26 AND LOOKING AHEAD TO 26/27

Discussion item Speaker: Rebecca Welch

Included within the KPI paper

12. *FINANCE CLOSING POSITION FOR 25/26 AND LOOKING AHEAD TO 26/27

Discussion item Speaker: Michelle Seeley

Included within the management accounts and forecast.

13. CAPITAL BIDS UPDATE - SEND AND LEVEL 3

Discussion item Speaker: Michelle Seeley/Nichola Newton
Time: 4:40

For discussion: to receive and note an update on capital bids, including SEND and Level 3.

Members heard that there were two capital grants that had been confirmed and up to £800k of the first £1.1 had been committed over the summer of 2026. It was explained that a bid for the Construction Skills Capacity Fund had been submitted but not yet confirmed and was for £1.3m to better accommodate the growth in the number of construction students. It was reported that the work included the creation of an external covered area and additional car parking spaces.

Members heard that the second bid was for the SEND project phase 2. Members were reminded that phase 1 was the reconfiguration of E block and phase 2 related to a bespoke inclusion base external to the college. It was reported that the college were still working with Warrington Borough Council to identify a facility which could be available and appropriate. Members noted that there was a visit to a site taking place the week commencing the 13th July 2026. Members were informed that there was additional information contained within the papers in regard to works which had already been undertaken.

It was shared that finding a space for SEND phase 2 was proving challenging.

Q- Is a separate space needed for SEND because of capacity.
R- Yes and the college wanted to develop a specialist facility.

Members heard that commercial properties had been explored but the college needed external space.

Members were informed that the condition allocation grants helped to support the budget position in terms of reduced revenue costs. There had been a commitment to the capital allocations from the government for the next three years.

Members RECEIVED and NOTED an update on capital bids, including SEND and Level 3.

14. ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

Decision item Speaker: Nichola Newton Time: 4:45

For resolution: to consider and if so minded, approve the Accountability Statement for publication

The Principal shared that the accountability statement was in its third iteration and the college had used the DfE guidance to structure the statement. Members heard that the use of the mainstream inclusion fund had been added and the college had set out how much it received and how it was being used. Members were informed that the detail of the new LSIP had been included and the college had set out its response.

Members noted the college's pledges. It was explained that the pledge around supporting NEET students in the Winsford area had been worked up, and discussions with Cheshire West and Chester were ongoing. Members noted that the NEET issue in the area was reducing.

Q- Does the college have to include outcomes? Are there granulated outcomes given that they are marked as TBC at present?

R- Members were informed that it was difficult because the achievement for the year would not have been received by the time the accountability statement needed submitting.

Q- What feedback has the college received on the last accountability statement.
R- It came through the annual strategic conversation although very little feedback had been received.

It was discussed that KPIs showed the detail in terms of the outcomes.

ACTION - Principal to provide an outcomes table incorporating previous year data for review by the Chair prior to submission.

Members heard that the college had been previously advised to keep the outcomes broad.
ACTION - in July meeting next year (2027) review the previous year's accountability statement.

Q- Could the English and maths outcomes be about more than achievement, such as attendance?
R- Yes.

Q- A member asked why strategic aim 1 was not included?
R- If the college put in aspects of quality, it would just be replicating the development plan. The accountability statement was more about responding to skills, which was underpinned by a strong curriculum.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the Accountability Statement for publication, subject to minor amendments and the sharing of the outcomes table with the Chair of the Board.

15. STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM MATTERS

Time: 4:55

15.1 CHAIR'S UPDATE

Speaker: Caroline Rowley

For information: to receive and note an update from the Chair of the Standards and Curriculum Committee on the work of the Committee

Paula Rowland (PR) gave the update on behalf of the Chair of the Committee.

It was reported that the Committee considered retention for 16-18 year olds and the subsequent impact on ensuring achievement.

It was agreed that the board wished to explore the current updated picture. The Vice Principal: Quality & MIS (VP:QM) shared that for 16-18 year olds, the college were predicting 81.8% and there were still a number of students who needed to achieve. It was flagged that the college would be below the provide group average (PGA) on achievement, but that the team were doing everything they could with every learner still working with the college.

ACTION - Standards and Curriculum Committee to explore the reasons behind the drop in retention at the next meeting of the Committee in November.

Members discussed not conflating inclusion with low standards, which would not be the approach taken by Ofsted.

It was shared that there were plans to make changes in 26/27 to improve retention and the college could not continue to do what it had always done. It was explained that curriculum areas would analyse the reasons for poor retention and make changes as necessary. Comment was made that there were barriers all colleges were facing, however, the college were still going to come in below PGA which was not where it aspired to be.

Members noted that the college were looking at the use of data to help to flag issues sooner and the senior team were also exploring different curriculum models. It was flagged that the PGA might change when published in March and might reduce to reflect the challenges faced by all colleges.

It was highlighted that when students were not retained when studying English and maths there was a triple hit in terms of the data.

In Standards and Curriculum, Committee members heard that there was going to be a sharp focus on the first 6 weeks of the new academic year in terms of expectation setting and there were plans to refer learners to senior team members where there were attendance concerns.

Q- What would happen after the first 6 weeks?
R- The plans in place were not for the long term but were about setting expectations and were based on sharing practice with another college who had success with the same model, and had seen a 3% increase in attendance.

PR commented that there was concern about 16-18 apprenticeships and why achievement was not significantly higher, because the rollover from the previous year had been quite large. Members were assured that there was an improving picture for apprenticeships.

Members of the Committee requested a deep dive into apprenticeships in 26/27.

ACTION – Deep dive into apprenticeships to be conducted in 26/27, in particular, exploring why 16-18 achievement was not significantly higher in 25/26 considering the large number of students who rolled over into the 25/26 academic year for achievement.

Members RECEIVED and NOTED an update from Paula Rowland regarding the work of the Standards and Curriculum Committee.

15.2 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS), INCLUDING AN UPDATE ON PREDICTED ACHIEVEMENT

Discussion item Speaker: Becky Welch Time: 5:05

For information: to receive and note performance to date on pertinent KPIS, including an update on predicted achievement

Members were pleased to note that adults were looking very positive from a retention and predicted achievement point of view, with the expectation that the results would be an improvement on last year and above provider group average.

Members were assured that the college were expecting to come in at least at PGA for apprenticeships.

Concern was raised over 16-18 achievement where the national rate was 84% but the college were expecting to come in around 82%. It was flagged that it was the worst position for a number of years, however, the college were only just below average. Members were assured that it was not a significant risk in terms of inspection, but the college needed to act quickly and address the decline. Members heard that level 2 provision was the worst from a retention point of view at 6.5% below the KPI and most learners on level 2 did their courses and resat GCSE English and or maths, therefore impacting the data three times in some cases.

It was reported that some curriculum SARs had already taken place, with a risk-based approach taken to those conducted first. The key curriculum risk areas were shared and members heard that the SAR curriculum grades would reflect the results presented.

Q- A member asked when students were not retained, whether there was a pattern in reasons why, and how that is information was used to drive improvements.
R- Where possible, if students were at risk of leaving, the college engaged with parents and put action plans in place. If students left for reasons such as another job, it was captured. Unfortunately, there were some learners the college were not able to contact but the college

tried for 4 weeks. It was shared that many were leaving for jobs, but not the sort of jobs the college aspired them to leave for.

Q- Where students have additional needs, is that taken into account for achievement rates by external bodies?
R- No.

Q- Can the college or Board influence about situations where the college is trying to do the right thing by taking a risk on more vulnerable learners but being penalised because of the data?
R – It was discussed that the college would always try to give narrative to data. Members were informed that the college monitored retention for all protected groups, and learners with SEND actually retained better than their peers. It was reported that all protected groups were within the 3% tolerance.

C- Comment was made that there was concern about the fact that the college did not see the dip in retention coming as soon as it should have.

Members were assured that Ofsted would consider context to some degree and the college would need to be prepared with responses. Governors were informed that the college were not happy with the position and despite the deprivation, the college was not performing as well as peers, which needed to be addressed. It was shared that the college were concerned about NEET students but the college could not be all things to all people. The college were keen to learn from others where possible.

It was shared that the college would be considering the length of study programmes to help to support learners, and stepping stone qualifications were being explored to help to build students' resilience and help them to transition.

ACTION - do not include acronyms on Self-Assessment Review paper.

Q- In regard to level 2, why was the retention so poor?
R- Learners could count three times in the data if they were resitting English and Maths. It was shared that level 2 theory had always been problematic. Members noted that disengagement with English and maths sometimes caused students to disengage altogether. The college were in the process of recruiting staff to support students with English and maths.

Q- Is the nature of the qualifications causing concern?
R- Some awarding organisations had changed qualifications which had not worked well for the college.

It was explained that English and maths had been timetabled differently to try and keep students from curriculum areas together.

Comment was made that governors had absolute responsibility for ensuring the quality of education and it was incredibly disappointing that achievement was not going to come in at provider group average. It was evident that there was good discussion, particularly at Standards and Curriculum. Members agreed that they would provide support, networking links and skills to help support the college in delivering the actions to address the issues with recruitment and achievement.

ACTION - Members requested that for the Corporation meeting in October, a paper needed be presented documenting what the college was doing to address the decline in achievement and retention. Paper to also include when the decline started to help governors to understand the triggers.

ACTION – VP:QM to share with governors detail emerging from curriculum heat maps and monitoring mechanisms to provide the Board with information and assurance.

Q- Is the Board providing opportunities to address the issues with achievement and retention and if not, what resources are needed?

R- Members heard that the college might consider an external review.

Members were assured that the staff were confident that there was sufficient ability to address the issues with retention and achievement and comment was made that the college was recognised by Ofsted as being good with outstanding features.

ACTION – Principal, VP:QM and VP: Curriculum to discuss whether an external review would be beneficial.

ACTION – Arrange an additional standards meeting, focused on 16-18 so that issues can be explored more thoroughly, including an update on individual curriculum areas causing concern.

Comment was made that the change of qualification to exam assessed did not suit some of the students who studied at the college.

Q- What is the college doing in terms of marketing to try and encourage people to come to the college for a broader experience other than just study?

ACTION – Members to receive an update on the impact of WVR extra.

Members RECEIVED and NOTED performance to date on pertinent KPIs, including an update on predicted achievement.

15.3 APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE

Discussion item Speaker: Andy Atkin Time: 5:20

For discussion: to receive and discuss an update on apprenticeships, in particular,16-18

To include key AFIs (QIP) and predicted outturn 25/26.

Members heard that there was an updated position since the paper was published, with further positive movement.

Members were informed that when the staff met with the DfE and discussed apprentices, the college were not aware of what the nationally published data was because the meeting was held in December prior to data publication. Members heard that the college had originally agreed to

go for 65% overall and aim for 62% for 16-18, and the current picture was 62.4% overall and possibly closer to 63.5 with achievements not yet published. For 16-18, the college was predicting 63%. In predictions overall, the college was projecting 66% so hopefully above PGA which was 65.4% and 63% for 16-18 last year.

Members heard that there was a DfE dashboard which was how the college was measured and it highlighted when trigger points for intervention would come into force. It was explained that if the predictions came in for the current year, the college would not hit any of the triggers for intervention. Members were assured that the college were in a far stronger position at the current point in the year for apprenticeships compared to the same time last year.

Members heard that there would be an apprenticeship quality improvement plan in the next academic year.

It was explained that there were new processes around target setting and information, advice and guidance.

Q- A member commented that there could be marketing opportunities with the employer feedback about apprenticeships.

ACTION – explore the use the employer feedback about apprenticeships for marketing activity.

Members RECEIVED and DISCUSSED an update on apprenticeships, in particular, 16-18

15.4 *QUALITY OF CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Discussion item Speaker: Amanda MacKinnon

For discussion: to receive and note an update on programme of study (PoS) learners, including key strengths, key areas for improvement (AFIs) and predicted grading

Members RECEIVED and NOTED an update on programme of study learners, including key strengths, key areas for improvement and predicted grading.

15.5 *QUALITY OF CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Discussion item Speaker: Andy Atkin

For discussion: to receive and note an update on adult learners, including key strengths, key areas for improvement (AFIs) and predicted grading

Members RECEIVED and NOTED an update on adult learners, including key strengths, areas for improvement and predicted grading.

15.6 SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

Discussion item Speaker: Becky Welch Time: 5:45

For discussion: to discuss the current safeguarding picture and receive a Prevent update

The VP:QM reported that she had been covering safeguarding since the departure of the Director of Student Inclusion and Support, however, the post had now been filled and Charlotte Barratt was due to start the week commencing the 13th July 2026.

Members noted that the majority of safeguarding referrals were from females studying at level 1. It was reported that the sexual harassment survey had been relaunched with minimal engagement, however, the findings were similar to when it was previously completed and any information pertaining to the college was being addressed. Members noted that the survey was about experiences generally, not just experiences within the college setting. It was explained that students liked smaller areas to meet peers within college and the college were looking to make changes to the estate in response to this.

There was a conversation around the Guardian Report, in particular around phones which the college would be taking forwards. Members heard that tutorial would be returning across all levels for 26/27.

Q- A member commented that the poor response rate surprising and asked why this was.
R- Members were informed that it was possibly something about the timing pre-GCSE and it could be too soon after the last survey. It was also discussed that students may feel the college was listening and taking feedback onboard and therefore they had no great concerns, which led to apathy around survey completion.

Members DISCUSSED the current safeguarding picture and received a Prevent update.

15.7 *HE UPDATE

Discussion item Speaker: Andy Atkin

For discussion: to receive and discuss a HE update including key challenges and OfS update

To receive an update on the Initial Teacher Education inspection (ITE)

Members RECEIVED and DISCUSSED a HE update, including key challenges and OfS update.

16. FINANCE AND RESOURCES MATTERS

Time: 5:55

16.1 CHAIR'S UPDATE

Information item Speaker: Andrew Bainbridge

For information: to receive and note an update from the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee on the work of the Committee

The Chair of the Committee reported that the consent agenda had worked well in the Finance and Resources Committee meeting. It was explained that the main risks had been reviewed, pertinent to the remit of the Committee.

ACTION - MS to circulate an update on progress against cyber security actions following the internal audit to members.

It was shared that there was a business centre update at the meeting and the income had declined which was a national picture, but disappointing. Members were assured that the risks associated with the decline were not significant.

It was shared that the projections were that the college were going to end the year with outstanding financial health, however, the position would be mitigated down for period 11. The Committee had held a thorough discussion about the forecast budget which was being covered during the meeting.

Members were assured that the Charles Middleton fund was going to be used more fully and invested in a way that generated more income. Conversations were ongoing to ascertain whether the fund should be run down or whether there was potential to grow it over time.
In respect of financial regulations, members heard that the Finance and Resources Committee following management review had considered the delegations of authority and had agreed figures to be presented, which were recommended for approval by the Board. Members were adssured that advice from the auditors had also been sought.

Nidi Etim joined the meeting at 5:55pm.

Members RECEIVED and NOTED an update from the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee on the work of the Committee.

16.2 16-18 AND ADULTS RECRUITMENT UPDATE

Discussion item Speaker: Michelle Seeley Time: 6:10

For discussion: to receive and discuss an update on recruitment for 16-18 year olds and adults

Members RECEIVED and DISCUSSED an update on recruitment for 16-18 year olds and adults.

16.3 FINANCIAL FORECAST FOR 2026/27 AND 2027/28

Decision item Speaker: Michelle Seeley Time: 6:20

For resolution: to consider and if so minded, approve the college forecast for 2026/27 (to include capital and ILT spend) and 27/28

The DP:FR explained that there had been a recent announcement from the DfE setting out that there would be increased funding for colleges, although the amount and dates were unknown. Members were advised that the proposal was to get the budget agreed as presented and then provide an updated position once the detail had been released by the DfE.

Members noted that the projections were based on current predictions and extended by one year to inform the CFFR.

It was reported that within the forecast budget:

- Increase in projected income to 28.5m.
- Staffing costs of £20m and whilst 73% staffing to income ratio was high (Financial benchmark - FEC team was 65%), it was not out of line with many other colleges. The DP:FR reported that within the forecast, some increases in income were money in, money out and a piece of work had been undertaken removing these costs which took the staffing to income ratio down to 71%.
- There was an increase in lagged funding of just over £1m and the college were projecting to be in a growth position, with an increase of 112 learners forecast at present.
- There was a growth estimate in the forecast budget because if the college was delivering to more students, there had to be more staff to deliver.
- Allocations had been given for construction placement funding to support work placement coordinators to ensure that learners went out on placement.
- Allocations for Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester Combined Authority were also included.
- Apprenticeship funding was projected to be similar to the present year and there was an increase in full cost and learner loan income.
- High needs income was set to increase.

In regard to staffing costs, the college had budgeted for a pay award but nothing had been agreed and there had been no conversations to date with unions because the position had not been finalised. The budget included other costs such as contractual increments and an assumption about the national minimum wage. Members heard that non-staff movement overall had not changed significantly.

It was explained that the college had taken a second decision around transport and in order to grow 16-18 numbers, the college had decided to continue with the transport policy which had previously been removed.

The DP:FR assured members that the college were tight on challenging subscriptions to ensure value for money and that best estimates as known for exams and inflationary increases on other lines of income had been modelled through.

Overall, a positive budget had been forecast with EBITDA just over 5% which was the aim, and a surplus of £855k. Members heard that the forecast also included a projection around college investment of £250k in the current year alongside the capital grants and SEND funding. Overall, members heard that the CFFR had been issued late by the DfE and the Director of Finance was still working on inputting the figures, although the projection was good financial health.

Kirstie Simpson joined the meeting at 18:07.

Q- How is the Winsford campus factored into the forecast?
R- It has not been split out separately.

ACTION – DP:FR to share Winsford financial impact at the next meeting of the Corporation in October 2026.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the college forecast for 2026/27 (including capital and ILT spend) and 27/28.

16.4 *EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT AND GROWTH, INCLUDING INDUSTRY PLACEMENT

Discussion item Speaker: Becki Anderson-Moss

For discussion: to receive and discuss a report on employer engagement and growth

Members RECEIVED and DISCUSSED a report on employer engagement and growth

16.5 *FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Discussion item Speaker: Michelle Seeley

For discussion: to receive and discuss the management accounts for period 10.

Members RECEIVED and DISCUSSED the management accounts for period 10.

16.6 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Decision item Speaker: Michelle Seeley Time: 6:30

For resolution: to consider and if so minded, approve the Financial Regulations

Members heard that the updated figures for financial delegated authority had been shared for approval subject to Board agreement. It was reported that the number of quotes was delaying operational processes, however, members were assured that the college always ensured value for money.

Members were assured that the proposals were in-line with the Procurement Act.

Members discussed increasing limits for board approval from £100k to £200k.

ACTION – DP:FR and Director of Finance to review the financial limits for Board approval thresholds next academic year.

Members heard that the works in excess of £100k were due to take place in summer 2027. The auditors had urged caution over increasing the limit for Board sign-off to £200k and highlighted that it was out of line compared to other colleges. Members were informed that it was recognised that the team needed to look at ongoing revenue spend. The DP:FR commented that the college tended to go for one year contracts, unless there were significant savings to be realised for engaging for longer and the college were confident the product was needed in longer term.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the financial regulations.

17. AUDIT MATTERS

17.1 CHAIR'S UPDATE

Speaker: Anne Ryans

For information: to receive and note an update from the Chair of the Audit Committee on the work of the Committee

The Chair of the Committee commented that the last meeting took place on the 12th June, with Anthony Sit joining as a new governor. It was shared that the use of the consent agenda had worked well.

In regard to the internal audit cyber report, the Committee had been concerned that a number of the follow up action dates had slipped, and the Committee therefore requested an update on why the dates had moved. It was explained that the Committee had been given good assurances, however, it was noticeable that a number of timelines were way in the past and given cyber security was the most severe risk, a written submission had been requested from the DP:FR and Director of IT.

One of the actions for the Committee had been for somebody to volunteer to test the use of BoxPhish for governors, which was the college's online training platform and the Chair of the Committee had undertaken that testing on behalf of committee. The Clerk advised that it was best practice for all governors to complete cyber security training and the positive feedback from the Chair of the Committee meant that BoxPhish could be rolled out to all members. The Clerk highlighted that it did mean that governors would receive the phishing simulation emails as well.

ACTION - roll out BoxPhish training modules to governors, starting with cyber security in line with the college's most severe risk.

Members were informed that the Audit Committee did a deep dive at each meeting into one of the risks and for the meeting in June, the Committee focused on the risk around retention rates, with the VP:QM and VP: Curriculum joining the meeting to present. Members were assured that actions were in place to mitigate the risk and that further work would be done going into 26/27 to ensure the issue did not reoccur.

The Committee received the internal audit follow up report and were pleased to note that 14 of the 15 actions had been closed out. Comment was made that it was disappointing that one of the actions had not been completed around HR procedures when the Committee had previously been given assurances that the matter was in hand. Members were assured that there was now a new system in place which should address the issues.

It was reported that the Committee proposed for approval the internal audit plan and the Committee had queried the reason why there were 3 pieces of internal audit work taking place so close together in the spring term. The Committee had been assured by the auditors that they were content, and it was common across sector for the bulk of internal audit work to take place in the spring term. Members noted that on consent agenda was the appointment of the external

auditor and fees which was a formality and the auditors were in year two of a three year contract.

Another matter discussed during the Committee meeting was the board assurance framework (BAF), which needed to be reviewed and was also a focus because of the Further Education Commissioner interest in assurance frameworks and three lines of defence. The Committee heard that the BAF was being revised and would be presented to the Board in the new academic year. Members were assured that the BAF was a standing item on audit agendas.

Members heard that the Committee had SMART targets and a tracking document and at the June meeting, everything was on target to be achieved, which would be reported to the Board after the end of the academic year.

Members RECEIVED and NOTED an update from the Chair of the Audit Committee on the work of the Committee.

17.2 AUDIT REPORTS TO FLAG - CYBER SECURITY -INCLUDING TRACKING DOCUMENT

Discussion item Speaker: Michelle Seeley Time: 6:40

For discussion: to receive and discuss any RSM internal audit reports, or other audit reports, which require consideration by the Board.

Members RECEIVED and DISCUSSED the RSM cyber security report and tracking document.

17.3 *EXTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY

Decision item Speaker: Michelle Seeley

For resolution: to consider and if so minded, approve the external audit strategy for 26/27

It was RESOLVED that members approved the external audit strategy for 26/27.

17.4 *ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN AND 3-YEAR ROLLING STRATEGY

Decision item Speaker: Michelle Seeley

For resolution: to consider and if so minded, approve the annual internal audit plan and 3-year rolling strategy

It was RESOLVED that members approved the annual internal audit plan and 3-year rolling strategy.

17.5 *ANNUAL APPOINTMENT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND REGULARITY AUDITORS AND FEES - VERBAL

Discussion item Speaker: Michelle Seeley

For resolution: to consider and if so minded, approve the annual appointment of the financial statement and regularity auditors (2nd year of a three year contract).

It was RESOLVED that members approved the annual appointment of the financial statement and regularity auditors (second year of a three year contract).

18. SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Time: 6:50

18.1 CHAIR'S UPDATE

Information item Speaker: Andrew Ellams

For information: to receive and note an update from the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee on the work of the Committee

The Chair of the Committee encouraged members to feedback on Board papers via the Clerk so that they could be continually improved. It was reported that the Principal and Clerk would work with the senior team to continue to develop papers to establish clear reporting of Board actions required and key issues. The Search and Governance Committee discussed the appointment of new governors and expressed concern over the time taken between interviewing and new governors being able to attend meetings and therefore a decision was taken to make appointments via written resolution going forwards so that processes could be expedited.

The Chair of the Committee welcomed feedback from new governors on induction and any requests for training.

The Committee requested an action be taken by the Chair to raise at the Board meeting how low the attendance was at the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting in March. Governors did not provide any feedback on any particular issues which attributed to the low attendance. Members also heard that the Committee spent time exploring the feedback from the 1:1s with the Chair and question was raised whether all governors should have a link role. Members expressed support for all governors having link governors. It was discussed how the link governor feedback would be provided and how governors could contribute what they had learned to meetings.

ACTION – Chair to pick up governor attendance issues where apologies had not been provided ahead of meetings.

ACTION – Link governor proposals (suggested links aligned to Ofsted and key areas of concern, role descriptions and feedback mechanisms – reporting 3 key points) to be presented to the Board in the October meeting.

ACTION – RW to contact Andrew Dainty to support with the retention piece and share learning based on MMU and the challenges which they had previously faced and had now been addressed.

Members RECEIVED and NOTED an update from the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee about the work of the Committee.

18.2 *BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND VACANCIES

For information: to receive and note an update on the composition of the Board and vacancies

Members RECEIVED and NOTED an update on the composition of the Board and vacancies.

18.3 *GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT

For discussion: to receive and note an update on training activities/events attended by governors since the start of the academic year, including link governor activities:
(Safeguarding link governor – Lucy Gardner; Apprenticeships link governor – Geoff Spencer; SEND link governor – Paula Rowland, Careers link governor – Anne Ryans)

Members RECEIVED and NOTED an update on training and engagement activities attended by Governors.

18.4 GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2025/2026

Discussion item Speaker: Laura Churchill Time: 6:55

For discussion: to receive and note an update on the governance development plan

Members RECEIVED and NOTED an update on the governance development plan

18.5 CHAIR 1:1S WITH GOVERNORS

Discussion item Speaker: Andrew Bainbridge
Time: 7:00

For information: to *receive and note a paper detailing the outcomes and actions following the Chair's 1:1 meetings with Governors.*

The Chair commented that the 1:1s were incredibly useful discussions and the actions had been captured, with inclusion as necessary into the governance development plan. The Chair reported

that he would offer opportunities for an interim review and would speak to new governors at the start of new academic year.

ACTION – Governors to report engagement and development activities attended to the Clerk ahead of the close of the academic year.

Members RECEIVED and NOTED a paper detailing the outcomes and actions following the Chair's 1:1 meetings with Governors.

19. SENIOR POSTHOLDER REMUNERATION CODE

Decision item Speaker: Laura Churchill Time: 7:05

For resolution: to consider and if so minded, approve the adoption of the updated Senior Postholder Remuneration Code

The Clerk reported that the Code itself was underpinned by the same principles as the Code already in existence and that adherence was considered governance best practice. The Clerk reported that disquiet which had emerged across the sector regarding the guidance template report for publication which included publication of senior postholders' objectives and progress against them. The Clerk advised that the general approach being taken by other colleges was to adopt the code and use the template guidance report, however, given it was not mandatory, not to include publication of objectives.

Members were assured that the performance management procedures at the college for senior postholders was robust, with performance monitoring meetings conducted by the Chair and Vice Chair.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the adoption of the updated Senior Postholder Remuneration Code, with discretion to be exercised over the information provided in the published report.

20. APPENDICES TO THE PAPERS INCLUDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Information item Speaker: Chair

To note for information the minutes of Committee meetings held since the last meeting of the Corporation in March (included within the appendices to the papers)

Members RECEIVED the minutes of the Committee meetings held since the last meeting of the Corporation.

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

For discussion: to consider any items of other business

Members were pleased to note that staff and students had recently returned from the Turing trip to Sri Lanka, with a students' awards evening being held at 7pm. It was reported that the visit was incredibly successful, with incredibly positive feedback from students.

Q- Will there be marketing activity following the trip?
R- Marketing activity has been ongoing throughout the trip.

Thanks were expressed to Andy Atkin for leading the project. It was shared that the college had taken a number of students with learning needs who had flourished.

The Part I meeting closed at 18:48. RW, AA, AM and BB left the meeting at 18:48.

The part II meeting opened.

END NOTE

The meeting closed at 7:05pm.