

TRAFFORD & STOCKPORT COLLEGE GROUP

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the Corporation
held on Wednesday 17 July 2024 at 4.00pm
in the Boardroom at the Altrincham Campus**

Present:	Graham Luccock	(Chairperson)
	James Scott	(Principal and Chief Executive Officer)
	Charlotte Barratt	
	Jill Bottomley	
	Olivia Bussey	
	Sarah Drake	
	Jed Hassid	
	Alison Hewitt	
	Heather Lang	
	Jonathan O'Brien	
	Lewis Ormston	
	Ayo Oyebo	
	Marcia Reynolds	
	*Louise Richardson	
	Uswah Sayyed	
In Attendance:	Rebecca Clare	(Corporation Secretary)
	Carmen Gonzalez-Eslava	(Deputy Principal)
	Henry Taylor-Toone	(Chief Finance Officer)
	Yvonne Riley	(Assistant Corporation Secretary)
	Anita Monaghan	(Marketing Consultant – in attendance for item 1 only)

*attendance at the meeting via Microsoft Teams

Minute No.**COR/50/24****Strategic Plan**

The Chairperson of the Corporation welcomed Yvonne Riley to the meeting in capacity as the newly appointed Assistant Corporation Secretary. Anita Monaghan (Marketing Consultant) was welcomed to the meeting for this item only to share the marketing aspects of the draft Strategic Plan. The Principal and Chief Executive Officer (PCEO) confirmed that the Marketing Consultant has recently been appointed as the Group's Head of Marketing.

The PCEO shared a presentation that took the Board of the Corporation through the draft Strategic Plan. The PCEO began the presentation by sharing an overview of the national, regional and local policy environments and the huge political impact on FE Colleges over recent times including other issues facing the FE sector.

In relation to the National Policy Environment for FE Colleges, the PCEO referred to the following points:

- The Labour Manifesto and the post 16 system
- local skills/devolution

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- a tertiary System
- technical excellence college
- levy reform

The PCEO also shared other (non-manifesto) policy considerations including the following:

- Greater Manchester Skills Devolution
- barriers to Ofsted/DfE and rules around the EBACC
- Strategic Plan 2021-2024 and a key reminder of what has been achieved including financial sustainability, Ofsted rating, three mergers and redevelopment programmes.

The PCEO confirmed that at the Autumn Board of the Corporation meeting, the outcome of the Strategic Plan 2021-2024 will be shared, including achievements and what has not been achieved.

The PCEO provided the Board of the Corporation with an update on the Group's proposed strategic direction, including the first draft of the 2024-2030 Strategic Plan.

The new proposed Purpose, Vision and Mission were shared as follows.

Purpose

Unlocking potential, empowering futures (this was confirmed as the more favourable option) or
Inspiring minds, unlocking potential

Vision

Leading the way for a city region where everyone has the skills to success in life and work

Mission

Together we boost skills, shape futures and transform lives

A member suggested to change the word boost and suggested the word elevate/enhance or create.

Action: Principal and Chief Executive officer

A member raised a point that had been considered at an earlier meeting that the Group should consider whether it can be all things to all people and therefore was it appropriate to reference the word 'everyone' in the vision statement. It was agreed that the Group can't be everything to everyone, however, there was recognition that the Group are not the only contributors, and the aim is to be a lead contributor in a wider eco system. A member suggested an alternative option would be to focus on organisational success and consider the broader landscape.

Action: Principal and Chief Executive Officer

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A member questioned in relation to the vision and mission what the Group were striving to achieve. The PCEO confirmed that a focus is the communities that the Group serves. A member questioned whether the vision could be broader, and the focus being on something that can be changed. The PCEO confirmed that a focus had been on what success looks like, but all words lead to being 'outstanding'. Additionally, the PCEO questioned whether it was too narrow to quantify success that is determined only by a regulator on the one hand or have a broader remit on the other. Members agreed that this should be the latter.

The Marketing Consultant shared the purpose of the Strategic Plan and how to include how people feel and what others might say. The Marketing Consultant shared where the Group is now including:

- alignment of visual brand and Group identity
- identified campus USP
- consideration of the Group's brand and how the Group can differentiate between other colleges and sixth forms

The Marketing Consultant shared two routes in relation to direction of travel and to consider going forward. The options were shared as the following:

Option 1: Career College

Where the Group is known for skills/partnerships/alumni success and how this is applied and talked about in industry with clear results.

Option 2: Student Experience College

Where the Group is known for support/skills/development/contribution to society/next steps and the Group being known for the focus on the student package. This includes student opportunities and the support for students resulting in inspiring growth and exceptional support in the student journey.

A member questioned whether the USPs could include both options.

A member raised that they felt that the Group was more well known for student experience and inspiring growth.

A member questioned whether this should refer to learner experience rather than student experience.

Action: Principal and Chief Executive Officer

A member raised the point of driving objectives being a priority and the communication around critical skills and different types of skills that are needed to impact on employers' business. The member stated that this should relate to the Group's offer, through outstanding results and curriculum enrichment for life.

The Marketing Consultant confirmed that the Group will be working with an external agency to support delivery and focus on the messaging tool of how we speak to different audiences and communicate the ethos. The Marketing Consultant stated that the brand will be rolled out from September.

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A member confirmed that they felt the Group USP should be student experience with the aim on the work/university experience and next steps. The member confirmed that it was important that the Group deliver the College experience and it is not just a 'thing on a page'; it needs to be put into practice. The PCEO confirmed the aims of the draft Strategic Plan including the quality of employee experience, quality of student experience and quality of employers' experience. A member questioned the importance of 'what we do for you'.

The Marketing Consultant confirmed the importance of brand and what people identify as strengths, influences and challenging any misconceptions.

The strategic priorities were confirmed as the following:

- employers (skills)
- people (colleagues)
- students
- finances
- resources (innovation in digital and estates)
- communities (environmental, social and governance/civic duty)

The proposed Strategic Priorities were shared as the following:

SP1: Providing a curriculum that is highly responsive to local, regional and national skills needs

SP2: Positioning TSCG as the employer of choice for the further education workforce

SP3: Delivering an exceptional student experience

SP4: Ensuring financial stability and sustainability

SP5: Driving innovation in technology and estates

SP6: Responding to civic duty as an anchor institution for our local community

The PCEO confirmed that the proposed Strategic Priorities contain reference to the relevant college strategies that will drive the identified objectives, as well as the appropriate governance committee (or management committee with governor representation) that will provide oversight. On that basis, the PCEO proposed not to introduce an annual Operational Plan given that this would duplicate actions. However, it was proposed that the Executive provides the Board with an Annual Report on progress made against the Strategic Priorities. The proposed Strategic Priorities also refer to suggested impact measures that would form the basis of the TSCG KPIs 2024-30. The PCEO proposed that the new KPIs are presented to the Board in the Autumn Term for final approval. The KPIs will be set out to clearly cover each of the Strategic Priorities. The PCEO stated that there is some more work to do on finalising these in readiness for Board of the Corporation approval in the Autumn, particularly in relation to SP5 (and the production of the new Digital and Estates Strategies) and SP6.

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The next steps and timeline were confirmed as the following:

- **following feedback from the Board, the Executive will update the draft Strategic Plan over the summer**
- **the updated draft of the Strategic Plan will be shared with stakeholders, including staff and local authority/employer groups, during August and September for feedback**
- **it is then intended that the updated Strategic Plan is presented to Board at its Autumn meeting for final approval. A presentation including a summary of the Group's achievements against the 2021-24 Strategic Plan will also be presented at the same meeting**
- **the proposed new KPIs 2024-30 will be presented to the Board, along with the updated Strategic Plan, for approval at the Autumn meeting**
- **following final approval, the Group will seek to undertake an official launch event of the new Strategic Plan with stakeholders alongside its publication.**

Action: Principal and Chief Executive Officer

A member suggested a change in wording for 'anchored'.

A member suggested that the Key Performance Indicators could be linked to the ESG agenda through the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Action: Principal and Chief Executive Officer

A member raised whether there should be an additional priority for student behaviour. It was agreed that this would be difficult to quantify as a measure, but behaviour and attitudes remained an important matter across the FE sector. The PCEO confirmed that the committee look at this by level and the granular detail. **A member suggested creating a very simple behaviour framework that can be measured. The PCEO confirmed that this level of detail could be included in the new KPIs, but it was important to not have too many KPIs. The Deputy Principal confirmed that she will review this action.**

Action: Deputy Principal

A member questioned the order of the priorities and the rationale of what informed the order of priorities. The PCEO welcomed the challenge as all priorities were important. The PCEO confirmed that the order was more about sequencing, but that employers was at the top as meeting local and regional skills is the key priority for the government's remit for colleges. People (colleagues) was second as members of staff are a high priority to deliver student needs. However, it was recognised that all priorities are equally as important with students at the centre of all priorities.

A member stated that the Digital Strategy was not ambitious enough and the priority seemed estates driven with not enough focus on digital.

Action: Vice Principal Corporate Services and Planning

The Marketing Consultant left the meeting at this point.

Minute No.**Break in the meeting and the meeting recommenced at 5.30pm.**

At this point, the Board of the Corporation took a break to celebrate the recognition and record thanks for the long service of Janet Grant and for the contribution of Uswah Sayyed as Student Governor. Janet Grant had been a member for over 10 years and provided a wonderful insight, particularly with a financial focus. The Chairperson of the Corporation read a testimony to Uswah Sayyed who had contributed hugely to TSCG through her time as a student.

COR/51/24**Election****Chairperson of the Corporation 2024/2026**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) sought nominations for the position of Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation for the Academic Years 2024/2026.

Graham Luccock was the sole nomination, and it was unanimously resolved that he be re-elected to the position of the Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation for the Academic Years 2024/2026.

Vice Chairperson of the Corporation 2024/2026

The Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation sought nominations for the position of Vice Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation for the Academic Years 2024/2026.

Sarah Drake was the sole nomination, and it was unanimously resolved that she be re-elected to the position of the Vice Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation for the Academic Years 2024/2026.

COR/52/24**Apologies for Absence**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) reported that apologies for absence had been received from Emily McIntosh, Michelle McLaughlin (Staff Governor), Janet Grant, Jeremy Woodside and Blerta Shira (Student Member).

Michelle Leslie the Vice Principal Corporate Services and Planning was not in attendance at the meeting and her apologies were accepted.

COR/53/24**Declarations of Direct or Indirect Interests in any of the meeting's business items**

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

COR/54/24**Minutes of the Board of the Corporation Meeting held on 15 May 2024**

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 of the meetings proceedings.

Minute No.**COR/55/24****Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation 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.

It was confirmed that most actions were closed, and one action remained open.

The following additional update was provided in relation to the action that remained open:

(i) COR/48/24 – Board Assurance Framework

The CFO confirmed that in relation to deferring a decision in respect of the removal of the MIS staffing issues from the risk register, a decision would be made pending the outcomes of the work currently taking place by the MIS Consultant. The CFO confirmed that this action was now closed.

It was agreed that this action would be closed, and the Corporation Secretary would add a note to the proforma to show that the HE Student Data would continue to be monitored at committee level with any information passed to the Board of the Corporation as appropriate.

Action: Corporation Secretary

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

COR/56/24**Re-appointment of Co-opted Member to the Audit Committee for a further two-year term of office**

It was proposed that Ian Duncan be re-appointed as a Co-opted Member to the Audit Committee for a further two-year term. Ian is an established member with a key skill set to serve the Audit Committee.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the re-appointment of Ian Duncan, to the position of Co-opted Member of the Audit Committee for a two-year term of office be approved.

Action: Corporation Secretary

COR/57/24**Resignation of Co-opted Member of the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee**

It was confirmed that Sabine Van der Veer has resigned as a Co-opted Member of the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee due to moving out of the area. The Chairperson thanked Sabine for her commitment and support as both a Co-opted Member and Link Governor.

Minute No.**COR/58/24****Annual Strategic Conversation Outcome Letter**

The PCEO shared a copy of the Annual Strategic Conversation Outcome Letter following a meeting that took place on 1 May 2024. The PCEO confirmed that it was a positive meeting and there were many examples of strong effective practice that will be shared with the policy teams. The Executive Team, Chairperson and CS had attended the meeting.

There was confirmation that the discussion had been positive with a key focus from the DfE on the meeting of local and regional needs. The progress of the Group's integration with the LA's was recognised by the DfE as collaborative and a close working relationship, with the Group considered to be ahead of other colleges. The tangible actions in response to the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) which included the Manchester Airport Group and Sports Management courses were also noted.

It was further reported that other aspects of the conversation related to the financial position of the Group around which it was stated there had been transparency on the part of the Group and a positive movement in position.

There were no further questions or comments from members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Annual Strategic Conversation Outcome Letter be received and noted.

COR/59/24**Operational Plan and KPI Update 2023/2024**

The Principal and CEO (PCEO) referred members to the previously circulated report and an update on progress against the Group's Operational Plan and Key Performance Indicators for 2023-2024.

The following points were highlighted in relation to the Operation Plan:

- SP1: the main challenge this year has been student attendance which reflects a national trend. This was discussed in more detail at the last FE C&Q Committee meeting. TSCG have also fallen short on meeting student number targets for T Levels and HTQs, again this is reflective of a national trend. Good progress has been made overall on the focus on meeting local, regional and national skills needs
- SP2: TSCG haven't completed the action to attempt to achieve an external accreditation related to people and culture. This is something that will be considered further as part of the next plan. On workload and wellbeing, whilst a lot of activity has taken place, it remains a key issue for the workforce. Staff satisfaction has improved considerably across all questions compared to last year and the Group's approach to organisational culture through the Pacific Institute has met annual implementation targets
- SP3: apprenticeship income and outcomes are on track to improve on the previous year but will be below target. There is still work to undertake to develop and embed a fully effective CRM system
- SP4: a small-scale exercise has been completed around measurement of Social Value, but this needs to be a focus within the next plan. The Group's provision in engaging harder to reach learners has developed further this year but has not quite reached target levels

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- SE1: good progress has been made across the key objectives for estates redevelopment, including the commencement of the Cheadle project and the investment in new technologies through the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF)
- SE2: the objective of developing and embedding a student and staff entitlement around Digital Skills has only been partially completed. Work has commenced to introduce AI to support reduction in workloads – Teachermatic and Co-pilot
- SE3: the Group is forecast to reach a financial health rating of “Good” for this year. The expected underlying cash position will be in line with target. Further work is required to improve the Group’s approach to curriculum and resource planning to drive further efficiency and raise contribution rates

The following update was provided in relation to the Key Performance Indicators outcomes:

- the Group’s forecast financial position has improved since the last report. This has largely been driven by improved resolution of Apprenticeship D-Lock errors and a slight reduction in forecast pay and non-pay. EBITDA is still forecast to be below target but improved on the last report. Overall forecast financial health is “Good”
- under student outcomes the achievement rates given are still predicted at this stage. The overall achievement rate for Apprenticeships is currently predicted to be around 60%, and most measures have improved under the Apprenticeship Accountability Framework which was reported on at the FE Curriculum & Quality Committee. Achievement rates for young people are predicted to demonstrate incremental improvement on the previous year
- under People, overall staff satisfaction is rated as green due to the original target being set against one question (proud to be a member of TSCG – scored at 97% in the survey). On sickness, the Group has tightened compliance with the sickness / absence procedure and is ensuring cover is agreed where required to mitigate the impact of absence on students. Staff utilisation is also under target, and this has been reviewed for accuracy and impact on curriculum planning and resourcing for next year. Turnover is higher than target but better than last year’s rate of 16%
- under Estates, the overall utilisation has come through much lower than target. There are a number of factors influencing this, including: the Group have not yet achieved the efficiencies that will follow from the Cheadle project; the impact of block timetabling that reduces the maximum frequency the Group can achieve by a third; Cheadle and Stockport were analysed in advance and there was poor attendance at the time for some large groups (particularly English and maths); in some cases, curriculum areas have requested larger rooms than their student numbers; small group sizes for some areas; the data is for overall college use and we have some large spaces for enabling teams at additional sites that are not fully utilised due to people working from home. It should be recognised that this is a snapshot and measures actual use and occupancy rather than how often rooms are timetabled or how many students are on the register. A further update will be provided to governors on this through the Resources Committee.

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In terms of next steps and timeline, the PCEO confirmed that the final outcomes against the KPIs will be reported at the Autumn Term 2024 Board of the Corporation meeting. The PCEO also proposed that the overall outcomes from the TSCG's Strategic Plan 2021-2024 are presented to the Board of the Corporation in the Autumn Term rather than a further update to the Operational Plan outcomes.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member questioned on what has been done to raise attendance. The Deputy Principal (DP) confirmed that the Group is considering targets for attendance and how we report and monitor attendance going forward. The DP confirmed that students need to aspire to 90%, but where a student has low attendance, the Group is looking at how this can be raised and celebrated for the individual student to reach even better attendance targets.

A member raised in relation to AI and whether students were being supported to use it effectively and if members of staff were receiving appropriate training. The PCEO confirmed that one third of teachers are using TeacherMatic which has been positive, and Co-Pilot is being tested by members of staff including the Executive Assistants to see if it will support with workload issues. It was confirmed that training has been provided to the members of staff who are testing the use of Co-Pilot. It was confirmed that Co-Pilot is expensive and therefore is being introduced steadily.

A member questioned the reasons for staff turnover and staff sickness going up over the year. The PCEO confirmed that some of this is long term sickness, but short-term sickness has also gone up. The PCEO confirmed that this is like other educational organisations. The Deputy Principal confirmed that the Group's pay and conditions are good, but, for example, Learning Facilitators' posts are driving some of the turnover, as this is where the pay is not perceived as adequate

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Operational Plan and Key Performance Indicators Update Report be received and noted.

COR/60/24**FE QIP/KPI Update**

The Deputy Principal (DP) referred members to the previously circulated reports in respect of the FE Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2023-2024 update. There was confirmation that the reports as presented had been discussed in detail at the most recent meeting of the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee.

The DP stated that the QIP and accompanying summary was also an extension of the report made by the PCEO under the last agenda item.

A summary and progress against the eight key objectives or Areas for Improvement (Afls) was presented. There was confirmation that the appended KPIs marked in red were largely due to student attendance.

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The DP reported that in terms of next steps, the key priority is to continue to support students to complete their outstanding qualifications and assignments by providing as many opportunities as possible for learners to achieve and progress. The DP confirmed that the exam attendance, including English and maths will be analysed, and the Group will consider any implications for progression to ensure that learners get appropriate CEIAG and make informed choices about their future steps.

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 2023-2024 Update Report be received and noted.

COR/61/24**HE QIP/KPI update**

The DP referred members to the previously circulated reports in respect of the HE Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2023-2024 update. 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.

In relation to the QIP and the Areas for Improvement (Afls) members were referred to the RAG rating, the improving picture and increased levels of green RAG ratings.

The DP confirmed that the final KPIs will be brought to the Autumn Board of the Corporation meeting.

Action: Deputy Principal

A member raised a point in relation to objective 3; what was being done in relation to the progress not being achieved.

The Deputy Principal explained that this was in relation to the HE Data, and robust monitoring of quality data and prioritising the indicators that are specific for HE, so there are clear measures in place.

A member raised a point in relation to the enrolment figure not being achieved for HE and the number of starters, but the future target had increased and whether this was this achievable. The DP confirmed that recruitment in this area is a challenge, but it remains a priority to share HE case studies and market this area further. There have been some targeted campaigns which explain the most up to date offer. The Deputy Principal confirmed that recruitment is low in some specific areas, but a contingency has been built to support lower recruitment.

A member asked if there was a particular course that hasn't recruited. The DP confirmed that there is a lot of readily available work in the construction industry and therefore people are not taking on the offer because they are choosing to work instead.

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A member raised a point in relation to the partnership with the University of Huddersfield and the Government announcement of investment for new teachers, and whether this could help to increase recruitment. The DP confirmed that this partnership was taking place from September and will be used to push recruitment further. There is a lot of investment in teaching, but the demands of the job make the profession difficult to recruit. The Chief Finance Officer confirmed that this area remains a risk on the risk register and will continue to be monitored with the contingency built in, with the aim of marketing this area further.

A member raised a question of whether there was a way that we could 'white label' provision and whether this could be provided directly to large local employers. The DP confirmed that we do this currently, but the big employers also use the levy to do this. The DP will consider this further.

Action: Deputy Principal

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the HE Quality Improvement Plan and Key Performance Indicators 2023-2024 Update Report be received and noted.

COR/62/24**Chief Finance Officer's Report and Management Accounts for the period ending 30 April 2024**

Members were referred to the previously circulated CFO Report and Management Accounts for the period ending 31 May 2024. The CFO advised that the Management Accounts for the period to 30 April 2024 had also been considered in detail by the Resources Committee at its meeting on 19 June 2024.

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

- a copy of the CFO's presentation
- the Management Accounts Dashboard – April and May 2024
- Period 9 & 10 Management Accounts
- Period 9 & 10 Management Accounts Supporting Schedules.

The CFO made a presentation in relation to the key issues from his report and the management accounts under the following headings:

- Period 8 to Period 10 Educational EBITDA Forecast
- Risks and Opportunities
- Cash

Period 10 Educational EBITDA Forecast

The following was highlighted:

- the 16-19 - T-Level clawback was lower than anticipated
- full cost is under delivery (although this can be clawed back in last 2 months)
- for pay there has been a saving due to vacancies
- for non-pay there are various savings following a tightening of expenditure

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- there is no movement in full year forecast P9 to P10 as the Education. EBITDA forecast has stabilised but there still is a risk that this could drop off

Risks and Opportunities

In relation to risks and opportunities the CFO brought the following to the attention of members:

- P9 and P10 Ed. EBITDA forecast remains steady at £2,097k
- work has been done to stabilise non-pay costs and ensure the Group deliver
- risks are covered by the Group's risk reserve and new pay opportunity
- there is an opportunity to exceed budget £2.3m Ed. EBITDA
- the aim is to keep this momentum building into FY24/25

Cash

The CFO confirmed that the cash position was currently £2.7m higher than budget (this was down £1.3m compared to P8 forecast due to the invoicing of the Cheadle project). Reference was made to the increased income in 2024-2025 and recognition that as the Cheadle project commenced, cash reserves would decrease accordingly. It was noted that in relation to cash, the Group will be under £4m by the end of 25/26 on current run rates.

A member questioned the amount in relation to the cash position. The CFO confirmed that this would be the position if nothing was to change to the financial position.

A member questioned the amount of days for debtors and creditors. The CFO confirmed that this was currently 22 days, but the Group was trying to get better at paying quicker. The CFO confirmed that this is a challenge as invoicing is difficult, but the processes are being tightened. The CFO confirmed that this is an internal issue. The CFO reported that the budget figure is high, but this will come down.

In terms of future years, the CFO stated that the aim was to build up the cash reserves.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was resolved that: -

- (i) the Chief Finance Officer's Report and presentation be received and noted; and**
- (ii) the Management Accounts for the period to 31 May 2024 be duly approved.**

COR/63/24**ESFA Financial Assessment Letter and Dashboard**

The CFO referred members to the ESFA Financial Assessment Letter and Dashboard that was received on 22 April 2024. The letter confirmed the financial health grade for 2022/23 was 'Good'. The CFO confirmed that in relation to financial controls no concerns were raised. The CFO confirmed that in relation to the Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control, the ESFA had

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noted that the financial statements did not explicitly state whether the Group has established systems and processes to identify and handle any transaction for which DfE approval is now required. The CFO confirmed that the Group had provided the ESFA with written confirmation of this and this will be rectified for the 2023/2024 financial statements. The CFO also confirmed that in relation to the Statement of Regularity, Propriety and Compliance and Statement of Responsibilities of Members of the Corporation, the ESFA had noted that the Group did not comply with the format as set out in the College Accounts Direction 2022-2024. The CFO confirmed that the Group will ensure that this is included correctly in the 2023/2024 Financial Statements. In relation to the Financial Dashboard, the CFO confirmed that at the current time the comparatives to benchmarks could not be accessed and therefore the information was not useful.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the ESFA Financial Assessment Letter and Dashboard be received and noted.

COR/64/24**Board Assurance and Risk Management Framework**

The CFO 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 24 June 2024.

It was reported that of the 30 risks, 24 were greater than 15 and 3 had a net risk of greater than 15. There was confirmation that 12 net risks were outside risk appetite. The CFO confirmed that a new risk had been included for AI and recommended for the removal of a risk relating to the Stockport Development, as the redevelopment project is complete.

In relation to horizon scanning and emerging risks, an overview was presented in relation to:

- financial sustainability
- people and culture
- student and quality of education
- other corporate risks.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member questioned in relation to Safeguarding, what action was being taken for more resources needed at a leadership level. The CFO confirmed that an additional Assistant Principal is required for Safeguarding and therefore an additional person will be recruited with additional investment made in this area.

A member raised a point that at the recent Safeguarding meeting within her capacity as Link Governor it was pleasing to note how many of the safeguarding referrals are being closed. It was confirmed that 90% of safeguarding cases have been closed.

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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 the Summary Framework and visual heat map as presented be approved.

COR/65/24**Health and Safety Charter Statement of Intent 2024/2025**

The Health and Safety Charter Statement of Intent for 2024/2025 was presented. A member raised whether there should be a comment added in relation to the Vice Principal Corporate Services and Planning. The CFO confirmed that will be passed to the VPCSP for review.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration the Health and Safety Charter Statement of Intent 2024/2025 was approved subject to a review from the VPCSP of comments received by members.

COR/66/24**Link Governors****Link Governor outcomes for 2023/2024**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) shared an update on the Link Governors outcomes for 2023/2024. There were a potential 55 visits able to be undertaken in the year, of which 49 were completed (as compared to 50 potential visits in 2022/2023 of which 40 were completed). This does not include the monthly meetings with the Chairperson of the Corporation, Principal and CEO and Corporation Secretary which have all been completed. The Corporation Secretary confirmed that all areas had received at least one visit with 15 areas being fully completed.

Link Governor proposals for 2024/2025

The Link Governor proposals for 2024/2025 were shared. The CS proposed that Lewis Ormston take forward the vacant role of Information Technology – Curriculum. A member stated that the previous member undertaking this role had been a member of the FE C&Q Committee. The Chairperson of the Corporation confirmed that with the inclusion of AI and up to date technologies in the workplace that Lewis Ormston was a suitable member to fulfil this requirement. The CS confirmed that a link report will be uploaded to Team Engine for members of the FE C&Q Committee to keep up to date.

Draft Schedule of Board, Committee and Working Group meetings 2024-2025

The CS referred members to a draft version of the Schedule of Board and Committee Meetings for 2024/2025. The CS explained that a draft version was circulated via email to all members of the Board of the Corporation and the Leadership Team in April for review and comments. Most of the members supported the new schedule with two responses where comments required further consideration. To be as inclusive as possible, ensuring strong governor engagement, a small number of changes from the draft schedule (circulated via email in April) have been made as follows:

- 3 Board of the Corporation meetings have moved to a later time
- a change in date/time to one HE C&Q Committee and one Audit Committee

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- 2 training sessions will be held remotely (or be held in-person with an option to join remotely)
- the Resources Committee will continue to be held remotely and will combine the SPWG due to the Cheadle Project now being underway and the Stockport project being complete
- the HE C&Q Committee in the Spring Term will be held in person at the Stockport campus
- members are actively encouraged to attend Board of the Corporation meetings in-person; however, members can request to the Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation to join the meetings remotely if circumstances make it difficult to attend in person.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Draft Schedule of Board, Committee and Working Group meetings 2024-2025 be approved.

The Corporation Secretary confirmed that the meetings will now be added to governors' calendars.

Action: Assistant Corporation Secretary

COR/67/24**Minutes of the HE Committee held on 5 June 2024**

The minutes of the meeting were received, and the Chairperson of the Corporation provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee. The Chairperson of the Corporation confirmed the Chairperson of the Audit Committee and CFO attended the HE C&Q Committee meeting to provide an update on the HE Internal Data Audit. It was confirmed that this will continue to be monitored by both committees.

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

COR/68/24**Important matters only to note and approval as recommended by the HE Curriculum & Quality Committee**

The Chairperson of the Committee in conjunction with the considerations of the Committee commended the following items to the Board of the Corporation:

HE Curriculum & Quality Terms of Reference

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration, on the recommendation of the Committee, the updated Terms of Reference of the HE C&Q Committee 2024-2026, were approved.

HE Higher Nationals Qualification Assessment Regulations

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration, on the recommendation of the Committee, the HE Higher Nationals Qualification Assessment Regulations, were approved.

Minute No.**HE Academic Policy and Procedure**

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration, on the recommendation of the Committee, the HE Academic Policy and Procedure, were approved.

HE Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration, on the recommendation of the Committee, the HE Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure, were approved.

COR/69/24**Minutes of the Search Committee held on 19 June 2024**

The minutes of the meeting were received, and the Chairperson of the Committee provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee.

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

COR/70/24**Important matters only to note and/or Approve as Recommended by the Search Committee**

The Chairperson of the Committee in conjunction with the considerations of the Committee commended the following items to the Board of the Corporation:

Instruments and Articles of Government

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration, on the recommendation of the Committee, the Instruments and Articles of Government, were approved.

Standing Orders

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration, on the recommendation of the Committee, the Standing Orders, were approved.

Role Description and Person Specification for Member of the Corporation

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration, on the recommendation of the Committee, the Role Description and Person Specification for Member of the Corporation, were approved.

Key tasks and role description for Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration, on the recommendation of the Committee, the Key tasks and role description for Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation, were approved.

Expenses Policy for Corporation and Co-opted Members

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration, on the recommendation of the Committee, the Expenses Policy for Corporation and Co-opted Members, were approved.

Minute No.**Governor Induction, Mentoring and Training Policy**

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration, on the recommendation of the Committee, the Governor Induction, Mentoring and Training Policy were approved.

COR/71/24**Minutes of the Resources Committee held on 19 June 2024**

The minutes of the meeting were received, and the Vice Chairperson of the Resources of the Committee provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee.

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

COR/72/24**Important matters only to note and approval as recommended by the Resources Committee of:**

The Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation with reference to the presentation made earlier in the meeting by the CFO under agenda item 6 and the accompanying documentation, and in conjunction with the considerations of the Committee commended the following items to the Board of the Corporation.

P9 Management Accounts ending 30 April 2024 (item 6.1)

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Period 9 Management Accounts be approved.

New Management Accounts Format FY 2024/2025

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the New Management Accounts Format FY 2024/2025 be approved.

OfS/DfE Capital Funding update

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the position in relation to the OfS/DfE Capital Funding Update be noted.

Financial Regulations Update and Scheme of Delegation

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Financial Regulations and updated Scheme of Delegation be approved.

Procurement Strategy 2024/2027

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Procurement Strategy 2024/2027 be approved. It was explained that this strategy is being carried over, but a consultant is going to be working with the Group to create a new Procurement Strategy and this will be presented in due course.

Minute No.**Local Government Pension Scheme Discretionary Policy 2024/2026**

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Local Government Pension Scheme Discretionary Policy 2024/2026 be approved.

A member raised whether the government would be reimbursing the Group for the RAAC. The CFO confirmed that this matter is ongoing, and this should be fully funded by the government, but the Group has not been reimbursed as yet. The CFO confirmed that the process has been slow.

COR/73/24**Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 24 June 2024**

The minutes of the meeting were received, and the Chairperson of the Committee provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee as follows:

- an internal audit on work placements had taken place and the second line of defence was flagged in relation to risks and how we deal with it. The second line of defence has been flagged across several internal audits and therefore the second line of defence will be considered further as part of the internal audit plan for 2024/2025
- there were recommendations from the Partnership/Subcontracting review and the differences between the two that will be considered further by the Group
- the HE Internal Data Audit was continuing to be monitored and the Chairperson of the Audit Committee had attended a meeting with the OfS and the Group and the HE C&Q Committee to provide an update on the matter
- the Leaders in Safeguarding Audit had been completed and it was noted as a positive report with only a few recommendations.

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

COR/74/24**Important matters only to note and approval as recommended by the Audit Committee**

The Chairperson of the Committee in conjunction with the considerations of the Committee commended the following items to the Board of the Corporation:

Internal Audit Reports – Visit 2 2023/2024:

1. Work Placements
2. Learner Records (Enrolments)
3. Partnership/Subcontracting review
4. Follow up on recommendations (from previous reports)
5. Business Critical Controls - HR (implementation dates included)

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Internal Audit Reports – Visit 2 2023/2024 (as listed) be approved.

Draft Internal Audit Needs Assessment

Minute No.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Draft Internal Audit Needs Assessment be approved.

External Audit Strategy for Year Ending 31 July 2024 and future going concern assessment

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the External Audit Strategy for Year Ending 31 July 2024 and future going concern assessment be approved.

Policies:

- **Whistleblowing Policy 2024/2026**
- **Anti-Fraud Theft Bribery and Corruption 2024/2026**
- **Board Assurance and Risk Management Policy 2024/2026**
- **Leaders in Safeguarding Audit**

The Board of the Corporation thanked the Chairperson of the Audit Committee and the Audit Committee for all their hard work, particularly in relation to the HE Data Internal Audit.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Policies (as listed) be approved,

COR/75/24**Minutes of the FE Curriculum & Quality Committee held on 26 June 2024**

The minutes of the meeting were received, and the Chairperson of the Committee provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee as follows:

- a focus on attendance with a link to good teaching and good attendance being shared
- predicted achievement was shared and this was reported to be heading in the right direction
- the focus on areas such as construction and apprenticeships were looking more positive
- the apprenticeship accountability framework was shared
- positive student destinations are 90.5% and this was reported be positive compared to the national rate
- the collection of student destinations to be moved to a new provider
- the student governor report was shared with interesting headlines
- the student experience report was shared and there was so much positive work in this area reported
- the Leaders in Safeguarding Audit had taken place with a very positive outcome and only 8 recommendations
- the AP – Study Programmes (Academic) attended the Just One More Thing Event in Kent with the focus on attendance and behaviour with some positive take aways.

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

Minute No.**COR/76/24 Important matters only to note and approval as recommended by the FE Curriculum & Quality Committee**

The Chairperson of the Committee in conjunction with the considerations of the Committee commended the following items to the Board of the Corporation:

- Mental Health and Well-being Policy 2024/2026
- SEND Policy
- Student Relational Behaviour Support Policy 2024/2026
- Complaints and Compliments Policy 2024/2027
- Sexual Violence, Harassment and Abuse Policy 2024/2026

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Policies (as listed) be approved,

The Chairperson of the Committee in conjunction with the considerations of the Committee commended the following items to the Board of the Corporation and it was noted that the policy and strategy date is being extended and a thorough update is planned for the Autumn Term:

- Careers Education and IAG Policy
- Excellence in Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Policy and Strategy (as listed) be approved.

COR/77/24 Key issues of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 20 June 2024

The minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 20 June 2024 were received and noted.

The Link Governor for this area shared the following key points:

- reports of health and safety had increased from this time last year and the majority of this was reported to be due to ill health offsite (that was reported on arrival)
- there was now a better capture system in place to support the monitoring of the increase
- there had been a fire incident that was reported at Stockport. It was reported that no one was injured but there were some housekeeping adjustments recommended
- training was scheduled for health and safety for members of staff
- departments were being supported to capture evidence and ensure a continued healthy working space.

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/78/24 Key issues of the Sustainability Committee Meeting held on 27 June 2024

Minute No.

The minutes of the Sustainability Committee meeting held on 27 June 2024 were received and noted.

The Link Governor for this area shared the key points but explained that many of the actions were still in progress at the time of the meeting:

- one of the key objectives was to develop student enrichment and support engagement in this area
- key targets dates for actions to be completed were set for July
- applications for the Green Gown Awards 2024 had been submitted.

PCEO confirmed that he was pleased to confirm that following the committee, the applications for the Green Gown Awards 2024 for Employee Engagement and Tomorrow's Employees have been shortlisted. Members congratulated the Group on this success.

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/79/24**Key issues of the Safeguarding Committee Meeting held on 26 June 2024**

The minutes of the Safeguarding Committee meeting held on 26 June 2024 were received and noted.

The Link Governor for this area shared the following key points:

- there was robust challenge at the safeguarding meeting
- the Leading Safeguarding audit was detailed, and it was pleasing to see that all processes were in place and followed well
- the new Keeping Children in Safe Education guidance will be implemented in the new academic year
- most safeguarding referrals were closed
- there was an increase in safeguarding cases at Cheadle and Marple campuses compared to other sites
- there was good evidence of good practice being shared across campuses
- it was reported that this was an excellent committee that is well attended.

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/80/24**Policy Approvals**

The following policies were reviewed and considered by the Board of the Corporation.

The CFO recommended the following policies for approval:

- Social Media Policy 2024/2026

Minute No.

- Freedom of Speech Policy 2024/2026

The DP recommended the following policy for approval:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy 2024/2025

Following comments from members that had been received and updated in advance of the meeting, it was agreed that the policy would be recommended for approval.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the policies be approved.

COR/81/24

Any Other Business

There were no matters raised under any other business.

Governors were reminded that if they were encountering any IT issues to let the Assistant Corporation Secretary know.

COR/82/24

Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting will be 2 October 2024 at 4.00pm. It was noted that a training event will take place on 30 October 2024 at 3.00pm.

The meeting closed at **7.03pm**.