

TRAFFORD & STOCKPORT COLLEGE GROUP

**Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting
held on Wednesday 12 November 2025 at 5.00pm via Microsoft Teams**

Present:	Louise Richardson	(Chair)
	Alison Hewitt	(Vice Chair)
	Graham Luccock	
	Jonathan O'Brien	
	Lewis Ormston	
	James Scott	(Chief Executive Officer)
	Nick Wroe	
In Attendance:	Rebecca Clare	(Corporation Secretary)
	Carmen Gonzalez-Eslava	(Group Principal)
	Michelle Leslie	(Chief People Officer)
	Yvonne Riley	(Assistant Corporation Secretary)
	Lyndsay Sheridan	(Director of Finance)
	Henry Taylor-Toone	(Chief Finance and Operations Officer)
	Kelly Wright	(Assistant Principal Planning, Funding and Performance)

Minute No:**RES/48/25 Apologies for Absence**

The Corporation Secretary (CS) reported apologies for absence for Jill Bottomley.

Apologies for absence were also noted for the Chief Technology Officer and Director of Estates.

The CS confirmed that in relation to the Digital Strategy item the paper would be confirmed as read and any questions forwarded to the CS via email following the meeting for a response to be provided.

The Chair of the Resources Committee confirmed that this would be the Director of Finance last meeting and thanked her for her work. The Director of Finance expressed confidence in the finance team's ongoing strength.

RES/49/25 Declarations of Interest

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

RES/50/25 Succession Planning for Resources Committee

The Corporation Secretary (CS) reported that the Term of Office for the Chair of Resources Committee is due to end in the summer term. Lewis Ormston will Chair the spring and summer term meetings to support succession planning with ongoing mentoring arrangements in place until the end of the academic year.

RES/51/25 Minutes of the Resource Committee Meeting held on 18 June 2025

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The minutes of the meeting were approved and accepted as a correct account of the proceedings.

RES/52/25**Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The Chair referred members to the previously circulated summary and progress update concerning the actions arising from the minutes and earlier meetings of the Resources Committee.

It was confirmed that a number of the actions had been closed or would be considered as part of the meeting's agenda.

The Corporation Secretary confirmed that the Digital, Data and Technology Strategy would be presented to the Board of the Corporation for approval in December 2025.

RES/04/25 Matters Arising from the Minutes

In relation to developments between Stockport County and Life Leisure in respect of the Woodley site, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) advised that there was no further update at the current time.

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

RES/53/25**People and Culture Five Year Plan**

The Chief People Officer (CPO) referred members to the previously circulated reports and information in relation to the People and Culture Strategy 2025-2030. The CPO presented the plan, aiming for a 2030 vision with a shift from annual actions to long term outcomes. The CPO explained that plans are fluid, with ongoing consultation and a focus on impact over effort. The new Shadow Board and leadership development initiatives were highlighted.

Overview of the Timeline and Roadmap

It was highlighted that the recently approved People and Culture Strategy aimed to foster a culture of ambition, inclusivity, opportunity, and innovation across the Group, with the aspiration to be the employer of choice for the FE Sector. The CPO advised that there was now a clear focus on identifying the specific long-term actions required to successfully deliver the ambitions set out within the strategy.

The CPO advised that the intention was to move away from overly detailed annual plans and develop a roadmap to enable a more dynamic approach that focuses on identifying the key milestones and outcomes essential for delivering the strategy and, through regular review and adaptation, can better respond to evolving needs including the external environment.

It was confirmed that the People and Culture Strategy Five Year Timeline of suggested key actions had been provided as supplementary documentation.

The CPO advised that discussions were now taking place with members of the People and Culture team and People and Culture Steering Group to confirm the anticipated key actions. It was confirmed that once agreement had been reached on the required

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actions, further work would be undertaken to review the impact measures and from there the roadmap would be developed.

Strategic Objectives

It was noted that the actions/outcomes detailed in the Plan reflected the anticipated activities to achieve the following strategic objectives.

- PC1: Lead the way in attracting, recruiting, and retaining an exceptional workforce that meets local, regional, and national skills priorities.
- PC2: Position TSCG as the Employer of Choice for the workforce, enabling professional growth, innovation, and leadership at every level.
- PC3: Deliver an exceptional people first experience by enabling a culture of wellbeing, engagement, and personal accountability.
- PC4: Enable financial stability by cultivating an agile and future-ready workforce where colleagues thrive through attractive reward and recognition.
- PC5: Create a workplace where all colleagues believe they belong, embedding equity, diversity and inclusion into every aspect of our people experience.
- PC6: Champion environmental and social principles to foster a purposeful college community.

It was confirmed that each strategic objective would be supported by appropriate monitoring mechanisms and/or impact measures.

Governance and Continuous Improvement

The CPO advised that progress would be reviewed by the People and Culture Steering Group, with annual oversight from the Resources Committee. It was noted that this process would allow for iterative refinement based on performance data, feedback, and organisational needs. It was confirmed that a full strategic review would be planned for 2029 to prepare for the next strategic cycle.

Next Steps and Timeline

- To agree key actions with the People and Culture Steering Group – November 2025
- To review impact measures and key milestones – December 2025
- To develop a timeline/roadmap of key outcomes – January 2026

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member questioned in relation to the 'deal for colleagues' and progress with leadership competencies. The CPO described positive feedback on well-being initiatives and ongoing work to embed leadership behaviours, with plans to cascade these further.

A member praised the staged approach and requested ongoing progress tracking. The CPO agreed and noted priorities may shift over time.

There were no further questions or comments from members and following consideration it was resolved that the update in relation to the People and Culture Five Year Plan be received and noted.

RES/54/25**Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) Draft Five-Year Timeline**

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The Chief People Officer (CPO) referred members to the previously circulated reports and information in relation to the proposed long term objectives to deliver the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) Strategy 2025-2030.

Overview of the Timeline and Roadmap

It was confirmed that the summary outlined the key elements required to successfully deliver the ambitions set out the EDIB Strategy 2025 to 2030 and that the intention was to develop a roadmap to position the Group as a sector leader in inclusive practice, with actions and outcomes structured around five central strategic themes.

It was noted that an initial timeline of suggested key actions per year of the Strategy had been provided as supplementary documentation.

It was highlighted that the successful development and delivery of the roadmap was a cross-college responsibility that necessitates an extensive collaborative process with key stakeholders, ensuring collective ownership and meaningful engagement at every level. The CPO reported that discussions were taking place with relevant colleagues and members of the EDIB Committee to confirm the anticipated key actions and outcomes.

It was confirmed that once agreement had been reached on the required actions further work would be taken to review the impact measures and develop a roadmap. It was reported that the actions/outcomes detailed in the plan reflected the anticipated activities to achieve the five strategic objectives.

Governance

The CPO reported that the draft five-year plan aimed to set out a comprehensive, measurable approach to embedding EDIB across all aspects of the Group's operations. It was confirmed that regular reviews, stakeholder engagement, and transparent reporting would underpin the Strategy's success, with the aim of achieving recognised external accreditation and sector-wide recognition by 2030.

It was confirmed that progress would be reviewed by the EDIB Committee, with annual oversight from the Resources Committee. The CPO advised that a full strategic review would be planned for 2029 to prepare for the next strategic cycle.

Next Steps and Timeline

- To agree key actions with the EDIB Committee – December 2025.
- To review impact measures and key milestones – January 2026.
- To develop a timeline/roadmap of key outcomes – February 2026.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

There were no questions or comments from members and following consideration it was resolved that the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Draft Five-Year Timeline be received and noted.

RES/55/25**Final Funding Claims 2024/2025 and Contract Values 2025-2026**

The Assistant Principal Planning, Funding and Performance (APFP) referred members to the previously circulated report which provided information for the final funding

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claim submissions in respect of 16-19, adult and apprenticeship income for 2024-2025 and sets out the contract values for 2025-2026

Headlines included:

- 16-19 Funding
- Adult Skills Fund
- Level 3 Skills Guarantee (ASF Local Level 3 and Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) Adult Level 3)
- Apprenticeship Funding
- Higher Skills

Key points highlighted included:

- Learner numbers were on track for 16-19.
- Learner numbers were slightly below target for T Levels (resulting in clawback), and over-delivery for GMCA adult funding (extra income).
- Apprenticeship income was slightly below forecast due to delayed achievements.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member questioned in relation to GMCA and how optimistic the Group were in relation to over delivery payments. The Group Principal confirmed that she was not optimistic about additional funding. The CFOO noted that the budget included recognised income only, and future delivery will be more controlled.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members arising from the report and after due discussion and consideration it was resolved that the funding position for 2024-2025 and contract values for 2025-2026 be noted.

RES/56/25**Partner Subcontracting Update**

The Assistant Principal Planning, Funding and Performance (APPPF) referred members to the previously circulated report and update on the current position in relation to the Group's Partnership and Subcontracting activity during 2025-2026.

Key points highlighted included:

16-19 Study Programmes:

It was confirmed that Subcontracting activity on DfE funded study programmes for young people for TSCG relate to Debut Academy of Performing Arts, and Stockport County Football Club.

The APPFP reported that learner numbers were over the budget plan by 9 learners for Debut Academy and 4 learners for Stockport County.

A table was provided that set out the current position with enrolment and funding figures.

It was advised that partnership arrangements for Altrincham Football Club continue this year, with recruitment slightly below target.

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The APPFP reported that work was ongoing with the adult partnership arrangements, working with Working Wonders and Code Nation.

It was confirmed that the latest figures had been provided in the report, with a reduction on the planned numbers for Code Nation. The APPFP advised that work continues to review these arrangements throughout the executive business review meetings held monthly

Questions and comments were invited from members.

The CFOO confirmed that no current risks had been identified.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following consideration it was resolved that the Partner Subcontracting Update be received and noted.

RES/57/25**Learner Numbers and Funding Update**

The Assistant Principal Planning, Funding and Performance (APPFP) presented a report which provided a summary update in relation learner numbers and predicted learner funding income.

The APPFP drew the Committee's attention to the following:

- Positive position for 16–19 recruitment with circa 524 learners above allocation. It was noted that the Group were awaiting information from DfE in relation to in year growth business case potential. It was advised that T Level recruitment was below allocation by 55 learners (below target and campus level performance), potentially resulting in a reduction in funding.
- Adult Skills Fund tracking positively against the expected November profile, with the full-year recruitment projected to meet allocation targets, reflecting strong demand and effective engagement strategies.
- Apprenticeships appear in line with expected budget targets, with monthly reviews taking place to ensure this remains on track.
- HE enrolments stabilised at 246 but remain below the original target of 350 due to course viability and staffing limitations. It was confirmed that a targeted January intake had been planned within the HE provision to maximise progress toward addressing the current shortfall.
- Advanced Learner Loans enrolments stabilised at 118, with a further review required to ensure that this facility is maximised in line with the wider adult offer.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

The Group Principal added retention has improved due to better onboarding and support. A member shared feedback from a student's family about their positive experience.

There were no further questions or issues raised from members arising from the report and following due discussion and consideration it was resolved that the Learner Numbers and Funding update report be noted.

Minute No:**RES/58/25****The Trafford and Stockport College Group Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements 31 July 2025**

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) presented a report which included the Draft Report and Financial Statements (DRFS) for the year ended 31 July 2025.

There was confirmation that the Group was obliged to prepare an Annual Report and Financial Statements (ARFS) to 31 July each year. It was stated that the DRFS were subject to external audit and that the Regularity Self-Assessment (RSA) was subject to assurance engagement. Members were reminded that both documents were required to be submitted to the ESFA for review by 31 December 2025.

There was confirmation that the 'front end' narrative was scheduled to be reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 17 November 2025 as well as consideration in relation to an assessment of going concern and any events after the reporting period together with the Letter of Representation from the external auditors.

The CFOO took members through the narrative of the DRFS, and attention was drawn to the following:

- Reconciliation of P12 Management Accounts to Statutory Accounts.
- Smooth and clean audit and acknowledgement of thanks to the Finance team for their effective processes.
- No Audit Adjustments noted at the time of writing and all statutory adjustments in line with expectation. No material changes are expected except for minor R14 adjustments.
- As no impact on DfE Ed. EBITDA financial statements were in line with what we reported at P12.

In terms of the next steps, it was confirmed that the DRFS would be considered further by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 17 November 2025 and thereafter be presented to the Board of the Corporation on 10 December 2025 for discussion and formal approval. The CFO stated that once approved the accounts would be signed and submitted to the DfE prior to 31 December 2025 and published on the Group's website in advance of 31 January 2026.

Questions and comments were invited.

A member noted a typo, which the Director of Finance welcomed for correction, emphasising the document is still in draft form.

There were no issues or comments raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was resolved that the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Trafford and Stockport College Group to 31 July 2025 be recommended to the Board for approval.

RES/59/25**Management Accounts September (P02) 2025-2026**

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and financial position which included the management accounts for the 2 months ending 30 September 2025.

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Key points highlighted included:

- Income recognition is lagging due to timing, but contingency has covered the T Level clawback and pay awards.
- Pay awards were confirmed with unions: minimum 5% for all, up to 7% for lower paid staff, costing about £90,000 more, covered by contingency.
- Additional 16-19 learner growth could result in up to £1.3 million extra funding, though timing and confirmation are pending. No plans to spend this yet.
- National Insurance grant income is only recognised until March; any further grant would be an upside, but prudence is applied in forecasts.
- Cash position is strong, with a reconciliation provided to show underlying health after accounting for advance grants and VAT.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member questioned in relation to National Insurance risk. The CFOO confirmed the accounts assume no further grant after March, so any extension would be positive. The member acknowledged the prudent approach.

There were no further questions or comments from members and following consideration it was resolved that the Management Accounts for the 2 months ending 30 September 2025 be recommended to the Board of the Corporation for approval.

RES/60/25**Capital Funding Update including Post 16 Capacity Funding**

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and capital funding update.

Key points highlighted included:

- T Level specialist equipment funding not used (for T Levels not running) will be returned to the DfE; this is a balance sheet adjustment with no operational impact.
- FE condition allocation funds are being spent as planned, with about two and a half years left to use them.
- GMCA sufficiency/post-16 capacity funding: £500k+ confirmed for Stockport and Trafford, awaiting confirmation for the second tranche (Stockport and Stretford).
- Stockport's grant covered summer work.
- Stretford's allocation will be planned once the amount is confirmed.
- All reporting deadlines are being met, and there are no current risks identified with capital funding.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following consideration it was resolved that the Capital Funding Update including Post 16 Capacity Funding be received and noted.

RES/61/25**Annual Procurement and Procurement Strategy Update**

The Director of Finance (DoF) referred members to the previously circulated report and an annual update on the Procurement Strategy, setting out the performance against the action plan for 2024-2025 and the strategy for 2025-2026. The DoF highlighted a focus on compliance due to the Procurement Act, rather than cost savings.

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Key points highlighted included:

- Tender compliance on above threshold procurement now fully operational
- Contacts register now being actively managed in Finance department and all applicable renewals assessed for compliant procurement requirements.
- That the non-compliance of No PO, No Pay policy was 8% for 2024-2025 covering £1.4m of spend.
- Savings arising from invoice queries resulted in £117k of credit notes being issued back to the Group in 2024-2025.
- 42 instances of Exceptional Circumstances being used cover £957k of expenditure.
- Number of invoices over £50k received by Group in FY24 25 was 85 with £15m related to Cheadle and the biggest other spends related to subcontractor/partnerships, security, and various capital works. These related to mostly IT, where standard tendering is not feasible.
- Procurement Internal Audit due for March 2026 with a focus on compliance.

The DoF advised that the above demonstrated that, although the Group had tightened up in some areas, there was still some way to go ensure that the Group were fully compliant. It was confirmed that this would be addresses through the action plan for 2025-2026.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member sought clarification on the £117,000 savings from invoice errors. The DoF explained these were due to errors or overcharges (e.g. VAT miscalculations, cleaning hours, old meter charges) and were resolved by querying suppliers.

A member questioned on the focus of the upcoming internal audit. The CFOO confirmed the audit would follow purchases through the process to ensure compliance, including sampling invoices and checking tender documentation. The member also questioned if the audit approach was standard. The CFOO confirmed it would be, with an emphasis on compliance with the new Procurement Act

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following consideration it was resolved that the Annual Procurement and Procurement Strategy Update be received and noted.

RES/62/25**Annual Treasury Management Report**

The Director of Finance (DoF) referred members to the previously circulated report and an Annual Treasury Management update consistent with the requirements of the Treasury Management Policy and Financial Regulations of the Group. There was confirmation that the report also provided an update on performance against the banking loan covenants.

Key points highlighted included:

- That the total income generated through surplus cash deposits in 2024-2025 was £480k through continuous deposits and good cash management of monies in and out of the college.
- Deposit income to P3 £129k.
- That the Debt Service Cover Covenant had been met as of 31 July 2025

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- It was noted that the Group were still awaiting authorisation of STEGTA in relation to the bad debt write off from DfE, which is pending official liquidation confirmation.
- The college continues to use green deposit facilities to support its Sustainability Strategy.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

Action: Chief Finance and Operations Officer

A member questioned if it would make financial sense to pay off the outstanding loan or if it were fixed. The CFOO responded that the interest rate is low, the loan is decreasing, and since future borrowing is not possible, it is better to retain cash for now. The member noted the interest cost is about £300,000 per year, offset by deposit interest, and this could be reconsidered if cash balances fall in the future. The CFOO agreed to explore this further.

There were no questions or comments raised by members and after due discussion and consideration it was resolved that the Annual Treasury Management Report 2024-2025 be received and noted.

RES/63/25**Annual Value for Money Report**

The Director of Finance (DoF) referred members to the previously circulated report and an annual update on value for money.

Key points highlighted included:

- Areas of expenditure in non-pay remain largely similar to previous years with subcontractor costs increasing year on year.
- Benchmarking:
Non-Pay - Overall total expenditure similar to income scaled comparators, however the split of expenditure marked in areas such as teaching/ teaching support costs, rental costs, exam costs and subcontracting costs (mainly due to the Woodley site and high subcontracting in 2024/25 and expected to reduce this year).
Pay - Total FTEs 7% less than direct comparators. It was reported that this was driving the average costs per FTE. Average cost per FTE (Teaching Only) is lower than the specific benchmark population. Staff to income ratio roughly consistent with benchmark population.
- Social Value contribution of £1,144,608 in 2024-2025 from student and professional volunteer hours
- Procurement processes and compliance continue to be a key focus with new staff in the Finance Team recruited to support both reporting and compliance.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member questioned in relation to teaching costs, noting they seem higher for teachers but lower overall compared to comparators. The DoF clarified the report refers to non-pay teaching costs (resources, not staffing), which are lower than comparators.

A member questioned the reliability of benchmarking, given differences in cost allocation. The CFOO explained that while there are rules for reporting, some variation

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exists, but the data is validated and used by the FE commissioner for benchmarking. The DoF expressed a high confidence in the comparability.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following consideration it was resolved that the Annual Value for Money Report be received and noted.

RES/64/25 Estates Strategy Update

The Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) referred members to the previously circulated report and information in relation to the Estates Strategy update for key elements completed in FY24/25 and plans for FY25/26.

The CFOO provided the following summary:

- Key achievements, highlighting the early attainment of ISO sustainability accreditations (including Cheadle campus) as a major success.
- The main focus for the coming year is to increase estate utilisation and create more capacity without new construction, alongside upgrading infrastructure such as roofs and boilers to improve sustainability and comfort.
- Capital investment will be directed toward essential maintenance and sustainability improvements.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following consideration it was resolved that the Estates Strategy update be received and noted.

RES/65/25 Digital Strategy Update

The Digital Strategy update was tabled for information, with the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) unable to attend the meeting. The Corporation Secretary advised that any questions on the report should be emailed to her for a response and circulation and reminded governors that the previously circulated report included information in relation to progress against priority digital plan actions.

The Corporation Secretary confirmed that the new Digital, Data and Technology Strategy would be presented to the Board of the Corporation in December 2025 for approval.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following consideration it was resolved that the Digital Strategy update be received and noted.

RES/66/25 Sustainability Annual Plan Update

The Chief People Officer (CPO) referred members to the previously circulated reports and information in Sustainability Annual Plan for 2025/2026.

The CPO reported that the Sustainability Strategy Annual Plan for 2025-2026 had been developed following consultation with key internal stakeholders and had been aligned to the current strategy, noting the current strategy runs to 2027 but will be extended to 2030 to align with other TSCG strategies. The plan covers four key areas: curriculum development (including green curriculum and broader sustainable development goals), building design and management (with progress led by the estates team and focus on

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net zero targets), operational circular economy, and governance/partnerships. The Chief People Officer confirmed that a new sustainability coordinator has joined TSCG, with expertise in scope 3 emissions, aiming to improve the Group's approach beyond current scope 1 focus.

It was noted that ongoing progress is monitored by the Sustainability Committee

Key actions highlighted included:

- **Green Curriculum Development:** TSCG recognised the need to prioritise the establishment of a sector-leading 'green' curriculum. A clear overview of the current and planned green curriculum offer is being developed therefore, with the Group Principal agreeing to take the lead role in this process. Additionally, an audit of the curriculum against SDGs using the Responsible Futures framework will be undertaken to ensure a comprehensive and forward-looking approach. The above measures should ensure that accountability measures for curriculum actions will be strengthened.
- **Building Design and Management:** Further sustainable practices in building design and management are planned to contribute to reducing the Group's carbon footprint with investments in energy efficiency and waste reduction. Whilst data capture beyond scope 1 emissions remain a challenge, targets will be established to achieve this.
- **Circular Economy Principles:** The adoption of ethical and best practice circular economy principles in operational processes, including those delivered by third parties has commenced with the establishment of the procurement strategy.
- **Governance and Partnerships:** TSCG will continue to engage with external stakeholders. By strengthening our engagement, it enables us to add support to joint initiatives such as Green Week and to monitor our progress against other colleges and share best practice.

The CPO reported that the Group had already made good progress against the EAUC Climate Action Roadmap, particularly in meeting the emerging and establishing stages.

It was noted that the current plan now includes 'leading' actions from the roadmap, demonstrating the Group's commitment.

Strategy Update and Extension to 2030

The CPO reported that the Sustainability Strategy would be reviewed and updated to extend its scope to 2030. It was noted that this review would introduce clearer accountability mechanisms, with a particular emphasis on curriculum actions to ensure all teams were responsible for delivery and reporting. It was confirmed that the extended strategy would also align with evolving sector expectations and best practices, embedding sustainability more deeply across all areas of the Group's operations.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

There were no questions or comments raised by members and after due discussion and consideration it was resolved that the Sustainability Annual Plan update be received and noted.

RES/67/25**Any Other Business**

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There were no matters raised under any other business.

RES/68/25

Date of Next Meeting

The Corporation Secretary advised that the next meeting of the Resources Committee would be held on Wednesday 25 March 2026 at 5 pm via MS Teams

The meeting closed at 6.04 pm.