

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25TH JUNE 2025

Present

Angela Briggs	Governor
Peter Grant	Governor (Acting Chair)
Emma Kirk	Staff Governor
Philippa Poland	Governor
John Rees	Governor (CEO)

The quorum for the meeting was 40% of membership to include at least 3 external members. The meeting was quorate.

In attendance

Sharon Harmon	Clerk to the Corporation
Barrie Shipley	Chief Operating Officer, Finance & Infrastructure

The meeting was held on MS Teams and commenced at 5.00pm.

Item	Minute	Action
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1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Karen Jackson (Governor), Helen Kirby-Hawkins (Governor) and Ben Owen (Vice Principal Business Growth, Skills & Partnerships).

2 Declarations of Interest

Members should declare any personal or financial obligation, allegiance or loyalty which would in any way affect decisions in relation to the subjects under discussion.

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Finance & Resources Meeting held on 5th March 2025 and any matters arising

The minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 5th March 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

Item 4 - The Clerk confirmed that the updated Risk Register was circulated to the committee for their information following the previous meeting.

4 Committee Risk Register

Members received the Group Risk Register. Members reviewed and discussed the strategic risks for which the committee has responsibility for oversight. Members noted updates to controls, assurances, mitigations, and planned actions around each risk. Members discussed the updates and were assured by planned actions. Members considered the residual risk score for each risk. Members were satisfied the current risk ratings were appropriate.

Item	Minute	Action
5	<p>Recruitment, Projects and Contracts Update</p> <p>The Chief Operating Officer, Finance & Infrastructure (COOFI) presented the Recruitment, Projects and Contracts update report. The COOFI advised the committee that the report had been prepared by the newly appointed Interim Vice Principal, Business Growth, Skills, and Partnership. Members reviewed and noted the contents of the report providing an update on learner recruitment, contracts and funding.</p> <p>Members were assured by positive progress against recruitment targets for Apprenticeships, Education Programmes for Young People and Higher Education programmes. Members noted and discussed some recruitment challenges for adult learners and were assured by planned activities to support further recruitment.</p> <p>Members noted and discussed updates on subcontracting partners. Members were assured by progress on quality audits for sub-contracting partners.</p> <p>Members noted and discussed the update on funding streams and financial impacts across provision. Members noted some financial pressures around adult learner loans and were assured by planned mitigations.</p> <p>Members asked for further explanation on adult learner loans funding the impact of student numbers on income. The COOFI explained the funding model and how funds are allocated. Members were assured by planned actions to mitigate any risk.</p>	
6	<p>Management Accounts to end of May 2025</p> <p>The COOFI presented the Management Accounts to 31st May 2025. Members noted the contents of the report providing an update on the Group's financial performance to 31st May 2025.</p> <p>Members noted and discussed variants in income and expenditure vs budget. Members noted that the current financial performance is ahead of recent forecast and budget. Members were assured that risks on certain income streams are currently being mitigated by underspends on pay and non-pay budgets. Members noted the confirmation of additional in year funding, and additional support for the increase in national insurance contributions.</p> <p>Members noted that the year-to-date financial performance adjusted operating surplus vs budget deficit provides a positive variance. Members were assured of banking covenant compliance and financial health outstanding expected to be achieved. Members asked for further clarification on capital spend. The COOFI explained the delays in capital expenditure and the position with cash reserves. Members sought further explanation on staff vacancies and staff pay costs. The COOFI explained the current position and provided further assurance.</p> <p>Members were assured by the update on the current financial position and thanked the COOFI for the update report.</p>	
7	<p>Draft Financial Plan 2025-27 and Commentary</p> <p>The COOFI presented the draft Financial Plan 2025-27. Members reviewed the report which provides the outcome of the financial planning for 1st August 2025 to 31st July 2027, identifying current planning assumptions and risks. Members were assured that the financial plan follows a comprehensive business planning round and confirm and challenge meetings with all budget holders. Members noted the Financial Plan for 2025/26 to 2026/27 is to be approved by the Corporation Board and will form the basis</p>	

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for completion of the College Financial Forecast Return (CFFR) to be submitted to the DfE by 31st July 2025.

The COOFI provided a detailed outline of forecasted income and expenditure and the assumptions on which the financial projections are based as set out in the detailed commentary report. Members considered the assumptions on Income, pay award assumptions, capital investment, cashflow and key risks identified within the plan.

Members were assured that the plan reflects the strong financial position of the College, with opportunities for significant capital investment to support the delivery of the Colleges strategic objectives. Members were assured by the overall strong financial position and forecast financial health rating 'Outstanding' and banking covenant compliance achieved. Members were advised that the impact of the North Lindsay re-development and financial reporting standards changes are not reflected in the future years of the financial plan. Members were assured that these should not impact on the financial health rating or banking covenant compliance, with sufficient headroom in the plan. Members noted and supported a proposed additional non-consolidated pay award for 2024/25 of £300 pro rata to be deferred until December 2025. Member were updated on funding since the report was circulated. Members were assured that work is ongoing to sense check some areas of the plan for accuracy, any amendments will be highlighted when the plan is presented to the Corporation Board at the July meeting.

Resolution: The Finance & Resources Committee endorsed the draft Financial Plan 2025-27 for recommendation to the Corporation Board for approval.

8 DfE Finance Assessment and Benchmarking

The COOFI presented a DfE Finance Assessment and Benchmarking update report. The COOFI advised members that following completion of the 2023/24 external audit of the financial statements, the College was required to submit to the DfE their financial statements and annual assurance returns, including the Finance Record for 2023-2024. The COOFI reported that the DfE has now had the opportunity to review these and confirm DNCG's financial health grade as 'Outstanding'. The COOFI advised that a digital dashboard is also available for Governors and will be reported at the next meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee. Members noted the contents of the report.

Members were further advised that the FE Commissioners team have also reviewed their FE sector benchmarks. Members noted that the benchmarks are intended to be general markers of a 'good' financial position, whilst recognising that individual colleges financial strategies do vary. Members further noted that the benchmarks are not triggers for intervention. Members considered the benchmarks that have been reviewed. Members were assured that management have considered these benchmarks when preparing the draft financial plans for 2025/26 and 2026/27.

Members noted the new dashboard to compare Curriculum Efficiency and considered and discussed the summary of key points. Members noted that there may be inefficiencies or areas that require resource re-allocation worthy of further investigation. Members were assured that management have engaged a sector cost and benchmarking specialist to undertake further detailed benchmarking to compare the actual outturn for the current year, and the budget for 2025/26.

9 Sub-Contracting Policy

The COOFI presented updates to the Subcontracting Fees and Charges Policy. Members considered the updates to the policy. Members noted updates to wording throughout the policy to reflect the closure of ESFA and its functions moved to the

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	<p>Department for Education and to ensure the policy is in line with the recently updated 'Subcontracting funding rules for post-16 education and training. Member were advised that the SYMCA Adult Skills Fund Funding and Performance Management Rules stipulate that a maximum of 20% management fee per sub-contracted learning organisation can be applied and that the policy had been adjusted accordingly to compile with this stipulation. Members were assured that safeguarding responsibilities set out in the policy have been reviewed and updated by the Safeguarding team.</p> <p>Members were assured the policy had been through a robust internal development and review process.</p> <p>Resolution: The Finance and Resources Committee approved the Subcontracting Fees and Charges Policy.</p>	
10	<p>Estates Update</p> <p>The COOFI presented an Estates update report providing an update on the progress of existing capital works and potential future works update.</p> <p>Members noted and discussed works completed at the Doncaster campus since the last report to the committee. Members noted and discussed works at Doncaster and North Lindsey to be completed this month. Members noted and discussed progress with current ongoing Estates projects. Members noted and discussed a potential budget pressure and risk and were assured by contingencies in place.</p> <p>Members thanked the COOFI for the comprehensive update report and were assured by the progress with capital works and the Estates Department operations.</p>	
11	<p>Sustainability Update</p> <p>The COOFI presented a Sustainability update report providing an update on the progress made by DNCG towards meeting its sustainability strategic objectives.</p> <p>Members reviewed and considered the updates to the Group's sustainability action plan. Members noted the number of initiatives which have been implemented since the last committee meeting including a range of activities were undertaken across the Group as part of College's National Green Week (17-21 March 2025). Members were assured that good progress has been made over the last couple of years against the current action plan. Members noted that estate condition surveys have been commissioned by the DfE to help inform future funding requirements. Members were advised that a review of the new Climate Action Road Map for Further Education has been completed that incorporates a new dashboard. The headline results are good progress is being made, but whilst we lead in some curriculum areas and sustainability awareness is embedded within Personal Development, further development is planned to embed sustainability in all Teaching & Learning. Members were assured that embedding sustainability within the curriculum and staff development will enhance the student experience, raise awareness and deliver the future 'green' skills required of the workforce.</p> <p>Members were advised that a review of the roadmap and progress against the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals will be conducted, and an overarching Sustainability Policy will be developed ahead of the next F&R Committee meeting.</p> <p>Members thanked the COOFI for the update report.</p>	
12	<p>Cycle of Business for 2025-26</p>	

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	Members considered the Finance and Resources Committee’s proposed Cycle of Business for 2025/26. The Committee considered the business of the committee and agreed the proposed cycle of business was appropriate.	
	Resolution: The Finance and Resources Committee approved the proposed Finance and Resources Committee’s Cycle of Business for 2025/26 for recommendation to the Corporation Board for approval.	
13	Committee Chair’s Report to Corporation Board	
	Members considered the business of the meeting and recorded key items and any changes to strategic risks identified for feedback to the Corporation Board in the Committee Chair’s Report. The following items were highlighted for inclusion:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The committee endorse the draft Financial Plan 2025-27and support the proposed £300 non-consolidated pay award.• Feedback on Benchmarking Report• The Subcontracting Fees and Charges Policy was reviewed and approved by the committee.	
14	Any Other Business	
	There were no items of any other business.	
15	Date and Time of Next Meeting:	
	Members noted that the next meeting of the F&R Committee will be held in November 2025 with the date to be confirmed.	
The meeting closed at 7.04 pm		
Sharon Harmon Clerk to the Corporation		
Signed: (Chair)		