TRURO & PENWITH COLLEGE CORPORATION

Finance, Infrastructure and People (FIP) Committee

Minutes of the Finance, Infrastructure and People Committee meeting held on Tuesday 11 November 2025 Truro College on MS Teams

Members: Kay Penney (Interim Committee Chair), Peter Cox (Non Corporation member), Julie-Anne Sunderland (Non Corporation member), Robert Townsend, Ramon Van De Velde and Martin Tucker (Principal)

Also Present: Ken Curtis (Chair of Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee), Adele Bull (Director of People, Culture and Curriculum), Lisa Briscoe (Director of Student Experience), Lucy Langdon (Chief Finance Officer), Hayley McKinstry (Director of Business Partnerships and Skills), Lucy Maggs (Director of Quality), Kristina Moon (Head of Finance), Vicky Pearson (Director of Learning, Assessment Support) and Wendy Randle (Head of Governance).

Item	Discussion/Decision	Action
1	**Apologies, welcome and declaration of interests** Apologies were received and accepted from Vicky Pearson and Martin Tucker Peter Cox was welcomed to the meeting following his appointment, by Board, as a Non Corporation member of the Finance, Infrastructure and People (FIP) Committee. The Chair of the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee had been invited to attend the meeting for the review of the draft annual financial statements.	
2	**Minutes** The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 30/09/25 were approved as an accurate record.	
3	**Matters arising report** A review of the matters arising report was completed; actions related to the Estates Strategy would be considered under agenda item 9.	
4	**Progress against Strategic Objectives 1,2, 3 & 7 and risks related to the FIP** The Committee received the paper and noted progress made against the strategic plan objectives. It was understood that whilst the College are behind on student recruitment applications compared to last year this was likely due to many schools behind in their application processes.	
5	**Risks related to the FIP Committee** The CFO reported that the volume of risks on the risk register has been reviewed following guidance from the Audit, Risk and Assurance (ARA) Committee where the full risk register will be reviewed in greater detail. The following risks were considered in greater depth by the Committee: Transport - whilst the College remain confident that there will not be any negative financial impact from the significant transport issues at the start of term, the likely impact on student recruitment and attendance was noted.	

	Staff costs - in response to a Committee member's question, the College completes monthly management accounts and to mitigate risks linked to drift within staff costs, the CFO meets monthly with Head of Faculties to review staffing levels and to support the ongoing maintenance of their budgets. A Committee member advised the College to consider a more proactive approach to prevent the drift rather than a reactionary position, as the proposals continue to present a risk. A Committee member was keen to explore whether the digital investment had been focussed on teaching digital skills to staff and students or the digitalisation of systems to support improved access to business intelligence for decision making. The CFO reported the focus had been on digital infrastructure linked to upgrading IT equipment to meet cyber essentials requirements and maintenance and efficiency of buildings. It was noted that the proposed new HR system and the estates system can be used to provide business intelligence to support the College and its further digitalisation. The Committee concluded that risks remain above tolerance levels with no concerns.	LL
6 6.1 6.2 6.3	**Finance matters** **Update on progress and risks linked to efficiencies** Details contained in the confidential minutes. **September management accounts, cashflow forecast and projected outturn 2024-25** The Committee received the September management accounts. A discussion took place on staff costs, the following points were noted; ▪ The variance between employment contracts running until 31/08 and the financial year end 31/07, was noted. ▪ September demonstrated the first full month of activity for the College. To date there have been no major fluctuations with staffing levels. ▪ October payroll detail had been included in the papers for context. ▪ Committee and SMT noted the ongoing need to consider the lessons learnt from 2024/25 and to continue to monitor pay costs during FIP Committee meetings this financial year. The CFO reported slight income increases in government funding to support a staff pay award and the achievement of 90% retention within HE, resulting in higher income. **KPIs** The Committee reviewed the KPIs: ▪ the College's EBITDA is at 8.01% and on budget for 7.2% compared to the Further Education Commissioner's (FEC) benchmark of 6%. ▪ Cashflow forecast remains above the FEC benchmark of 40 days, at 66 days in hand at the end of September; inclusive of investments yet not restricted cash. ▪ Staff costs as a percentage of income continue to operate at 73% with the aim to reduce to 70% via a review of curriculum contribution costs and assessment of group sizes; FEC benchmark is 65-70%. A Committee member suggested the College share the sensitivity analysis data within the papers with the Heads of Faculties (HoFs) during budget monitoring discussions, to encourage a more robust approach to prevent drift within staff costs. In response to Committee member questions, the following information was noted; ▪ Should staff costs increase by £200k for example, the College can easily identify where and why the increases occurred.	

	▪ The CFO receives and reviews staff pay costs monthly. ▪ Without a HR system, there are no flags for HR to stop staff pay claims progressing, however Heads of Faculties sign off all pay claims and can review the impact on their staffing budget. ▪ Learner numbers have dipped in line with the demographic data. ▪ The College continue to develop staff utilisation and group size data systems. ▪ A copy of the monthly management accounts is shared with the Further Education Commissioner team for ongoing feedback.	
6.4	**Revised Budget 2025/6 and 2026/27** A Special Finance, Infrastructure and People Committee meeting has been scheduled to review the revised Budget. The Committee were reminded of the progress made by the College with this timescale as historically the revised budget was reviewed in the spring term. The timing of the November 2026 FIP meetings will be adjusted to accommodate this review within the existing meeting structure.	
6.5	**CEFFS report and progress against recommendations** The Committee received the report and reflected on the importance of the document in embedding the changes culturally within the College. It was noted that the Chair of the Corporation and FIP Committee Chair will be invited to join the CFO and Principal at the January visit with the FEC to review progress. Progress made against the high priority areas was reviewed, the following points were noted: ▪ HoFs have received staff and budget management training from the Association of Colleges (AoC) and whilst new to colleagues, this has been received well and will be a positive significant change for the College. ▪ In the new year, two Governors plan to undertake a Governors on the Ground visit to consider the impact of the changes within enrichment. ▪ The College will review the conversion rate of applications and compare practice with the recommendation. It was reported that there has been a reduction in retention, an area that remains high risk to the College and often due to factors outside of College's control. ▪ The College are reviewing the student applicant interview policy and sector practice alongside the requirement to provide careers information advice and guidance.	
6.6	**Investments quarterly report** The CFO reminded the Committee that investments over time have reduced from £50m to £4m with the investment fund continuing to maintain an upward trend. A Committee member reflected on the disappointing performance against benchmarks; the CFO will seek clarity. It was agreed that the Investment Manager be invited to the next Committee meeting and that the Chair of the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee will meet with them.	LL KC
6.7	**Staff pay award** Detail contained in the confidential minutes.	
7	**Review of College's financial position to report to Corporation** The Committee reviewed the paper and agreed the CFO's proposal to review this at the Special FIP Committee meeting with updates.	
8 8.1	**Finance matters 2024/25** **Draft Final accounts 2024/25** The Committee received the draft annual financial accounts, noting the need for a key reconciliation linked to the inclusion of the Local Government Pension Scheme, a recognised	

	accounting adjustment. The final version will be reviewed by the Audit, Risk and Assurance (ARA) Committee and recommended to the Board for approval. There was a discussion on the reserves policy statement within the financial statements. It was agreed that this be removed, with a reserve policy proposal, including sector practice, presented at the next meeting. The auditors will be approached to remove the statement from the financial statements. The CFO reported that the College is preparing the accounts on a going concern basis, the Committee agreed to recommend this approach to the Board. A Committee member requested that future papers continue to include commentary on going concern.	 LL LL KP LL
8.2	**Student Association** The Committee received the Student Association annual accounts and noted minimal activity. Some fundraising had been undertaken to support specific charities.	
8.3	**DfE Financial Health Grade** Following submission of the College Financial Forecasting Return (CFFR) the DfE has confirmed a Requirements Improvement grading for 2024/25 and a forecast grading of Outstanding for 2025/26. The Committee were aware of the 'View your education dashboard data Governor tool' which could be used to triangulate information received from management.	
9 9.1	**Premises Matters** **Estates Strategy** In the Principal's absence, the Committee Chair had a brief conversation with them prior to the meeting regarding the paper. The Committee noted the need for strategic direction from Governors for the Estates team, aiming for a longer term strategy. The current document is a good information gathering tool outlining property ownership and provides a good maintenance action plan. The Committee agreed to recommend to Board the plan, subject to a review of the campus utilisation data linked to the Seaton building. The Interim Committee Chair will liaise with the Director of Learning, Assessment and Support to request the development of a timeline for FIP to monitor progress against the plan in time for the next FIP Committee meeting, with the inclusion of any adjustments following discussions at conference on some estates matters.	 HM/MT KP
9.2	**Premises update** The Committee received the paper.	
10 10.1	**People matters** **Performance management** The Director of People, Culture and Curriculum provided an update on progress being made within performance management. The following points were noted; ▪ The performance management policy has been revisited and will be shared with the People Task and Finish (T&F) group in December, prior to FIP review at the January meeting, ▪ Training on undertaking performance review is scheduled for all Heads of Faculties (HoFs) and support team leads, to support them in understanding their roles and responsibilities and how the HR team can support. ▪ Difficult conversations training will be provided to help staff address issues early.	

	▪ Lecturing staff are supporting the development of data collection tools, including qualitative data, to inform discussions. ▪ The HR system will play a key role in supporting this process.	
10.2	**HR System** An update was given on the risks associated with the implementation of the new HR system due to stricter procurement regulations, which may delay the system's implementation until November 2026. Concerns were raised about the failure rate of the current paper based system and the impact on the team. The discussion covered the balance between complying with procurement rules and achieving value for money versus implementing the system earlier.	
10.3	**Unions update** The new Head of HR plans to maintain positive working relationships and working practices with the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC).	
11 **11.1**	**Governance** **Draft cycle of business 2025/26** The Committee approved the cycle of business for 2026.	
11.2	**Governors on the Ground** Considered earlier in the meeting.	
11.3	**Membership** Recruitment remains ongoing for the Committee with disappointing progress made. The Committee thanked Kay Penney for fulfilling the Chair role in the interim.	
11.4	**FEC Intervention Report – Havant and South Downs** The Committee received the report and noted the learning points that could be taken from the report.	
12	**Date of Next Meeting** All meetings below start at 4pm, Valency, Truro College Tues 27 January 2026 Tues 10 March 2026 Tues 9 June 2026	