

## Meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee

**Venue:** STC Conference Room 1 / TEAMS

**Date:** 25 September 2025

**Time:** 4.00pm – 6.10pm

**Present:** Clive Johnson (in the Chair)  
Donya Urwin (T)  
Lindsey Whiterod  
Gary Hindmarch

**In Attendance:** Jane Cuthbertson (Chief Operating Officer)  
Lorna Lister (Senior Governor Support Officer)  
Karen Ritchie (Director of Finance)  
Allyson Edney (Director of HR)  
Craig Scott (Director of IT)  
Daniel Raw (Vice Principal)(Part)  
Simon Ashton (Marine School Principal)

### ACTION TRACKER

Item	Summary of Action Required	By whom	Status	Comment / Update
<b>Meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025</b>				
5.	<b>Committee Workplan 2025-26</b> Audited Accounts are to be only reviewed by the Audit Committee	JC/LL		25/11/25 – To be presented to Audit Comm 4/12/25
6.	<b>Annual Estates Report:</b> 6 monthly reports on the condition of campus's	SB		To be presented 12/03/25 committee

### MINUTES

ITEM	ISSUES	ACTION
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>  There were no apologies received.	
2.	<b>Declarations</b>  i. <u>Declarations of interests</u> The Chair reminded members to declare any conflicts of interest as they arose on the agenda.  The members of the Committee were reminded of the standing declarations in respect of the roles held in Tyne Coast Academy Trust by CJ.  ii. <u>Business to be raised under Item 21</u> None	
3.	<b>Minutes</b>  The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.	

	<p><b><u>3ii- Matters arising not covered on the agenda</u></b> As reported on the Action Tracker.</p> <p><b><u>3iii – Chair’s Urgent Action</u></b> The Chair highlighted where Chair’s Action had been utilised since the last committee meeting.</p> <p><b>That the committee accept the report and endorse the use of Chairs Action.</b></p>	
4.	<p><b>Review of Committee Performance against ToR</b></p> <p>LL introduced the review of committee performance against the Terms of Reference (ToR). The performance review for the Finance Committee for the previous year (2024-25) was distributed, achieving a 100% return on the survey, indicating the committee was rated as good to outstanding. The results and the ToR tracker were discussed, with most items covered except those highlighted in blue, which were not due to be reviewed that year. The committee agreed to the terms of reference for the next year (2025-26) and acknowledged their outstanding performance for the previous year. There was a discussion about streamlining the approval process for documents and policies to avoid repetitive work</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the committee agree to receive the report and acknowledge the information as provided.</b></p>	
5.	<p><b>Committee Workplan 2025-26</b></p> <p>The committee workplan for 2025-26 was discussed and approved with the exception to the Audited Accounts. It was recommended that the accounts only have to be reviewed by one committee and agreed the Audit Committee was best suited.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>That the committee agree to receive the report and acknowledge the information as provided.</b></li> <li><b>That the committee recommend the Audited Accounts only to be reviewed by the Audit Committee.</b></li> </ol>	LL/JC
6.	<p><b>Annual Estates Report</b></p> <p>Sarah provided a comprehensive annual update on estates, concentrating on the new build and the condition of current buildings. Key projects included the completion of data sheets for the new build, T Levels at TyneMet, Road map to Zero and the feasibility of Monkseaton High School as a solution to TyneMet.</p> <p>Potential alternative sites were discussed, such as revisiting Cobalt and Port of Tyne. The committee underscored the importance of maintaining current buildings while exploring new opportunities.</p> <p><b>Q. Were the T levels fully operational?</b> Yes.</p> <p><b>Q. Was there any feedback from students?</b> Very positive.</p> <p><b>Q. Was North Tyneside a longer-term project?</b> Yes, a working party task group had been created to work through the options available as noted above.</p> <p><b>Q. Timescales to report back to the committee?</b> The new campus south of the river and were hopeful that the North Tyneside campus would follow seamlessly on.</p> <p><b>Q. Could the committee receive a 6 monthly report on the condition of the current campuses?</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the committee agree to receive the report and acknowledge the information as provided.</b></p>	SB

7.	<p><b>Procurement Reflection 2024-25</b></p> <p>CP presented a reflection on procurement activities for 2024/25, highlighting a positive audit with only one action required. The committee discussed the impact of the Procurement Act and the significance of meticulous planning and detail in procurement processes.</p> <p>Key tenders included food supply, which could potentially save approximately £100K. The committee also reviewed the contract register and plans for future procurement activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security (Agency Staff)</li> <li>• Agency Staff in general</li> <li>• Payroll</li> </ul> <p><b>Q. Do we build the estimates of potential savings into the budget?</b> Those that we know about, the link between finance and procurement work closely so changes could be reported on swiftly.</p> <p><b>Resolved: The committee accept the reports acknowledging the information as presented.</b></p>	
8.	<p><b>Update on Forecast Partnership Activity 2025-26</b></p> <p>Confidential item</p>	
9.	<p><b>Monitoring of Key Risks from the Risk Register</b></p> <p>Confidential item.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Human Resources Report incl annual sickness</b></p> <p>Confidential item.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Human Resources Plan 2025-26 and review of 2024-25</b></p> <p>The new central HR system has been implemented, although there have been some disappointments and teething problems. The system now held all staff details, including personal information and salaries, which transfer through to the payroll system. However, agency staff and governors' details were not yet included. There was a discussion about the importance of maintaining an accurate single central record, which used to be kept on a spreadsheet but was now integrated into the HR system. There were also concerns about the analytics provided by the system, which have not been entirely accurate. The HR system should ideally help in managing the establishment of the college, providing a clear picture of staff numbers and positions, and helping to manage changes in the establishment effectively.</p> <p><b>Q. Was the system not accurate due to the amount of movement of staff?</b> As one staff member left job titles or responsibilities changed but the system was not clearly updated which meant it was difficult to track. It was becoming clearer due to the policies and procedures implemented by the HR Manager; however, it required further work.</p> <p>The discussion highlighted the importance of the HR system in managing staff assessments and ensuring that managers were held accountable for their team's development. There was a mention of implementing a policy where managers' performance assessments include the completion rates of their team's assessments. This approach aimed to ensure that managers prioritise the development of their staff, this was to be explored further.</p>	

	<p><b>Q. Do we know the cost of adding governors and agency staff to the system?</b> No, Procurement were in contact with CINTRA and gaining quotes. In April 2027 the contract ceases and would have to test the market for a new provider at that point.</p> <p><b>Resolved: The committee accept the reports acknowledging the information as presented.</b></p>	
12.	<p><b>Annual Report from JCC 2024-25 and arrangements for 2025-26</b></p> <p>AE presented the Annual Report from JCC noting the structure of the JCC included representatives from UC Union, Unison, and current management. Meetings were generally held four times a year, but the last calendar year saw fewer meetings due to other priorities.</p> <p>The meetings were usually positive, with updates from various principals on their areas and discussions about finance and other strategic issues. There was a focus on the new building and its implications for staff.</p> <p>The relationship with JCC has been positive, with a focus on building good working relationships. The discussion also touched on the challenges faced in the previous finance committee meeting, where concerns were raised about the resources available to deliver the planned improvements. There was an emphasis on the further restructure which was being discussed and the potential impact on staff, including increased stress and pressure.</p> <p>The conversation highlighted the importance of maintaining positive relationships with the JCC, especially as the college navigates these challenges.</p> <p>AE highlighted the 4% pay award, change to the 864hrs, half day Friday working pattern and an extra 2 days holiday at Christmas which had been well received.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the committee accept the report acknowledging the information as presented.</b></p>	
13.	<p><b>Policies/Procedures</b></p> <p>The following policies were reviewed and approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBS Policy &amp; Procedure</li> </ul> <p>AE explained the changes were largely due to government guidance. The definition of regulated activity had been updated, and the policy now included additional assessments for staff with DBS records – updated in red.</p> <p><b>Q. Do we use a third party to complete the DBS checks?</b> No, TCC carry out DBS checks directly with the DBS service.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The committee accept the reports acknowledging the information as presented.</li> <li>That the committee approve the above-named policy &amp; Procedure</li> </ol>	
14.	<p><b>Learner Recruitment and Funding Update 2025-26</b></p> <p>Confidential item.</p>	
15.	<p><b>New Build Update &amp; Project Spend</b></p>	

	Confidential item.	
16.	<b>Annual Write off of Bad Debt</b>	
17.	<b>Approval of Contracts and Planned Expenditure over £125k</b>  Confidential item	
18.	<b>Management Accounts and Commentary</b>  Confidential item.	
19.	<b>Annual Review of Financial Regulations</b>  The purpose of the report was to review, agree and approve the Financial Regulations.  The Financial Regulations were reviewed and updated. The review included any guidance updates reflected within the College Financial Handbook which was updated on 23 July 2025 and was effective from 1 August 2025.  Areas shaded in blue were suggested to be incorporated, areas shaded in red were to be removed. Changes were primarily within the expenditure process, naming conventions and an addition within fixed assets to ensure the most up to date guidance was followed.  <b>Resolved: The committee reviewed and commented on the report, recommending it for adoption by the board.</b>	
20.	<b>Dr Winterbottom Annual Report</b>  The purpose of the report was to provide governors with details of the Dr Winterbottom Charitable Fund (DWCF) results and closing balance for 2024/25 and an overview of activity for the year.  The report highlighted an opening balance of £8,185.71, incurred costs, and received donations, resulting in a current balance of £6,318.05.  <b>Resolved: That the committee accept the report acknowledging the information as presented.</b>	
21.	<b>Any other business</b>  None	
22.	<b>Date and time of next meeting</b>  12 March 2026	
23.	<b>Identification Confidential Items</b>  <b>Resolved: That the following items are to remain confidential:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Item 8 – Update on Partnership Activity 2025/26</li> <li>• Item 9 – Monitoring of Key Risks from the Risk Register</li> <li>• Item 10 – Human Resources Report incl Annual Sickness</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Item 14 – Learner Recruitment and Funding Update 2025-26</li><li>• Item 15 – New Build Update and Project Spend</li><li>• Item 16 – Annual Write off of Bad Debt</li><li>• Item 17 – Approval of Contracts and Planned Expenditure over £125k</li><li>• Item 18 – Management Accounts</li></ul>	
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Signed: ..... Date: .....