

TMC Board Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2025 at Openshaw Campus

Present: Dame Ann Limb DBE DL (chair), Philip Johnson, Garry Bridges (via teams), Rachel Curry (Principal), and Mubarak Oyeboode.

Apologies: Catherine Hill OBE and Justice Ellis

In Attendance: Debbie Sanderson (Vice Principal Resources, Planning & Performance), Michael Walsh (Deputy Principal: Adult Curriculum and Student Support), Lorna Lloyd-Williams (Company Secretary & General Counsel), Barry Atkins (Deputy Principal), Ed Lack (Group Quality Director and Standards), Orla Wood (Divisional Finance Director – College and Income Team), Stuart Steen, Vice Principal FE, Christian Jowles (Assistant Principal - Quality Assurance) and Yetunde D. Olabode (Governance and Legal Advisor).

The meeting opened at 13:30 and was quorate with at least 3 Governors present	
1	APOLOGIES Apologies were received and accepted from Catherine Hill, Justice Ellis, Michelle Fletcher, and Marie Stock. Congratulations were extended to the Principalship and wider staff teams for securing a “Good” rating in the recent Ofsted inspection. The Board encouraged the College to sustain momentum and ambition, with aspirations noted for progressing toward an “Outstanding” rating.
2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest.
3	MINUTES OF THE MEETING of 14th of February 2025 The minutes of the meeting on the 14th of February 2025 were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.
4	MATTERS ARISING The Board received the matters arising for assurance and noted completion/ progress against the same.
4A	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE DEPARTMENT: Review of feedback from employers on additional needs beyond skills and areas for improvement. The Board was apprised of developments within the Health and Social Care Department following a previous presentation and a written response to earlier queries on sector-wide skills alignment. The Board found the response to be detailed and aligned with broader employability and workforce needs. Following feedback from employers, it was highlighted that new programme developments had embedded key areas such as speech and language therapy and occupational therapy into the curriculum, enhancing learners’ foundational skills and behaviours. The Board welcomed this employer-aligned content. The Board was informed of a new partnership, which had enabled cross-institutional student activities and enriched exposure to applied therapeutic settings. The Board acknowledged the department’s strong leadership and commended the swift transformation. Members noted the ambition and strategic focus evident in recent progress and expressed interest in future student feedback on the new qualifications and initiatives. ACTION: Health and Social Care Department to provide student feedback on the new qualification content and initiatives at the end of the 2025/26

PRINCIPAL'S OVERVIEW INCL KPIs, RISK SUMMARY AND TMC VISION STATEMENT

The Board was informed of recent developments in the external policy and funding landscape, including a confirmed 4% pay award for schoolteachers and additional government funding for the further education (FE) sector to work towards pay parity. The Board welcomed confirmation that the uplift would be reflected in revised 16–18 allocations expected by the end of June, enabling the Group to plan for the staff pay award for the upcoming academic year. The Board was informed that the one-year funding uplift had been well received across the sector and was viewed as a government initiative to address the long-standing underfunding in technical education. However, members acknowledged that future certainty would depend on the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review. The Board was informed of ongoing funding pressures in adult education, noting that the Adult Skills Fund had not been subject to indexation.. It was highlighted to the Board that the College , in partnership with Manchester Adult Education Service, had drafted a letter to the Combined Authority urging support for adult learning through indexation. The Board noted the development, recognising the College's strategic role in adult education across the City region. A member noted that future announcements might focus more on skills investment.. It was observed that the role of further education had gained more attention within central government, particularly the Treasury. The Board welcomed the progress and emphasised the importance of continued investment to support long-term improvements.

The Board reviewed the visual statement in the report. A member inquired about the achievement rate rankings and whether they accurately reflected the College's scale, complexity, and performance, and whether there was an ambition to move further up the National Achievement Rate Table. The Board was informed that achievement rate tables were one of many measures and reflected the balance of mix of a college in terms of enrolments and qualifications. The College would continue to offer a broad, long-term curriculum aligned with student need and local priorities. It was further noted that, when measured solely on long-course achievement, the College continued to be placed as number one in GM —an outcome transparently reported through the Self-Assessment Report at inspection. The Board was assured that internal and external quality measures, including progression and destination data, underpinned strategic decisions. Members welcomed the movement the values-led strategy, prioritising curriculum quality and student success. This reflected a broader cultural change, with the Board commending the emphasis on sustained improvement and impact-driven delivery. A member inquired whether the College's current position aligned with its potential and whether its improvement efforts continued to align with its values. It was confirmed that curriculum integrity and learner impact remained central to the College's approach, reaffirming its commitment to meaningful outcomes over data-driven positioning. The Board noted that the Department for Education was reviewing the national accountability framework, with potential changes to how data and curriculum breadth were assessed. Members agreed that transparency and stakeholder engagement would be vital in ensuring accurate representation of performance.

Vision Statement

The Board was informed that, as part of a wider LTE Group strategy review, all business units had been asked to assess whether their current vision statements still aligned with organisational aspirations. Following internal consultation with all colleagues, the Principalship proposed a refined version designed to preserve the ambition and themes of the original while enhancing clarity and impact.

The Board provided feedback on the revised vision statement, raising several points concerning tone, language, and alignment with the Group's values—particularly regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion. It was emphasised that the vision should reflect the Group's commitment to valuing and supporting all learners, including neurodiverse students and those with learning difficulties, across both academic and enrichment areas. A member queried the use of the term "inclusive," suggesting it could perhaps be positioned as a core principle rather than explicit in the vision. It was recommended that inclusive education remain central to the vision, while ensuring the language remained clear and purposeful. The Board reflected on the vision's intended audience—whether students, external stakeholders, or both—and agreed that it should resonate widely, communicate identity, and inspire confidence. Members acknowledged the challenge of crafting a concise, meaningful, and distinctive vision and expressed support for continued staff engagement in refining the language. It was suggested that the vision avoid sector-generic language and instead highlight

	the Group’s unique civic mission and role within the regional education landscape. Following discussion, it was agreed that the word ‘inclusive’ should remain. The Board provided further reflections on the proposed wording, including a preference for referencing “Manchester” rather than “the city,” to strengthen place-based relevance and civic identity. It was advised that the statement be framed around learner opportunity rather than system-driven expectations. A clear preference was noted for the thematic direction of Option 2, which was considered more purposeful and impactful. Members reaffirmed the need for a learner-focused, motivational vision aligned with institutional values and goals. It was also highlighted that, although place-based context added value, the vision must remain concise, student-centred, and free of unnecessary abstraction. Members expressed support for a final statement that communicated the organisation’s educational mission with clarity and authenticity. The Board sought clarification on the scope of the review, querying whether both vision and mission statements were under consideration. It was confirmed that only the vision was being reviewed at the business unit level, while the overarching mission would remain LTE Group-wide. It was further noted that once the Group mission had been revised, business unit visions would be finalised. The use of the term “purpose” as a modern alternative to “mission” was discussed. The Board was advised that the current draft vision did not explicitly reference the College’s skills-based identity and the emphasis on technical pathways. While it was acknowledged that the term “education” could imply skills, values, and employability, members questioned the absence of the word “skills”.. It was confirmed that “skills” would feature prominently in LTE’s revised Group mission to avoid duplication across statements. The Board was advised that staff consultation would follow, with three shortlisted options to be shared for feedback. A preferred version would then be submitted to the LTE Group Board for final approval. In conclusion, the Board supported the iterative development process and requested that the preferred version of the vision statement following staff feedback be returned for formal endorsement by The Manchester College Divisional Board ACTION: Principal to present the final version of the vision statement to The Manchester College Divisional Board for formal endorsement.
6	QUALITY UPDATE (INCLUDING OFSTED OUTCOME, OFSTED CONSULTATION, QIP) The Board was apprised of the latest quality update, which provided an overview of current performance and outlined changes to the assurance framework. It was noted that TMC’s quality metrics included in the report would be submitted to the LTE Group Board in July, with the performance scorecard updated to reflect the recent Ofsted inspection and new strategic priorities. Additional metrics, including “contribution to skills” and “enrichment,” had been introduced to capture broader aspects of learner participation. The Board noted that performance remained strong in areas such as attendance, achievement, and learner destinations, contributing to the positive inspection outcome. Members were informed that a new Ofsted framework would be introduced in November and that a five-year LTE Group Quality Strategy had been approved. TMC’s implementation plan aligned to the Group Quality Strategy was in development and scheduled for presentation in July. The Board was advised that the scorecard would be revised later in the year to align with the new strategy. Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) were also being updated to reflect new expectations and support a more proactive approach to development. The Board was informed that the Ofsted consultation had concluded six weeks earlier, with informal feedback suggesting that revisions or a delayed rollout were possible. Members noted that the removal of a single “overall effectiveness” grade, and the introduction of approximately 16 category-specific grades, would likely introduce complexity in assessing and communicating quality. Upon reviewing the quality scorecard, the Board raised questions about the clarity of the visual indicators and whether the performance benchmarks were sufficiently visible. While red and green indicators were useful, the Board noted that the criteria used to determine these ratings were not shown. It was confirmed that benchmarks were included in the appendix and the Group Director committed to improving visibility in future versions. Members welcomed this proposal and supported continued refinement. The Board also reviewed the scorecard’s presentation, noting some visual complexity and a need for simplification. While national achievement rates had clear external benchmarks, other areas, such as learner destinations, were harder to evaluate due to a lack of sector-wide comparators. The Board sought clarity on internal targets, particularly where

green ratings—such as an attendance rates—might be in excess of the internal target set but needed external context. It was confirmed that internal benchmarks were applied and would be made more explicit in future reporting. It was noted that TMC had piloted a more detailed internal version of the scorecard, which included “on target” and “below target” flags and had been well received. The Board acknowledged that current quality metrics aligned with existing Ofsted expectations but recognised the need for future updates in light of anticipated framework changes. The Board noted that the quality reporting pack remained detailed yet navigable, allowing for effective engagement with key data. Members appreciated opportunities to engage between meetings but reiterated the importance of clearer benchmarks within summary visuals.

The Board was advised that areas for improvement identified in the Ofsted inspection had been mapped against the QIP, with most actions already implemented and the final area newly incorporated. A more agile QIP model was being explored to allow for ongoing updates throughout the academic year. It was confirmed that the National Achievement Rate Tables, released after the inspection, continued to evidence that students from the most deprived backgrounds achieved rates, in excess of the national average for the least deprived learners. This was recognised as a significant achievement.

The Board noted the introduction of a revised BRAGG rating system featuring a five-point colour scale to support more nuanced tracking and targeted curriculum interventions. The Board welcomed this change and commended the continued focus on evidence-led quality assurance, especially in supporting disadvantaged groups. The Board was updated on recent developments at the subject level. Level 3 Media showed improvement, with project grades raising ALPs ratings and indicating a likely BRAGG upgrade. Games and Graphics remained satisfactory but did not fully meet desired expectations. Construction Level 1 and Health and Social Care Level 3 maintained strong performance, with the latter potentially being removed from the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2025/26. The Board was informed that Music remained under review, with monitoring to continue despite the small cohort size. Follow-up reviews have also taken place in Animal Care, Travel, and Tourism. While progress in Animal Care was mixed, with concerns around staffing and leadership, issues were considered resolvable. Travel and Tourism showed stronger progress, with some areas still requiring support. The Board noted that Progress Monitoring Point 3 (PMP) had shown improved high-grade outcomes across levels and adult provision, indicating positive academic progress. Feedback from the February Festival of Learning was also reported as highly positive. The Board welcomed continued progress within the QIP, with all central areas now rated green.

The Board commended the Quality Team for their work and extended thanks to the presenting officers. It was also noted that elements of quality reporting had been automated and that comparative data continued to show the College performing strongly, particularly among learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Board discussed whether commissioning an independent study on the College’s contribution to social mobility could be helpful. The Board recognised the potential sector-wide benefit of understanding how educational quality supports transformative outcomes. It was agreed that the proposal would be further explored during 2025/26. The Board also noted the continued development of the student enrichment programme, which had progressed positively without disrupting delivery. The College’s inclusive approach, recognising barriers such as employment or caring responsibilities, was welcomed. Members praised the shift away from rigid expectations and highlighted the contribution in advancing team development and student engagement. The Board supported plans, including international trips and participation in events such as WorldSkills. Efforts to secure funding, including through the Turin Scheme, were endorsed. The Board formally acknowledged the value of the enrichment programme and the team’s efforts.

The Board noted the Quality Update Paper

ACTION: Group Director of Quality to consider Board feedback on the scorecard presentation and amend in future to include targets/benchmarks where available.

BREAK FROM 15:08PM TO 15:13PM

The Board extended its sincere thanks to the outgoing Student Governor, noting their intelligent, insightful, and well-judged contributions, which reinforced the College’s core mission to deliver high-

	quality education, skills, and training. The Student Governor expressed gratitude for the opportunity, and the Board reiterated its appreciation and good wishes.
8	SUBCONTRACTING: The Board was informed of ongoing governance requirements relating to subcontracting, which had been reviewed through a three-part process: a review of the 2023/24 delivery, approval of the 2024/25 policy, and consideration of arrangements for 2025/26. The Board noted that the 2023/24 activity had been successful, with the longstanding partnership with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) supporting over 160 learners through The King's Trust. It was also noted that GMFRS had made a positive contribution to the Ofsted inspection, particularly about contract management and the quality of provision. The Board was advised that the subcontracting policy remained compliant with the Department for Education (DfE) and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) requirements, with only date updates made. GMCA guidance for the new year was still awaited., The Board was reminded of earlier DfE guidance suggesting the need to re-tender longstanding arrangements. However, some ambiguity remained due to changes in procurement regulations. As such, the Board supported continuing the current subcontract while awaiting further clarity on legal and regulatory expectations. The Board was advised that a planned tender process had been delayed due to revised procurement guidance issued in February 2024. Legal and procurement advice had confirmed that a full tender would not be required if no alternative provider could reasonably deliver the services. In such cases, single-source approval could be pursued, though this would still require market testing. The Board was informed that market engagement had taken place, including with Groundwork, one of the few providers working with The King's Trust in Greater Manchester. While Groundwork was affiliated with another provider, it did not operate in required locations such as Bolton. Written confirmation had been requested to clarify its capability and interest, with a response expected shortly. The Board noted that, depending on this outcome, either a single-source route or a limited procurement process would follow. The Board reflected on discussions held during the recent strategy session regarding the future use of subcontracting to address capacity challenges. It was noted that subcontracting remained limited, but any expansion would require proportionate governance measures. Members referenced a recent case in the education sector where insufficient oversight had led to a significant financial penalty. The Board agreed that while no expansion was proposed for 2024/25, small-scale partnerships with reliable providers could be considered for 2026/27. The current policy was deemed sufficiently robust to support this approach. It was noted that any growth in subcontracting would require additional oversight, particularly from the quality team, to ensure adequate due diligence and monitoring. The Board was also informed that retained funding would be necessary to support quality assurance activities related to the subcontracted provision. The Board confirmed that any future proposals would be brought forward for approval in advance of any changes to delivery from 2026/27. A member queried whether longer contract durations could be considered to reduce the administrative workload of annual tenders. It was confirmed that a three-year model had previously been explored; however, annual funding allocations from the DfE and the Adult Skills Budget posed challenges. The Board supported further exploration of this approach, subject to future funding clarity and the implementation of appropriate safeguards. The Board queried the frequency of subcontracting policy reviews and was reminded that annual approval remained a governance requirement, with final endorsement by the LTE Group Board. The Chair thanked the team and conveyed best wishes for the next steps. The Board RESOLVED to RECOMMEND The Manchester College Subcontracting Policy to LTE Group Board for approval.
9	ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT The Board was informed that the purpose of the item was to seek its recommendation for approval of the updated Accountability Statement. This marked the second year of the required submission, with a more detailed narrative expected in year three, as outlined in regulatory guidance. The report provided an overview of progress and summarised changes made since the previous version. The

	Board was apprised that paragraph four of the report captured the main updates, including the integration of Ofsted inspection outcomes, revised terminology, and alignment with the Group's Skills Strategy. It was noted that the updates also reflected Greater Manchester-wide priorities, such as the Labour Market and Skills Strategy and the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). The final section of the report set out actions taken across priority areas. Key strengths included the delivery of T-levels and health and social care provision, as well as collaborative, cloud-based projects linked to sectors such as health, construction, engineering, and digital. The Board was informed that the College's Skills Strategy and associated activities remained aligned to the LSIP, and . However, it was noted that balancing qualification-based and skills-focused provision continued to present challenges within the context of curriculum reform. In discussing terminology, the Board inquired about the use of "Manchester" rather than broader references, such as "Greater Manchester" or "city region," suggesting that wider terminology might better reflect the Group's regional footprint. It was clarified that while the current wording was not intended to be restrictive, it was aligned to the areas where most learners were based. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) had responded positively to the framing of local impact. The Board was assured that while much of the Group's work remained focused on Manchester, the institution remained attentive to the diverse priorities across all Greater Manchester boroughs. It was agreed that future versions of the statement could include broader regional language where appropriate. The Board acknowledged the importance of highlighting city-based initiatives while also recognising contributions across the wider region, including any wider work in areas such as Stockport and Trafford. The Board was reminded that Greater Manchester comprises ten collaborating authorities, with Manchester at its central core. Many GM referenced strategies were developed collectively by the ten boroughs to formulate a GM position, and as a result Manchester and GM priorities and strategy were often the same. Manchester's demographic profile, characterised by high levels of migration and diversity, was identified as a key factor in positioning the College as a civic leader both locally and regionally. Members agreed that clear articulation of this civic role added value without detracting from regional engagement. The Board RESOLVED to RECOMMEND The Manchester College Annual Accountability Statement to LTE Group Board for approval. It was noted to the Board that the approval process would be sought through a Written Resolution of the LTE Group Board.
10	CURRICULUM PLANNING 25/26 The Board was informed of key curriculum developments for the upcoming academic year. Under revised government guidance, providers were now required to deliver 100 hours annually of English and maths across both GCSE and functional skills. While the College's GCSE provision already met this requirement, functional skills delivery would increase from 1.5 to 3 hours per week. The additional time would be used for project-based, contextual learning to embed English and maths within main study programmes. The Board was apprised of updated funding conditions, with the permitted tolerance for non-compliance set to reduce to 2.5% by 2025–26. The Board was assured that systems were in place to monitor attendance and ensure compliance with regulations. The Board was informed that curriculum reform at Level 3 and an ongoing assessment review were still in progress, with additional guidance expected in autumn 2024. Recent policy announcements confirmed the continuation of T Levels as the technical education standard, the removal of the rule of combination to allow greater flexibility, and the alignment of strategic planning with these developments. While Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs) remained under development, the College intended to explore future opportunities in line with its technical and skills-focused strategy. The Board welcomed the government's decision to delay the withdrawal of applied general qualifications that overlap with T Levels, such as BTEC Applied Science. This extension, in place until 2027, was considered significant as it the change would affect 42% of current students who would not meet the T Level entry criteria. The decision preserved accessible pathways at Level 3. The Board was advised that the College would continue its current strategic direction for Level 3 qualifications, supported by the temporary pause in reforms. The expansion of T Level provision and learner numbers was planned for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

	The revitalisation of the Harpurhey campus curriculum was identified as a priority. Plans included expanding Level 1 programmes into Level 2 pathways in areas such as childcare, computing, media, and business, with the introduction of Level 3 provision to follow. The Board recognised the strategic value of this initiative in supporting local needs and progression opportunities. The College also aimed to strengthen its foundation learning offer, including Level 1 provision and specialist pathways such as supported internships and King’s Trust education routes. The provision for electively home-educated learners was to be relocated from Shena Simon to Harpurhey due to the closure of the former site. Enrolment would reduce from 90 to 60 learners, reflecting a strategic focus on 16–19 provision and current site capacity. This change had been supported by Manchester City Council and aligned with the College’s wider planning. While not a significant shift in direction, the Board acknowledged these developments as essential steps in improving accessibility and provision across the city. Members welcomed the clarity and forward focus of the curriculum strategy. The Board inquired about the reduction in places for home-educated learners and was advised that this was a pragmatic decision due to space limitations at the new site. The College confirmed this was not a strategic withdrawal and that the programme would remain under review, depending on enrolment patterns and available capacity. It was noted that over half of learners from this provision had progressed into the College’s 16–19 pathways. Destination data was partially tracked, with further collaboration planned with Manchester City Council to enhance visibility and transparency. Achievement remained strong, with only one learner not completing in the previous academic year. Safeguarding considerations supported the decision to retain the provision at Harpurhey. The College remained open to exploring alternative sites if necessary. The Board supported a proposal to hold a future meeting at the Harpurhey campus to observe the curriculum model and engage with learners. ACTION: Principalship and Governance Team to arrange a future Board meeting at Harpurhey Campus, including hybrid attendance options. The Board was informed about potential funding pressures affecting adult education, with early indications of a shift toward outcome-focused funding and a narrower “get into work” agenda. While GMCA remained the primary funder, static allocations could result in a reduced number of learners supported despite potential rate increases. The closure of the Shena Simon campus had operational implications. The College confirmed that adult provision would relocate to Nicholls Campus, which would serve as a dedicated adult learning centre. Enrolment levels were expected to remain consistent, and improvements to the site were underway. The Board was updated on the rollout of Essential Digital Skills qualifications, which complemented English and maths offers and were now available across campuses. This aligned with national skills agendas and employment-readiness goals. The College has contributed to regional planning in sectors such as logistics, construction, and digital. Members were informed that employer-focused provisions, such as modular delivery and boot camps, were being explored, with further engagement planned. The Board queried the decline in health and social care enrolments in South Manchester and was informed that efforts were underway to enhance adult uptake and employer partnerships in that sector. The Board welcomed the strategic direction and agreed that an updated skills strategy would be brought to a future meeting to review progress and inform the next steps. ACTION: Deputy Principal: 16-18 Curriculum and Deputy Principal: Adult Curriculum and Student Support to present an updated skills strategy at a future TMC meeting to review progress and inform next steps.
11	PERFORMANCE REPORT Estates Strategy/Capacity for 25-26 The Board was informed that the College had met its target to increase the number of 16–18 learners by 162 and was on track to exceed this figure, with an additional 200 learners projected for the following academic year. Curriculum planning had been aligned to support this growth, and preparations were underway to ensure campuses could accommodate the increased numbers by September. The Board was apprised that £10 million in capacity funding had been allocated by the Department for Education through the Combined Authority, with £5 million directed to the College. Due to the

short implementation timeframe, the College was prioritising smaller-scale projects to expand learner capacity by September 2026. The Board was advised of a second £10 million funding round, expected to be split between capital and resource support. Expressions of interest were anticipated within two weeks, although final guidance was still pending. The Board acknowledged the potential for strategic expansion and noted that engineering had been identified as a priority area for development. Plans included enhancements at the current site and small-scale projects at the City Campus to increase provision in science and media. Although formal criteria had not been provided, the College aimed to spread the use of the capital funding so as not to increase volumes solely on a one particular site. It was taking a cautious approach to avoid limiting future development, such as by restricting vertical expansion through short-term low-rise construction. In response to queries, the Board was informed that ancillary infrastructure—though not eligible for capital funding—had been considered in operational planning. Measures such as staggered timetables and alternative service points were being developed to support increased learner volumes. The Board was assured that future infrastructure needs were reflected in long-term financial planning and that considerations such as safeguarding and regional health and wellbeing developments were also being factored into the planning. The Board welcomed the update and commended the College’s continued progress, particularly about staff indicators and the strengthening of its institutional reputation.

Health and Safety

The Board noted the updates as provided in the paper.

People

The Board noted the updates as provided in the paper.

Finance

The Board was informed that the Period 9 financial position remained in line with forecasts, with no significant risks identified. The Group was on track to meet year-end targets. The Board was apprised of the proposed 2025/26 budget. While not the most challenging budget year, several key assumptions were highlighted. A £2.6 million increase in 16–18 funding had been factored in, although in-year Department for Education (DfE) growth funding remained uncertain and was not included. Assumptions also included full delivery of Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Adult Skills Fund allocations and a projected £0.5 million increase from uplifted rates for DfE delivery. It was noted that upcoming National Insurance increases presented a cost pressure. The budget assumed 70% funding support, resulting in a potential shortfall of approximately £300,000. A 2% pay award and incremental progression were included in the budget; however, additional pay increases were not included presently due to affordability constraints. The Board was informed that should anticipated funding be confirmed later in the month, there may be scope for a more competitive pay award, potentially aligned with schoolteacher pay frameworks, to implement changes by November. The Board was assured that financial forecasts remained cautious, with budget controls in place as the Group approached the end of the year.

The Board noted that relocating to the City Campus and reactivating the Nicholls Campus would result in higher operational costs. While the overall budget had been balanced, this outcome reflected careful and collective decision-making. Nicholls had been ‘mothballed’ in recent years, and any running costs had been offset by a commercial tenancy with Warner Brothers, which had now ended, thereby increasing net costs. The Board acknowledged that closing the Shena Simon Campus supported sustainability goals; however, its gas-powered infrastructure offered lower energy costs compared to the fully electric City Campus. While the City Campus aligned with long-term sustainability objectives, its higher utility costs presented a financial challenge. It was highlighted that the budget factored in these anticipated pressures, including the exclusion of in-year growth funding and uncertainty around National Insurance support beyond March. Despite these variables, leadership had prioritised filling previously vacant posts, many of which had been covered by agency staff, now reinstated within the staffing structure. The Board recognised the complexity of setting a budget within the context of institutional growth, funding limitations, and staff investment.

In response to a query, the Board was assured that a zero-based budgeting approach had been applied, with staffing aligned to actual student numbers and curriculum requirements. Further work

	was planned to monitor staff utilisation against contracted teaching hours. Departmental contribution reviews and internal efficiency checks had been undertaken to support a sustainable staffing model. It was noted that staffing costs accounted for just under 60% of the total budget. The Board was informed that, within a group structure, central services such as HR were accounted for differently than in standalone institutions, which affects the visibility of overall staffing expenditure. The Board was also advised that the construction programme remained ahead of schedule and within budget, with practical completion achieved earlier than planned. The repurposing of Nicholls had exceeded expectations, and the new atrium space in Phase 2 had already been used for external examinations, reducing the need for external venue hire. The Board commended the Principalship for this achievement. Safeguarding The Board noted the updates as provided in the paper.
10	GOVERNANCE UPDATE Division Effectiveness Review The Board was apprised of two governance items requiring approval. As part of the upcoming Board self-assessment, a divisional board and committee effectiveness review has been introduced to assess compliance with terms of reference and identify areas for improvement. For the TMC Board, only student access to IT had been highlighted, with a recommendation to include it in future performance reports for escalation if necessary. It was confirmed that the Board had met its responsibilities, and the findings would contribute to the overall self-assessment report, due to be reviewed by the Governance Committee and Group Board in October. The Board was informed that this review process was being implemented across all boards and committees to support a consistent approach to performance evaluation. Members welcomed the process, recognising it as part of standard governance practice. The Board RESOLVED to APPROVE The Manchester College Division Effectiveness Review. Cycle of Business 2025/26 The Board also approved the 2025–26 cycle of business, noting its value as a planning tool that would be refined throughout the year. Members expressed appreciation for the structured approach and the continued efforts to align governance activity. The Board RESOLVED to APPROVE The Manchester College Cycle of Business 2025/26.
11	STUDENT AND STAKEHOLDER VOICE UPDATE The Board was informed of progress in student stakeholder engagement, noting a significant increase in curriculum focus groups, with over 1,000 students participating in classroom-based discussions. Plans were in place to expand this further in the next academic year, including the use of iPads to collect real-time, voluntary feedback in refectories and communal areas. The Board was informed that broader stakeholder engagement—such as with parents and employers—was also being developed to support broader insight across the provision. Members welcomed the approach and emphasized the importance of transparency in how feedback was gathered. The Board noted the Student and Stakeholder Voice Update Paper
12	POLICIES FOR APPROVAL - FE FEES POLICY The Board noted the tuition fees policy for 2025/26 and was informed that only minimal changes had been made compared to the previous year. The accompanying paper was taken as read. It was confirmed that the policy remained broadly aligned with sector expectations and upcoming changes in funding policy. A minor point of clarification was raised regarding the wording in one section of the document, though it was confirmed that this did not represent a material change. The Board was satisfied that the overall structure and principles of the fee policy remained sound. The Board RESOLVED to APPROVE the FE Tuition Fee Policy 2025/26
13	AOB

	The Board noted that this meeting marked the final attendance of the Company Secretary and General Counsel. The Chair, on behalf of the Board, expressed sincere thanks for her leadership and contributions, particularly in strengthening governance and supporting Ofsted preparedness. In response, she thanked the Board and praised the Principalship and governance team. The Board also extended its appreciation to all staff for their continued efforts during a demanding year and offered best wishes for a restful summer. The meeting concluded with thanks for contributions made throughout the academic year.
	SIGNED (CHAIR)..... DATED

Meeting closed at 16:18pm