

**Present:** James Adnett, Chantal Pottage, Ed Senior and Sam Wilson.

**In Attendance:** Jane Jenkins (Vice Principal), Andrew Leyland (College/MAT Accountant) and Jo Payne (Clerk to the Local Governing Body)

**1. Apologies:** Matthew Adams, Tom Gregory.

**2. Standing Items**

- (i) There were no declarations of interest relevant to the agenda.
- (ii) No items were identified as confidential to the Committee.
- (iii) No urgent items were declared.

**3. Minutes**

(i) Minutes of the Finances & Resources Committee: 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025

The minutes of the meeting were **confirmed** as a correct record and signed by the Chair. In relation to the action points, it was noted that:

- There are a number of uncertainties in relation to Universal Credit and travel costs which mean it has not been possible to forecast bursary spend;
- The MP's office did reply to a letter about the lack of Police action and an incident reference number was provided, however, there has been no follow up communication;
- In relation to lack of plans for penetration testing, the Trust's Chief Data Officer advised that there is a commitment to undertake annual security assessment or testing, but these aren't always 'penetration tests' but the nature and scope are chosen collaboratively between academy IT managers based on current priorities, current risks, and recent changes to the IT infrastructure.

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

**4. Finance**

(i) Financial Update

The College/MAT Accountant provided the following commentary:

- The latest report shows a positive variance on its EBITDA year-to-date of £196,000. The differences are expected to largely unwind by the end of the year with the exception of the pay cost EBITDA variance, which is positive by £49,000. This is largely caused by there being additional net recruitment that was budgeted for but not yet implemented.
- The Catering net income, before payroll costs, is £138,400 which is largely consistent with the previous year. Full-year Catering payroll costs are budgeted to be £230,900 by the end of the year. This is the result of above inflation increases caused by living wage legislation, and additional recruitment.
- The College is anticipating £398,000 in School Condition Allowance for year ended 31 March 2027 and has until 31 March 2028 to spend this money to avoid clawback. Current plans include the replacement of PV panels, installation of additional EV points, car park barriers, Legionnaires remedial action, carpeting corridors, renovation of the Maths office, 2.20 and G.12 and the repair of the netball court.
- Non-SCA additions include classroom fixed screens and investment in a new College website.

- Employer contributions to the Local Government Pension Scheme will reduce from 19.6% to 17.2% in April with two further years of reduction down to 15.2% in April 2028.
- Due to a nationwide Government policy change, any student who has a parent in receipt of the Universal Credit will be entitled to free College meals. Additional funding is expected towards this, however, the scope of this is not yet known. Similarly, there is uncertainty about the cost of travel to College and the outcome of these factors will allow the College to determine the financial support it can provide. The bursary pot is forecast to hold a remaining surplus of funds at the end of the year of £51,000 which means that the College will have disbursed £250,000, against income of £243,000.

In response to governor scrutiny, the following points were noted:

- Data on the amount of allocated funds for free College meals utilised suggests that only 65% is being used. Information is shared with tutors on individual students who are not accessing these funds so that it can be followed up and the Catering team are excellent at encouraging students to make full use of their allocation;
- It is not possible to identify what the impact of the changes to Universal Credit will be on the numbers eligible for free meals;
- Travel support is currently offered to students who live 2 miles or more from College. This had previously been 3 miles. Whilst consideration could be given to increasing this again, if the College lost students as a consequence, this would ultimately have a negative financial implication;
- The TV screens being placed in classrooms will replace whiteboards which cannot be completely cleaned which make any projection onto them unclear;
- The EV charging points would create between 3 and 6 additional points. Whilst consideration could be given to not charging staff for using them, the College would not want to make these available to the public during non-College hours due to associated costs of opening and locking and the potential for misuse of the College site given concerns around individuals using County Hall;
- The 5% bursary administration cost is permitted within the bursary guidance and goes towards the staffing cost of administering college meals and travel.

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

## 5. Management and Strategic

### (i) Principal's Update Report

The Principal presented his update report and noted the following points:

- Jane Jenkins had been appointed Principal with effect from the start of the 2026-27 academic year and would be the first female Principal in the College's history. The role of Vice Principal is currently being advertised with interviews planned for 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March;
- Applications for next academic year were approximately 80 below the equivalent point last year, although in line with the previous year and there was little difference between enrolment numbers in the two years. It was also positive that applications from the College's main feeder schools were running ahead. In reviewing the latest county cohort data and using trends around enrolment and rollover into year 2, the current forecast is that the College will experience some growth, possibly increasing the student number to 1800. The growth in the cohort is anticipated to end in several years and the challenge of any decline in student number was noted;
- The Government have issued guidance to schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones during the school day. Whilst there is a nuanced approach suggested for post-16, the College will need to be clear on its approach and provide appropriate challenge. As students access their timetables, College emails and Teams on their phones, a ban would not be manageable in the same way as is possible at schools;
- The latest county sufficiency planning suggests that there has not been the anticipated upward trajectory in secondary student numbers and a new Worcester City school was not required. Plans to increase places at high schools across the county were noted. Should Wychavon Town

be one of the settlements selected for early investment from the Government, development could begin as early as 2030 rather than 2035 with the plan for 10,000 houses and a population of 30,000 with early years, primary and secondary provision planned as part of this in the first instance;

- Given that the College will have a new Principal and Vice Principal, the likely Ofsted inspection in the new academic year and the focus on inclusion, it would seem an appropriate time for a governors' conference to discuss these matters.

The Committee **noted** the update.

(ii) HR Update

The Principal presented the HR update and the following points were highlighted:

- The new Estates Manager takes up his position on 16<sup>th</sup> February and is supported by two Estates Assistants;
- The SFCA provide salary benchmarking of senior posts. Whilst the Trust's Director of Governance advised that the Vice Principal was not a senior postholder, the CEO determined the pay associated with the role and this was based on the size of the College compared to its sister colleges, however, this did not seem consistent with similar posts in the Trust's schools
- There is an issue with support staff pay particularly on the lowest points of the scale and how this compares with similar roles at other Trust institutions;
- Governors were invited to feedback on the data that would be useful for them to see in terms of equality monitoring.

In response to challenge, it was noted that:

- It is not possible for teachers to be under the age of 20 so this discrepancy will be checked with the HR Officer;
- The College does not publish a gender pay gap report as has fewer than 250 employees, but the Trust has a requirement to do this

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

## 6. Policy Reviews

(i) Health and Safety Policy

The Trust stipulated a format for Health and Safety policies to be adopted by academies so that they aligned with the Trusts' overarching Health and Safety Policy. There was little fundamental difference to the existing policy in terms of content, the format was 'topped and tailed' to match the Trust template. The policy was **approved** with the changes as outlined.

(ii) Fire Safety Policy

The policy was **approved** to include updated fire evacuation procedures which take account of changes to personnel.

The Principal reported that the new architects preparing plans for the College's capital bid are querying whether fire safety plans should include staircase capacity as this has not been provided by previous architects.

(iii) Student Conduct Policy

The Committee **approved** a minor change to the policy to incorporate a new appendix to reflect the Government guidance on the use of mobile phones and how this will be interpreted and implemented at College.

(iv) Policy on use of Restrictive Interventions

The Clerk advised that the DfE has issued new guidance on restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools which will replace the 'Use of reasonable force in schools' guidance from 1 April 2026. The key differences between the existing and new guidance involve the inclusion of all restrictive interventions (restraint, seclusion, non-contact restraint) not only reasonable force, a strong emphasis on proactive prevention and de-escalation, a statutory duty to record all significant interventions, reporting to parents and to governors.

Reporting to governors should enable review of patterns and disproportionate impact, detailed guidance for SEND and vulnerable students and a requirement for a standalone policy.

The Committee **approved** the policy.

**7. Health & Safety**

(i) Health & Safety Update and Accident Report

The Principal presented the health and safety update and accident report and the following points were noted:

- A fire evacuation was prompted by a call point being activated. Whilst this was not a planned drill, the building was evacuated promptly and in an orderly manner. There is one member of staff and five students who currently have a hearing impairment. As the fire alarm is a siren and there is no visual signal that the alarm is sounding, the College is undertaking a risk assessment with the member of staff and checking that personal evacuation plans are appropriate;
- There are no identifiable trends or concerns in relation to the accident report.

The contents of the report was **noted**.

**8. Closing Standing Items**

(i) Risk Management: The Principal presented apposite risk register entries where there had been a change to the score or revised comment.

(ii) Impact: The Committee noted its scrutiny of the College's use of bursary funding, environmental sustainability and staffing.

(iii) Any Urgent Business: No urgent business was identified.

(iv). Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026

The meeting finished at 6.46pm

Signed:.....

Sam Wilson (Chair)

Date:.....

**FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE: ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MEETING ON 11<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2026**

<b>Report Reference</b>	<b>Action Point</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Check</b>
F&R/11.02.26/5(ii)	Check with HR Officer in relation to age breakdown of teaching staff.	EYS	May 2026	

**ACTION POINTS CARRIED FORWARD**

<b>Report Reference</b>	<b>Action Point</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Check</b>
F&R/12.11.25/5(i)	Bursary forecasts be completed earlier and feedback provided to ensure that student needs can be met.	EYS/APL	February 2026	

**ACTION POINTS COMPLETED**

<b>Report Reference</b>	<b>Action Point</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Check</b>
F&R/12.11.25/6(i)	Write to Worcester MP on behalf of Governors in relation to lack of Police action.	JJP	ASAP	✓
F&R/12.11.25/6(ii)	Feedback concern in relation to lack of plans to conduct penetration testing.	EYS	ASAP	✓