OLDHAM COLLEGE
FULL CORPORATION

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 25 March 2025 at 4.00pm at Oldham College

Present:	Jonathan Edwards	Governor – Chair
	Paul Axon	Governor
	Adrian Barrass	Governor
	Simon Jordan	Principal & CEO
	David Kay	Governor
	Sue Kershaw	Governor
	Phil Mayall	Governor
	Shaid Mushtaq	Governor
	Michelle Royle	Staff Governor
	Jane Shelton	Governor
	Danielle Vipond	Governor
	Carol Whitworth	Governor
	Karen Wright	Governor
	Joshua Bellot	Student Governor
	Catrina Cenusa	Student Governor
	Sarah Thompson	Governor
	Stuart Lockwood	Governor (appointed 25 March 2025)
Officers:	Rachel James	Deputy Principal
	Rebecca Johnson	Finance Director
	Janet Frost	Clerk to the Corporation
Apologies:	Mashukul Hoque	Governor
	Laura Windsor-Welsh	Governor (appointed 25 March 2025)

45/24 **Welcome and Introductions**
The Chair welcomed new governor Stuart Lockwood to the meeting (refer to Min 51/24).

46/24 **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**
Declarations of interest were made by Shaid Mushtaq should any discussion in the meeting relate to his area of work.

47/24 **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies had been received and accepted from Mashukul Hoque and Laura Windsor-Welsh.

48/24 **(i) Minutes of the Meeting held 17 December 2024**
The minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on 17 December 2024 had been previously circulated to members for consideration.
It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes reflected a true record of the meeting and were accepted as a correct record.

(ii) Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting held 11 February 2025
The minutes of the Extra Ordinary meeting of the Corporation held on 11 February 2025 had been previously circulated to members for consideration.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes reflected a true record of the meeting and were accepted as a correct record.

49/24 **(i) <u>Matters Arising from the minutes of the 17 December 2024</u>**

None to report

(ii) <u>Matters Arising from the minutes of the 11 February 2025</u>

None to report

50/24 **<u>Rolling Actions</u>**

1. Min 31/24 17 December 2024 – Staff Annual Pay Award 2024

A review of competitor salaries be carried out alongside a review of roles and responsibilities and performance management and the outcome be reported to the Resources Committee for scrutiny

It was RESOLVED this action was complete.

51/24 **<u>Appointment of New Governors</u> (Item 5)**

The Chair reported the G&S Committee had met on 19 March 2025 and met with two prospective governors; Stuart Lockwood and Laura Windsor-Welsh. It was reported the committee had considered their skills and agreed both applicants would bring additional expertise to complement the current membership of board members.

The G&S Committee recommended the appointment of both applicants subject to board approval. Members of the Corporation supported the decision of the G&S Committee.

It was agreed SL and LWW be appointment with immediate effect.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the appointment of:-

(i) Stuart Lockwood as governor member for an initial induction year from 25 March 2025 to 24 March 2026, and before the expiry of one-year, subject to the satisfactory completion of the induction year be appointed to complete a four-year term of office to March 2029.

(ii) Laura Windsor-Welsh as governor member for an initial induction year from 25 March 2025 to 24 March 2026, and before the expiry of one-year, subject to the satisfactory completion of the induction year be appointed to complete a four-year term of office to March 2029

52/24 **<u>Student Voice Update</u> (Item 7)**

A copy of the Student Voice report had previously been sent to members for their consideration. The Student Governor (CC) presented the report and highlighted key points, in summary:-

- The Student Union accounts as at 28 February 2025 were presented to members for noting
- It was noted the breadth of activities the SU had organised since the previous meeting including; 2 Social Action projects Linear Park and Northern Roots, charity camp out, Green Week.
- Reported the College has partnered with African Adventures for an incredible opportunity for our young people to boost their personal development and make a life-changing impact at one of African Adventures partner schools in Nakuru, Kenya. A group of students will have the opportunity to work in a school in Kenya that has been set up by local people to give children the chance of a better future
- The Committee noted that the first Student Development Day took place on 11 December 2024 and was well attended. Senior leaders and governors participated alongside students, creating a valuable opportunity for sharing knowledge, exchanging views, and networking. A governor commented that the event provided governors with direct insight into students' perspectives and experiences. This engagement enhanced their understanding of some of **<u>C</u>**

the challenges faced by students, which could be triangulated with the work of the Safeguarding Team.

- The Student Governor informed members feedback from students was positive and they were pleased they had been able to voice their opinions and provide their ideas as to how the college could improve further. A second event is planned for May 2025 and governors are encouraged to participate.

Members thanked CC for her report.

It was RESOLVED that members acknowledged the report as presented and noted the ongoing progress with the Student Voice framework

53/24 <u>**Curriculum and Quality Summary Report**</u> **(Item 7)**

The Deputy Principal introduced the C&Q Summary Report that had previously been circulated to members for information. The DP reported that the C&Q Committee had considered each of the reports in detail at the 18 March 2025 meeting. The following key points were reported:-

(i) Safeguarding and Welfare Report – A detailed report on matters relating to safeguarding and welfare of students had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The DP drew members attention to the following:-

- There continues to be high referral levels since the start of term noting these were split across safeguarding referrals and welfare referrals (686 – SG and 491 – W).
- Reported there has been changes to the categories the college monitor on CPOMs advising a care experience learner is no longer recorded as a safeguarding concern and subcategories recognising LGBT+ rather than homophobic bullying to reflect our Rainbow Trust Award have been added.
- Safeguarding support has mainly been for domestic violence, suicidal ideation and intelligence- professionals, whilst welfare support has focused on anxiety, mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Noted Caring Professions have had the highest overall number of referrals at 212, Skills and Employability have 192, Construction & Built Environment 109 and ESOL 130

(ii) **FE and Apprenticeship Quality Summary**

The Deputy Principal provided members with the key points arising from the FE and Apprenticeship summary report including the predicted achievement data, accelerated support programme update and the Post Inspection Action Plan.

The March **overall predictions** showed they were above the 2023/24 achievement outturn for all provision types. The DP reported the predictions will continue to be refined and become more accurate towards the end of the year. A governor sought assurance that staff are able to identify **<u>C</u>** those students that require additional support and that this is being provided to students. In answer the DP reported the HoFs and Curriculum Directors use the information from the Accountability Boards to implement interventions targeted at students and apprentices that require additional support.

The predicted achievement data by level was reported, advising the current Level 1 prediction was below the previous year (16-18 81.9% 24/25 82.7% 23/24) and actions have been agreed and implemented to improve this position.

Members noted Level 2 predictions showed an improvement with a notable increase at Level 3 compared to last year for both 16-18 and adult.

Accelerated Support Programme – The DP reported Construction, Health & Social Care and Travel & Tourism are receiving additional support and interventions to assist them to improve their outcomes. A governor asked how the programmes aim to improve the faculties position and the DP

<u>Q</u>

explained the robust approach taken for each area advising the action plans for each may differ however the same process is implemented which is focussed on a risk-based approach.

Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP)
The DP updated the Corporation on the progress to date on developing the PIAP following the inspection and receiving the Ofsted report and circulated the first draft of the plan for governors to review. She explained the purpose of the document and the mechanism of review and monitoring by the board. She further added SLT have utilised the experience of the colleges' external Quality Improvement Partner in developing the plan.
It was reported the PIAP will run alongside the whole college QIP, with a focus on improvements needed directly in line with the inspection, inspection report and preparation for the upcoming monitoring visit and full inspection.
Members noted the report as presented and the action being taken to address the points highlighted through the Ofsted inspection.

HE and Higher Skills Quality Report

The Deputy Principal provided a summary update on the **Quality KPI** report for UCO which reported the Retention was currently at 89% (88% LYTD), and attendance YTD was at 84%, in line with LYTD.

2024/25 Semester 1 Assessment Board Summary Report
The assessment data for each establishment was provided and noted by members.

Observation of Teaching and Learning Scheme Report 2023/24
A summary of best practice and actions was reported to members for information. Members noted the actions and recommendations as stated within the report.

Mid-Year Survey Report
The DP provided a summary of the key points from the mid-year survey report. Of note:-

- 93% of students were overall satisfied at UCO at the end of Semester 1.
- 94% of students feel on track to complete and pass this year.
- 95% of students agreed with the statement *I feel I have developed skills which will be useful for my future (either for work or further study).*

It was further reported action has been taken to identify concerns and develop an action plan for those courses with the lowest scores.

The DP updated members on the work taking place with alumni and current students promoting ambition and social mobility to enhance job opportunities.

Research and Scholarly Activity Report

Members were informed the Research and Scholarly Activity Group had met seven times this year for formal meetings and at additional points in the year in preparation of the 9th UCO Research Symposium. A governor observed this was good practise and an excellent opportunity for staff to extend their knowledge through research and scholarly activity and requested feedback on the impact of alumni be reported to a future meeting. **C**

Members noted the report.

It was RESOLVED that members received the C&Q Summary Report as presented.

54/24 **Resources Summary Report (Item 8)**
A copy of the Finance and Resources Summary Report had previously been circulated to members for consideration. The Finance Director advised that the Resources Committee had

received detailed papers and discussed all at length at their meeting on the 11 March 2025. In summary:-

(i) Reported the **management accounts to 31 January 2025** had been presented to the committee for their consideration and discussion. The yearend estimated EBITDA is in line with expectations at £4,019k (budget £4,036k). The FD informed members all income streams continued to be closely monitored to ensure income targets were achieved. A member asked the impact on budget due to the ESFA not releasing information on funding as previously reported. The FD gave assurance a prudent approach had been taken on budgeting due to the uncertainties on the 16 - 19 funding rates and formula, 16 - 19 in-year growth, the post-16 budget grant and the increase in employer National Insurance contributions. **Q**

(ii) Cash Flow and Treasury Position – The Finance Director updated members on the cash flow and treasury position as at 31 January 2025. Members were provided with and noted the loan balances. It was also noted the College was not in breach of any of the revised loan covenants for the forecast year end.

(iii) Capital Grants - A report was presented that updated members on College capital grant spend as at 31 January 2025, and of any new grants received since the last meeting.

(iv) Budget 2025/26

The FD reported that the Resources Committee had received the first iteration of the budget for 2025/26 and a copy had been provided to members for information. The FD added the budget was currently being reviewed as part of the business planning process and the final version would be presented to the July 2025 meeting.

(v) UCO Update

The FD provided a report that updated members on the actions being taken in relation to the future of HE delivery and members noted the progress being achieved on the production of an integrated accommodation plan and options available for the Studio building.

Members further noted that once the accommodation plan was finalised efforts would focus on exploring potential OfS capital funding, undertake an external review of the College Adult and University provision with local communities and stakeholders and consider a refresh/rebrand of the College Adult and University provision.

(vi) The Health and Safety report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting for their consideration. The FD drew members attention to the following:-

- Accidents & Incidents - The total number of work-related accidents/incidents reported since the start of the current College year was 31, which was 3 less than the same period last year and showed a continuing downward trend.
- There has been six RIDDORs reported in the stated period and details were provided and actions to improve safety were reported also.
- There have been no environmental incidents

  Members noted the report.

(viii) The **Risk Management Register** as at March 2024 was presented to the committee for review and members noted the areas of risk and mitigation as reported. A discussion ensued and governors considered the risks that had increased and the mitigating factors put in place to manage the risks. Discussion relating to risks associated with the implementation and use of AI were considered and it was agreed the FD would review the college's exposure to AI and discuss the level of risk further with SLT and the next Audit Committee. **Action.** **C**

(ix) Contracts over £30k
Governors noted the contracts detailed in the report.

It was RESOLVED that:-
(i) members noted the report as presented
(ii) SLT to review the college's exposure to AI and the potential risk to the college with its implementation.

55/24 **<u>Principal's Report</u> (Item 9)**

A copy of the Principal's Report had previously been circulated to members for consideration prior to the meeting. The Principal guided members through the report and provided an overview of the key strategic and operational issues.
In discussion the following points were considered:-

Student:
The Principal provided the current predicted achievement data noting priority remains Level 3.
He reported the 'Elevate Your Progress' provides pathways within the broader Elevate programme for staff to enhance their teaching practise and empower practitioners to equip students for success. In answer to a question raised he explained the programme emphasises robust progress **Q** tracking through formative and summative assessments is data driven and puts in place high expectations for student achievement.
The Principal continued and reported the early impact of the Accountability Boards and learning walks noting there has been an enhanced academic rigor at Level 1, alongside focused development of learning behaviours.
A robust discussion and ensued and members considered the reporting methodology and **C** requested KPIs be presented within future reports that showed the student starting position and expected level of grade and progress to date against the KPI.

Ofsted – The Post Inspection Action Plan had previously been circulated to members for their consideration and review. It was reported the plan will be reviewed regularly with members being given the opportunity to challenge the progress of the indicators within the plan at both the C&Q Committee and PIAP Task and Finish Group. Members noted the report.

People:
An update since the previous meeting on staff turnover, sickness, managing absence process and agency spend. See confidential item.
It was reported a monthly staff newsletter has been launched which includes updates on strategy, highlights achievements related to our strategic pillars: Student, People, Place, and Partners and features stories from students, staff, and stakeholders.

Place:
The Principal provided clarity on the budget arrangements for the in-year 16-19 students advising the Department for Education (DfE) has announced it cannot fully fund the resulting growth in college numbers this year and colleges will only receive two-thirds of their anticipated in-year growth funding, calculated using a newly introduced "affordability factor." A governor sought assurance the in-year budget figures would not impact negatively on the students due to this reduced allocation and the FD assured members the financial position was in a good position and **C** the spend as per the budget would be met.

The Principal continued and advised the DfE has announced a 3.78% increase in funding rates for 16–19-year-old students for 2025-26, raising the top funding rate for study programme students to £5,026. He reported this increase was part of the £300 million funding package announced in the Chancellor's October budget and of this £50 million will be allocated as one-off grants to further education and sixth form colleges to support pay awards from April to July this year. The remaining funds will cover the funding rate increase for the 2025-26 academic year. It was further reported that details regarding adult learner funding and payments to offset the upcoming employer national insurance rise were still pending.

An update on the capital programme was provided. In summary the modular building is progressing and will be available for use September 2025; the Grange Theatre is awaiting the grant funding letter from the DfE ahead of its demolition; awaiting the formal lease agreement from Oldham Council for the Futsal building, this should be with the college imminently.
An update on the current position of the UCO building was reported. Members noted the position of UCO and requested an update be provided to the May Strategy day.

Partners:
The Annual Strategic Conversation with the Department for Education will take place on 28 March 2025. This year's discussion will centre on the College's performance and its alignment with local skills needs, as defined in our Accountability Agreement

The Principal updated members on recent events the College has participated in including the Oldham Trading Platform, awarded Cyberfirst Gold Accreditation by the National Cyber Security Centre plus maintaining and building partnerships across Oldham and GM.

The Chair thanked the Principal for his detailed and informative report.

It was RESOLVED that members noted the report.

56/24 **<u>Governance and Search Summary Report</u> (Item 10)**

A report had previously been circulated to members prior to the meeting that provided an update on matters relating to governance since the previous meeting of the Corporation. The Clerk to the Corporation advised:-

- See minute 51/24 - Following the interview of two prospective governors at the G&S Committee at its meeting on the 19 March 2025, the committee recommended to the Corporation the appointment of Stuart Lockwood and Laura Windsor-Welsh. Members considered the skills and experience the two prospective governors would bring to the board and supported the decision of the committee. It was agreed SL and LWW be appointment with immediate effect.
- It was reported the G&S committee had received a report initiating the discussion on succession planning for the Chair position as the current Chair's tenure ends on 31 August 2026. To facilitate a smooth and timely transition it was agreed the board progress a robust succession planning process and commence this through consideration of options for the board at its Strategy Day on 13 May 2025.
- The committee reviewed and recommended approval of the terms of reference of the PIAP Task and Finish Group. The group will be responsible for overseeing the development, implementation, and monitoring of the action plan following the recent Ofsted inspection.

It was **RESOLVED** that members:-

(i) Noted the report as presented, and

(ii) Approved the terms of reference of the PIAP Task and Finish Group.

57/24 **Policies for Approval**

(i) HE Capacity to Study Policy

A copy of the HE Capacity to Study Policy was presented to members for consideration. Members noted the policy and approved it with no changes.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the HE Capacity to Study Policy as presented.

(ii) HE Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

A copy of the HE Student and Engagement Policy was presented to members for consideration. Members noted the policy and approved it with no changes.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the HE Student and Engagement Policy as presented.

58/24 Use of the Seal (Item 12)

Not used since the previous meeting

59/24 Minutes and Reports from meetings:-

59/24.1 Audit Committee 12 December 2024 (Item 13.1)

The Chair reported that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 12 December 2024 had been circulated to members for formal receipt and there was no further discussion required on any of the items.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting be received as a true record of the meeting.

59/24.2 C&Q Committee 18 March 2025 (Item 13.2)

The minutes of the meeting of the C&Q Committee held on 18 March 2025 would be presented to the next meeting.

59/24.3 Resources Committee 11 March 2025 (Item 13.3)

The minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 11 March 2025 had been circulated to members for formal receipt and there was no further discussion required on any of the items.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting be received as a true record of the meeting.

59/24.4 G&S Committee 19 March 2025 (Item 13.4)

The minutes of the meeting of the G&S Committee held on 19 March 2025 had been circulated to members for formal receipt and there was no further discussion required on any of the items.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting be received as a true record of the meeting.

60/24 Any Other Business (Item 14)

None reported.

61/24 Corporation Workplan (Item 15)

The Workplan for 2024/25 including changes to the reporting sequence for the current meeting was presented to members for consideration.

Members noted the report.

It was RESOLVED that noted the Workplan as presented.

62/24 Dates of Future Meeting

13 May 2025 – Strategic Meeting of the Corporation

1 July 2025 – Full Corporation

5.55pm – The DP and FD, staff governors and student governors retired from the meeting

See confidential minute -

Minutes Approved……………………………………………………………………………Date…………………………………………….
Chair

Full Corporation 25 March 2025

Rolling Action List

Meeting Date and Item No.	Rolling Action List (Outstanding actions from previous meeting(s) to be carried forward, listed below, and not removed until completed/closed.)	Actionee	Reported as Completed at meeting of:
17 12 24 Min 31/24	**Staff Annual Pay Award 2024** A review of competitor salaries be carried out alongside a review of roles and responsibilities and performance management and the outcome be reported to the Resources Committee for scrutiny.	SJ/CS	25 03 25 Min 50/24.1
25 03 25 Min 54/24	**Resources Summary Report** SLT to review the college's exposure to AI and the potential risk to the college with its implementation.	FD	
25 03 25 Min 55/24	**Principal's Report** UCO update to be presented to the Strategy Day in May	SJ	