



Stirling Campus, 9.30am

		Publish on Web?	Type	Lead
1	Apologies, Declaration of Interests and Changes to Members' Register of Interest	N/A	Discussion	Abhi Agarwal
2	Draft Minutes and Matters Arising of meeting 2.1 19 June 2025 2.2 14 August 2025	Yes	Approval	Abhi Agarwal
3	Review of Action Tracker	Yes	Discussion	Alison Stewart
4	Principals Executive Summary Report (Paper 4 is withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 36 Confidentiality of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)	No	Discussion	Kenny MacInnes
5	Chairs Update (Verbal)	N/A	Discussion	Abhi Agarwal
6	Student Association Report	Yes	Discussion	Martin Podhorsky
STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION				
7	Corporate Parenting Plan 2025-2028	Yes	Approval	Sarah Tervit
8	Digital Strategy	Yes	Discussion	Darren Payne
9	College Transformation Project (Paper 9 is withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 36 Confidentiality of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)	No	Presentation	Kenny MacInnes
GOVERNANCE				
10	Appointment of Board Secretary Verbal	N/A	Approval	Abhi Agarwal
11	Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024/25 (Paper 11 is withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 27 Information Intended for Future Publication of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)	No	Approval	Alison Stewart
12	External Auditor Annual Report and Letter of Representation (Paper 12 is withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 27 Information Intended for Future Publication of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)	No	Discussion	Alison Stewart



13	Audit Committee Chair's Report to the Board of Management	Yes	Discussion	Rhona Geisler
14	Board of Management: Risk Appetite Workshop Output	Yes	Discussion	Alison Stewart
15	Board of Management Scheme of Delegation	Yes	Approval	Alison Stewart
16	Procurement Approval: Finance System (Paper 16 is withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 33 Commercial Interests and the Economy of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)	No	Approval	Alison Stewart
17	Committee Meetings	Yes	Noting	
	17.1 Audit Committee 20 November 2025			Rhona Geisler
	17.2 Finance, Resource & Infrastructure Committee 20 November 2025			Liam McCabe
	17.3 Learning & Resource Committee 13 November 2025			Lorna Dougall
	(Elements of item 17 withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 36 Confidentiality of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)			
18	Review of Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identified in meetingRisks which sit with Board	Yes	Discussion	All
19	Any Other Competent Business	Yes	Discussion	All
	FOR INFORMATION			
20	Forward Agenda – To follow	Yes	Information	

PRIVATE MEETING SIM & MEMBERS



2.1 Minutes of Meeting of 19 June 2025 For Approval

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Steeple Suite, Falkirk Campus

Present: Abhishek Agarwal (Chair)
Kenny MacInnes (Principal)
Craig Arthur
Chris Brodie
Lorna Dougall – Vice Chair
Rhona Geisler
Annemarie Harley – EIS FELA member
Grace Hepburn – Corporate Services Staff Member
Phil Harris
Jen Hogarth – Teaching staff member
Kirsten Kennedy – Student Association Vice President
Suzanne Reynolds
Campbell Ure

In Attendance: David Allison, Vice Principal Infrastructure and Communications (VPIC)
Sarah Higgins-Rollo, Vice Principal Learning and Student Experience (VPLSE)
Colin McMurray, Vice Principal Business and Innovation (VPBI)
Alison Stewart, Vice Principal Finance & Corporate Affairs (VPFACA)
Sarah Tervit, Head of Inclusions and Student Services (HISS) for B/24/063 only
Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer (CGPO), Minute

The Chair informed members that this would be the final meeting for both Kirsten Kennedy and David Allison.

The Principal noted that Kirsten has served two years as the Student Association Vice President and has brought the student voice to the fore and contributed well to the work of the Board.

David has served over 21 years at the College and has been a pleasure to work with and will be sorely missed both for his knowledge and his contribution.

B/24/069 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Elena Strachan – Student Association President
Liam McCabe – Senior Independent Member

The Chair reported to members that he had had discussions with the Committee Chairs about appointing vice chairs for each committee to cover in the event of absence. Following their agreement, he has spoken with the following members who have agreed to take up the position of vice chair as follows:

Chris Brodie – Learning & Student Experience Committee
Philip Harris – Finance, Resource & Infrastructure Committee
Suzanne Reynolds – Audit Committee (in addition to being on FRAIC)

a) Members agreed the appointment of the vice chairs



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B/24/070 Minutes and Matters Arising of Meeting of 24 April 2025

The minutes of the meeting were considered and approved.

Matters Arising

None

B/24/071 Review of Action Tracker

The VPFACA presented the tracker to members. She noted that one item had been marked as cancelled and explained that this was because it was materially similar to an existing task and that the two had been merged.

She noted that the majority of actions had been completed and provided members with context on the four recommendations that were still live.

a) Members noted the content of the update

B/24/072 Principals Executive Summary Report

The Principal presented his dashboard on College activities.

He informed members that the College remains on course to meet its credits target and that recruitment for next year is 19% above where it had been at this point last year.

He discussed how proud he was of the staff and students, led by Sarah Higgins-Rollo and Rob McDermot, who had achieved an effective rating from the recent QAA TQER quality visit.

He reported on the launch of the teamSOS safety notification system and the roll out of training to staff.

He highlighted the recent Grangemouth Future Industry Board meeting and the prominent role the College was taking in this activity.

He confirmed that the student elections had been completed and that there were two new sabbatical officers who would take the post from 1 July 2025.

He discussed the College benchmarking exercise the College had taken part in. This review, covering five colleges, had demonstrated that Forth Valley was the most efficient College.

He stated that this efficiency rating, combined with the effective rating from QAA creates a powerful narrative for the College.



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He informed members of the appointment of Gavin Donaghue as CEO of Colleges Scotland.

He noted that the College Modern Apprenticeship contract would increase for 2025/26 and that this was one of the largest contracts of its kind in Scotland for a standalone regional college.

He outlined the section 22 report which was published and has been presented to the Scottish Parliament's Public Audit Committee.

He also commented on the continued increase in the numbers of students accessing support in relation to additional support needs, with 31% of full-time students accessing the services and the stress that this is placing on provision.

a) Members noted the content of the report

B/24/073

Chairs Update

The Chair began by noting his thanks to the VPLSE and her team for the positive outcome of the TQER review.

He reported on engagement with a range of external stakeholders, including ambassadors, in support of the College international activity, noting the work of the Global Partnership Manager in securing these visits.

He informed members that he has been involved in the public appointments process in relation to College Chairs for four regional Colleges and stressed the importance of securing a sound chair for these Colleges.

He reported on joint meetings with the Principal with senior leadership at SFC and that these discussions had been followed up with correspondence which has been copied to members.

He also informed members of the intention to meet with Ministers before the next board meeting to emphasise the position the College is in.

He confirmed to members that he continues to meet with the Principal on a regular basis and has also been meeting one on one with other members of the Senior Management Team. He also noted that he has been meeting with the Committee chairs on a regular basis.

He informed members of the preparations being done for the recruitment of non-executive members to fill the current vacancies and that a number of high-quality applications had been received.



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The FVSAVP noted that the incoming sabbatical officers would benefit from meeting with the Chair, and it was agreed that this would be arranged as part of their Board induction.

a) Members noted the content of the update

B/24/074 Forth Valley Student Association Annual Report

The FVSAVP presented the annual report of the student association.

She reported that the new sabbatical officers had been elected and that they would start their roles in July. She highlighted that the Sabbatical posts were now part time which meant the new officers would also be active students during their tenure.

She highlighted the success of the student awards ceremony, which included an expansion of the number of categories to enable recognition of students from every department.

The Chair asked her what her highlights from her time in the Vice President role were over the last two years.

She highlighted the learning curve associated with the role, the personal development which she had benefited from and the difference she has been able to make for students.

Members queried whether the change of the sabbatical roles to part time would have an impact on their work. The VPLSE noted that the post holders are on college employment contracts and that they would be supported through line management and the setting of clear parameters as well as coaching and inductions.

a) Members noted the content of the report

B/24/075 Strategic Plan Monitoring Dashboard

The VPIC presented members with an overview of the proposed strategic plan monitoring dashboard, demonstrating that each category could be drilled down into underlying data for when SMT review the information.

He outlined that SMT would review all measures twice per year and update the tracker, highlighting as well that each of the measures were weighted to reflect their overall impact on achieving the strategic plan objectives.

He confirmed the proposal would be to bring to the Board a mid-year and end of year report, with narrative provided on an exception basis for those measures requiring further detail due to any underperformance.



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Members queried whether this would lead to the Board being able to view trends in information over time and the VPIC confirmed that this should be possible.

Members also queried if the data being presented could be shown as charts and the VPIC also confirmed that this was possible.

Members queried whether twice yearly reports gave enough time to rectify any issues that might impact on the achievement of the objectives.

The Principal confirmed to members that, while the proposal was to bring the report to the Board bi-annually, the data would be reviewed monthly as part of the operational planning process with the responsible SMT member.

Members queried whether they would be able to access the report, and the Principal confirmed this would be looked at and that the first report would be available for the December meeting of the Board.

a) Members noted the content of the presentation

B/24/076

Revenue and Capital Budgets

The VPFACA presented a paper on the revenue budget. She informed members that the paper had been considered the previous week by the Finance, Resource & Infrastructure Committee (FRAIC) and that there had been a lengthy discussion on both the budgets and the Financial Forecast Return (FFR) paper.

She highlighted to members that the College was currently projecting a deficit of approximately £800k for 2025/26 and that there was also a real risk of the College running out of cash reserves by July 2026, with a cash 'pinch point' also predicted for March 2026.

She also clarified to members that the overall underlying deficit was significantly larger at £2.1m and that the position for 2025/26 was only possible due to the £1m donation from the ALF and a number of one-off pots of money such as government funding in relation to Petroineos.

She confirmed that the Principal had written to SFC to highlight the severity of the position the College was in, with members receiving a copy of the letter at the time it was sent.

She reported that SFC had acknowledged the letter and promised a response but that none had been received in time for this meeting.

She outlined a number of activities the College was undertaking to reduce costs, noting discussions between the Principal and Council Chief Executives regarding a reduction in rates for the campuses. This request was denied by all three Councils,



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and they recommended considering the hardship fund available for rate relief, the application for which requires the development of a business case for each area.

She informed members that the curriculum was being reviewed to see if a reduction in contact time per class was feasible while not impacting on the quality of learning.

She noted that the budget presented did not contain a budget for restructuring and that SFC had been approached for funding but their view was the College was adequately funded and would need to look to further savings.

Members welcomed the continued work to identify and secure savings but highlighted that the risks associated with the College funding continued to increase.

Members also noted that they were being asked to approve a deficit budget and that they need to bear in mind their responsibilities as charity trustees.

Members suggested contacting SFC to state the Board could not approve the budget unless SFC provide a written assurance in relation to the College cash position.

The VPFA informed members that Audit Scotland continue to consider College's going concerns as, should an individual institution fail, the delivery of the learning would be provided elsewhere.

She outlined a number of considerations SFC might make ranging from reducing the credit level for the College while maintaining funding levels through to a potential merger with another body. She noted these take funding which is not currently available from SFC and an amount of time that would not solve the immediate issues.

She confirmed to members that the College was not alone in the challenges being presented, with information from the College sectors Finance Directors group indicating that only three colleges are anticipated to have a break even position next year and only one college the year after that.

She confirmed that, if the College were to merge with a college or university, additional funding would still be needed to make that happen.

The Chair requested further information on, if SFC were to offer support, what would the ask from the College be.

The VPFA confirmed it would be sustainability of the 3-campus model and continued teaching delivery at current levels. She confirmed that this has been communicated to SFC.

Members queried what impact on the deficit actions such as the closure of the Alloa campus might have.



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The VPFAA noted that any savings from these measures would not impact until the following financial year 2026/27.

Members requested information on measures to reduce the deficit for 2025/26.

The VPFAA outlined the benchmarking review that had recently been completed and the work of the FRAIC short life working group examining options.

She confirmed to members that a large proportion of discretionary spend has already been cut and that, with 80% of costs being staff related and set at a national level, the drivers for cost increases are outwith the College's control, without cutting staff numbers.

She highlighted that even restructuring is a challenge as the College does not have the necessary funds to support this.

The Principal confirmed that the review of teaching contact time to 50-minutes per class is designed to address staffing levels however the College does have credit targets it must meet and that, combined, these identified measures will still not reach the level of the deficit.

He discussed commercial activity noting that, even here, the amount of activity needed to address the projected budget issues is not realistic.

Members noted that they were uncomfortable approving a deficit budget without a roadmap of how this would be brought back into balance.

The Principal reiterated that the College continued to pursue a range of options and engage with anyone from local business to Scottish Ministers but that the roadmap could not be created until there was positive engagement on one of these options.

Members queried if moving to a four-day week would deliver savings.

The Principal responded that the savings from the campuses being closed for one day per week was relatively minimal and that the only way a four-day week would work is if College staff took a corresponding cut to pay. As such this was not being looked at as an option.

Members queried what the timing around approval for the possible closure of Alloa and the change to class contact times would be.

The Principal noted that this decision would need to be by the meeting in September 2025 at the latest.

He informed members that he was meeting with Clackmannanshire Council the following day to look at the potential for delivering learning in the area by operating out of the local schools.



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He noted also that the College had received correspondence from SFC requesting that the FFR is submitted on time.

Members noted that the longer it took to put in some of the proposed corrective measures identified to date, the greater the impact on the budget was and asked if the reduction in class time to 50 minutes was something that could be introduced sooner or mid-year.

The VPLSE confirmed that the proposal was for 2026/27 given where we are in the College calendar but that a pilot could be looked at, possibly in Alloa.

Regarding mid-year changes should the pilot showed the 50-minute class time was possible, the Principal commented that this was unlikely owing to issues such as delivery of contracts.

Members queried what the impact on the deficit of moving to the 50-minute model might be.

The VPLSE responded that an exact figure is not known as this would involve a complete redesign of the curriculum which would impact on other roles but that it could be up to £1m. She noted that the 50-minute model equates to a reduction in teaching at HND level of 45 hours and that remaining staff would have an increased class load.

The Principal reminded members that there were costs associated with exiting staff and that SFC were unlikely to fund this.

He confirmed the estimate of approximately £1m saving from the 50-minute model and approximately £900k from the closure of Alloa.

Members queried, if SFC would not help with restructuring, what could the next steps be for the College.

The Principal commented that the next steps would likely be to approach SFC for permission to begin merger discussions, if the Board approved of this approach. He noted that 21 College's were reporting deficits so there was not much potential for merger within the sector.

The Chair confirmed that this should form part of the discussions in September, including the decision on whether or not to close the Alloa campus. He reiterated for members the impact of closing a campus both in terms of the level of work to do so and the impact on the staff based there.

Members queried whether the efficiency statement provided in the benchmarking exercise included staffing.



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The Principal clarified that, owing to the level of commercial delivery done by the College, there is a higher income per head in the College which contributed to the efficiency ranking.

He reminded members that, in the last few years, the College has already removed over £5m of expenditure, with over 100 staff exiting the organisation.

Members noted that non-teaching staff costs were higher than other colleges in the benchmarking exercise. The VPFACA commented that this was not a significant difference and the estates cost per sqm feeds into this but that conversations were happening with the other colleges involved to ensure that this is fully understood.

In relation to queries on the timing of the decision on closing Alloa campus, the Principal noted that there would be time to proceed with this if the decision was taken in September. If taken today, there would be some savings possible by mothballing the campus however he reiterated the point that doing so would require funding for voluntary severance costs which the College does not have.

Members queried what the consequences would be with proceeding with a deficit budget.

The VPFACA noted that the College would run out of cash and reach a point similar to that reported for the University of Dundee. SFC would likely step in with short term cash help, but they have already indicated that they would require the College to take all reasonable action to reduce the deficit which could include the closure of Alloa and the move to 50-minute classes.

She noted it was worth considering going public with the situation as SFC and Scottish Government may take more note in that event.

Members noted that the position for further education has not been sustainable for a number of years now and that going public may be the best option.

The Principal informed members that he had engaged with Scottish Government at Ministerial level to state that the challenges are so significant the College may not be able to participate fully in project Willow. He reported that he had been asked to submit a proposal for additional funding and that a £1m ask had been submitted.

In relation to going public, members commented that the College should investigate the appointment of a PR company to support this work.

In relation to not approving the budget, the VPFACA confirmed that SFC had been advised that the Board would likely not approve a deficit budget or running out of cash. SFC have not responded to this information.

The Chair asked members to consider what communications the College would take forward from this meeting on their behalf.

The Principal commented that any correspondence would likely include –

- The Boards decision to not approve the budget and FFR, should that be the outcome of the meeting
- The potential of industrial relations action if the move to 50 minutes class time was implemented, particularly as this would mean the College is the only one in Scotland delivering 50 minutes per class
- The risk to our relationships with partners, particularly in the Clackmannanshire area
- The impact on the student experience, both for students from Clackmannanshire and the wider student body with shorter classes
- Confirm that any closure of Alloa is a result of the lack of funding from SFC and Scottish Government and that the College has tried all avenues to try to keep the campus open

Members queried whether, given the information discussed at the meeting, this would impact on the College's status as a going concern.

The VPFACA informed members that Audit Scotland consider all Colleges as a going concern as, should one College fail, the delivery of the training would still happen in some other form.

Members queried the other risks outlined in the paper that may raise the level of deficit and whether there was a sense of when these might crystallise?

The VPFACA commented that, in regard to pay settlements, these had been agreed with EIS-FELA but that there was still uncertainty in relation to the support staff unions and that there may shortly be an extraordinary meeting of Colleges Employers Scotland to try and progress this.

In relation to the RDEL/CDEL risk, there is uncertainty on when this will be confirmed by SFC, with last years not being confirmed until March 2025.

For the severance risk costs, this cannot be quantified until a decision is made on what actions the Board are going to take.

The VPFACA presented members with the Capital budget paper which had also been considered by FRAIC. She highlighted that, owing to the level of budget available, the College was focussing expenditure only on business critical and health and safety matters and could not afford to address any backlog maintenance at this time.

She confirmed that the College would continue to meet its' legal obligations and that other large grants for capital, such as the Skills Transition Centre funds, are ringfenced for particular activities.

a) Members did not approve the revenue budget



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b) Members approved the capital budget paper

B/24/077 Financial Forecast Return 2024-2028

The Chair noted that the previous items had fed into discussions on whether or not the College would or could submit a balanced FFR.

The VPFAA informed members that there had been lengthy discussion at the FRAIC meeting on whether to provide balanced figures, as required by SFC in their guidance, or to provide true figures reflecting the actual College position.

She informed members that, despite published guidance from SFC as referred to above, at a recent meeting of the College Financial Directors technical sub-group, SFC representatives advised not submitting a balanced FFR. She stressed that this has not been followed up by any official announcement.

She commented that FRAIC had come to the conclusion to submit a balanced FFR but with clarity that the actions identified to reach a balanced position are only potential corrective actions and that the Board has not approved them. This would be supported by the provision of this paper which would also be submitted with the FFR.

The Chair asked the Principal if there was any indication from the other College Principals on what direction they would be taking on this matter.

The Principal advised that there was not a sector position at this time.

The VPFAA highlighted to members that, as the FFR includes the budget for 2025/26, and the Board are not approving the budget at this time, she was unsure if members would want to approve the FFR submission.

She suggested that the College write to SFC the next day to highlight that, after lengthy discussion at the Board, the Board are unable to approve the budget for 2025/26 and are still waiting on a response to the previous communication to SFC. The letter would also state that, as the budget is not approved, the Board cannot approve the FFR until such time as SFC provide written confirmation that the FFR submission does not commit the College to deliver a budget that is not achievable.

The Chair requested that a 'roadmap' of next steps to deal with the deficit be prepared and brought to the September Board meeting.

a) Members did not approve the submission of the FFR



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B/24/078 College Estate

The VPFACA presented a paper outlining the options explored for the Alloa campus and informed members that other options had arisen since the paper had been published.

She covered the range of engagement so far with potential partners/buyers and confirmed that this had not had a positive outcome but that other discussions were continuing at this time.

She requested that members consider going public with the decision to close the Alloa campus if these discussions do not result in a positive outcome.

She confirmed that the decision could be taken at the September meeting and commented that lecturing staff were soon to go on leave so there needs to be consideration of timing and messaging.

The Principal noted that, if the Board approved the closure today, the next steps would be to write to SFC and ministers to outline the issues discussed and that, should a positive response not be received by a certain date, then the College would go public. This would allow for an audit trail of correspondence highlighting the Board's concerns over the last few years.

The Chair noted that, with the Board not being able to approve the budget, this should factor into any correspondence.

Following discussion on what should be communicated, it was agreed that SFC would be notified of the decision in principle to close the Alloa Campus and that the College executive team was working on an announcement for September.

Members also requested that a specialist PR firm be costed for consultation on the announcement.

- a) Members noted the content of the report
- b) Members approved writing to SFC

B/24/079 Public Audit Committee – S22 Report

The Chair noted he had requested the VPFACA to prepare a report on the recent meeting of the Public Audit Committee.

The VPFACA presented the report outlining the discussions at the meeting of the committee.



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She noted comments made by Audit Scotland regarding transparency on the part of the College and that the College external auditors had stated that their experience of the College was that the staff had been fully transparent.

She noted that there had been comments from Audit Scotland on the current arrangements for the Board Secretary and potential conflicts of interest.

Members queried whether this was the end of the process.

The VPFA confirmed that the College had not been asked for more information or to attend but also that the Committee had taken evidence in private that the College does not have the detail of.

She noted that it would be unlikely to hear anything further until September when the Scottish Parliament recommences.

The Chair asked if the College could provide the Board with assurance that all the recommendations from the lessons learned report had been actioned.

The VPFA confirmed that the updated tracker had been reported to the Audit Committee and the only outstanding point at that point was the Principals objectives.

As these objectives were included in the papers, she confirmed that all recommendations are now completed.

The Vice Chair commented that any members who had not read the College's anti-fraud materials as part of the last Board meeting should do so.

The VPFA confirmed these would be sent to those who were not in attendance.

a) Members noted the content of the report

B/24/080 Board Appointments (Verbal)

The Chair provided an overview of the progress with the non-executive vacancies.

He confirmed that, once the recruitment process was completed, a report would be issued electronically to members seeking approval to submit the candidates to Scottish Ministers for final approval.

a) Members noted the content of the update

B/24/081 Honorary Fellowships Nominations

The Principal presented a paper with two nominations to receive an honorary college fellowship. He outlined the nominees and their contributions to the College.

a) Members approved the award of a fellowship to each nominee



B/24/082 Equalities Outcomes

The Head of Inclusion and Student Services (HISS) presented a paper outlining the College's equalities outcomes for the past four years and the proposed future objectives.

She confirmed that, overall, the College's progression in equalities was positive but it was recognised that there was still work to do.

She confirmed that the 9 outcomes in the paper were in line with SFC guidance on tackling inequality across the sector and that these had been developed by SFC in conjunction with the European Human Rights Commission.

She highlighted that one of the focus areas will be mental health and wellbeing for men.

She confirmed annual action plans are in place to further embed equalities throughout College processes.

Members noted that the data in the report showed that care experienced students had poorer overall outcomes but weren't specifically mentioned in the objectives.

The HISS confirmed that this was due to care experienced student performance will be dealt with specifically via the College's Corporate Parenting plan and associated activities.

Members queried what the HISS thought would present the biggest challenge for the College.

The HISS stated it was not a specific challenge, but it was recognised that one of the biggest areas to work on was anti-racism as this was increasing in society.

a) Members approved the reports as presented

B/24/083 Review of Risk

Members noted that the 'roadmap' document requested should address the reputational risk as well as the risks to staff impacted by any changes.

B/24/084 Any Other Competent Business

Board Development Session (Verbal)

Members were informed that a number of options were under consideration for the session and further information would be issued in due course.



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BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Steeple Suite, Falkirk Campus

Present: Abhishek Agarwal (Chair)
Kenny MacInnes (Principal)
Craig Arthur
Chris Brodie
Lorna Dougall – Vice Chair
Annemarie Harley – EIS FELA member
Grace Hepburn – Corporate Services Staff Member
Phil Harris
Jen Hogarth – Teaching staff member
Monika Smith – Student Association Vice President
Liam McCabe – Senior Independent Member
Suzanne Reynolds
Campbell Ure

In Attendance: Sarah Higgins-Rollo, Vice Principal Learning and Student Experience (VPLSE)
Colin McMurray, Vice Principal Business and Innovation (VPBI)
Alison Stewart, Vice Principal Finance & Corporate Affairs (VPFACA)
Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer (CGPO), Minute

The Chair thanked members for coming to an additional meeting of the Board of Management, noting that the meeting had been called owing to the importance of the matters to be discussed.

He also welcomed Monika Smith, FVSA Vice President, to her first meeting of the Board.

Finally, he noted that this would be the final meeting of the Board for Campbell Ure who was coming to the end of his tenure. He thanked Campbell for his contributions both to the Board and FRAIC committee, as well as his additional contributions to the FRAIC short life working group.

B/25/001 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apology from Rhona Geisler

B/25/002 Board Members Responsibilities for Financial Sustainability

The VPFACA presented a paper to members outlining the various guidance documents and legislative requirements relating to their responsibilities as members in regard to College financial sustainability.

She noted the Audit Scotland guidance from 2022 that stated that College's will always be considered a going concern as public bodies until such time an order to wind up is made.



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She noted that the College must comply with the requirement of the SFC Financial Memorandum and the wider Scottish Public Finance Manual.

She covered the rules for charity trustees which apply to members owing to the College's charitable status.

She confirmed to members that, as a public body, the requirements of the Companies Act do not apply to the College.

She confirmed that SFC guidance on the Financial Forecast Return (FFR) does permit Boards to approve a deficit budget if there is a plan to move back to a balanced position within the FFR timescales. She highlighted the key importance of ongoing cash generation to this to meet College commitments and that SFC can be approached for help with this if needed.

Members welcomed the paper, noting it was helpful in understanding their responsibilities in relation to College financial sustainability.

a) Members noted the content of the report

B/25/003 Revenue Budget 2025/26

The VPFAA presented an updated budget to member. She reminded members of the significant level of deficit the last time the budget was presented in June 2025 and commented on the work undertaken to reach an improved, if still deficit, position.

She informed members that one of the annexes in the paper detail the reconciliation between the two budgets.

She also confirmed that the cash projections have been reprofiled to reflect the updated budget.

She discussed the key assumptions used and detailed the remaining significant risks in relation to pay deals and the RDEL/CDEL re-allocation.

She also discussed upcoming opportunities, commenting on whether these were one off opportunities or recurring.

She outlined a bid being prepared for all three local authority areas where College campuses are based for the rates hardship scheme.

She also discussed some shared international opportunities and the Project Willow funding bid.

She also confirmed to members that there was also still opportunity to approach the Arm's Length Foundation (ALF) if needs be for their remaining funds.



2.2 Draft Minutes of Meeting of 14 August 2025 For Approval

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Members were asked to note the range of possible scenarios contained in the paper and the VPFACA confirmed that the current anticipated position was between the mid and best case scenarios as detailed, depending on the opportunities crystallising or not.

Given the information provided, the VPFACA requested that members approve the budget itself and the other recommendations contained within the paper.

Members welcomed the significant amount of work undertaken between the last meeting and the current on from SMT and the finance team.

Members welcomed the information that the College cash reserves were deemed sufficient to support the deficit.

a) Members approved the revenue budget and the remaining recommendations as outlined in the paper.

B/25/004 Financial Forecast Return 2024-28

The VPFACA provided an overview of the FFR process from SFC noting that, in past iterations of the FFR submissions, SFC have expected College's to use the assumptions provided by SFC and deliver a balanced position.

She highlighted that the sector had conveyed their concerns regarding the inclusion of theoretical savings in the FFR's and that, following discussions, written confirmation had been received from SFC that Colleges can submit unbalanced FFRs if required.

She confirmed that the majority of the sector had now submitted unbalanced FFR submissions to SFC.

She discussed the underlying deficit to the College under current arrangements and that this has been discussed with SFC and would be highlighted again in the commentary that is provided to accompany the FFR submission.

Members requested further information on the funding model and why the College is receiving a smaller increase than other College's.

The VPFACA outlined conversations with SFC on the funding model and that the sector feels that this remains flawed and also that it does not address historic levels of underfunding experienced by Forth Valley College.

She reported that SFC are reluctant to make further changes as, with the overall level of underfunding for the sector, addressing the College's concerns would put another College at risk.



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Members welcomed that the College continued to raise this significant concern for the College.

Members queried whether the decision from SFC to allow unbalanced FFRs was in anticipation of using this information in their dealings with Scottish Government.

The VPFACA thought this might be the case and informed members that SFC also want to use Forth Valley College as a case study for approaching Scottish Government. The case study would focus on how this position was reached and can highlight areas such as no increase in SDS payments for apprenticeships since 2016, despite ongoing staff and cost rises.

She also informed members that an additional letter had been created to accompany the FFR submission.

The Principal also confirmed to members that the College continued to raise the issue at all levels, noting a recent positive meeting with the Director-General Education and Justice the previous week.

a) Members approved the submission of the FFR and approved for the Chair to sign the letter referred to by the VPFACA

B/25/005

College Transformation Framework

The VPFACA presented a paper outlining the SFC transformation framework.

She detailed the framework's flexibility to temporarily lower the number of credits to be delivered without clawback by SFC to allow Colleges to undertake curriculum review and redevelopment to deliver efficiencies before returning to delivering their full credit allocation. She outlined the example provided by SFC on credits reduction and what that would mean for the College budget.

The Board was asked to approve the SMT taking forward the development of a proposal for accessing the transformation framework.

The VPFACA commented that this would involve a significant amount of work as the curriculum will need to be fully reviewed. She informed the Board that the College had pre-existing hierarchy of criteria to allow an objective review of the curriculum.

As part of this review, the impact of an exit from the Alloa campus on the curriculum will also need to be assessed.



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Given the College is already categorised in the recent benchmarking exercise as effective, all options for this work would need to be considered including areas like contact time and the inclusion of digital transformation.

She requested that the Board agree the creation of a Board short life working group to assist in this review work over the next four to five months.

She noted that the paper contained three high level scenarios for what the development would be and highlighted the concern that the scenario with the best case in terms of increased SFC funding would still require reductions in staffing to ensure sustainability.

She also highlighted that the work in relation to the transformation framework, if approved and implemented, would require additional funding to support voluntary severance.

Members were informed that a letter clearly setting out what level of intervention would be required would be sent to SFC to allow for further discussions to commence.

Members noted the position the College found itself in and concern regarding the impact this could have on staffing and the wider community.

Members queried how the College could return to its full credit position with fewer staff.

The VPFA noted that this is one of the considerations and that activity that does not require direct staffing would need to be looked at.

The Principal commented on the community and staffing impact of the College having to close a campus owing to the funding position.

Members commented that a transformation programme of this size was hard for an organisation to absorb and was a risk for the College that should be reflected in the College risk register.

Members also expressed some scepticism about the ability of digital transformation to deliver on the necessary levels of improvement but recognised that the College did not have a choice in pursuing this.

The Principal also noted that reductions in staffing and loss of a campus would curtail the College's ability to maximise opportunities from large projects such as Project Willow or the Forth Green Port.

Members raised concerns that changes to staffing might be in breach of national circulars from the sector.



2.2 Draft Minutes of Meeting of 14 August 2025 For Approval

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The Principal noted that a time might come where if the College did not review its cost base, it would run out of cash, however he stressed that this was not the intention of the review of the curriculum to breach national circulars.

Members expressed some concerns about the language used in the reports, noting that the staff were not responsible for the situation.

The VPFACA agreed that this was the case but did highlight staffing had to be looked at as it was the most significant cost to the College.

The Principal assured members that the case would also continue to be made to Scottish Government about the funding for the sector being insufficient.

The Chair commented that these were difficult choices facing the College and that the Board had a role to both support management and also challenge their proposals as they develop.

He noted that the short life working group requested should contain representatives from all of the Board committees. He informed members that he and the Principal would discuss membership and contact those identified.

The Principal commented that, as Principal, the need to consider and develop these proposals was devastating. He reiterated that the position was tied directly to the funding of the sector and assured members that there was no financial mismanagement contributing to the position.

The Principal informed members that he would be conducting staff briefings in early September to speak to staff.

- a) Members agreed that SMT should commence work on a proposal
- b) Members agreed to the creation of a Board Short Life Working Group to support this

B/25/006

Board Committee Membership

The VPFACA presented a paper outlining the proposed new membership of Board committees. She noted that this was needed owing to some members exiting the Board and four new members joining.

- a) Members approved the membership as outlined in the paper

B/25/007

Review of Risk

Members identified the ability of the College to deliver the magnitude of change required for the transformation programme as a potential risk.



2.2 Draft Minutes of Meeting of 14 August 2025 For Approval

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Members also identified the change in Board membership as a potential risk given upcoming detailed discussions at the Board level.

B/25/008 Any Other Competent Business

Annual Update to Register of Interest

The VPFACA informed members that the CPGO would be issuing the annual register of interest request and asked that members return this quickly.

a) Members noted the request

Chair's Evaluation materials to be returned

The VPFACA noted that the CGPO had issued members with the Chair's evaluation materials and requested these be returned.

The Chair noted the importance of ensuring all levels of the Board are reviewed annually.

a) Members noted the request

Board Strategy Day

The Chair discussed possible options for the day and confirmed further information will be passed once the options have been considered.

The VPFACA discussed possible input from the staff, noting the new members joining soon and that this can enhance their understanding of the College.

She also noted that there would be an externally facilitated risk appetite and risk management session.

a) Members noted the content of the update

Board Member Bios

The Chair commented that the bios for Board members were being updated for posting on the College website and requested those members who were yet to complete their own bio to do so and send to the CGPO.

a) Members noted the request

Meeting	Date	Minute Ref	Action	Assigned to	Deadline to report?	Status	Output Required	Comment
Board	20/2/25	B/24/042	Student constitution to come to April meeting	Sarah Higgins	04/12/2025	In Progress	Board paper	Nov 26 - Draft underway Changes to the Student constitution require consideration and approval at the Student Council. The next Council meeting is not scheduled until late October/November 2025 so the update will be brought to the Board meeting in December 2025. FVSA President started in post in Nov 25. Work on constitution is ongoing. Will go to Board in 2026.
Board	20/2/25	B/24/047	Global Strategy to come to April Board	Colin McMurray	Abhi to advise	In Progress		Strategy in final draft format
Board	27/9/24 & 20/2/25	B/24/020 & B/24/053	Board Risk session	Alison Stewart	24/04/2025	Completed		Session on Risk given at September 25 Board development day.
Board	19/6/25	B/24/075	Charts to be added to strategic plan monitoring to allow trends to be seen	Kenny MacInnes		Not Started		
Board	19/6/25	B/24/075	Can the Board get access to the dashboard?	Kenny MacInnes		Not Started		
Board	19/6/25	B/24/076	Paper on Alloa closure to be brought to September meeting	Kenny MacInnes	25/26 September	Delayed		SFC have agreed to fund an options appraisal (OA) related to the College's three-campus estate. Meetings with SFC are on-going to discuss future funding and cash flow support. OA Consultant appointed and work currently underway. Transformation work progressing. Board will be updated at December Board and a final report will be presented to the Board at the 19 February 2026 Board meeting.
Board	19/6/25	B/24/078	SFC to be notified of the boards decisions regarding Alloa when made	Kenny/Alison		Not Started	Letters	
Board	19/6/25	B/24/084	Explore options for hotel accommodation on Thursday Night for 25/26 Sept	Gill/Karen	Karen has issued information to KM and AS	Completed		No longer being considered as an option
Board	14/8/25	B/25/005	Board short life working group to be established to support the transformation project work	Alison Stewart		In Progress		Will be covered as part of College transformation framework presentation at December Board



1. Purpose

To seek discussion from members on the recent activities of Forth Valley Student Association ('FVSA').

2. Recommendation

That members note the contents of this report.

3. Background

Forth Valley Student Association (FVSA) plays a central role in representing and supporting students across the College, ensuring their voices are heard in decision-making processes and partnership activities. Operating within the framework of the Student Partnership Agreement, FVSA works collaboratively with College staff and external stakeholders to promote engagement, inclusivity, and continuous improvement in the student experience. FVSA's Operational Plan 2025/26 underpins the activities and developments in the period of Sept -End of November that are outlined in the current report.

4. Key Considerations

Since the last report to the Board of Management, FVSA has conducted several activities.

Staff update

New FVSA Administrator, Cara Captain, joined the team on Monday 15th September. The Administrator post was vacant at the start of term, and impacts were minimised by a quick turnaround on recruitment, and by the support of staff in the Quality & Teaching Enhancement department.

Following elections in September, we welcomed new Student President, Martin Podhorsky, on Monday 3rd November. Martin will work part-time alongside his studies as a first-year HND Visual Communication student. While the Student President post was vacant for 15 weeks, FVSA Vice President Monika Smith helpfully covered as many Sabbatical Officer tasks and meetings as possible during this time.

Student Partnership Agreement ('SPA')

As our Student President is now available to take the lead student representative role, we are working with Communications & Marketing staff to update the Student Partnership Agreement document for 2025/26, and we have the Action Plan in place for 2025/26. An objective, to monitor the College's implementation of the SEAP, has been added for session 2025/26, in response to TQER feedback in terms of enhancing partnership working. We will monitor progress towards achieving the objectives of the SPA Action Plan with a series of regular meetings.



6. FVSA Update For Discussion

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Student President and Vice President have committed to attending the College's Board of Management meetings throughout the year and met with the Chair and the Corporate Governance and Planning Officer as part of their induction. Their Board membership achieves the representation of the student voice at the highest level of College governance, which is a key indicator of robust student partnership working. In response to feedback from the TQER, Sabbatical Officer involvement in other key management meetings is being reviewed, with invitations being extended wherever possible.

FVSA's Budget

FVSA continues to spend within the confines of its operational budget for session 2025/26. We anticipate discussions in terms of the team's operational budget for session 2026/27, and in terms of the College mainstreaming FVSA posts into the College's staffing budget from 26 June 2026 onwards.

FVSA's Operational Plan

FVSA's Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 has informed the team's Operational Plan for 2025/26, and that has underpinned the activities of the team in the period of September – End of November.

Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP) - Project

As FVSA's Vice President, Monika is the College's lead student representative for the STEP Project, "Strategies to Support Student Engagement and Partnership Within an Increasingly Time-Poor and Cash-Poor Student Population".

Staff from sparqs lead the project, with Forth Valley College one of the 8 institutions involved in this project team. This project explores how money and time pressures affect student engagement and partnership. The project team will deliver pilot activities to make student voice and representation activity more accessible, and shall create on-boarding and induction resources for learners which can be used across the sector.

Monika attended the STEP Welcome Session on 1st October, taking up the project in its 2nd year, following the launch in session 2024/25. Significant time has been committed to this project, and the team is working closely with the Learning, Teaching & Quality Manager.

Student representation

Sabbatical Officers have been supported by the Executive Office, senior managers, Board members, and Committee members to attend and participate in meetings e.g. Board of Management, FRAIC, LISEC, Sustainability committee. This ensures the student voice is represented at all levels of College management, a key objective of the Student Partnership Agreement, and in line with TQER action plan.

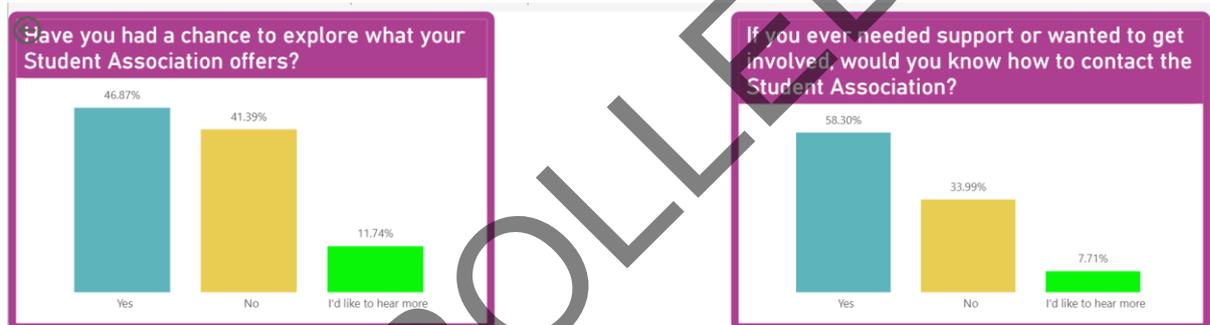
Alloa campus announcements

FVSA worked with FVC's Communications & Marketing team to respond to media requests for comment on the possibility of the Alloa campus closure. Requests were submitted by the BBC and NUS.

FVSA's Student Community 2025-26 Teams group

We have used a Power Automate workflow to facilitate the bulk uploading of students to the FVSA's Student Community 2025-26 Teams group. FVSA will continue to engage with students via the Teams Student Community Page, which currently has 2498 members. January-start students will be added to the Teams group in due course.

Student Early Experience Survey



In response to Student Early Experience Survey data, the team will boost digital promotions across Teams, social media, and the e.zine to increase awareness of the service. As mentioned below, the team has delivered over 60 Class Visits across all three campuses which aimed to raise awareness of FVSA. With the Student President in post, we increased our capacity to consistently staff offices. Signage has been requested to increase the visibility of the office at Stirling campus.

Welcome Fairs – Block 2

The team will begin preparations for the Block 2 Welcome Fairs at the start of December. Welcome Fairs are scheduled to take place as follows:

- Tuesday 3rd February, Alloa campus
- Wednesday 4th February, Stirling campus
- Thursday 5th February, Falkirk campus

Class Representatives

With the support of staff across the College, we have recruited 222 Class Reps.



6. FVSA Update For Discussion

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The team has delivered Class Rep training sessions across all campuses, including a hybrid-option. 136 Class Reps attended a training session - 61% engagement.

This level of participation is an increase on session 2024/25: by the same period last year, we had recruited 196 Class Reps; and we achieved 32% engagement with the training (we did not offer an online/hybrid session).

Executive Officers

Following elections in September, 3 Executive Officers have been recruited:

- Amy Muir – Education Officer
- Mamoun Ramadan – Diversity & Inclusion Officer
- Victoria Mielczarek – Welfare Officer

Executive Officers have completed induction and training, and the first Executive Committee meeting shall take place on Thursday 20 November.

Vacancies for the 3 remaining posts will be addressed in the Block 2 by-elections.

Student Mental Health Agreement ('SMHA')

As our current SMHA overlaps 3 academic sessions, the Action Plan from session 2024/25 has been re-set for session 2025/26. The first working group meeting shall take place on Tuesday 25th November, with our Student Vice President as the lead student representative.

Monthly Meetings with the Principal

FVSA staff continue to update the Principal on our activities at regular meetings, and continue to provide a summary of student complaints, and an overview of student engagement data. The Principal provides feedback to the team while welcoming feedback from FVSA in terms of the College's activity.

Class Visits

FVSA staff carried out Class Visits across all three campuses for an extended period across Block 1 to afford lecturers and LDWs as much opportunity possible to support their classes' engagement with FVSA. The team attended 66 class visits.

Constitution Review

Work continues on drafting a new Constitution. Lisa has consulted with staff at sparqs and NUS in terms of format and content. Peers across the sector have also been consulted, in college and



university unions/associations. We aim to achieve a final submission of the updated Constitution, with bye-laws, in session 2025/26.

Student Council

The Student Council is the major decision-making body of the Students' Association. It consists of Class Representatives, Executive officers, Sabbatical officers, and the wider student body.

The forum is held twice per year. The first series of Student Council meetings will take place on Monday 1st December at Falkirk campus.

FVSA Online

FVSA's website will be dismantled by January 2026. FVC's Communications & Marketing team has created a page for FVSA on the College's website and this is being regularly updated. FVSA continues to engage its audience via social media accounts, in accordance with Communications & Marketing guidance.

We have noted modest merchandise sales via the new eShop.

Student Awards 2026

Each year FVSA organises the FVSA Student Awards to celebrate students' – and staff - achievements and give them recognition for "going that extra mile." FVSA aims to build on its corporate award sponsors from the 2025 event, and further increase the nominations submitted for the student categories.

FVSA Student Awards 2026 is being planned for Thursday 21st May 2026, Falkirk campus.

5. Resource Implications (Financial, People, Estates and Communications)

None

6. Equalities

Staff and students are impacted by the delivery of FVSA activities; however, there are no special considerations in relation to any objectives.

7. Communities and Partners

NUS, sparqs, and the FVC student community are key stakeholders who influence and benefit from FVSA's activities



8. Risk and Impact

Please complete the risk table below. Risk is scored against Likelihood x Impact, with each category scored from Very Low through to Very High. Risks should be robustly scored and, if the combined score (Likelihood x Impact) is higher than the Board Risk appetite for the risk category identified, additional justification must be provided on why this risk is necessary.

If the paper is an approval, please reflect on whether the approval will have any direct or indirect impact for any other areas of operational activity internally or externally within the College – No

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High (5)		
High (4)		
Medium (3)		X
Low (2)	X	
Very Low (1)		

Total Risk Score – 6

The College has a Strategic Risk appetite for categories of risk as defined by the Board of Management. Decisions being taken at LMT/SMT/Board level must have cognisance of this. Please indicate the single most relevant risk category in the table below.

BoM Risk Categories & Risk Appetite (Select one area only)			
Cautious <15	Open 15 > <20	Eager >20	
Governance	Strategy	People	
Legal	Financial	Project/Programme	X
Property	Reputational		
	Technology		

FVSA co-leads with FVC teams on the delivery of the Student Partnership Agreement and the Student Mental Health Agreement. FVSA also delivers key events such as Welcome Fairs and delivers processes to ensure students can participate in student voice projects and activities.

Is the score above the Board Risk Appetite level? No

Risk Owner – Sarah Higgins

Action Owner – Lisa Baxter

Paper Author – Lisa Baxter

SMT Owner – Sarah Higgins



1. Purpose

To seek approval of the Corporate Parenting Plan 2025-2028.

2. Recommendation

That members approve this plan.

The full plan is attached for members information. Members should note that, for corporate publication, the full plan will be used however there will also be a shorter student version of the plan that will be published to our care-experienced community. This is in direct response to the feedback gained throughout the consultation process from our networks of care-experienced individuals.

3. Background

Scotland has a clear national commitment to ensuring that all children and young people grow up loved, safe, and respected, enabling them to realise their full potential. This ambition was crystallised through the Independent Care Review, which concluded in 2020 and led to the publication of [The Promise](#). The Promise sets out over 80 recommendations to transform the care system, underpinned by five foundations: Voice, Family, Care, People, and Scaffolding.

The Promise emphasises that care-experienced children and young people must have their voices heard and their rights upheld. It calls for systemic change across services, ensuring that relationships are maintained, early help is prioritised, and transitions into adulthood are supported. Local authorities and partner agencies such as Forth Valley College, play a critical role in delivering these commitments through robust planning and collaboration.

Alongside The Promise, the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) provides the statutory framework for corporate parenting. Part 9 of the Act defines corporate parenting as the collective responsibility of public bodies to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of looked-after children and care leavers. It sets out duties requiring Corporate Parents to:

- Assess needs and take action to meet them,
- Collaborate with other corporate parents,
- Promote positive outcomes in health, education, and wellbeing,
- Prepare and publish corporate parenting plans, and report on progress.

The Act also embeds the principles of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and the UNCRC, ensuring that children's rights remain central as they transition into adulthood and further education. For care-experienced learners entering college, this means Corporate Parents must actively remove barriers to participation and success. Duties extend beyond statutory care to include support for educational attainment, wellbeing, and inclusion, recognising that many learners face challenges such as financial insecurity, housing instability, and limited social networks. Colleges, as Corporate Parents, are expected to provide tailored guidance, flexible learning opportunities, and access to pastoral and practical support—creating an environment where care-experienced students can thrive academically and personally.



4. Key Considerations

Enrolment and Performance Data

To deliver on our Corporate Parenting responsibilities, we must understand who we are supporting and how we will meet their needs. Care-experienced learners represent a growing proportion of our student population, and their circumstances often mean they face unique barriers to success. These barriers include financial insecurity, housing instability, mental health challenges, and the stigma associated with being care-experienced. Our approach must therefore be trauma-informed, flexible, and tailored to individual needs.

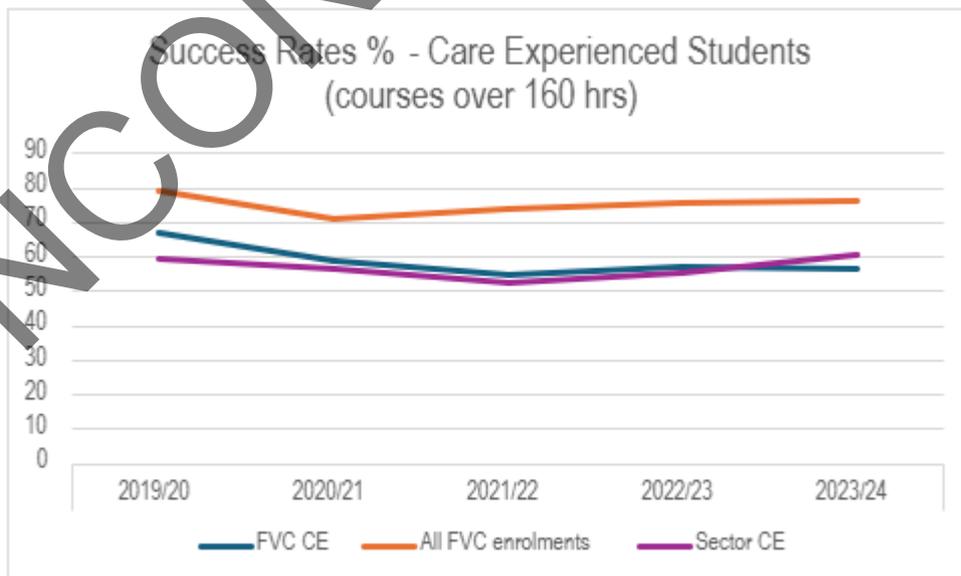
The number of students disclosing care experience has increased steadily over the past three years, as shown below:

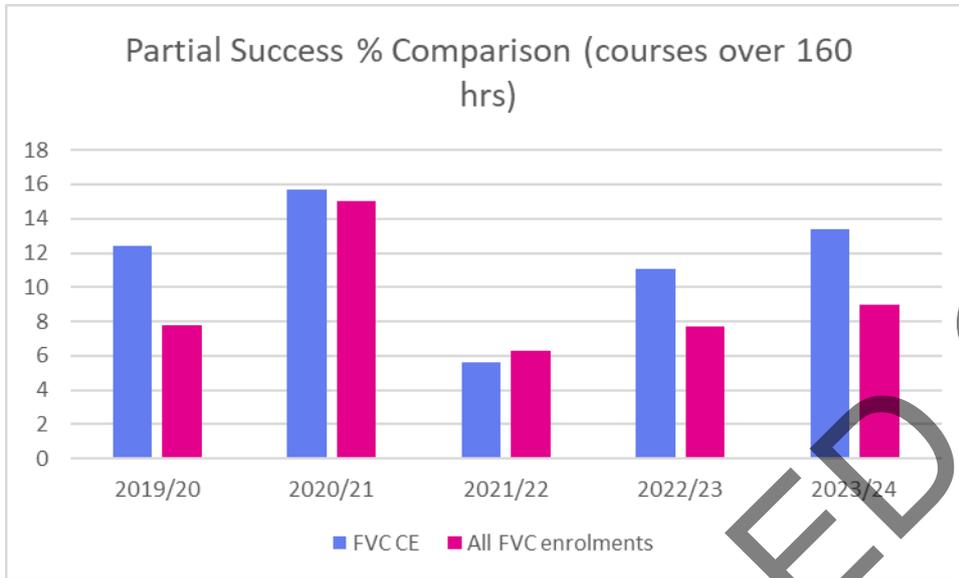
	Full Time Courses		All courses	
	Number of enrolments	% of enrolments	Number of enrolments	% of enrolments
2022/23	256	9%	668	3%
2023/24	265	9%	704	4%
2024/25	325	11%	884	4%
2025/26 YTD	272*	10%*	543**	5%**

*January enrolments pending

**continuous enrolments across other modes of delivery e.g. flexible learning courses

This upward trend reflects improved disclosure processes, growing confidence among individuals to share their care experience status as well as better systemic support such as the [SFC Care Experienced Bursary](#). However, data consistently shows that care-experienced students are more likely to withdraw or achieve only partial success compared to their non-care-experienced peers (see charts below).





Plan Development

Our previous Corporate Parenting Plan (2021-2024) laid the foundation by improving application, enrolment, and initial support processes (see Appendix 1). While much has been achieved, the landscape has evolved.

The current plan.....

The Changing Learner Report (College Development Network) highlights that learners today present with increasingly complex needs, requiring colleges to adopt trauma-informed practice and holistic support models. For care-experienced students, this means moving beyond traditional academic support to include wellbeing, financial guidance, and strong partnership working with local authority care teams, social work services, and third-sector organisations.

To strengthen and update our previous plan, we worked closely with a wide range of stakeholders, including external partners as detailed above, care experienced students, and staff from both academic and corporate areas. Our goal was to create a version that is clear, accessible, and easy to understand—particularly for care-experienced students.

Over a three-week period, we ran six focus groups to gather feedback on the current plan, exploring how well it is known, what elements have been effective, and what improvements could be made. The main findings revealed that the existing plan is not widely known, especially among our student body, and those who were aware of it found it difficult to interpret. External partners provided very positive feedback, noting that while they see us as proactive in supporting students, much of what we do is not documented in writing.

Using the feedback from these focus groups, we created our proposed new corporate parenting plan which reflects the input we received. We re-circulated the draft plan to focus group attendees for further feedback and incorporated suggestions to finalise the document we are submitting today. This collaborative process has guided us in creating a more inclusive and transparent plan that demonstrates our commitment to supporting all learners.



Key features of the new plan for 2025–2028 include:

- Embedding trauma-informed approaches across all student support services.
- Mainstreaming corporate parenting responsibilities so that every staff member understands their role.
- Strengthen collaboration with local care services and partner organisations.
- Ensure care-experienced learners have consistent, flexible, and responsive support throughout their college journey.

Next steps

5. Resource Implications (Financial, People, Estates and Communications)

There are no financial costs associated with approving the Corporate Parenting Plan.

To ensure the successful promotion and implementation of the new Corporate Parenting Plan once approved, we will work closely with the Marketing team to produce a fully published document that will be accessible to all staff, students and external partners. In addition, we will establish a working group comprising academic and corporate services staff alongside care-experienced students. This group will develop a detailed annual action plan and drive progress to ensure all agreed actions are met. Furthermore, we will highlight Who Cares? Scotland online training module (available on Moodle) to all managers through CM Forum and Corporate Services Leadership Group, encouraging managers to promote completion of this training within their teams. These steps will ensure the plan is visible, understood, and actively supported across the college and by our partners.

6. Equalities

Who does this impact?

- (i) Care Experienced students
- (ii) The plan is specifically designed to improve the outcomes of CE students.
- (iii) While no one is directly disadvantaged by the CE Plan, a range of other groups such as carers and Gypsy/Travellers would benefit from a plan like this but are not included in this plan because there is a specific legislative requirement for a CE Plan.

Assessment in Place? – Yes

7. Communities and Partners

- Local authority care teams, social work services and third-sector organisations will collaborate more closely with College to provide wraparound support.
- Shared responsibility for transitions into Further education, employment and independent



8. Risk and Impact

Please complete the risk table below. Risk is scored against Likelihood x Impact, with each category scored from Very Low through to Very High. Risks should be robustly scored and, if the combined score (Likelihood x Impact) is higher than the Board Risk appetite for the risk category identified, additional justification must be provided on why this risk is necessary.

If the paper is an approval, please reflect on whether the approval will have any direct or indirect impact for any other areas of operational activity internally or externally within the College – Yes

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High (5)		
High (4)		
Medium (3)		
Low (2)	X	X
Very Low (1)		

Total Risk Score – 4

The College has a Strategic Risk appetite for categories of risk as defined by the Board of Management. Decisions being taken at LMT/SMT/Board level must have cognisance of this. Please indicate the single most relevant risk category in the table below.

BoM Risk Categories & Risk Appetite (Select one area only)			
Cautious <15	Open 15 > <20	Eager >20	
Governance	Strategy	People	X
Legal	Financial	Project/Programme	
Property	Reputational	X	
	Technology		

A risk associated with not producing and publishing a Corporate Parenting Plan is reputational damage. A number of our partners regularly review and make use of the information in the plan; Scottish Government requests a copy of our plan and many care experienced people review our plan before applying to college. In addition, without a Corporate Parenting Plan in place, we risk losing sight of the outcomes of our care experienced students – this would be lost in the wider student populations and they would not get the support they require.

Is the score above the Board Risk Appetite level? No

Risk Owner – Sarah Tervit

Action Owner – Lisa MacLaren/Laura Geoghegan

Paper Author – Lisa MacLaren/Laura Geoghegan SMT Owner – Sarah Tervit

Appendix I – Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2024 Progress

The previous Plan detailed a series of commitments to be completed 2021-24. Each commitment is addressed in the table below identifying progress made against the defined actions and notes areas for further development.

Commitment	Progress made
<p>To support care experienced students from the very start of their college journey, all the way through.</p>	<p>Significant progress has been made in embedding early and sustained support for care-experienced students throughout their college journey. Standardised processes have been implemented and refined, and proactive measures—such as named contacts, transition information sharing, and prioritised bursary processing—have strengthened continuity of care. Enhanced visibility through website resources, teacher information sessions, and Who Cares? Scotland training has improved awareness among staff and partners. Practical supports, including Get Ready 2 Learn workshops and the laptop loan scheme, have addressed key barriers to engagement. Regular cross-team monitoring ensures early intervention where challenges arise. While these developments represent a robust foundation, further systemisation and a stronger focus on supporting transitions beyond college remain priority areas for improvement.</p>
<p>To communicate with Care Experienced people in different ways throughout the year in a way that works for them.</p>	<p>The college has taken positive steps to diversify communication methods, with the introduction of MS Teams proving effective in improving student–staff interaction. However, recent research and feedback from care-experienced focus groups highlight that further adaptation is essential. Current reliance on traditional email does not align with the communication habits of today’s students, who prefer concise, accessible updates via text alerts, social media, and other youth-friendly channels. While digital touchpoints are important, students consistently emphasise the value of face-to-face communication for building trust and reducing the sense of isolation created by formal correspondence from multiple agencies. Moving forward, efforts must focus on delivering information in clear, bite-sized formats across multiple platforms, while maintaining opportunities for personal interaction. Embedding these approaches will be critical to sustaining strong, responsive communication channels that meet student’s evolving needs.</p>

<p>To provide care experienced students with the support they need, in the right way, at the right time.</p>	<p>The college has made strong progress in developing flexible and empathetic communication approaches for care-experienced students. The proactive outreach model through Named Contacts ensures support is visible and accessible at key points in the academic year, recognising that needs vary over time. Staff training—both internally and via College Development Network and Who Cares? Scotland resources—has improved understanding of barriers and responsibilities, and continuity of care is maintained through handover processes when staff changes occur. Extending support beyond age 26 reflects a commitment to lifelong impact. However, further work is needed to embed mandatory corporate parenting training across all staff and to implement a holistic needs assessment model to streamline support and reduce duplication.</p>
<p>To provide opportunities for care experienced students to engage with the college to improve our services and improve our knowledge of their experiences.</p>	<p>Progress has been made in creating opportunities for care-experienced students to share their views, though engagement remains challenging. Focus groups were trialled but proved less effective, prompting a shift toward more responsive approaches such as leveraging existing forums like local Champs boards and analysing feedback from college-wide surveys through a care-experienced lens. These strategies have enabled the college to capture student voice indirectly and through trusted networks. Strengthening partnerships with external networks and collaborating with the Student Association to establish an internal care-experienced network and peer mentoring programme are possible next steps to embed student voice more meaningfully.</p>
<p>To forge strong partnerships with other corporate parents to make accessing support and information as easy as possible for care experienced students before, during and after they leave college</p>	<p>The college has strengthened partnerships with other corporate parents to improve access to support and information for care-experienced students. Active participation in regional forums such as Falkirk Family & Friends and Stirling's Care Experienced Network has helped shape collaborative approaches to improving outcomes. Engagement with the Who Cares? Scotland Corporate Parenting Network has provided a platform for sharing best practice and ambitions. Targeted partnerships with Skills Development Scotland and local authority social work teams have enabled wraparound support and effective information sharing, ensuring students receive coordinated assistance. Outreach through local Champs boards has further promoted college as a realistic destination. Continued focus on deepening these partnerships and formalising collaborative protocols will enhance consistency and sustainability of support before, during, and after college.</p>



Forth Valley College

Corporate Parenting Plan 2025-28

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What is a Corporate Parent

A corporate parent is an organisation with a special responsibility to support young people who have experience of care. That means making sure students with experience of care feel safe, supported, and have the same opportunities to succeed as anyone else.

Forth Valley College is one of many organisations named as a Corporate Parent under the Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, which sets out protections and support for people with experience of care. While we take our legal duties seriously, being a corporate parent is about more than the law - it's about doing what's right. It means listening to you, respecting your rights, and helping you have the best possible outcomes.

Who this includes:

People with experience of care are anyone who has lived in:

- Foster care
- Residential care
- Kinship care (formally or informally)
- Adoption
- Or living at home with a supervision order

Our Responsibilities as a Corporate Parent

As your corporate parent, we have a responsibility to look out for you and make sure you feel safe, supported and heard during your time with us. Here's what that means in practice:

- **We stay aware of anything that might affect your wellbeing**
Whether it's something happening in your family life, your studies or just day-to-day life, we're here to support you.
- **We take time to understand what help you might need**
Everyone's journey is different, and we'll work with you to figure out what services or help could make a difference.
- **We make it easier for you to access help**
Whether it's counselling, financial help, academic guidance or just someone to talk to—we'll make sure you know what's available and how to get it.
- **We promote your interests**
That means advocating for you, celebrating your achievements, and making sure your voice is heard in decisions that affect you.
- **We create opportunities for you to thrive**
From extracurricular activities to leadership roles and wellbeing initiatives, we want you to feel part of a community that helps you grow.
- **We work with other corporate parents to give you the best support possible**
We're part of a wider network, and we'll collaborate with others to make sure your experience is joined-up and consistent.

Using Respectful Language

We are committed to using language that is positive and supportive. You told us that the term ‘corporate parent’ can feel formal and distant, we will limit its use when we speak to you. In this plan we use ‘students with experience of care’ to better reflect experiences in a respectful and accurate way because that is what you asked.

Our Role

Everyone at Forth Valley College has a part to play in helping you. While responsibilities may differ depending on the role, we all work towards the same goals:

- Listening to and understanding your needs
- Supporting your rights and wellbeing
- Ensuring fair access to opportunities and services
- Working with partners to make access to support easier

By doing this, we aim to create a caring environment where students with experience of care feel valued, supported and able to thrive.

Engagement & Celebrating Success

How we listened

Many people helped shape this plan, but the most important voices came from students with experience of care, who told us what works well and what we could do better. This feedback has guided our priorities and shaped every part of the plan.

We also spoke with:

- External corporate parent partners (including Who cares? Scotland, NHS, Falkirk Council, SDS, Stirling Council, Falkirk & Stirling CHAMPS).
- Staff from across the College including, Lecturers, Curriculum Managers and Corporate Services team members.

What we learned from students

Throughout our consultation we learned:

- Feeling welcomed and supported early on makes a huge difference.
- Information needs to be easy to find and understand.
- Trusting relationships with staff are essential.
- Celebrating success matters – it’s important that you feel recognised and valued.
- You prefer to speak to staff face-to-face and not through email.

Celebrating Success so far

We're really proud of the progress we have already made:

- **Dedicated Support Contacts**
Every student with experience of care has access to a named staff member for guidance and advocacy.
- **Staff Training**
Our trauma informed training has strengthened awareness and empathy across departments.
- **Financial and Practical Support**
Offer of support to make access to Care Experience bursary easier and wellbeing services have reduced barriers to success.
- **Student Voice**
Students with experience of care are starting to shape decisions through focus group engagement.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Accountability

We are committed to ensuring that our Corporate Parenting Plan delivers meaningful outcomes for students with experience of care. To do this, we will monitor progress, evaluate impact, and remain accountable to our students.

Oversight & Governance

The Head of Inclusion and Student Services holds overall responsibility for the implementation and oversight of this plan. They will work closely with the Corporate Parenting Champions Group, which includes lecturers, Curriculum Managers, and student representatives, to ensure that actions are being delivered and evaluated effectively.

How we will monitor progress

- **Annual Progress Reports**
We will publish yearly updates that highlight achievements, challenges, and areas for improvement. These reports will be shared with staff, students, and external partners.
- **Mid-Plan Review (2026)**
A formal review will be conducted to assess progress against our commitments and make any necessary adjustments.
- **Final Evaluation (2028)**
At the end of the plan's lifecycle, we will carry out a comprehensive evaluation to measure impact and inform future planning.
- **Student Voice in Evaluation**
Students with experience of care will be central to our evaluation process. We will continue to gather feedback through:
 - Focus groups and surveys
 - Advisory roles and student-led reviews
 - Informal feedback channels

Accountability

We will hold ourselves accountable by:

- Acting on feedback and being transparent about changes.
- Reporting outcomes to senior leadership and external partners.
- Ensuring staff across all campuses understand their responsibilities and are supported to fulfil them.

By embedding evaluation and accountability into every sage of this plan, we aim to build a culture of continuous improvement and trust.

Our Promise to you

We are proud to champion students with experience of care, fostering a college culture where you can truly thrive. Our commitment is to ensure you feel supported, heard, and valued throughout your journey — through clear communication, meaningful connections, and opportunities that empower you to succeed. From your first day to graduation, we'll provide tailored support to help you flourish academically, socially, and emotionally, every step of the way.

How we will keep this promise

The Right Support, at the right time

1. Starting College

You told us the move into college can feel daunting. That's why we'll make sure you feel welcomed, informed and supported from day one.

How we will do it:

- Give you the opportunity to tell us on you application and at enrolment. So, we can reach out to offer you help throughout the full process.
- Transition activities to help you prepare for starting college.
- A dedicated staff member who will be introduced before your first day and support you through your whole college journey.
- Link with the other key people in your life you so we can work together to provide you with the support that you think would be best (or something like that).

2. While you are studying

Once enrolled, you'll receive consistent, proactive support throughout your time at college.

How we will do it:

- Regular check-ins with your dedicated staff member.
- Priority access to support services, financial aid and academic support
- Mentoring and wellbeing activities.
- Staff who are trained to understand their corporate parenting responsibilities and are confident to support your college journey in ways that you need it.

3. Moving on from College

We're here to help you get ready for your next steps—whether that's further study, employment, or independent living.

How we will do it:

- Help with applying for your next steps such as UCAS applications or employment.
- A series of 'Moving On' workshops covering topics like career choices, personal finance, and independent living skills.
- Clear referral routes to external support services.
- If you're planning to transition to another institution, we'll also offer guidance to make that move as smooth as possible and with your permission can share your support plan.

4. Clear & Accessible Communication

We'll use language that's respectful and easy to understand – because words matter.

How we will do it:

- Make sure all college information is easy to understand and relevant.
- Make support more visible and proactive.
- Creating a student-led glossary of preferred terms.
- Training staff to use trauma-aware, positive language.

5. Relationships

We're here to build trust through consistent, caring relationships – so you always have someone to turn to.

How we will do it:

- We'll regularly listen to your views through focus groups and surveys.
- We'll celebrate your achievements and share success stories that highlight the strength and brilliance of our students.

6. Strong Partnerships

We will work with partners to create more opportunities for learning, careers and life experiences.

How we will do it:

- Continue our work with current partners such as SDS, DWP, MCR Pathways and identify further opportunities to strengthen and develop our corporate parenting network.
- Explore additional external partnerships to enhance the support we can offer you.

Creating a College where you can thrive - together

We know that real change comes from listening, learning, and acting together. That's why we will continue to work in partnership with you, staff, and external stakeholders to create a college culture where care-experienced students can thrive—not just academically, but in every aspect of their lives.

Forth Valley College is proud to be a corporate parent. We will keep striving to do better and ensure that every student with experience of care has the opportunity to reach their full potential.



1. Purpose

To seek Board Comment on Forth Valley College's Digital Strategy 2025–2030 which sets the vision, principles, strategic aims, and success measures to deliver an agile, inclusive and AI-enabled college and to align enabling policies and procedures.

2. Recommendation

Comment on the Digital Strategy 2025–2030 as the College's governing digital strategy.

3. Background

The Digital Strategy is designed to support the FVC 2025–2030 Strategic Plan and other college strategies such as the student learning experience. It articulates how digital will deliver transformational learning, innovative and connected services, with secure, resilient infrastructure over the next 5 years.

It is underpinned by nine Digital by Design principles to ensure all digital transformation solutions deliver real value for students, delegates and staff.

As requested, the strategy sets seven prioritised strategic aims with measurable outcomes. They include

1. Transformational Digital Learning & Future Pedagogy Excellence
2. Digital-First Culture,
3. Intelligent Systems & Organisational Data Excellence,
4. Resilient Digital Infrastructure,
5. Digital Inclusion & Accessibility,
6. AI Excellence & Future Digital Capabilities Framework,
7. Innovation Partnerships & Digital Entrepreneurship

Key Considerations

1. Confirmation that key college strategies have been considered and are supported by the digital strategy.
2. The Digital Strategy has been reviewed by the revamped Digital Steering Group (DSG) along with key college stakeholders.
3. Following feedback from LMT, the strategy has been updated.
4. The strategic aims have been prioritised.
5. Each strategic aim has measures of success attached.

4. Resource Implications (Financial, People, Estates and Communications)

Financial:

No direct financial impact from the adoption of the strategy, however each digital transformation project / change will be financial assessed on a case by case basis. AI Pilot projects has a small amount of funding that will be used to initiate small measurable projects that will support the Digital Strategy.



People:

The adoption of the strategy will require the creation, adoption, monitoring and reviewing of a Digital Skills Plan (CPD) which has been initiated as a project under the DSG stewardship. In addition to training however release for Digital/AI Champions, CPD to meet Strategic Plan targets for digital skills and AI capability.

Estates:

No major physical works anticipated. Emphasis on classroom readiness and reliable Wi-Fi.

Communications:

No College-wide plan anticipated until full sign off of strategy by board.

Equalities

Who does this impact?

The Strategy is College-wide and impacts students, delegates and all staff.

Expected positive impacts include:

- a) inclusion by design with accessibility embedded in all new/changed solutions,
- b) equitable access via device/connectivity support and assisted alternatives, and
- c) AI fairness safeguards through a SAFER AI approach.

Risks include potential digital exclusion where access/support are inadequate and bias in AI-enabled tools if not governed. Mitigations are embedded in the strategy measures such as 100% accessibility compliance for new/changed solutions, device/connectivity support, AI governance and literacy and Digital/AI Champions.

Assessment in Place? – Yes

5. Communities and Partners

The strategy enables potential joint ventures and college sector partnerships supporting regional skills and additional non-public income and/or reduced costs.

The Strategy also strengthens collaboration with schools and employers to improve learner pathways to digital / AI inclusion and digital / AI readiness.

6. Risk and Impact

Please complete the risk table below. Risk is scored against Likelihood x Impact, with each category scored from Very Low through to Very High. Risks should be robustly scored and, if the combined score (Likelihood x Impact) is higher than the Board Risk appetite for the risk category identified, additional justification must be provided on why this risk is necessary.

If the paper is an approval, please reflect on whether the approval will have any direct or indirect impact for any other areas of operational activity internally or externally within the College – N/a



8. Digital Strategy For Discussion

20 November 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High (5)		x
High (4)	x	
Medium (3)		
Low (2)		
Very Low (1)		

Total Risk Score – 20

The College has a Strategic Risk appetite for categories of risk as defined by the Board of Management. Decisions being taken at LMT/SMT/Board level must have cognisance of this. Please indicate the single most relevant risk category in the table below.

BoM Risk Categories & Risk Appetite (Select one area only)					
Cautious <15		Open 15> <20		Eager >20	
Governance		Strategy	x	People	
Legal		Financial		Project/Programme	
Property		Reputational			
		Technology			

The strategy is a significant strategic and cultural digital transformation change. Correct adoption, training, governance and financial investment will be required to realise the strategy. Adopting the right approach and implementing the right solutions should see the funding gap close and deliver operational efficiency gains and improved growth opportunities for all.

Is the score above the Board Risk Appetite level? No

Risk Owner – Colin McMurray
Paper Author – Darren Payne

Action Owner – Darren Payne
SMT Owner – Colin McMurray



Forth Valley College Digital Strategy (Draft)

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Welcome

At Forth Valley College, our purpose is to deliver excellence in tertiary education and skills that transform lives for our students and partners. Digital is one of the ways how we make that purpose real every day, for everyone.

Our Digital Strategy, designed to support the Forth Valley College's strategic 2025-2030 plan, sets out how, over the five years, we will drive digital transformation across the College.

Our focus is simple, to create an exceptional digital learning, teaching and assessing experience where access, inclusion and quality are built in from the start. We will equip all users - students, delegates and staff with the knowledge and tools to enable innovation, improve efficiency and productivity, and ensure that this is underpinned by a resilient, secure, and safe digital infrastructure.

By 2030, our vision is to be Scotland's most agile, inclusive and AI-enabled College. Digital transformation for us will build on a cultural, organisational and operational shift. Through our Digital by Design approach, we will deliver personalised learning, connected and efficient services, and a confident digital culture. In partnership with employers and communities, we will be the partner of choice for smart learning and innovation, ensuring technology helps everyone at Forth Valley College to thrive.

Our Digital Principles

These nine principles have been developed to ensure every decision throughout the digital transformation process delivers real value to the College, guaranteeing that human-centred digital solutions serve the students, delegates and staff and not the other way around.

People-first

We will design simple, consistent pathways that work for everyone, with accessibility and inclusion embedded across all campuses.

Insight with purpose

We will treat data as a strategic asset to be used ethically, accurately, efficiently and confidentially to enhance learning, teaching and support services.

Open, interoperable by design

We will implement digital solutions that connect easily, reduce duplication, improve integrity and enable reuse at scale.

Responsible AI, diligently embedded.

We will responsibly embed AI solutions to enhance learning and support services with an operational efficiency and productivity focus, not replacing but enhancing human interaction and judgment and guided by our SAFER AI framework.

Secure, resilient & sustainable

We will implement and maintain solutions for continuity and trust, advancing cyber maturity and security and making “green digital” choices that support Net Zero.

Empowered people & continuous upskilling

We will invest in digital and AI capability for students, delegates and staff, creating time and confidence for all to innovate and improve learning, teaching, and support services.

Evidence led investment.

We will prioritise initiatives with the greatest impact on outcomes, starting with identification of problems and measurable process enhancement indicators, post implementation benefit reviews and learning adoption.

Learn fast, scale what works.

We will adopt agile pilots, test thoroughly, iterate with skilled users, and turn proven ideas into standard practice.

User tested and morale enhancing.

We will measure success not just in efficiency and productivity but in improved student, delegate and staff satisfaction and reduced digital and manual stress.

Our Strategic Aims (2025-2030)

Over the next five years, we will deliver seven, mutually reinforcing digital aims transforming pedagogy and operational excellence, building a digital-first culture, unifying data, strengthening resilient infrastructure, ensuring inclusion, embedding human-centred AI, and growing innovation partnerships all to realise our vision and have a positive impact on outcomes for students, delegates and staff.

1 Digital First Culture

We will embed a digital-first culture where every student, delegate and staff member is equipped, upskilled and empowered to use, explore, improve, and responsibly innovate with technology.

How it will be achieved:

- 1.1. We will cultivate digital leadership at every level, embedding training and support to ensure all staff can confidently guide their teams, peers, students and delegates through technological change.
- 1.2. We will foster an open digital innovation culture through safe, measured experimentation and clear change management protocols. We will learn from failure and share what works to generate further learning.
- 1.3. We will enable students and staff to explore ideas, learning and challenges enabling co-creation solutions, ensuring that the best ideas emerge.
- 1.4. We will ensure that our digital transformation enhances workplace culture and wellbeing by establishing innovation forums, digital collaboration and feedback spaces.

Measures of Success:

- 85% of staff in appropriate roles to complete digital skills assessment.
- 5 Digital projects piloted per annum with “show and tell” measured outcomes.
- 20% time reduction in non-core administration time through digital solution adoption.
- 10% improvement on net promotor score digital pulse checks.

2. Transformational Digital Learning & Future Pedagogy Excellence

We will pioneer educational transformation through intelligent learning ecosystems and practices that personalise education and training, foster engagement and equip students and delegates with the future skills needed to thrive.

How it will be achieved:

- 2.1 We will harness technology to deliver truly personalised learning, where each student and delegate's journey is optimised for success.
- 2.2 We will establish Forth Valley College as the regional leader in human-centred AI education, where technology amplifies rather than diminishes the learning and teaching relationship.
- 2.3 We will elevate learning through immersive, experiential approaches aligned to awarding-body requirements and real-world complexity and demands.
- 2.4 We will pioneer verifiable recognition of skills, so every digital skill gained is validated, visible and valued.

Measures of Success:

- 90% of courses meet a measurable Digital Learning Standard.
- 80% of blended/digital component courses have personalised content and feedback to the student.
- 60% of courses issue micro-credentials/badges for defined digital skills.

3 Intelligent Systems & Organisational Data Excellence

We will create information intelligence through smart unified data ecosystems and agile processes that power trusted, real-time insight for evidence-based decisions at every level.

How it will be achieved:

- 3.1 We will integrate our data systems to provide a strategic advantage in reliable, real-time intelligence that will drive better decisions and outcomes across the College.
- 3.2 We will protect and respect our data, ensuring it is used ethically and responsibly to benefit Forth Valley College while maintaining privacy, confidentiality and trust.
- 3.3 We will liberate staff from repetitive bureaucratic administrative tasks, enabling them to invest their expertise in activities that directly enhance student and delegate success.
- 3.4 We will implement proportionate digital solutions that transform student, delegate and staff data into actionable insight, triggering timely engagement, interventions and driving better outcomes.

Measures of Success:

- Top 10 student, delegate and staff digital journeys re-engineered to remove duplicate data entry.
- 95% of systems are correctly connected to ensure improved operational efficiency and enhanced productivity.
- 95% accuracy and completeness across the business-critical data elements.

4 Resilient Digital Infrastructure

We will provide resilient, secure, and scalable digital infrastructure so technology just works and builds trust to underpin learning, teaching, and support services ongoing digital transformation.

How it will be achieved:

- 4.1. We will provide enterprise-grade infrastructure that delivers consistent, dependable performance across all locations and access methods.
- 4.2. We will maintain sector-leading cybersecurity and data protection that builds trust through demonstrated resilience against evolving threats.
- 4.3. We will design future-ready architecture that scales, integrates, avoids silos and supports sustainability.
- 4.4. We will ensure business continuity through comprehensive resilience planning that maintains critical services during disruptions.
- 4.5. We will adopt proactive infrastructure management that prevents issues before they impact users, moving from reactive fixes to predictive maintenance.

Measures of Success:

- 99% of planned uptime for core learning and business support systems.
- 100% software compliance to Forth Valley College IT Security Policy.
- Cyber assurance maintained with no major incidents.
- 100% Classrooms and meeting rooms are digitally and Wi-Fi enabled.
- Device lifecycle and cloud efficiency trend positively toward Net Zero goals.

5 Digital Inclusion & Accessibility

We will ensure digital inclusion and accessibility for every student, delegate, and staff member to support the success of the digital transformation strategy.

How it will be achieved:

- 5.1 We will invest in digital skills development for all to ensure every student, delegate and staff member have the knowledge and confidence to fully participate.
- 5.2 We will ensure equitable digital access for all recognising that true digital transformation excellence requires every individual to have fair opportunity to participate and succeed.
- 5.3 We will eliminate digital barriers to participation, because technology must be an enabler of achievement rather than a source of exclusion or frustration.
- 5.4 We will promote digital wellbeing, so technology reduces stress and enables participation for all.

Measures of Success:

- 100% of new digital solutions achieves a positive Forth Valley College Equality Impact Assessment.
- 95% of eligible students and delegates receive device/connectivity support within the agreed timeframes.
- 10% improvement year on year in student, delegate and staff digital engagement

6 AI Excellence & Future Digital Capabilities Framework

We will achieve human-centred AI integration and digital skills enhancement across learning, teaching and support services so efficiency and productivity improve, every student graduates AI-fluent, and all staff can confidently use AI-augmented tools.

How it will be achieved:

- 6.1. We will implement AI governance and alignment through the comprehensive SAFER AI frameworks.
- 6.2. We will transform into being digitally confident where AI literacy is embedded throughout learning, teaching, and support operations.
- 6.3. We will leverage AI to transform how we work, reducing the administrative burden and improving decision-making to improve operational efficiency and productivity.
- 6.4. We will create a network of Digital AI champions across all departments who will model digital behaviours with enthusiasm, provide peer learning support, and support digital adoption locally.
- 6.5. We will embed AI literacy programs across curriculum and operations, so students graduate AI-fluent and staff use AI confidently.
- 6.6. We will integrate AI with sustainability in mind ensuring where possible AI initiatives strengthen environmental objectives.

Measures of Success:

- 100% of high-risk AI enabled software reviewed under adopted SAFER AI principles and policies.
- 50% of staff trained to expert level in the use of AI tools.
- 100% coverage of Digital/AI Champions across departments.
- 10 AI Pilot projects graduate from pilot to live implementation use.

7 Innovation Partnerships & Digital Entrepreneurship

We will deliver commercially astute digital solutions and technology partnerships that build sustainable financial resilience through either additional revenue streams or reduced operating costs.

How it will be achieved:

- 7.1 We will co-create commercially reusable sector tools or digital services where they can reduce operational cost or generate sustainable income.
- 7.2 We will contribute to digital cross sector collaboration for best practice data sharing that enables benchmarking insight and collaboration opportunities.
- 7.3 We will empower in-house development with the right tools and environments to enable agile deployment of updated and new digital services.

Measures of Success:

- 95% of FVC software solutions are benchmarked against industry best practice.
- Establish a measurable digital revenue baseline in Year 1 and demonstrate growth against that baseline in subsequent years through digital platforms, subscriptions or partnerships.
- Target a 10% improvement in digital cost-efficiency

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

The purpose of this document is to ensure that decision makers consider the impact of their policies and procedures on those who share protected characteristics. An EqIA should be undertaken for new practices or changes to current practices that could directly or indirectly affect staff, students and stakeholders.

Title of the Action Considered:	Digital Strategy
Impact Assessed by:	Darren Payne
Signature(s) of assessor(s):	
Date of Impact Assessment:	7th November 2025

Step 1: (a) Identify the aims of the action.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) What is the purpose of the action? (ii) Why has this action been come about? (iii) How does the action seek to achieve its purpose?
<p>Purpose To set the College-wide Digital Strategy for 2025–2030, establishing aims, principles and measures for 7 digital objectives that delivers inclusive, secure, human-centred digital transformation that improves learning/teaching and services, build AI and digital capability, ensure resilient infrastructure and grow innovation partnerships.</p> <p>Why To align digital strategy (and transformation from) with the 2025–30 Strategic Plan, address staff/student feedback on digital experience, and provide a governance framework for secure, inclusive, responsible adoption of technology and AI.</p> <p>How Through Digital-by-Design principles, the specific number 5 strategic aim of digital inclusion and accessibility, measurable KPIs, and consultaion via the Digital Steering Group.</p>

Step 1: (b) Identify who is affected by the action.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Who benefits from this action? (ii) How does the group of people benefit from the action? (iii) Who does not benefit from the action? Is anyone disadvantaged either directly or indirectly? (iv) If so, how is the group of people disadvantaged by this action?
<p>Who benefits Students, delegates, staff and partner organisations, employers and communities.</p>

How

Strategic development of digital and AI skills for all, Improved access and consistency, assistive-tech-compatible services, device/connectivity support, safer AI principles, streamlined journeys.

Who may not benefit / be disadvantaged?

The strategy is supportive of all users of digital and AI tools but the issue is around the fast pace of technology and the ability for the college to keep up and be secure.

Nature of disadvantage?

Risk of digital exclusion where AI is misused or poorly governed or uneven uptake without targeted support.

Step 2: Consultation

Where a action is organisation specific, it can be useful to consult those that will be directly impacted. This may not always be appropriate or proportionate. It may useful to explore other types of information available such as college data, Listening to Learners, cultural surveys etc.

Is a consultation required for any stage of this process?

Yes

Yes

No

The Digital Strategy is College-wide with material impact to all. A proportionate and appropriate approach has been taken with consultation with multiple stakeholders including Students' Association, Digital Steering Group, LMT, Inclusive Learning, curriculum and staff.

Where a consultation was identified as being proportionate and appropriate

- (i) Outline the analysis of the data gathered during the consultation
- (ii) The recommendations identified following this analysis

Analysis of data

Staff/student Digital Check-ins, Strategic Plan targets; JISC tools, complaints and sector guidance.

Themes to test:

accessibility compliance, device/connectivity turnaround, AI literacy needs, approved tools/process.

Recommendations anticipated:

- Digital principles guide that aid decision making
- AI champions network coverage.
- Communications plan tailored to groups.
- Feedback loops that include DPIA/equality checks.
- Pilot projects – assessment of measures of success.

Step 3: Consider the evidence and assess impact by protected characteristic.

- (i) What data or evidence have you used to consider the impact of the action on each protected characteristic? For example student/staff demographic data; consultation responses; national data/reports. If you lack data/evidence, where else could you look for/gather data? Is this reasonable/proportionate to the change proposed?
- (ii) Referring to the evidence you do have available, would this policy positively or negatively impact on those who share protected characteristics?
- (iii) If there is an identified impact, where negative, detail the action required to mitigate this impact. Where positive or no impact, are there any other actions that could be identified to further enhance the positive impacts of the action?

Protected Characteristic	Evidence	Impact	Action Required
Disability	Accessibility-by-design standard; assistive tech compatibility requirement; classroom readiness metrics.	Positive	Make 100% accessibility a go/no-go as part of digital decisions – digital principles. Inclusive Learning as part of pilot user testing;
Sex (man or woman)	N/a	No Impact	
Race (refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins)	Plain-language guidance; multilingual/translation options via tooling; Tech industry bias controls in AI.	Positive	SAFER AI fairness checks translation/friendly comms; feedback loop
Age	Varied digital literacy across age groups; training offer.	Mixed with training where CPD uptake is low	Age-inclusive training – digital skills plan Digital pulse drop-in sessions – where anyone can ask questions. To be considered.
Gender Reassignment (the process of transitioning from one		No Impact	

gender to another)			
Sexual Orientation (whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes)		No Impact	
Religion and Belief (including no belief)		No Impact	
Pregnancy and Maternity		No Impact	
Marriage and Civil Partnership		No Impact	
Other Identified Groups (e.g. carers, care experienced, SIMD10 and 20)		No Impact	

(iv) If it has been identified that more evidence is required, detail the action plan to collect that evidence and identify the timescale for this;

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Step 4: Decision Making

Select an option below that identifies the next stage of the implementation stage;	
No amendment to the action is required. It has been concluded that the action is robust with no negative impact.	x
Adjustments the action are required to take steps to meet the general duty and reduce negative impact on those who share protected characteristics.	
Adverse impact has been identified but a decision has been made to implement the action without adjustment.	
Adverse effects have been identified and the impact cannot be justified or be considered reasonable or proportionate. The action will not proceed.	

Step 5: Publication:

It is best practice to publish Equality Impact Assessments. It may not always be appropriate to publish EqIAs at the time of development.

	Does this group need to be aware of this EqIA?	How will information be shared with this group?
Students	Yes	Once approved along with publication of the digital strategy
Employees	Yes	Once approved along with publication of the digital strategy
Partner organisations & stakeholders	No	
Other - please state:	No	
Are there any barriers to communicating with the groups identified?	No	Potential digital access/language barriers therefore consultation required for alternative formats on request, plain-language versions, captions, translation options, offline/assisted routes.
Website EqIA summary, Accessible intranet post Various student channels (VLE/SA posts)		

Step 6: Monitoring and Review

Is monitoring required as part of the process of implementation?	Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
If yes, how will this policy/decision be monitored to assess its impact on protected characteristics groups? E.g. will qualitative/quantitative data be collected? Survey, Student Council, Listening to Learners sessions?	staff AI-training completion champions coverage usage/satisfaction trends) Listening to staff/ Learners/Student Council Pilot project feedback loops
Staff member/designation responsible for ensuring monitoring/review takes place:	Director of Digital Transformation with assistance from relevant stakeholders.
Review date:	31/12/2026

Please send the completed EqlA to equality@forthvalley.ac.uk

If you require any assistance in completing an EqlA, please contact equality@forthvalley.ac.uk

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE TO THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

1. Introduction

The Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the College's governance arrangements, financial systems, internal controls and risk management practices. The Committee provides assurance to the Board of Management that the College continues to meet the legislative and regulatory requirements applicable to the college sector. This report covers the 12 month period from 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025.

2. Committee Business

The Committee meeting dates and attendance are noted below:

Audit Committee Attendance			
Member	05/09/2024	21/11/2024	15/05/2025
Lorna Dougal	✓	✓	✓
Rhona Geisler	x	✓	x
Grace Hepburn		x	✓
Liam McCabe	✓	✓	✓
Alistair McKean	✓		

Alistair McKean retired from the Board of Management in September 2024. Grace Hepburn was appointed to the Committee in December 2024.

3. Internal Audit

Internal Audit is governed by the Code of Audit Practice, as published by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). The Code requires the Internal Auditors to adopt a risk-based approach to the programme, and to undertake follow-up work to ensure that all recommendations accepted by College management have been implemented.

Audit Provider: Wbg

Annual Report on Audit Activities: The Internal Auditor's report on audit activities carried out during the year 2024-25 was considered by the Audit Committee at its 4 September 2025 meeting. Internal Audit assignments for this period were carried out broadly in accordance with the Audit Plan presented to, and approved by, the Audit Committee on 7 September 2023.

Audits: The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) require colleges to have the student activity data they submit in their Further Education Statistics (FES) return audited. Wbg conducted an internal audit of the 2023-24 data and issued an independent opinion confirming the return complied with all relevant guidance and that adequate procedures were in place for accurate data collection and recording. They could, therefore, provide a reasonable assurance that the College's return was free from material misstatements.

The other audit assignments were identified based upon a review of the College risk register, the identification of new systems being implemented within the College and those audits (i.e. credits) required on a rolling basis.

The specific audit reports produced for each assignment made recommendations for the improvement of internal procedures and controls, and each recommendation was given an agreed target date for implementation. The monitoring of internal audit recommendations is a standing agenda item on Audit Committee agendas.

Internal Audit Annual Report Area	Days	Conclusion	Priority Recommendations		
			High	Medium	Low
Credits	5	N/a			2
Student Support Funds	4	N/a			1
EMA	3	N/a			
Commercial Income	5	Strong			
Fraud Awareness	4	Strong			3
Cyber Security	5	Substantial		2	3
Corporate Governance	4	Strong			1
Sustainability & Carbon Management	5	Strong			2
	35		-	2	12

The recommendations from internal audits are graded low, medium or high. Each audit is also graded with one of four overall levels of assurance which, from high to low, are: strong, substantial, weak, and no.

Effectiveness: On the basis of the work undertaken during the year the auditors have expressed an overall opinion that the College has – “adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes to manage its achievement of the College’s objectives” and “the College has proper arrangements to promote and secure value for money.”

4. External Audit

Audit Provider: Forvis Mazars – appointed by Audit Scotland.

Auditors Report: The External Auditor’s report on the Financial Statements for the year 2024-2025 is included in the papers for the Board of Management. The audit was carried out during October/November 2025.

Management Letter: During the course of the audit the Auditors performed overviews of the key financial systems of the College to assess their adequacy for the purposes of ensuring that accurate, timely and complete accounting records were being maintained. The recommendations resulting from this exercise are set out in the report of the External Auditor.

5. Audit Committee Self Evaluation 2023/24

Members completed a self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the Committee and the College’s internal controls, financial reporting and internal/external audit arrangements. The self-



evaluation exercise, based on the model questionnaire provided in the Scottish Government's Audit & Assurance Committee Handbook, is undertaken annually.

6. Freedom of Information and Data Protection 2023/24

The Committee received an annual report on the requests submitted to, and handled by, the College under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004. The Corporate Governance and Planning Officer confirmed that 34 requests were received and 100% were responded to within the statutory 20-day timescale in the previous academic year. There was a 54% increase in the number of requests received from 2022-23.

It was reported to the Committee that nine data breaches were recorded in 2023-24, none of which required notification to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

There was one subject access request from an individual during the year and one request under the right to be forgotten aspect of the legislation.

7. Complaints and Compliance 2023/24

The Committee received a report from the Corporate Governance and Planning Officer on the volume and nature of complaints received and handled by the College. Eighteen stage two complaints were received in 2023-24 regarding staff, parking, disability discrimination, customer care, applications, and another student. 56% of complaints were not upheld. For complaints that were either upheld (33%) or partially upheld (11%), actions and lessons learned were captured to inform improvements.

8. Risk Management

The Committee has the responsibility to ensure that the College has effective risk management arrangements in place. Members regularly reviewed the Strategic Risk Register and management updates on mitigating actions. Risks are rated very low, low, medium, high or very high. The key risks identified relate to financial sustainability, and affordability of a three campus estate and backlog maintenance.

9. Policy Approval

During the 2024-25 the Committee approved the following policies;

- Anti Bribery and Anti-Corruption
- IT Security

10. Other

Cyber Security: The committee received updates on the cyber security landscape and the work the College is undertaking in this area.



13. Audit Committee Chair's Report to the Board of Management For Approval

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Fuel Change Lessons Learned: The committee continued to monitor the recommendations from the Fuel Change Lessons Learned report and agreed at the meeting on 15 May 2025 these had been implemented and there was no further need to monitor the action tracker.

ESF Clawback: The Audit Committee received an independent report on the circumstances which related to a clawback of ESF funding from SFC. Having considered this report, the Committee recommended it should also be considered by the Board of Management, who in turn requested that the Audit Committee review and track progress against the recommendations. At the meeting on 15 May 2025 the Committee confirmed it was satisfied that the recommendations had been actioned and there was no further need to monitor the action tracker.

Governance Statement: The committee reviewed and approved the Governance Statement which was included within the Annual Report & Financial Statements 2023-24.

11. Adequacy and Effectiveness

The Committee accepts the views of the internal and external auditors that Forth Valley College's internal financial and management systems are adequate and that the Board of Management's responsibilities have been satisfactorily discharged.

Rhona Geisler
Audit Committee Chair
4 December 2025



14. Risk Appetite Workshop Output For Discussion

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

1. Purpose

To provide to the FVC Board of Management with the output of the recent Risk Appetite Workshop.

2. Recommendation

That Board of Management members consider the report from Henderson Loggie and confirm it is an accurate reflection of the workshop.

3. Background

The Board of Management initially considered its risk appetite in February 2022. Given the turnover of Board members since then it was considered now would be a good time to review this to reflect the current members views.

4. Key Consideration

The attached the Report captures the new scorings and compares this against the previous scoring. Members are asked to consider the revised scorings and confirm they are content with these.

5. Resource Implications (Financial, People, Estates and Communications) - None

6. Equalities: Assessment in Place? – Not applicable

7. Communities and Partners - N/a

8. Risk and Impact

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High (5)		
High (4)		
Medium (3)		
Low (2)		
Very Low (1)	x	x

Total Risk Score – 2

Without a risk appetite framework being in place there is a risk that decisions could be made which do not reflect the Board of Management's appetite for risk. By defining both optimal and tolerable positions, the Board clearly sets out both the target and acceptable position in the pursuit of its strategic objectives.

The College has a Strategic Risk appetite for categories of risk as defined by the Board of Management. Decisions being taken at LMT/SMT/Board level must have cognisance of this. Please



14. Risk Appetite Workshop Output For Discussion

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

indicate the single most relevant risk category in the table below.

BoM Risk Categories & Risk Appetite (Select one area only)					
Cautious <15		Open 15> <20		Eager >20	
Financial		Governance	x	People	
Legal		Property		Project/Programme	
Reputational				Technology	
Strategy					

Is the score above the Board Risk Appetite level? No

Risk Owner – Board of Management

Action Owner – Alison Stewart

Paper Author – Alison Stewart

SMT Owner – Alison Stewart

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Forth Valley College

Summary of outputs from the Risk Appetite session conducted with the Board and senior managers on 25 September 2025



October 2025

Henderson
Loggie 

Risk Appetite Session

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Risk Appetite Session

Background

In advance of the next Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review, we were commissioned to deliver a risk management session at a Board event at the Stirling campus on 25 September 2025. In advance of the Board session, a planning meeting was held in the Falkirk campus on 29 August 2025 with the Chair of the Board and the Depute Principal and Chief Operating Officer. At this meeting it was agreed that as part of this wider risk management session there would be a review and refresh of the risk appetite levels previously set by the Board in February 2022. It was agreed that for the nine agreed risk categories from the HM Treasury Orange Book, we would challenge the risk appetite set by the Board in February 2022 to ensure that the risk appetite remained aligned with the current collective view of the Board, recognising that there have been significant changes in Board membership since 2022.

Approach

The updated Government Finance Function 'Risk Appetite Guidance Note' August 2021 sets out 15 potential risk categories which can be scored from a risk appetite perspective on a five-point scale from Averse to Eager. These are drawn from the HM Treasury Orange Book 2020.

The Orange Book – Management of Risk, Principles and Concepts (2020) advises that *'the Board should determine and continuously assess the nature and extent of the principal risks that the organisation is exposed to and is willing to take to achieve its objectives – its risk appetite – and ensure that planning and decision-making reflects this assessment. Effective risk management should support informed decision-making in line with this risk appetite, ensure confidence in the response to risks, transparency over the principal risks faced and how these are managed'*.

The Risk Appetite Guidance Note was developed by risk practitioners in the public sector to support colleagues in implementing effective risk management arrangements, aligned with the Orange Book principles. The guidance note defines risk appetite as *"a concept is often referenced in organisations, without clearly defining what it is. Similarly, the terms risk appetite and risk tolerance are often used interchangeably. It is equally true that many organisations already apply the principles contained in this guidance without necessarily fully acknowledging them as part of a risk management framework where risk appetite is actively considered in decision-making"*.

Risk appetite provides a framework which enables an organisation to make informed management decisions. By defining both optimal and tolerable positions, an organisation clearly sets out both the target and acceptable position in the pursuit of its strategic objectives. The benefits of adopting a risk appetite include:

- Supporting informed decision-making
- Reducing uncertainty
- Improving consistency across governance mechanisms and decision-making;
- Supporting performance improvement
- Focusing on priority areas within an organisation
- Informing spending review and resource prioritisation processes.

It was agreed that a total of nine risk categories would be scored at the session on 25 September 2025. These are the same nine risk categories which were scored at the similar session held in Dunblane in February 2022. These are summarised in Appendix 1, below, which have been extracted from the Risk Appetite Guidance Note. It should be noted that some of these risk categories do not map across directly to existing risks on the College risk register. Nevertheless these were included on the basis that these nine risk categories reflect the areas where risk is likely to arise within the College.

Risk Appetite Session

Approach (Continued)

The example appetite levels, as defined by risk categories set out in the Orange Book (for the nine risk categories selected), were assessed by the Board Members who attended the 25 September 2025 session. The scores were arrived at following discussion on each risk category, with senior management in attendance. The scores agreed were arrived at through discussion in order to reach a consensus on all nine risk categories. These are summarised in the table below.

Summary of Risk Appetite scores agreed

Risk Category	September 2025 Risk Appetite Score	February 2022 Risk Appetite Score
1. Strategy	3 - Cautious	4 - Open
2. Governance	4 - Open	3 - Cautious
3. Legal	3 - Cautious	3 - Cautious
4. Property	4 - Open	3 - Cautious
5. Financial	3 - Cautious	4 - Open
6. People	5 - Eager	5 - Eager
7. Technology	5 - Eager	4 - Open
8. Project / Programme	5 - Eager	5 - Eager
9. Reputational	3 - Cautious	4 - Open

Acknowledgement

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Board Members and senior managers who attended the risk management session held on 25 September 2025.

Risk Appetite Session

Appendix 1 – Risk Categories extracted from the Risk Appetite Guidance Note

Category	Averse	Minimal	Cautious	Open	Eager
Strategy	Guiding principles or rules in place that limit risk in organisational actions and the pursuit of priorities. Organisational strategy is refreshed at 5+ year intervals	Guiding principles or rules in place that minimise risk in organisational actions and the pursuit of priorities. Organisational strategy is refreshed at 4-5 year intervals	Guiding principles or rules in place that allow considered risk taking in organisational actions and the pursuit of priorities. Organisational strategy is refreshed at 3-4 year intervals	Guiding principles or rules in place that are receptive to considered risk taking in organisational actions and the pursuit of priorities. Organisational strategy is refreshed at 2-3 year intervals	Guiding principles or rules in place that welcome considered risk taking in organisational actions and the pursuit of priorities. Organisational strategy is refreshed at 1-2 year intervals
Governance	Avoid actions with associated risk. No decisions are taken outside of processes and oversight / monitoring arrangements. Organisational controls minimise risk of fraud, with significant levels of resource focused on detection and prevention.	Willing to consider low risk actions which support delivery of priorities and objectives. Processes, and oversight / monitoring arrangements enable limited risk taking. Organisational controls maximise fraud prevention, detection and deterrence through robust controls and sanctions.	Willing to consider actions where benefits outweigh risks. Processes, and oversight / monitoring arrangements enable cautious risk taking. Controls enable fraud prevention, detection and deterrence by maintaining appropriate controls and sanctions.	Receptive to taking difficult decisions when benefits outweigh risks. Processes, and oversight / monitoring arrangements enable considered risk taking. Levels of fraud controls are varied to reflect scale of risks with costs.	Ready to take difficult decisions when benefits outweigh risks. Processes, and oversight / monitoring arrangements support informed risk taking. Levels of fraud controls are varied to reflect scale of risk with costs.



Risk Appetite Session

Category	Averse	Minimal	Cautious	Open	Eager
Legal	Play safe and avoid anything which could be challenged, even unsuccessfully.	Want to be very sure we would win any challenge.	Want to be reasonably sure we would win any challenge.	Challenge will be problematic; we are likely to win, and the gain will outweigh the adverse impact.	Chances of losing are high but exceptional benefits could be realised.
Property	Obligation to comply with strict policies for purchase, rental, disposal, construction, and refurbishment that ensures producing good value for money.	Recommendation to follow strict policies for purchase, rental, disposal, construction, and refurbishment that ensures producing good value for money.	Requirement to adopt arrange of agreed solutions for purchase, rental, disposal, construction, and refurbishment that ensures producing good value for money.	Consider benefits of agreed solutions for purchase, rental, disposal, construction, and refurbishment that meeting organisational requirements.	Application of dynamic solutions for purchase, rental, disposal, construction, and refurbishment that ensures meeting organisational requirements.



Risk Appetite Session

Category	Averse	Minimal	Cautious	Open	Eager
Financial	Avoidance of any financial impact or loss, is a key objective.	Only prepared to accept the possibility of very limited financial impact if essential to delivery.	Seek safe delivery options with little residual financial loss only if it could yield upside opportunities.	Prepared to invest for benefit and to minimise the possibility of financial loss by managing the risks to tolerable levels.	Prepared to invest for best possible benefit and accept possibility of financial loss (controls must be in place).
People	Priority to maintain close management control & oversight. Limited devolved authority. Limited flexibility in relation to working practices. Development investment in standard practices only.	Decision making authority held by senior management. Development investment generally in standard practices.	Seek safe and standard people policy. Decision making authority generally held by senior management.	Prepared to invest in our people to create innovative mix of skills environment. Responsibility for noncritical decisions may be devolved.	Innovation pursued – desire to ‘break the mould’ and challenge current working practices. High levels of devolved authority – management by trust rather than close control.



Risk Appetite Session

Category	Averse	Minimal	Cautious	Open	Eager
Technology	General avoidance of systems / technology developments.	Only essential systems / technology developments to protect current operations.	Consideration given to adoption of established / mature systems and technology improvements. Agile principles are considered.	Systems / technology developments considered to enable improved delivery. Agile principles may be followed.	New technologies viewed as a key enabler of operational delivery. Agile principles are embraced.
Project / Programme	Defensive approach to transformational activity - aim to maintain/protect, rather than create or innovate. Priority for close management controls and oversight with limited devolved authority. Benefits led plans fully aligned with strategic priorities, functional standards.	Innovations avoided unless essential. Decision making authority held by senior management. Benefits led plans aligned with strategic priorities, functional standards.	Tendency to stick to the status quo, innovations generally avoided unless necessary. Decision making authority generally held by senior management. Plans aligned with strategic priorities, functional standards.	Innovation supported, with demonstration of commensurate improvements in management control. Responsibility for noncritical decisions may be devolved. Plans aligned with functional standards and organisational governance.	Innovation pursued – desire to 'break the mould' and challenge current working practices. High levels of devolved authority – management by trust rather than close control. Plans aligned with organisational governance.



Risk Appetite Session

Category	Averse	Minimal	Cautious	Open	Eager
Reputational	Zero appetite for any decisions with high chance of repercussion for organisations' reputation.	Appetite for risk taking limited to those events where there is no chance of any significant repercussion for the organisation.	Appetite for risk taking limited to those events where there is little chance of any significant repercussion for the organisation.	Appetite to take decisions with potential to expose organisation to additional scrutiny, but only where appropriate steps are taken to minimise exposure.	Appetite to take decisions which are likely to bring additional Governmental / organisational scrutiny only where potential benefits outweigh risks.



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15. Board of Management Scheme of Delegation For Approval

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

1. Purpose

To provide to the FVC Board of Management with a draft updated Scheme of Delegation.

2. Recommendation

That Board of Management members consider the revised Scheme of Delegation and approve its adoption. Thereafter, approve the appropriate amendments to the Remit of the Finance, Resource and Infrastructure Committee (FRAIC).

3. Background

Following recent changes to the Financial Regulations which were approved by FRAIC, the Chair of the Board of Management requested that the approval of the Financial Regulations be reserved to the Board of Management rather than be delegated to FRAIC.

4. Key Considerations

Scheme of Delegation: The required change is included under s1.16 of the revised Scheme of Delegation Appendix 1. No other changes have been made to the previous Scheme of Delegation.

FRIAC Remit: The required change is included in S5 Specific Duties of the Committee.

Financial Regulations: The Financial Regulations will be presented to the February 2026 Board of Management for approval.

5. Resource Implications (Financial, People, Estates and Communications) - None

6. Equalities: Assessment in Place? – Not applicable

7. Communities and Partners - N/a

8. Risk and Impact

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High (5)		
High (4)		
Medium (3)		
Low (2)		
Very Low (1)	x	x

Total Risk Score – 2

There is no risk attached to the Board having final approval of the Financial Regulations.



15. Board of Management Scheme of Delegation For Approval

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The College has a Strategic Risk appetite for categories of risk as defined by the Board of Management. Decisions being taken at LMT/SMT/Board level must have cognisance of this. Please indicate the single most relevant risk category in the table below.

BoM Risk Categories & Risk Appetite (Select one area only)				
Cautious <15		Open 15> <20		Eager >20
Governance	x	Strategy		People
Legal		Financial		Project/Programme
Property		Reputational		
		Technology		

Is the score above the Board Risk Appetite level? No

Risk Owner – Board of Management

Action Owner – Alison Stewart

Paper Author – Alison Stewart

SMT Owner – Alison Stewart

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SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Scheme of Delegation of the Board of Management of Forth Valley College

Preamble

In accordance with paragraph 12(4) of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 (“the 1992 Act”) a board may delegate the performance of any of their functions to their chair, to any Committee appointed by them or to any member of their staff.

In accordance with paragraph C.8 of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland’s Colleges (“the Code”) delegation of responsibilities from, and matters reserved to, the Board and its Committee must be clarified through a Scheme of Delegation including the functions delegated by the Board to the Chair, Committees, the Principal and the Board Secretary.

This Scheme of Delegation must be approved by the Board before it comes into effect, and any subsequent amendments must also be approved by the Board.

1 Authority Reserved to the Board

Whilst initial discussion or consideration may take place by Committees or individuals, the Board reserves making decisions on the following matters to itself:

- 1.1 determining the objectives of the Board
- 1.2 final approval of the College’s Strategic Plan, Regional Outcome Agreement and Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan
- 1.3 approval of the year-end Annual Report and Accounts
- 1.4 approval of the Annual Budget
- 1.5 final consideration of the Annual Audit Report
- 1.6 approval of the Strategic Risk Register
- 1.7 acquisition and disposal of heritable property, subject to approval of the Scottish Funding Council
- 1.8 appointment of Board members, in accordance with the 1992 Act and the College Sector Board Appointments: 2014 Guidance
- 1.9 appointment and removal of the Principal
- 1.10 appointment and removal of the Board Secretary (in accordance with paragraph D.13 of the Code)
- 1.11 approval of terms and conditions of appointment of Board members
- 1.12 approval of the Students’ Association constitution and the election regulations for student officers
- 1.13 delegation of functions of the Board including remits of Committees and this Scheme of Delegation
- 1.14 the making, amendment and revocation of the Standing Orders of the Board.
- 1.15 to form or promote, or to join with any other person in forming or promoting, companies under the Companies Act 2006
- 1.16 final approval of Financial Regulations

2 Delegation to Committees

- 2.1 In accordance with paragraph 13 of Schedule 2 to the 1992 Act, the Board may establish Committees for any purpose and any such Committee may appoint Sub Committees.
- 2.2 In accordance with paragraph C.8 of the Code, the minimum Committees required are Audit, Remuneration, Finance and as appropriate Nominations/Appointments.

- 2.3 Each Committee and Sub Committee shall have a clearly defined remit which shall set out the duties and responsibilities delegated. The remit must be approved by the Board. The Committee may suggest amendments to the remit, but any amendments must be approved by the Board before they are implemented.
- 2.4 The Board may delegate functions to a specific Committee and this shall be clearly detailed within the minutes of the appropriate meeting.
- 2.5 The Board reserves the right to review the Committees required and the authority delegated to them as and when it deems it appropriate to do so.
- 2.6 The minutes of each Committee meeting will be submitted to the Board for information at the next appropriate meeting. In addition, the Committee Chair shall give an update to the Board on key issues where requested to do so.

3 Delegation to Chair of the Board

The Chair must abide by the terms and conditions of their appointment in leading the Board and ensuring its effectiveness, and in exercising any delegated authority. The Chair has delegated authority to:

- 3.1 exercise judgement in the event of a need for an urgent decision during the period between Board meetings, such that:
 - 3.1.1 an extraordinary Board meeting is called in the case of material decisions;
 - 3.1.2 a proposal is circulated and a decision is approved by email (in accordance with the Standing Orders) and is thereafter ratified at the next Board meeting.
 - 3.1.3 to make the required decision, subject to ratification at the next meeting
 - 3.1.4 to refer the decision to a meeting of the Board Chairs Committee
- 3.2 on behalf of the Board, sign and date the College's Annual Report and Accounts, after Board approval, and other documents as may be required.
- 3.3 represent the Board within the College and externally.
- 3.4 issue communications on behalf of the Board in whatever form is appropriate, both within and out with the College.
- 3.5 monitor, review and record the Principal's performance at least annually against performance measures agreed by the Board.
- 3.6 monitor, review and record the Board Secretary's performance at least annually against performance measures agreed by the Board.
- 3.7 ensure each Board member participates in an annual development meeting, facilitated either by the Chair or Vice Chair as appropriate.
- 3.8 initiate action further to a decision of the Board to take disciplinary action against, or suspend, the Principal or Board Secretary.

- 3.9 initiate action further to a decision of the Board to appoint a new Principal or Board Secretary.

4 Delegation to the Principal

The Principal, as Chief Executive of the College, shall be responsible for the operational management of the College subject to strategic and policy direction by the Board and the terms of any specific authority reserved to the Board. The Principal may in turn delegate tasks as appropriate to staff, including the Board Secretary.

In exercising any delegated function, the Principal shall take into account:

- (a) the legislation and any further provisions set out in the Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation
- (b) guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers and the Scottish Funding Council
- (c) any potential conflict of interest as outlined in the Code of Conduct
- (d) the provisions of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges

The Principal has delegated authority to:

General Management

- 4.1 as appropriate, take such measures as may be required in emergencies, subject to advising the Chair where possible and ratification at the appropriate Committee or to the Board as soon as possible thereafter, on any items for which approval of the Committee or the Board would normally be necessary.
- 4.2 facilitate the management of the College and its provision of services within the framework determined by the College's Strategic Plan and Regional Outcome Agreement, the approved budget, and any other policies and strategies determined by the Board or its Committees.
- 4.3 consult on behalf of the Board with representatives from key organisations, local and national, about the priorities contained within the College's Strategic Plan and Regional Outcome Agreement prior to final approval by the Board.
- 4.4 respond on behalf of the Board to consultative documents that may be sent to the College by the Scottish Government, the Scottish Funding Council or other external agencies.
- 4.5 incur expenditure in making visits and the provision of reasonable hospitality to representatives of other Colleges, organisations and companies, taking into account the principles of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 4.6 give a direction in special circumstances that any member of staff shall not exercise a delegated function.
- 4.7 take out membership of and attend meetings of outside bodies and professional associations where it is compatible with the duties of Principal and in the interests of the College to do so.

- 4.8 authorise the issue of press releases for publication and broadcasting on behalf of the College.
- 4.9 authorise the publication of any document on behalf of the College.
- 4.10 engage the services of outside persons, firms or organisations and enter into contracts and sign all deeds and other documents binding the Board for all purposes except those where the power to engage such services is not delegated to a Committee or is not reserved to the Board.
- 4.11 raise funds for and apply them to any of the activities which the Board has power to undertake.
- 4.12 provide courses as required by outside agencies and negotiate appropriate charges for these.
- 4.13 determine the dates of the College holidays and other details of the College's academic calendar.
- 4.14 appoint a senior member of staff to deputise for the Principal during periods of planned absence.

Staff Management

- 4.15 determine an appropriate staff structure for the College consistent with the conditions of employment that currently apply after consultation and where appropriate, negotiation with representatives of recognised trade unions.
- 4.16 consult and negotiate with representatives of recognised trade unions on behalf of the Board.
- 4.17 establish procedures for the appointment of College staff in circumstances where the power to appoint has not been delegated to a Committee or is not reserved to the Board.
- 4.18 supervise, manage and deploy staff within the College and arrange appropriate Induction and training for College staff.
- 4.19 establish procedures for taking disciplinary action against College staff up to and including dismissal subject to complying with the policies laid down by the Board.
- 4.20 grant unpaid leave of absence to any member of College staff in accordance with the relevant policies laid down by the Board.
- 4.21 represent the Board in negotiating and implementing conditions of service in relation to relevant College staff, including participation in national collective bargaining.
- 4.22 approve the secondment of College staff to external agencies in accordance with relevant policies laid down by the Board and to approve the appointment, where necessary, of a temporary replacement for the duration of the secondment.

- 4.23 in exceptional circumstances agree individual severance arrangements with staff, taking into account limits set by the Scottish Funding Council and functions delegated to the Board or a Committee.
- 4.24 establish any other procedures required for the orderly management of College staff.

Student Management

- 4.25 arrange for the provision of appropriate curriculum and support services for students and clients.
- 4.26 administer, in accordance with any policy determined by the Scottish Government or the Scottish Funding Council or the Board the disbursement of monies to students attending the College.
- 4.27 administer, in accordance with any policy of the Board, the provision of financial or other assistance to students of the College.
- 4.28 set and amend as necessary the level of tuition fees, examination expenses, maintenance and contribution scales for all courses offered by the College and to waive or grant remission of such fees or expenses in special cases within guidelines set by the Board.
- 4.29 authorise students and to make grants to students, to enable them to attend courses and conferences, and to undertake educational visits and excursions within the UK or abroad, within approved budgets and policies of the Board.
- 4.30 take appropriate disciplinary action including exclusion, against students in accordance with any policies of the Board.
- 4.31 provide financial or other assistance to the Students' Association of the College within the terms approved by the Board.

Property Management

- 4.32 allocate accommodation within the College in order to meet student and staff needs and to arrange for any necessary alterations or adaptations to College property.
- 4.33 apply to the appropriate authority for any necessary statutory consents.
- 4.34 grant any way leave or servitude over property of the College on such terms as may be appropriate.
- 4.35 grant the use of College accommodation to outside bodies or persons for the purpose of holding meetings and functions on such terms and conditions as are reasonable in the circumstances.

Financial Management

- 4.36 take personal responsibility for ensuring the proper and effective operation of financial, planning and management controls, and for giving effect to the Board's

policies for securing the efficient, economical and effective management of all the College's income, assets and expenditure. This includes agreeing Board approved budgetary limits.

- 4.37 act at all times in compliance with the Financial Memorandum, Conditions of Grant, Scottish Public Finance Manual and to follow the College's Financial Regulations, taking particular account of the delegated financial limits.
- 4.38 enter into and negotiate contracts and other binding arrangements for the supply of goods and services (whether bought, leased, hired or otherwise acquired) to the College or to authorise another to enter into such contracts up to a value of the relevant EU Procurement threshold or Board approved budgetary limits and all in accordance with the College's financial regulations.
- 4.39 terminate contracts, when it is in the best interests of the College to do so.
- 4.40 check the financial standing of potential contractors.
- 4.41 dispose of assets up to the value of the delegated financial limit as set out in the Finance Regulations and in line with the requirements of the Scottish Public Finance Manual.
- 4.42 take out any necessary insurances to protect the interests of the College.
- 4.43 settle any claims whether or not such claims are insured or whether or not a court action has been raised.
- 4.44 spend public funds only for the purposes for which they were given and in accordance with any terms and conditions attached to them.
- 4.45 arrange for the presentation to the Board for approval an Annual Budget of income and expenditure, including revenue and capital, and to give regular updates on income and expenditure account, balance sheet and cash flow statement.
- 4.46 arrange for the preparation, audit and presentation to the Board of Accounts following the end of each financial year in compliance with the requirements of the Accounts Direction and encompassing Audit Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council instruction.
- 4.47 report to the Scottish Funding Council should the Board adopt a policy or commission an action which is incompatible with the terms of the Financial Memorandum or the Scottish Public Finance Manual, or which would infringe on the requirements of propriety or regularity, and report to the Board in writing on such matters being considered and advise the Board that, should it wish to choose to continue with the policy or action, then as Accounting Officer he or she must report the Board's intentions to the Scottish Funding Council in writing.

5 Absence of the Principal

- 5.1 In the absence of the Principal, the Senior Management Team shall ensure that the essential functions and delegated authorities of the Principal are carried out with due

regard to any relevant provisions of the Financial Memorandum with Fundable Bodies in the College Sector.

- 5.2 After a period of four weeks' unplanned continuous absence of the Principal, the Board shall designate the Depute Principal as the accountable officer for the duration of the Principal's absence, ensuring that the Scottish Funding Council is advised of such absence at the earliest opportunity.

6 Delegation to the Board Secretary

The Board Secretary has delegated authority to:

- 6.1 administer, circulate, retain and publish as appropriate the records of all Board and Committee business.
- 6.2 undertake appropriate actions to ensure that the Board is sufficiently informed of its obligations as defined in legislation, the terms and conditions of grant, the Scottish Public Finance Manual, the Code and the Standing Orders.
- 6.3 administer staff elections to the Board and act as returning officer.
- 6.4 act as Standards Officer in accordance with Advice on the Role of a Standards Officer (issued by the Standards Commission for Scotland).
- 6.5 in accordance with the Code, report any unresolved concerns about the governance of a body to the relevant funding body (i.e. the Scottish Funding Council)

7 Absence of the Board Secretary

- 7.1 In the absence of the Board Secretary, the Board shall agree temporary arrangements that can be put in place either by appointing the Depute Board Secretary or a staff member to fulfil the delegated functions, or by making such other arrangements as may be required.

8 Previous Schemes

- 8.1 This Scheme of Delegation replaces any previous versions as may have been approved by the Board.

Approved by the Board [22 February 2024](#)



Finance, Resource and Infrastructure Committee

1 Committee Rationale

To contribute to good governance by providing -

- Independent advice on the financial management of the College
- A strategic overview of the College's financial direction whilst ensuring a position of financial security, including meeting all relevant audit and legislative requirements
- Oversight of human resources issues
- Oversight of Health and Safety and Equalities matters
- A strategic overview of the College's infrastructure utilisation to obtain best advantage of College facilities and contribute to the College's Strategic Plan ambitions

2 Purpose

- To help the Board of Management meet its responsibilities under the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 in relation to financial and property matters and to ensure compliance with the Financial Memorandum between the Scottish Funding Council and the Board of Management of the College of Further Education.
- To advise the Board of Management on finance related matters and make recommendation on the financial policy of the College.
- To assist the Board of Management to discharge its responsibilities under the Standing Orders and Operating Guidelines and to advise the Board on human resource (HR) related matters
- To consider equalities, health and safety and other relevant areas of College activity as they relate to staff and learners
- To consider College plans for the utilisation of physical resources

3 Membership

- The Committee shall comprise of at least 7 members of the Board of Management (including a Vice Chair of the Board of Management).
 - The Chairman of the Board of Management and College Principal shall be ex officio members and are not eligible to vote on committee matters.
 - The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Management and should not be the Principal. If the Chair of the Board or Committee is not present at any meeting, the Vice Chair shall assume that role. Where a Vice Chair is not available, members shall elect from amongst themselves a Board member who is entitled to vote as the Chair of that meeting.
-



- Committee members should possess an appropriate level of experience in finance, accounting, auditing, HR or equalities and a professional qualification in one of these areas is desirable

4 Meetings

- The Committee will normally meet quarterly, though other meetings may be arranged as necessary
- The meeting shall be quorate if 4 or more members eligible to vote are in attendance
- Minutes will be kept of the proceedings and circulated after approval by the Chair. The minutes will be presented to the following meeting of the Committee for approval and to the next Board of Management meeting
- Meetings will be held in accordance with the Board of Management Standing Orders and Operating Guidelines
- Other members of College staff may be invited to attend meetings of the Committee

5 Specific Duties of the Committee

- To ensure compliance with the Financial Memorandum between the Scottish Funding Council and the Board of Management of the College of Further Education
 - To ensure preparation of annual revenue and capital budgets and to consider them prior to final approval by the Board of Management
 - To receive regular financial reports to allow the revenue and capital budgets to be monitored and the financial position of the College to be assessed. (For example, revenue/capital monitoring statements, cash flows, debtors, grant receipts, significant projects etc)
 - To ensure that annual accounts are prepared within the timescale, and in the format, determined by the Scottish Funding Council
 - To consider the annual accounts in conjunction with the Audit Committee and prior to the Board of Management
 - To receive and review such regular reports on such key performance indicators as may be required by the Committee
 - To consider and advise on the financial management and control systems within the College – including the [approval-endorsement](#) of Financial Regulations [for Board of Management approval](#)
 - To receive advice, and consider recommendations, from the Audit Committee
-



15c. Finance, Resource and Infrastructure Committee Remit

Board of Management

- To consider and advise on College systems for financial planning
- To consider and advise on all matters concerning the disposal, purchase or major alterations to land and buildings
- To consider and advise on proposals with significant financial implications to be met from within approved budgets, and to consider and advise on proposals not included in approved budgets
- To request reports or investigations on any matter related to the finances of assets of the College and/or matters with current or potential significant financial implications
- To advise on the development and implementation of the College's People Strategy
- To consider and advise on College systems and procedures for health and safety
- To consider and advise on College equal opportunities policies and to monitor College equal opportunities aspirations for staff and students
- To receive and review regular reports on such key performance indicators as may be required by the Committee
- To request reports or investigations on any HR issues, including sanctioning the use of external consultants
- To consider and advise on the College's Infrastructure utilisation plans

6 Authority

- The Committee is authorised by the Board of Management to approve all policies relevant to the Committee, or where appropriate refer to the Board of Management for final approval

To provide advice and monitor the arrangements, for

- Insurance
 - Procurement
 - Fundraising
 - Banking
 - Taxation

 - To annually review and set the rates for tuition fees for further education courses and most part-time courses
 - To act on behalf of the Board of Management in determining trade union recognition
 - To review and approve the College's infrastructure utilisation plans
-



17.1 Audit Committee 20 November – Key Points and Committee Risks For Information

4 December 2025

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

1. Key Points

Financial Sustainability

The committee reviewed the external auditors annual report to the Board of Management. Within that report, despite raising no matters in relation to the College’s financial management, the auditors did the issue of ongoing financial sustainability, noting that this was a sector-wide risk.

Need for Legal Advice

Members discussed their duties as charity trustees in relation financial sustainability and noted the ongoing approval of contracts. It was agreed that the College would seek legal advice on when the Board would have a responsibility to stop the College accepting new contracts and obligations

AI policy

Members considered a new policy for the College, covering the use of AI to support staff and students and to help drive digital transformation. Members requested further information on training for staff to use new tools and whether the policy was agile enough for an area undergoing rapid development. The College confirmed a training plan was in development and that the procedures underlying the policy would be kept under review and updated to reflect changes in the AI landscape.

2. Actions from the meeting

Actions were –

- To arrange a short meeting of the remuneration committee to look at staff and student input into the Principal’s objectives
- To update strategic risk scores based on member feedback

3. Policy approval

IT Security Policy
AI Policy

4. Committee Risks

Risk No	Date identified	Risk Title	Initial Risk Score	Last Residual Score	Current Residual Score	Movement in period	Risk Appetite Category	Risk Appetite Score	Risk Treatment
12	Aug-24	IT legacy equipment	16	8	8	<->	Technology	20	Accept with mitigation



Falkirk Campus, Steeple Suite, 4.30pm

Present: Rhona Geisler (Chair)
Suzanne Reynolds
Lorna Dougall
Grace Hepburn
Liam McCabe
Emma MacGregor

In Attendance: Abhi Agarwal, Chair (Left after A/25/017)
Kenny MacInnes, Principal (Left after A/25/
Alison Stewart, Depute Principal and Chief Operating Officer (DPCOO)
Darren Payne, Director of Digital, Integration and Transformation (DDIT) for item
A/25/022 – Via teams
Moira France, Finance Manager (FM) left after A/25/017
Kyle McGuinness (KM), WBG Services
Michael Speight, Forvis Mazars
Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer (CGPO)

A/25/016 Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024/25

The FM presented the annual report and financial statements to members, seeking endorsement to submit these to the Board of Management for approval.

She confirmed that the external auditors were performing their final checks and had confirmed a status of going concern for the College,

She covered the main points in the document, and the accounting treatments used. She highlighted that page 15 of the document outlined the underlying position of the College with a £317k deficit.

She confirmed to members that SFC had seen the draft and, except for a request to include some pension costs, approved the position reported by the College.

Members queried what “approved” in the context of SFC meant. The DPCOO confirmed to members that this meant that they agreed that the calculations used were correct.

Members thanked the finance team for their work in preparing the accounts.

- a) Members endorsed the annual accounts and financial statements for submission to the Board of Management

A/25/017 Draft External Auditor’s Annual Report to the Board of Management

Michael Speight (MS), Forvis Mazars, presented the draft external auditors annual report.



He confirmed that their opinion was that the accounts were a true and fair reflection, with no material concerns identified.

He outlined the areas covered in the audit and the recommendations made in the report. He also confirmed that last year's recommendations had been addressed.

He reported that he anticipated sending a standard letter of representation for the Board to sign.

He informed members that, while no matters were raised in relation to financial management, a comment did have to be included in relation to financial sustainability. He confirmed that this was as a result of sector issues, not anything specific to the College.

Members discussed their duties as charity trustees as pertaining to financial sustainability for the College.

They also noted that there had been sign off on multi-year contracts and queried where this aligned with their role in terms of acting reasonably.

MS confirmed again that the issues facing the College were at a sector level and that, as body in the public sector, the College is considered a going concern.

The DPCOO also informed members that SFC can support liquidity if needed and had already done so for some other Colleges. She confirmed that discussions on this point had been had with SFC.

Following discussion, members agreed that legal advice should be sought on at what point do the Board have a responsibility to stop the College accepting new contracts and obligations.

It was also agreed to reflect this further in the College risk register.

Members also agreed that a series of key dates regarding the College's financial health should be developed to support decision making.

a) Members approved the submission of the External Auditors report to the Board

Finance, Resource and Infrastructure Committee members existed the meeting at this point.

A/25/018

Apologies, Declaration of Interests and Changes to Members' Register of Interest

No apologies were noted.



A/25/019 Draft Minutes and Matters Arising of meeting of 4 September 2025

Members asked whether there was an update in relation to the section 22 report.

The DPCOO stated that she believes this matter is closed and that there have been no other requests for information since July 2025 on this matter.

a) Members approved the minutes of the meeting

A/25/020 Review of Action Tracker

The DPCOO presented the action tracker. She noted that a refresh of risks was underway and outlined the discussions to date with the Chair and Chair of the Learning and Student Experience Committee.

Members noted that there were two actions that require completion dates.

Members suggested that the Remuneration Committee related action could be closed off with a short, single item meeting after the next Board meeting.

a) Members noted the content of the action tracker

A/25/021 Response to Forvis Mazars letter to those charged with Governance

Michael Speight confirmed that the letter was the same as the previous years.

The DPCOO confirmed that the response from the College was the same as the previous years.

a) Members approved the response

A/25/022 Policy Approval

IT Security Policy

The DDIT presented an updated IT security policy. He explained that the IT security policy provides a framework for managing evolving security threats, with procedures to be updated by the LMT. He noted the policy covers principles such as physical security, access controls, backup plans, and asset disposal.

Members questioned the adequacy of biennial risk assessments and the DDIT agreed that more frequent reviews are prudent. He also confirmed that procedures are approved by the LMT to ensure agility in responding to emerging threats.

a) Members approved the IT security policy



AI Policy

The DDIT presented a new AI policy to members. He noted that this was intended as a framework for safe and innovative use of AI.

He confirmed that the policy includes principles for staff, students, and delegates, with plans for mandatory digital skills training and ongoing support to ensure effective implementation.

He outlined the controls for managing AI risks, including blocking high-risk applications, conducting data protection impact assessments, and reviewing software roadmaps.

He noted that the college is among the first to implement comprehensive AI policies, with ongoing evaluation and feedback mechanisms.

Members queried the anticipated timeframe for training and whether there was a communications plan to raise awareness of the new policy.

The DDIT confirmed that a digital skills plan was under active development and would include this information.

Members queried whether the policy was agile enough for the area it covers.

The DDIT responded that the main agility would be in the associated procedures which can be updated and approved by LMT on an ongoing basis.

Members queried whether the training would be mandatory for staff and the DDIT confirmed this was the case.

Members noted that it was good to see a positive approach to AI within an organisation.

a) Members approved the AI policy

A/25/023 Presentation of Internal Audit Reports

Kyle McGuiness (KM) of WBG services presented members with three audit reports.

Credits

KM reported that this was an overall strong report. He noted a couple of minor recommendations and outlined what these were.

Members noted that some of the implementation dates for recommendations were not until March 2026 and requested that these be actioned sooner. Members also noted an error in the report which stated that the College had exceeded the credits target, despite the figures showing the College was not.

KM agreed to update the text and re-issue the report to the College.

a) Members noted the content of the report

Student Support Funds

KM outlined the content of the report and noted that the College was using the funds appropriately and in line with SFC guidance.

He outlined two low level recommendations for control improvements.

Members queried the underspend on student support funds. The DPCOO noted that the funding can only be used for certain activity and that the College endeavours to distribute as much funding as possible to students.

Members noted that one of the dates had a 31 October 2025 completion date and queried whether this was now in place. The DPCOO noted that, while she did not know for definite, the Director of Finance had set the timeframe and therefore she was confident this would have been actioned.

a) Members noted the content of the report

Education Maintenance Allowance

KM reported on another positive response report and noted that there had been one low level recommendation. He confirmed this related to spot checks and informed members that the guidance provided in this area was open to interpretation.

a) Members noted the content of the report

A/25/024 Progress Report on Audit Recommendations

The CGPO presented the report on progress against audit recommendations.

Members asked KM if he had any concerns with the progress being made by the College and he confirmed that he did not but that the follow up audit would verify this in due course.

a) Members noted the content of the report

A/25/025 Risk Management

The DPCOO presented the current risk register to members for discussion.

Members noted that risk 14 had reduced its score based on mitigating measures which had not yet been put in place and therefore the score should remain the same.

The DPCOO agreed to update the score. The DPCOO noted that the student experience risk score had reduced as a result of the output of the TQER process.

Members agreed the reduction but asked that this be kept under review as the transformation programme has the potential to impact on this.

a) Members noted the content of the report



A/25/026 Compliance Report

The CGPO presented a report outlining the stage 2 complaints, data protection activity and Freedom of Information activity over the 24/25 period.

He noted that levels had stayed broadly similar to the previous year and discussed any trends that the data had highlighted.

a) Members noted the content of the report

A/25/027 Review of Risk

Risks were identified in their individual papers.

A/25/028 Any Other Competent Business

None

A/25/029 Forward Agenda

The forward agenda was noted.

A/25/030 Three Points for Raising with the Board

Members highlighted the risk of financial sustainability, the need for legal advice for members and the new AI policy.

Members also noted the positive news that the College continues to take audit recommendations seriously and is proactive in applying these.

A/25/031 Joint Private Meeting with Auditors and Committee Members

Committee members heard from both MS and KM in relation to the nature and content of information being presented by management to the Committee and also to the level and nature of cooperation they and their colleagues experienced in the preparation of their respective audits. Both submissions were positive, particularly in relation to the level of courtesy and assistance they received during audits which was much appreciated.

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1. Key Points

Year One Review of the OCS Facilities Management Contract

The committee considered a report on the first year performance of the College facilities Management contract with OCS. They requested further information on a number of areas including the cost of waste services and performance against a KPI for maintenance. The College confirmed that waste services were currently being re-tendered by OCS and that the maintenance is covered as part of the monthly monitoring meetings between the College and OCS. Members also requested that the potential for value engineering services be kept under review to identify possible areas of savings.

Annual Procurement Report

The committee considered and approved the annual Procurement Report, which is a statutory requirement and has to be published on the College website. Members discussed overall procurement performance and requested further background on specific contracts which had shown increased costs. The College provided the necessary context for these.

Principal's Disciplinary Policy

The Committee approved an updated disciplinary policy for the Principal. Members were informed that the update was required to bring this policy into alignment with the national policy that covers other College staff. Members noted that there was no cap on additional resources an investigating officer could request and recommended that the underlying procedures be amended to ensure any requests made were proportionate to the matter being investigated.

2. Actions from the meeting

Actions were –

- The missing appendix for the item on Management Assessment of Going Concern was to be circulated to members. This has occurred
- Legal advice was to be sought in regard to at what point the Board would have to decide to stop the College accepting new contracts and obligations
- Key decision dates in relation to the financial health of the College were to be determined

3. Policy approval

Principal Disciplinary Policy

4. Committee Risks

Risk No	Date identified	Risk Title	Initial Risk Score	Last Residual Score	Current Residual Score	Movement in period	Risk Appetite Category	Risk Appetite Score	Risk Treatment
1	Apr-21	Financial Sustainability	25	25	25	<->	Financial	20	Accept with mitigation
2	Apr-21	Estates Maintenance - affordability	25	25	25	<->	Property	15	Accept with mitigation
9	Apr-21	People Strategy delivery	16	12	12	<->	People	25	Accept with mitigation
5	Apr-21	National Bargaining / Strike Action	20	8	8	<->	People	25	Accept with mitigation
8	May-23	Student Accommodation	12	8	4	↓	Financial	20	Accept with mitigation



17.2 Draft FRAIC Minutes of Meeting of 20 November 2025

For Noting

4 December 2025

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

S1.20, Stirling Campus (commencing at 4pm)

Present: Liam McCabe
Angus Gray (via teams)
Graham Leebody
Mary McLuskey
Julie McKenzie (co-optee)
Suzanne Reynolds
Monika Smith (FVSA)

Apologies: Craig Arthur
Chris Brodie
Philip Harris

In Attendance: Abhi Agarwal, Chair, Board of Management
Kenny MacInnes, Principal
Alison Stewart, Depute Principal and Chief Operating Officer (DPCOO)
Ralph Burns, Head of Human Resources (HHR) until F/25/030
Moira France, Finance Manager (FM)
Martin Loy, Head of Estates, Facilities Management and Health and Safety (HEFMHS)
for item F/25/028 only
Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer (CGPO)

The Chair welcomed Mary McLuskey to her first meeting of the Committee

F/25/025 Apologies, Declaration of Interests and Changes to Members' Register of Interest

Apologies were noted as above

F/25/026 Draft Minutes and Matters Arising of meeting of 18 September 2025

Members considered the minute from the meeting of 18 September 2025.

a) Members approved the minutes

F/25/027 Review of Action Tracker

There was one action noted that was on the agenda as a substantive paper.

a) Members noted the content of the tracker

F/25/028 Year One Review of the OCS Facilities Management Contract

The HEFMHS presented a review of the facilities management contract, discussing contract performance, cost comparisons, lessons learned, and future tendering and



negotiation strategies. Members of the Committee commented on the contract terms and the financial pressures the college is facing.

Contract Performance Overview: the HEFMHS provided assurances that the facilities management contract has been managed well, with performance considered exceptional in the last year. The report included comprehensive appendices supporting the main findings and highlighted that contract management processes are robust.

[REDACTED]

KPI and Compliance Issues: Members noted a failure in KPI related to reactive maintenance compliance, which required a response within five days. The HEFMHS confirmed the issue and explained that monthly monitoring is in place to address compliance failures.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

a) Members noted the content of the report

F/25/029 HR Policies

Principal Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

The HHR presented an update to the Principal's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures, noting that this was focused on aligning these with national standards, clarifying investigation procedures, and discussing resource management and transparency.

He emphasised the importance of uniformity between staff and principal policies for transparency.

Members queried the resource requirements for the nominated officer, and whether there was a mechanism to ensure the resource requests are proportionate.



The HHR noted that this would be considered in the procedures.

- a) Members approved the Principal's Disciplinary Policy

F/25/030 Annual Procurement Report

The DPCOO presented the annual procurement report.

She explained that the annual procurement report is a statutory requirement, outlined the number of regulated and non-regulated contracts, and emphasised the importance of compliance with procurement regulations and delegated authority levels for contract approval.

Members discussed contracts with expenditures over £50,000, but which had not, respectively, been the subject of formal tender process. The DPCOO clarified that in one case the apparent breach was due to multiple contracts awarded at different times to the same supplier and that all procurement procedures were followed. In terms of the other instances, the DPCOO confirmed that internal controls were implemented to identify potential threshold breaches early and that there were valid explanations for the instances where non-tendering had occurred.

Questions were raised about increased costs with specific suppliers, such as Premier Welding, which the DPCOO attributed primarily to higher volume due to curriculum changes rather than significant price increases.

The report included a schedule of future potential procurements, allowing suppliers to anticipate upcoming opportunities.

Members queried whether the appendices to the report would also be published online.

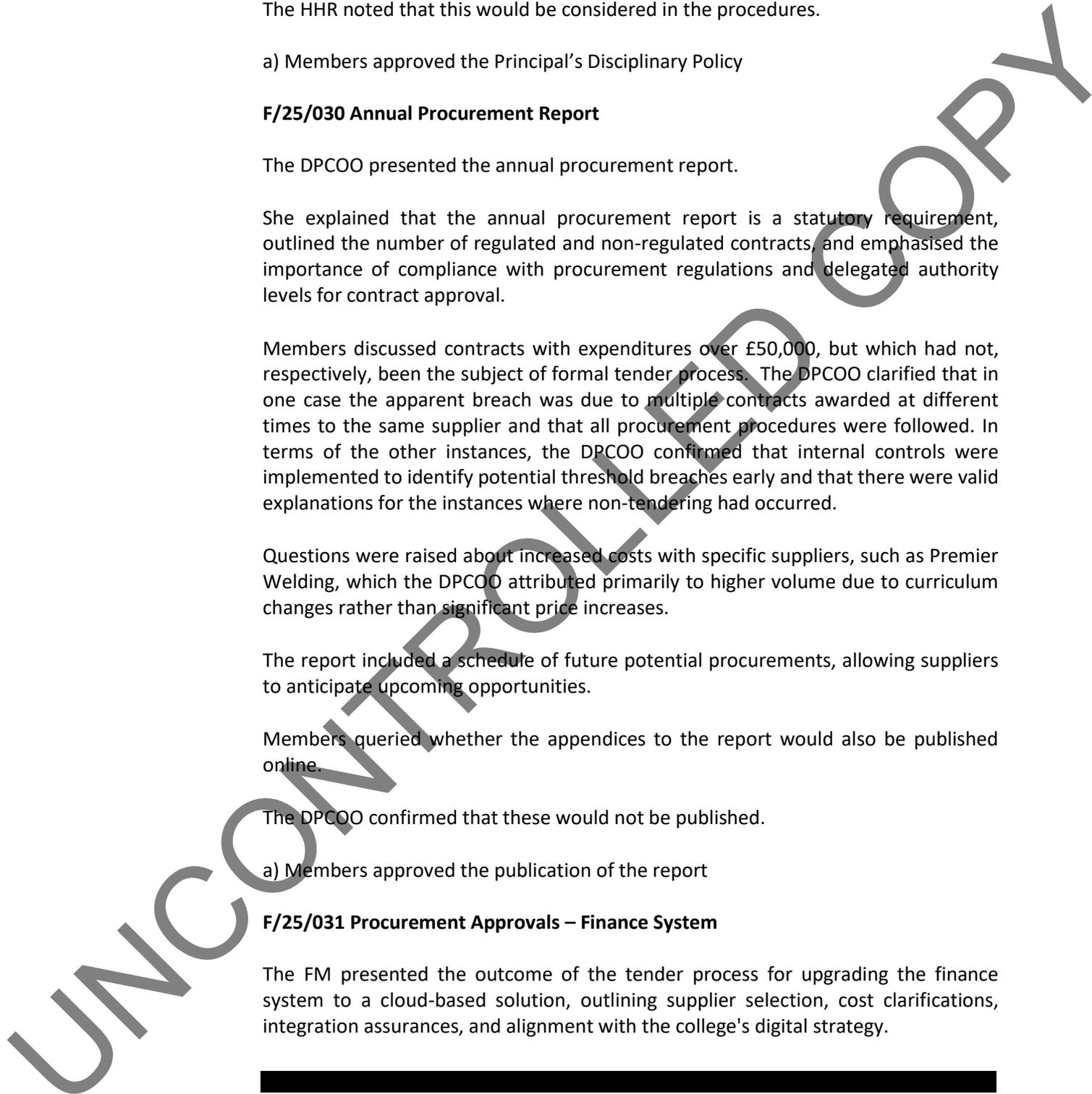
The DPCOO confirmed that these would not be published.

- a) Members approved the publication of the report

F/25/031 Procurement Approvals – Finance System

The FM presented the outcome of the tender process for upgrading the finance system to a cloud-based solution, outlining supplier selection, cost clarifications, integration assurances, and alignment with the college's digital strategy.

[Redacted content]





Members sought reassurance on system interoperability and integration, with the DPCOO confirming that the IT department was involved in assessing technical requirements and that integration capabilities were a mandatory part of the tender.

The upgrade was described as a natural progression driven by the need for continued support, with the DPCOO clarifying that while not a direct result of the digital strategy, the move to cloud-based systems aligns with broader strategic goals for integration and support.

a) Members approved the submission of the tender to the Board of Management for final approval

F/25/032 Management Assessment of Going Concern

The DPCOO presented the paper on going concern, apologising to members as the appendix to the paper had not been attached.

She confirmed that the missing paper would be circulated to members.

She reported that Audit Scotland continue to consider colleges as a matter of record to have, on an individual basis, the status of being a going concern and that the Board required to confirm this assessment within the financial statements.

a) Members noted the content of the report

F/25/033 Q1 High Level Forecast

The FM presented the Q1 figures for members consideration. She noted a slight improvement of £25k to the deficit as compared to the budget.

She outlined the assumptions and risks associated with the figures.

Members noted that Q1 figures were always an early look but welcomed the slightly improved position.

[REDACTED]

a) Members noted the content of the report

F/25/034 Student Funding Outturn 2024/25 and Forecast 2025/26

The FM presented a report outlining the outturn for the previous financial year and the forecast for the current year.



She noted funding levels from SFC have remained static but that there had been a slight increase in SAAS funding. Members noted that these funds were only for use with student funding and that unspent allocations are returned to the relevant body.

a) Members noted the content of the policy

F/25/035 Tuition Fee and Fee Waiver Policy

The CGPO presented an updated version of the policy. He reported that there had been some slight changes to national policy as outlined in the paper and that the policy was coming for re-approval so that these changes can be reflected in the College document.

a) Members approve the updated policy

F/25/036 Review of Risk

Members highlighted risks in relation to non-compliance with procurement rules.

Members noted that the risks associated with the FM Contract appear to be managed well.

F/25/037 AOCB

In relation to the three points to the Board of Management, members agreed that these should be the FM Contract review, Procurement report and Principal's disciplinary policy.

Audit Committee members joined the meeting at this point.

F/25/038 Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024/25

The FM presented the annual report and financial statements to members, seeking endorsement to submit these to the Board of Management for approval.

She confirmed that the external auditor were performing their final checks and had confirmed a status of going concern for the College,

She covered the main points in the document, and the accounting treatments used. She highlighted that page 15 of the document outlined the underlying position of the College with a £317k deficit.

She confirmed to members that SFC had seen the draft and, approved the position reported by the College.

Members queried what approved in the context of SFC meant. The DPCOO confirmed to members that this meant that they agreed that the calculations used were correct.



17.2 Draft FRAIC Minutes of Meeting of 20 November 2025

For Noting

4 December 2025

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Members thanked the finance team for their work in preparing the accounts.

- a) Members endorsed the annual accounts and financial statements for submission to the Board of Management

F/25/039 Draft External Auditors Annual Report to the Board of Management

Michael Speight (MS), Forvis Mazars, presented the draft external auditors annual report.

He confirmed that their opinion was that the accounts were a true and fair reflection, of FVC's result for the year and of its balance sheet and other financial statements with no material concerns identified.

He outlined the areas covered in the audit and the recommendations made in the report. He also confirmed that last year's recommendations had been addressed.

He reported that he anticipated sending a standard letter of representation for the Board to sign.

He informed members that, while no matters were raised in relation to financial management, a comment did have to be included in relation to financial sustainability. He confirmed that this was as a result of sector issues, not anything specific to the College.

Members discussed their duties as charity trustees as pertaining to financial sustainability for the College. They also noted that there had been sign off on multi-year contracts and queried where this aligned with their role in terms of acting reasonably.

MS confirmed again that the issues facing the College were at a sector level and that, as body in the public sector, the College is considered a going concern.

The DPCOO also informed members that SFC can support liquidity if needed and had already done so for some other Colleges. She confirmed that discussions on this point had been had with SFC.

Following discussion, members agreed that legal advice should be sought on at what point do the Board have a responsibility to stop the College accepting new contracts and obligations.

It was also agreed to reflect this further in the College risk register.

Members also agreed that a series of key dates regarding the College's financial health should be developed to support decision making.

- a) Members approved the submission of the External Auditors report to the Board
-



17.3 Learning & Student Experience Committee 13 November – Three Points and Committee Risks

For Information

4 December 2025

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1. Key Points

Performance Indicator Prediction Review: Delivery Period 1 2025/26

The committee reviewed the Delivery Period 1 PI predictions for 2025–26, noting early improvements across full-time FE and HE provision, with stronger high and low PI predictions compared with 2024–25. These gains were linked to curriculum review, enhanced transition processes, and continued staff development. The committee also noted emerging risks highlighted at CCI Meeting 1, including inconsistent attendance, varying learner support needs, and differences in LDW engagement monitoring. Work is progressing to standardise LDW practice and strengthen communication regarding emergency funding to support at-risk learners.

TQEF: Institutional Led Quality Review (ILQR)

The committee reviewed and approved the ILQR proposal, noting its central role within the TQEF as the internal process for evaluating and enhancing academic standards and the student experience. The committee recognised that ILQR outcomes inform national requirements such as TQER, Annual Institution Liaison Meetings and the SEAP, and acknowledged the six-year review cycle. Members also discussed the resource implications of delivering TQEF outputs and implementing the new quality arrangements, with the College noting the additional workload and outlining efforts to streamline and embed processes within existing practice.

TQEF: Self Evaluation and Action Plan

Given the timescales and scheduling of committee meetings, the TQEF Self-Evaluation and Action Plan will be circulated to the LSE by email for approval. The SEAP is due for submission to the Funding Council on 2 December and will be included in the Board of Management meeting on 4 December for information.

SFC College Transformation Update

The committee reviewed the initial proposal update for the SFC College Transformation Project, noting that the current version focuses on curriculum change, while the final proposal will encompass a broader institutional transformation. The draft outlined four pillars, phased over three years, aimed at strengthening digital capability for students and staff, improving teaching efficiency, and safeguarding the quality of the student experience. The committee expressed concern about the potential reduction in lecturer contact time and recognised the challenging financial context underpinning the proposal.

TQER Action Plan

Following the successful QAA Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review in May 2025, the College developed an action plan that was submitted to QAA in November 2025. The TQER Action Plan, which addresses all four Areas of Recommendation and outlines how the College will further build on the five Areas of Good Practice identified, was provided to the committee for information.

2. Actions from the meeting

Actions were –

- Review of student applications by geographical location
- Arrange a demonstration of the PIPT system
- The College transformation programme was agreed as a standing agenda item



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3. Policy approval

None

4. Committee Risks

Risk No	Date identified	Risk Title	Initial Risk Score	Last Residual Score	Current Residual Score	Movement in period	Risk Appetite Category	Risk Appetite Score	Risk Treatment
3	Apr-21	High quality learning experience	20	15	8	↓	Strategy	20	Accept with mitigation
11	May-22	Malpractice	12	8	8	<->	Reputational	20	Accept with mitigation

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Teams (commencing at 4.30pm)

Present: Lorna Dougall (Chair)
Yvonne Harley
Anne-Marie Harley
Jen Hogarth
Jayne Donaldson (Co-opted Member)

Apologies: Chris Brodie
Anna Fenge (co-opted member)

In Attendance: Kenny MacInnes, Principal
Sarah Higgins-Rollo, Vice Principal Learning and Student Experience (VPLSE)
Lyndsay Condie, Director of Operations (DOO)
Rob McDermott, Head of Learning and Quality (HLQ) via teams
Martin Podhorsky, FVSA President
Monika Smith, FVSA Vice President
Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer (CGPO) Minute

L/25/001 Apologies, Declaration of Interests and Changes to Members' Register of Interest

Apologies were noted.

L/25/002 Draft Minutes and Matters Arising of meeting of 5 July 2025

Members considered the minute of the meeting of 5 July 2025

a) Members approved the minutes

L/25/003 Review of Action Tracker

The VPLSE discussed the targets on the tracker and provided an update on the progress with each.

The Chair noted that the dates for each had not been set and the VPLSE explained the reason for this.

a) Members noted the content of the tracker

L/25/004 Review of Committee Remit

The VPLSE presented an updated remit for the Committee, noting that it was good practice for members to review the remit to ensure that it was still relevant to the work of the Committee.



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Members noted that the purpose and specific duties of the Committee seemed similar and recommended that these sections should be amalgamated in the updated Committee remit.

a) Remit approved subject to the suggested changes.

L/25/005

PI Prediction Review Dashboard

The VPLSE shared data on progress as at period one for students on full time courses as of October 2025.

She noted that, compared to this period in the last academic year, there were improvements showing for both FE and HE level courses.

She discussed ongoing work with Curriculum Managers to refine their predictions for each student, noting that previous years had showed them to be overly cautious.

She reported on changes to group awards within classes, noting that non-group award classes allowed more students to achieve and that this was feeding into the continuous curriculum improvement process.

She highlighted a positive development in relation to obtaining transition information for students coming from school which allows additional support to be in place for those who need it at the point of joining their course.

The DOO discussed the completion of the student journey project, noting that the developments had now been integrated into the standard operating practices of the College.

She confirmed that the College would continue to look at improving aspects of recruitment such as interviewing, international and the integration of digital systems through a newly established short life working group.

The Principal commented that the figures were to be welcomed and noted the next period was a key one as it covers the retention performance for the College.

The VPLSE informed members that a dashboard was underdevelopment to summarise these key metrics and that a demonstration of the dashboard would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

On the topic of retention, members queried whether the College had seen any improvements.

The VPLSE reported that the College was in a better position than the sector which had taken a drop during covid and was still recovering while the College had managed to maintain retention levels. She noted that the picture for retention continues to



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improve slowly but it is also recognised that there are challenges for some full time FE courses.

a) Members note the content of the report.

L/25/006

Student Activity

The DOO presented a paper on student activity for 2024/25 and progress for 2025/26.

She confirmed that the College had met its credit target and that this had been verified by the College internal auditors and submitted to SFC.

She confirmed earlier comments on retention levels within the College, noting that FE rates continue to prove challenging.

She discussed recruitment levels and provided an overview of the activity the College undertakes to support these students and the increase in demand for student support.

She outlined conversion rates from application to enrolment and provided some context on the profile of students applying.

Members queried the type of support on offer and whether the College required students to have a verified diagnosis.

The DOO outlined some of the support on offer and confirmed that a verified diagnosis was not required and that the College responds to the issues raised by each student.

Members queried whether there was enough resource to meet demand.

The DOO confirmed that additional support would always be welcomed and outlined previous additional supports that had been put in place but commented that these were externally funded and often for fixed periods of time.

The DOO discussed development of the College Schools portal and informed members that a demonstration would be provided at a future meeting.

Members noted that the paper outlines applications by gender, ethnicity and other factors and asked if it were possible to see applications by region to see if the College is attracting applicants from the Forth Valley region.

The DOO informed members that this would be looked at and reported at a future meeting.

The DOO commented that January starts for 2026 were looking healthy and that the prospectus for the 2026/27 session had been launched in the previous week.



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The Principal commented on applications for courses at the Alloa campus and members agreed that carrying on business as usual until a decision is made is important.

Members commented on the welcome level of detail in the paper. The Principal thanked the DOO and informed members that she had taken on this aspect of the role following the retiral of the Vice Principal Information and Communications.

a) Members noted the content of the report

L/25/007

Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model

The DOO provided an update on the Outcome Framework and Assurance Model (OFAM) which is the new approach to what was previously outcome agreements from SFC.

She outlined the quarterly reviews that occur with the College's OFAM manager from SFC and the data that they consider.

She noted that this was still a pilot year for the new system and that the focus was on good governance and student interest and success.

She noted that, following the Q4 review, the College would receive a report on the year and have the opportunity to check the data and submit any relevant case study material.

The VPLSE reminded members that the College was the first in Scotland to undertake this new process.

a) Members noted the content of the report

L/25/008

Performance Indicator Analysis 2023-24

The DOO presented a report outlining sector performance PIs.

She informed members that, in terms of overall performance, the College had improved FE success rates and was slightly above sector average, with part time FE being particularly strong.

She noted that part time HE was also improving.

She outlined performance by characteristics such as gender and care experienced status. She highlighted that care experienced students were slightly below the sector average and that plans were in place to focus on these students.

She discussed the data underpinning ongoing decision making, including the content of the Self Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP).



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Members noted they would welcome a demonstration of the system at the next meeting of the Committee.

The Principal noted that the data collected was in an effort to identify students who require help, even before they realise it themselves on occasion.

Members discussed potential external data sources which could enrich and provide further insight into the College's data.

Members queried whether the top performing college in the sector was always the same one. The VPLSE noted that the top college does change but that there were a group of colleges which tend to be at the top of the figures. She noted that the College's own performance continued to be consistent, with no real peaks and troughs over the years.

Members also discussed gaining student input and it was commented that TQER had interviewed students as part of their review and also that the College runs listening to learners' activity twice per year with all students.

The VPLSE also informed members that there were subject specific action plans developed for each area of teaching, so the actions are tailored to each particular student group.

a) Members noted the content of the report

L/25/009

Institution led Quality Review

The HLQ presented a paper on the Institution Led Quality Review (ILQR). He reminded members that the College and St Andrews university were the first two organisations in Scotland to undertake this activity.

He noted that the ILQR formed part of the wider new SFC TQER process that the College had embarked upon.

He informed members that the College was undertaking the self-reflection and action planning steps of the ILQR at this time and that this involved a deep dive into all areas of the College.

He highlighted that the student experience was at the heart of the process and that curriculum managers were drafting the self-evaluation activity for their areas which would then be reviewed by the HLQ and VPLSE.

He confirmed that stakeholders, including employer satisfaction, will also be consulted as part of this process and this will all feed into the wider action plan.

a) Members noted the content of the report



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L/25/010

SFC College Transformation Proposal Update

[Redacted content]

a) Members noted the content of the presentation



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L/25/011 Future Agenda Items

Members agreed that the transformation programme should be a standing agenda item.

The VPLSE commented on the SEAP that was under development and noted that the SFC deadline did not match up with the Committee dates. She sought agreement from members to circulate the SEAP via email for comment and approval.

a) Members agreed to the proposal

L/25/012 Review of Risk

Members agreed that the possibility of industrial action should be reflected in the risk register.

The Chair informed members of ongoing work to refresh the College strategic risks and noted that these would be brought to the next meeting.

L/25/013 Any Other Competent Business

Key points for reporting to the Board of Management

The CGPO was to develop these from the minute and pass to the Chair for approval.



20. International Strategy For Approval

4 December 2025
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

1. Purpose

To seek approval from the Board to formally adopt Forth Valley College's International Strategy, reflecting the strategic pillars, sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitments, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the governance model and the implementation roadmap for 2026–30.

The Strategy presents a comprehensive, future-facing framework that positions international activity as a mainstream function of the College. It outlines how FVC will strengthen its global influence, embed internationalisation across curriculum and research, expand high-value commercial training and enhance financial sustainability in line with Net Zero and CSR obligations.

2. Recommendation

That members:

- Approve the International Strategy
- Endorse the updated KPIs, governance model and implementation roadmap
- Support the integration of international activity across curriculum, commercial, research, mobility and corporate functions
- Note the resource model and the phased scaling approach to staffing and operations

3. Background

Forth Valley College is entering a period where international engagement is both a strategic opportunity and a competitive necessity. Over the past 12 months the College has experienced significant and rapid growth in global interest, visibility and partnership development. Recent achievements include:

- Representing the UK at the UK Government GREAT Futures Skills Mission in Saudi Arabia
- Meaningful partnership development and government-level engagement across China, Iceland, Germany, Kenya, Morocco, Mauritius, USA and South Africa
- Securing £50k of British Council International Skills Partnership funding across Morocco and South Africa
- Establishing new recruitment agents, signing MOUs with governments and institutions, and launching first-in-market international commercial courses
- Hosting an unprecedented volume of dignitaries and delegations seeking to understand FVC's approach to technical and vocational excellence.

This level of activity demonstrates a strong and growing global demand for Scottish skills, vocational training and energy-transition expertise.

The Strategy has been shaped using:

- Evidence of FVC's international traction to date
 - Benchmarks from high-performing UK colleges and universities with established global operations
-



- Alignment with major policy frameworks including the Scottish Government International Education Strategy and the UK Government International Education Strategy 2030, as well as NSET and national skills priorities.

The refreshed International Strategy recognises that FVC now has a platform, reputation and sectoral strength capable of positioning the College as one of Scotland's most globally engaged institutions by 2030.

4. Key Considerations

Strategic Pillars

The Strategy consolidates all international activity around three integrated strategic pillars:

Pillar 1: Global Engagement, Partnerships & Influence

Focus on strengthening FVC's outward-facing global footprint by:

- Prioritising the Middle East, Africa and Asia as core regions
- Securing at least two anchor partnerships per region by 2030
- Enhancing FVC's presence at government missions, trade events and global skills delegations
- Establishing a clear international brand identity
- Developing an international alumni and stakeholder network
- Ensuring partnership selection aligns with CSR, ethical considerations and responsible country selection

This pillar merges Global Engagement & Partnerships with Global Brand & Influence into a single coherent approach.

Pillar 2: Global Learning, Mobility, Research & Educational Exchange

A comprehensive academic pillar bringing together mobility, curriculum globalisation and applied research:

- 20 percent of full-time HN students to have physical or virtual international exposure by 2030
- Expansion of staff mobility and global CPD
- COIL embedded across multiple subject areas
- Participation in Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, Turing and British Council programmes
- New applied research and innovation partnerships utilising FVC specialist facilities
- Sustainable travel planning, direct flight prioritisation and carbon reporting

This pillar unifies Global Learning & Teaching with International Research & Innovation.



Pillar 3: International Student Growth, Sustainability & Performance

A growth pillar combining recruitment, commercial income, TNE, governance and performance:

- Growth of international full-time enrolments from 2 to 30 by 2030
- Expansion of articulation routes, TNE and international vocational training packages
- Year-on-year growth of international commercial income
- Governance framework covering due diligence, CSR alignment, risk assessment, and Net Zero reporting
- Annual performance reporting to SMT and the Board
- Income reinvested to support responsible scaling of operations

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs are fully aligned and provide measurable indicators for LMT, SMT and Board oversight:

- Increase international student recruitment from 2 to 30 by 2030
- Year-on-year growth in international commercial income
- Two anchor partnerships in each priority region
- 20 percent of full-time HN students with international exposure
- Minimum two international research or innovation projects per year
- All international travel documented in Net Zero compliance reporting
- Annual CSR assessment of all partnerships

Implementation Roadmap (2026–30)

The updated timeline reflects a phased, responsible-scaling approach:

2025/26: Build Foundations

- Strengthen and formalise partnerships
- Secure initial anchor partnerships
- Expand student and staff mobility
- Develop a recognisable international brand identity
- Establish sustainable travel and CSR compliance processes

2026/28: Scale Delivery

- Increase TNE delivery
- Expand international commercial training
- Secure additional international research and innovation funding
- Begin shaping a small international operations team (subject to contribution)

2028/30: Consolidate

- Deepen international reputation and diversify into new markets
 - Embed long-term delivery models that are academically robust and commercially sustainable
 - Integrate Net Zero and CSR compliance into every element of international delivery
-

5. Resource Implications (Financial, People, Estates and Communications)

Delivery of the International Strategy will require a phased and financially disciplined approach. For the first two years, activity will be delivered within existing staffing and operational capacity, with investment limited to essential areas such as targeted international travel aligned with government missions, enhanced marketing materials, due diligence, and compliance support. These costs are modest and already reflected within existing international budget. The objective is to consolidate partnerships, build the commercial pipeline and secure early international income before expanding operational resource.

Staffing growth will only be considered from Year 3 onwards, and only where international activity is generating a clear positive financial contribution. If income projections set out in the ALF paper are achieved, the College may introduce limited roles to support TNE delivery, operations and compliance, ensuring that international activity scales safely, sustainably and without risk to core services. This approach protects financial stability, ensures activity develops at a controlled pace, and enables FVC to grow its international presence in line with genuine demand and income rather than speculative investment.

Based upon the ALF paper's financial projections, year 3 (26/27) is when the ROI is expected to return a positive net contribution. Based upon current traction with existing commercial leads, this is on track to be realised at the time of writing.

ROI Table Excerpt from the ALF Paper 22 Feb 2024

ROI Table

Year	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
Income				
International Student Recruitment	£0	£48,000	£288,000	£448,000
Business Engagement/Cohort Activity	£24,000	£30,000	£100,000	£200,000
Total Income	£24,000	£78,000	£388,000	£648,000
Costs				
Costs of Business Development Manager including on costs	£71,033	£73,164	£75,359	£77,620
Delivery Costs	£11,750	£31,200	£155,200	£259,200
Other Expenditure (including travel, subscriptions and events)	£45,000	£48,000	£51,000	£54,000
Agents Commission	£4,800	£6,000	£20,000	£40,000
Total Costs	£132,583	£158,364	£301,559	£430,820
(Deficit)/Surplus	-£108,583	-£80,364	£86,441	£217,180
FVCF Funding Request	£109,000	£81,000		



6. Equalities

International activity will be designed to be inclusive and accessible to all students and staff. Mobility and global curriculum initiatives will prioritise widening participation, ensuring equal access regardless of background.

7. Communities and Partners

Strengthened international engagement enhances FVC’s profile with:

- UK and Scottish Government agencies
- The British Council
- Global employers and industry bodies
- International governments, colleges and universities.

This will directly benefit students, staff and the wider region, particularly in sectors relating to energy transition and digital industries.

8. Risk and Impact

Key risks include geopolitical instability, scaling pressures, and reputational risk from inadequate QA or due diligence. All mitigations outlined in the Strategy apply, including diversification, annual review, flexible delivery models and strengthened partner checks.

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High (5)		
High (4)		
Medium (3)		
Low (2)	x	x
Very Low (1)		

Total Risk Score – 4

BoM Risk Categories & Risk Appetite (Select one area only)			
Cautious <15	Open 15> <20	Eager >20	
Governance	Strategy	People	
Legal	Financial	Project/Programme	
Property	Reputational	x	
	Technology		

Is the score above the Board Risk Appetite level? No

**Risk Owner – Jamie Allan
Paper Author – Jamie Allan**

**Action Owner – Jamie Allan
SMT Owner – Colin McMurray**



Forth Valley College International Strategy

Executive Summary

Forth Valley College is entering a decisive phase in strengthening its global engagement. This updated International Strategy incorporates the College's commitment to the Net Zero College Strategy, ensuring sustainability principles underpin all international activity. The Strategy also reflects the College's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Policy, which guides the ethical considerations, country selection, and partnership choices that shape our global footprint.

Sustainable travel practices, including assessing the lowest-emission travel routes, prioritising direct flights where available, and recording all travel associated with international delivery, will form a core component of implementation.

1. Strategic Context

FVC's international presence and recognition has grown rapidly since 2024, with significant achievements to date across the UK, Saudi Arabia, China, Iceland, Germany, Kenya, Namibia and South Africa, to name a few.

The College has been formally recognised by UK Government departments, including acceptance into the Department for Business and Trade's UK Skills Partnership, as well as being selected to represent the UK at the Government's high visibility GREAT Futures Skills Mission to Saudi Arabia.

There has been a high number of foreign dignitaries and delegations visiting the College keen to learn about FVC and its areas of strength. MOUs with foreign institutions and Government agencies have been signed.

These are just a small example of the vast activities undertaken which demonstrate the strong global demand for Scottish vocational expertise and the College's capacity to deliver impactful skills, training and partnership outcomes internationally.

The international strategy is created with inspiration from leading universities and colleges across the UK with strong international activity, and not only supports the new FVC Strategic Plan 2025-30 but also aligns closely with key policy frameworks, including:

- Scottish Government International Education Strategy

- Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET)
- UK Government International Education Strategy 2030
- National and regional skills priorities, including energy transition, digital industries and STEM

2. Vision and Mission

Vision

By 2030, FVC will be recognised as one of Scotland's top three college providers of international technical and vocational training, known globally for excellence in workforce development, applied learning and industry-aligned training delivery.

Mission 2030

To establish and cement FVC as a trusted global partner for governments, industries and educational institutions, whilst expanding opportunities for learners and generating sustainable international income.

Future Ambition

Our ambition longer term is to have a physical presence abroad in one or more strategic markets, following best practice and success already evidenced by UK college sector leaders in international activity.

Our long-term ambition is to establish a physical presence abroad in one or more strategic markets. Although this Strategy is based on a four-year horizon, a projected £2m annual turnover from international activity within 10 years is achievable.

3. Strategic Aims

1. Grow international commercial activity and research partnerships.
2. Strengthen global partnerships aligned with FVC's institutional strengths.
3. Expand high-quality international mobility opportunities for students and staff.
4. Build FVC's international reputation and influence.
5. Increase and diversify international student recruitment.
6. Ensure financial sustainability, ethical practice and robust governance of international operations.

4. Strategic Pillars

Pillar 1: Global Engagement, Partnerships & Influence

FVC's ability to create meaningful international impact depends on the strength, credibility and visibility of its global partnerships. This pillar consolidates all outward-facing engagement so the College can build trusted relationships in strategically important regions, aligned with its subject strengths and ethical responsibilities.

What this pillar will deliver

- A targeted partnership approach focused on the Middle East, Africa and Asia as priority regions
- At least two anchor partnerships per priority region by 2030
- Strong participation in government missions, trade events and international delegations
- A clear international brand position that promotes FVC's strengths globally
- An international alumni and stakeholder network that strengthens influence
- CSR-informed country selection and partnership decision-making
- Engagement activities that enhance FVC's role in Scotland's and the UK's international skills agenda

This pillar brings together Global Engagement & Partnerships and Global Brand, Profile & Influence to create a single, coherent outward-facing engine for growth.

Pillar 2: Global Learning, Mobility, Research & Educational Exchange

Preparing learners and staff for an interconnected global economy is central to FVC's mission. International mobility, curriculum globalisation, and research partnerships all enrich teaching, improve graduate outcomes and elevate institutional reputation. Bringing these together ensures learning, innovation and exchange operate as one joined-up academic agenda.

What this pillar will deliver

- 20% of full-time HN students to have international exposure
- year
- Expanded staff mobility and capability-building
- Embedded global perspectives across curriculum areas
- Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) across multiple subject areas
- Participation in Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, Turing and British Council programmes
- New applied research and innovation partnerships leveraging FVC's specialist facilities
- Sustainable travel planning and carbon reporting for all mobility programmes

This pillar integrates Global Learning & Teaching with International Research & Innovation, creating a single academic pillar centred on learning enhancement, internationalisation at home, and collaborative innovation.

Pillar 3: International Student Growth, Sustainability & Performance

International student recruitment, transnational delivery and commercial training income will strengthen FVC's financial sustainability and diversify its income streams. Bringing growth and governance together ensures expansion is responsible, ethical and aligned with Net Zero and CSR commitments.

What this pillar will deliver

- Growth of international full-time student enrolments from 2 to 30 students per year by 2030
- Expansion of articulation pathways, TNE delivery and bespoke vocational training packages
- Income growth from sustainable and ethical commercial training
- A governance model that includes due diligence, risk assessment and performance monitoring
- Annual reporting to SMT and the Board on financials, CSR alignment, Net Zero travel compliance and partnership performance
- A sustainable operating model where international income is reinvested into scaling future activity
- This pillar integrates International Student Recruitment & Experience and Sustainability, Governance & Performance, ensuring growth is both ambitious and controlled.

5. Key Performance Indicators

The following Key Performance Indicators provide a clear framework for monitoring progress, ensuring accountability and demonstrating the impact of FVC's international activity. They align directly with the three strategic pillars and reflect the College's commitment to sustainable growth, ethical partnership development and responsible delivery. These measures will allow LMT, SMT and the Board to track performance annually, evaluate return on investment and ensure all international operations align with Net Zero and CSR standards.

- Increase international student enrolment from 2 to 30 by 2030
- Year-on-year growth in international commercial income
- Two anchor partnerships in each priority region

- 20% of full-time HN students to have international exposure
- At least two international research or innovation projects secured
- All international travel documented through Net Zero reporting
- Annual CSR assessment of all international partnerships

6. Governance & Delivery Framework

The international programme will be governed through a dedicated oversight structure involving:

- Regular updates provided to Leadership Management Team (LMT), Senior Management Team (SMT) and FVC Board of Directors
- Horizon scanning input to, and collaboration with, Curriculum Directorates
- Direct oversight from VP of Business and Innovation
- A quarterly performance report will be submitted to SMT and biannual reports to the FRAIC and annual reports to the Board, including financial performance, risk updates, partnership status and KPI progress.

7. Strategic Risk Register

Key risks include geopolitical instability, policy changes, quality assurance failures, excessive growth relative to resource capacity, internal culture/mindset conflict, and financial exposure.

Mitigation includes diversification of regions, robust due diligence, annual strategy review, strengthened QA processes, and phased scaling aligned to income generation.

8. Implementation Roadmap (2026–30)

Delivering this strategy requires a phased approach that balances ambition with responsible growth, strong governance and operational readiness. The roadmap outlines how FVC will move from early foundation building to large-scale delivery and then towards long-term consolidation. Each phase reflects the College's capacity, partnership maturity, Net Zero and CSR commitments, and the need to prioritise high-quality, sustainable international activity.

This structured progression ensures that new partnerships are developed carefully, academic and commercial delivery models are tested and refined, international recruitment builds predictably, and the College strengthens its global reputation in a controlled and ethical way.

2025/6: Build foundations

Further establish and strengthen partnerships, secure initial anchor partnerships, expand student and staff mobility programmes, and develop a recognisable international brand

identity.

2026/8: Scale delivery

Increase transnational education delivery, expand commercial training abroad, secure additional research and innovation funding, and begin shaping an international operations team.

2028/30: Consolidate

Embed FVC's global reputation, diversify into new markets, and formalise long-term delivery models that are academically robust, commercially sustainable and aligned with Net Zero and CSR standards.

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