BURY COLLEGE
FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, 28th April 2026

Corporation Meeting Commenced:	**5.00 p.m.**
Corporation Meeting Closed:	**6.48 p.m.**

PRESENT:

Chris Trees – Chair	Independent Member
Syed Ali	Staff Member (Academic Staff Support)
Charlie Deane	Principal
Stephanie Nixon	Independent Member
Anne Holt	Staff Member (Business Support)
Timur Rahman	Independent Member
Peter Ryan	Independent Member
Philip Johnson	Independent Member
Liaqat Ali	Independent Member – joined by Teams
Martin Dyer	Independent Member
Mark Granby	Independent Member (to 18.12pm)
Max Gallagher	Independent Member – joined by Teams

IN ATTENDANCE:

Tracy Pullein	Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Resources
Becky Tootell	Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality
Sarah Walton	Assistant Principal Personal Development, Vocational and Foundation
Lisa Matthew	Assistant Principal – Adult & HE & Childcare & Heath and Social Care
Joanne Greenhalgh	Executive Assistant to the Principal (acting Clerk to the Corporation)
Chris Fletcher	GM Chamber of Commerce – Executive Director of Skills Policy

25/26.53		**APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**
		Apologies for absence had been received from Naomi Sharples and Kamile Klumbyte
25/26.54		**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (AGENDA ITEM 2)**
		The Assistant Principal Personal Development Vocational and Foundation and the Assistant Principal Adult & HE & Childcare & Healthcare declared an interest in agenda item 8, the Principal declared an interest in agenda item 15
25/26.55		**CHAIRS REMARKS – VERBAL REPORT (AGENDA ITEM 3)** The Chair noted the tremendous contribution the late Clerk, who had very sadly recently passed away, had made to the Corporation. Members of the Corporation and staff in attendance held a minutes silence in respect.
25/26.56		**MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 4)**
		The Minutes of the Corporation Board Meeting on 17th March 2026 were approved to be signed as a true record.
25/26.57		**MATTERS ARISING (AGENDA ITEM 5)**
		The Chair introduced the report which provided an update on matters arising from the Corporation meeting held 17th April 2026'. Members noted there was one action; to add the curriculum areas under review and scrutiny to the Risk Register and this was in hand with the Deputy Principal and would be implemented with the May 2026 update to the Risk Register, due to be reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting on the 23rd of June 2026. All other actions were complete.

	It was **Resolved** that the contents of the report should be noted.	
25/26.58		**GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT SESSION - DEVELOPMENT OF THE GM LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN V2.0 (AGENDA ITEM 6)**
		Members welcomed Chris Fletcher, GM Chamber, who made a presentation which included: • An overview of progress on the development of the GM Local Skills Improvement Plan v2.0 which is co-owned with GMCA and due to be published late June to mid July 2026 • Overarching priorities (including Leadership and Management Skills, higher level Engineering and Digital Skills • Feedback on skills requirements from a survey of businesses in the Bury locality • Sector priorities - highlights for Construction, Engineering and Manufacturing Health & Social Care Digital and Technology, Creative and Media, Hospitality, Financial, Business and Professional Services and Logistics. • Confirmed the College's draft 2026/27 Accountability Statement aligns with the key themes that have been identified so far in Preparing for LSIP 2. Members noted that: • The overarching and sector priorities in the plan are subject to further analysis and not public knowledge As a result of questions, the following points were highlighted: • The survey of Bury businesses was anonymous and responses indicated that skills issues are linked to recruitment rather that the existing workforce. • The Strategic and economic background is critical • There is a difficulty recruiting employees with both technical and Leadership & Management skills. • Further work is needed to map Leadership & Management skills at entry level roles for career progression. • Local information for Bury will be available further down line, It was acknowledged that 50%+ students reside in other LA areas and other sources of information, e.g. LMI and ONS data are reviewed. • Annex A SIC/SOC codes and Annex B Changes and Actions are classed as live documents by Skills England and will be updated dynamically' Members thanked Chris for his professional and informative presentation and he withdrew from the meeting at 5.40 p.m.
	It was **Resolved** that the contents of the report should be noted.	
25/26.59		**DRAFT COLLEGE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT 2026/27 (AGENDA ITEM 7)**
		The Principal provided an update to members and highlighted the following: • The Annual Accountability Statement is a legal requirement and a condition of funding. It ensures colleges focus on meeting local, regional and national skills needs by asking colleges to demonstrate in the AAS, how provision is aligned to the **Local Skills Improvement Plan** (LSIP). • For 2026/27 the Annual Accountability Statement has been removed from the Annual Accountability Agreement to allow more flexibility around the deadline for submission. • The 2026-2027 Annual Accountability Statement incorporates the statutory **Local Needs Duty**. • The Local Needs Duty legislation requires governing bodies to review how well the education and training they provide meets local needs and consider what actions might be taken to better meet skills needs. • 2026-2027 Annual Accountability Statements must be approved by the Corporation and submitted by **31 July 2026.**

		• The College is required to publish the 2026-2027 Annual Accountability Statement on its website by **1 December 2026**. • The 2026-2027 Statement takes into account the priorities outlined in the current Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan (August 2023) and the Update Report (Summer 2025) and Bury Update report (Spring 2025) produced by the GM Chamber. Version 2 of the Local Skills Improvement Plan is due to be published Summer 2026. The Principal confirmed the Leadership Team will review the update that comes from LSIP 2 and formulate a response that includes working with employers as closely to align the curriculum Following discussion and questions it was noted that • People need experience to develop the Leadership and Management Skills highlighted as an LSIP 2.0 overarching priority • The College's contribution to the sector priority Engineering is T Levels as the HNC offering take up has been poor.
		It was **Resolved** that: I. **The contents of the report should be noted; and** II. **The College Accountability Statement 2026/27 is approved for submission to the DfE by 31 July 2026.**
		The Assistant Principal Personal Development Vocational and Foundations, The Assistant Principal Adult & HE & Childcare & Healthcare and Staff Governors withdrew from the meeting at 5..47pm
25/26.60		**PRINCIPALS UPDATE – MANAGEMENT TEAM RESTRUCTURE - CONFIDENTIAL (AGENDA ITEM 8)**
		The Principal introduced the report and highlighted the following: The resignation of the Assistant Principal Curriculum (A Levels, Art and Design, Science, Catering and Performing Arts and Digital), has provided an opportunity to look at the Management Team (MT) more broadly and look for a structure which will develop leadership capacity over the next period. The Principal explained this will be achieved by providing extended leadership and management responsibilities across the curriculum management team, moving from three Assistant Principals (Curriculum) to two Vice Principals (Curriculum) thereby freeing up resources to introduce a number of Directors of Curriculum along with some additional Heads of Curriculum. Although the Senior Leadership Team will be reduced, the Curriculum Leadership Team will be expanded significantly, giving a number of colleagues the skills and experience for future senior positions. The Principal confirmed a number of risks in association with a restructure had been considered and the actions to mitigate these risks are outlined within the report. Members of the Corporation reviewed the Current Structure (appendix 1) Proposed Structure (appendix 2) and associated costs (appendix 3) Following discussion and questions, it was confirmed that • There are no Director positions within the current Management Team Structure • Management development opportunities will be made available to staff within the new structure • Consideration had been given as to whether the 2 Vice Principal posts within the proposed structure should be designated as Senior Post Holders. Members agreed the current number of 3 designated Senior Post Holders was appropriate at this time but would be kept under review. • Members agreed they were in favour of adopting the proposed structure as detailed in appendix 2.
		It was Resolved that the contents of the report should be noted.
		The Assistant Principal Personal Development Vocational and Foundations and The Assistant Principal Adult & HE & Childcare & Healthcare and staff Governors rejoined the meeting at 6.00pm

25/26.61		**SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT UPDATE (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

		The Assistant Principal Personal Development Vocational and Foundation introduced the Report and highlighted the following:
		• A full breakdown of safeguarding categories is included within the report, outlining the total number of cases, those closed with no further action, and those that remain active. This reflects how the safeguarding system has been configured for the current academic year to support effective monitoring and oversight.
		• For 2026, safeguarding categories will be reviewed and updated to align with any changes introduced through Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
		• Updates to Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance have been reviewed and will inform future safeguarding practice and reporting.
		• The College response to the key changes to the draft updates from KCSIE 2026 are included within the report and include:
		  ◦ **Gender Questioning children**
		  ◦ **Harmful sexual behaviour and Misogyny**
		  ◦ **Mental Health** recognised as a safeguarding concern
		  ◦ **Serious violence** – further training for staff to look out for early signs
		  ◦ **Online Safety Expectations**: A new filtering and monitoring system is currently being procured. In the meantime, the existing system will continue to be tested on a half-termly basis to ensure its effectiveness
		  ◦ **Improved information Sharing Between Settings**: The use of CPOMS supports the secure transfer of safeguarding records. The College will continue to work with other providers to share information when students move between colleges during the academic year. This will include conversations prior to transfer to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are raised and that receiving providers are fully aware of any risks.
		  ◦ **Vulnerable students**
		  ◦ **Medical Conditions:** Review of the process and ensure that safeguarding is part of the review for any conditions that are life threatening.
		• LADO referrals – it was noted that responsibility for LADO referrals may potentially be moved to the Principal.
		• Student Assistance Programme: Since the launch on the 19th January 2026 there have been 403 registrations on the programme. All student reps have been asked to download the App and give feedback.
		
		Following discussion and questions, members noted that
		• The updated Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance introduces a stronger focus on "family help", combining targeted early help.
		• The total cases of Knife Crime reported (17) includes incidents in the wider community. There has been just 1 incident onsite where a student was found to be in possession of a knife and they no longer attend the College
		• The new Safeguarding, Prevent & Student Services Manager has settled into the role very well and brings a lot of prior knowledge and experience.
		• There have been 4 further referrals to the LADO since the last report
		• The selection of students for random searches is purely random and based on every 10th student who enters the building. In response to a members concerns around the potential for discrimination / racial profiling it was confirmed that staff carrying out the searches are themselves from diverse backgrounds and there is oversight by the Assistant Principal – Personal Development, Vocational and Foundation.

		Mark Granby withdrew from the meeting at 18.12pm
		It was **Resolved** that the contents of the report should be noted.
25/26.62		**CURRICULUM (AGENDA ITEM 10)**
		10a) QIP Update The Deputy Principal introduced the report and confirmed that the College had made progress against the key areas for improvement identified in the Quality Improvement Plan this year. Those key areas for improvement were: • Maths for Young People;

- Attendance and Punctuality;
- Quality of provision in underperforming teams, specifically Digital and Childcare; and
- A Level achievement, specifically value added.

1. GCSE maths is making good progress under a new Assistant Director. Attendance is slightly up and there is a good plan in place for quality improvement.

2. Attendance is marginally up on the same point last year.

3. Good progress being made in Childcare and Science. Digital provision continues to face performance challenges. This provision has now been moved into the quality team for intensive support.

4. A Level value added is showing promising progress towards target.

Following discussion and questions, members noted that:

- Next year a new approach will be taken for individual students or groups of students measuring progress from low attendance to better attendance
- A level Retention is up by 3.5%
- Progress scores for English are excellent; following a question it was confirmed progress scores for Maths are also detailed within the report.

It was **Resolved** that the contents of the report should be noted.

10b) Performance against national rates 2024/25

The Deputy Principal introduced the report and highlighted the following:
The National Achievement rate data for academic year 2024/25 was published in March 2026. This provides the College with benchmarking data enabling comparative analysis.

College achievement rates are broadly in line with national rates with the most significant exception of Entry and Level 1 programmes. This is as a result of lower achievement rates on Level 1 maths achievement, which although have improved on 23/24 (+11%) remain too low. Outcomes for level 1 qualifications excluding Basic Skills are strong at 85.8%.

GCSE Maths and English:

- GCSE English has performed well and is significantly above the national rate for grades 9-4
- Maths performance has improved and is now comfortably above the national rate.

Mix and Balance of Provision:

- The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality outlined the College's approach to curriculum planning which is designed to meet the skills needs of students and employers and which includes a greater proportion of large diploma qualifications which are well regarded by employers and Higher Education institutions. Members were asked to note that some Colleges with significantly better overall achievement rates than Bury College deliver a large proportion of non-regulated qualifications.
- In the main, GM Colleges have performed well against national rates. When making comparisons, it is important to take the mix and balance of provision into consideration.

T Levels :

- Overall, young people on T Levels achieve well and significantly better than their peers. Achievement rates at 76.6% are 10.9% above the national rate. Pass rates are above those nationally.

Apprenticeships:

- Apprenticeship provision at the College has performed significantly above national rates for a third year running. Apprenticeship achievement rates for 24/25 place the College 8th Nationally (top 5%) and top in Greater Manchester.
- The College is 9.6% above the National Achievement Rate for FE Colleges which is 65.7%.

ollowing discussion and questions, members noted that:

- Number & Measure is the right qualification for the students enrolled on it and improvements in the delivery of this qualification have been made

- Entries age 16-19 by type of qualification shows the majority of students are enrolled on large diploma qualifications compared to other non-regulated qualifications (2191 vs 676)
- Judgements on data emerging from colleges inspected under the new Ofsted framework is confusing with some achievement rates significantly above the national average being judge 'close to average'

It was **Resolved** that the contents of the report should be noted.

25/26.63 **FINANCE – MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FEBRUARY (AGENDA ITEM 11)**

The Vice Principal confirmed that the full accounts and dashboard had been made available on the Governors' portal. The operating surplus to 28th February was £ £1,208k (excluding pension adjustments), which was £361k adverse to the reforecast Q1 budget. Income is £105k adverse, pay expenditure is £216k adverse and non-pay expenditure is £40k adverse year to date. The major income and expenditure variances to the Q1 Forecast are detailed in the attached dashboard.

The forecast year end position had been revised to accommodate the effect of potential risks and savings that have been identified following a full review of income and expenditure. The overall Operating Surplus or the Total Surplus for the year has not changed, however there are movements between budget lines. Pay budgets reflected the Local Government Pension Scheme employer rate reduction from 22.2% to 15% with effect from 1st April 2026. This has mitigated the majority of the increased agency costs that have been incurred due to hard to recruit posts. The difference has been funded by the savings in vacancies that have been removed from the establishment for the remainder of the year

The actual cash position at 28th February 2026 is £7.112m. The cash forecast to December from the Q1 reforecast was £7.565m, an adverse difference of £453k. This is due to High Needs income from the local authorities not yet being received (timing), operating cost payments (timing) and Capital receipts & payments (timing). The cash position had been reforecast and reprofiled for Q2 which included the repayment of the loan in March 2026. The closing balance as at 31 July 2026 is now expected to be £6.296m (a reduction of £544k compared to the Q1 forecast). The reduction is mainly in relation to the repayment of the bank loan of £822k (including the early repayment fee) offset by an increase in balance sheet cash transactions i.e. Bursary, Employer Incentives etc.

The Financial Performance and Profitability tables on page 1 of the dashboard have been updated to include the Q2 forecast outturn position.

The forecast DfE financial health grade remains "OUTSTANDING".

All covenants are forecast to be achieved. Due to the bank loan being repaid in March 2026 there will no longer be a requirement to report on this item therefore the KPI section on bank covenants will be removed from March 2026.

Following discussion members noted:

- Confirmation of in year growth funding at circa £340k
- Details of the National Insurance grant contribution should be known by end of May and will be paid 100% in September.
- There will be a full budget reforecast at q3

In response to a member question regarding a long term plan to reduce agency cost the Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Resources said the College plans delivery of the curriculum with established posts or with vacancies, agency cover was for long term sickness rather than posts that could not be filled. Absence cover insurance was not viable for a college with 400+ staff as this would be too expensive. It was confirmed the variance was usually within 1% of plan, staff utilisation and sickness absence was monitored via business reviews and agency cover was always a last resort .

It was **Resolved** that the contents of the report should be noted.

25/26.63 **Property Strategy Update**

The Vice Principal introduced the report and provided an update on the following:

		An update on 2025-26 completed projects: • Transformation Fund FE01 – Woodbury Centre: Remaining phased retention payments due in 2026 • GMCA Sufficiency Fund and Local Growth Fund; Project monitoring returns have been submitted – awaiting feedback. • OfS Capital Funding 2025-2026; £212,208 had been awarded to support capital refurbishment in the University Centre and the purchase of IT equipment, with an expectation that all works were completed by end March 2026. The monitoring return has been submitted. Current projects Including: • £15,394 awarded to support the feasibility and development of decarbonization projects to a concept level of design (RIBA 2). Currently surveying Woodbury and Prospects with report due end at the of the month. Once submitted, the College should be able to bid for further funding from the Public Building Retrofit Enabling Fund to complete identified projects. • TfGM Cycle Parking Grant: £9,216 awarded to support the purchase of 12 x bike shelters. Order has been placed, with expected delivery date of 26th May 26. (4 x Woodbury Centre / 4 x University Centre / 4 x Millennium Centre) • FECCA1 and FECCA2: Both allocations circa £1.6m. and are to support the various identified works around campus. • FECDC2: Survey report has now been received, the information provided will be used to prioritise future Estates work, ensuring all work continues to improve the condition of the College. • Tenders / Bids : Caterlink have been awarded a 1-year extension to their 3-year contract to cover period 2026-2027. There will be an option to extend for a final year following for 2027-2028.
		It was Resolved that the contents of the report should be noted.
25/26.64		**Meeting Evaluation Form (Agenda Item 13)**
		The Post Meeting Evaluation summary from the Corporation meeting held on 17th March 2026, was noted.
		It was Resolved that the contents of the report should be noted.
25/26.65		**FUTURE CORPORATION MEETINGS (AGENDA ITEM 14)**
		5.00pm Tuesday, 7th July 2026 – in person
		Members of Staff and Staff Governors withdrew from the meeting at 18.40p.m.
25/26.66		**CONFIDENTIAL AGENDA ITEM (AGENDA ITEM 15)**
		a) Remuneration: • Members noted that the Principal's salary had been adjusted to reflect the changes in the LGPS contribution rate, in line with the agreement approved by the Corporation on 4th July 2017. **b) Succession Planning Governor Group** • The Chair confirmed that earlier in the day the group had interviewed 2 potential HR Consultancies and agreed their preferred option. **c) Clerk Recruitment** • The Chair confirmed that the post would be advertised.
		It was Resolved that the contents of the report should be noted.

There being no further discussion the meeting closed at 6.48p.m.

Signed and approved as an accurate record of the meeting:……………………………Date………………………….

Summary of Actions – Corporation Meeting on 28th April 2026			
Item	**Action**	**Person Responsible**	**Timescale**
25/26.59	**The College Accountability Statement 2026/27 is approved for submission to the DfE by 31 July 2026.**	Clerk	31st July 2027