



MidKent College

GOVERNING BODY

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on Wednesday 19 November 2025 at 17.00hrs on Teams.

Present:

Miss A Currie	Chair
Mr S Cook	Principal/CEO
Mr S Hardie	
Mr S Jackson	
Ms A Orhiere	
Mrs M Quadri	

In attendance:	Ms C Burkin	Clerk to the Governing Body
	Mr C Hare	Executive Director of Employers & Corporate Services & Deputy CEO
	Ms N Hill	HR item 5
	Mr M Peat	Executive Director of Finance & Estates
	Ms A Tarbet	HR item 5
	Mrs J Thompson	HR Item 5

1 Declarations of Interest

The members' interests are numbered and referenced on the Declaration of Interest log which can be obtained from the Clerk.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr M Prentis.

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2025

The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2025, Paper GBF&R25/1282 and confidential minutes were accepted by the Committee as a true record.

4 Matters Arising and Outstanding Matters Report

Members discussed Paper GBF&R25/1283, the Outstanding Matters Report.

- No 1. People Services Team Update – EDI Report update – **Complete**.
- No 2. People Services Team Update – EDI Policy update – **complete** under item 8.
- No 3. Options Appraisal – Estates Strategy – Capital Investment - postponed to the February meeting – **Ongoing**.
- No 4. People Services Team Update – updated data included under item 5. **Complete**.
- No 5. Pay Award 2025/26 – **Complete**.
- No 6. Investment Fund Annual Review – meeting with fund manager to be arranged – **Outstanding**.

5 People Services Update – Paper GBF&R25/1284

Chris Hare introduced [Natalee Hill and Abi Tarbet from the People Team who joined the meeting along with Julia Thompson](#). They presented the papers which provided an overview of the workforce metrics, any notable challenges, areas for improvement and successes.

N Hill particularly highlighted:

- Advert to offer led time is 29.4 days.
- Induction for new staff within 14 days sits at 98.25%.
- Mandatory training is at 99.7% compliance or higher
- Absence is currently at 9.43 days.
- Voluntary turnover is 10.02%.

Members confirmed that trend analysis were carried out looking at days of the week and particular times of the year/term. They were assured that any highlighted trends are then discussed with relevant managers or staff members. Further discussion took place regarding absence data, and the Committee were satisfied with how this is monitored and mitigated by the team.

The Committee challenged the comments around work/life balance and N Hill noted that further analysis would be carried out. It was noted that increased absence is widely reported across the many sectors.

Members also asked how the mandatory training is reviewed and were assured that the new system allows bespoke training to be conducted, and recruitment training is refreshed for managers to ensure continued improvements.

Members thanked N Hill for the comprehensive report and requested further context around the data for future reports to help them understand any influencing factors.

Action: J Thompson

Theme – Recruitment – Paper GBF&R25/1284a - the Deep Dive provided the Committee with insight of the workforce recruitment performance over the past 12 months. The insight highlighted any notable challenges, areas for improvement and successes, associated with recruitment and onboarding new entrants to the workforce. Abi Tarbet presented slides and informed members that since the last deep dive in 2023 the People Team (PT) have made significant improvements to the efficiency, compliance, and candidate experience. This has been supported by modernised systems and data-driven decision-making.

She highlighted the following improvements:

- Introduction of a bespoke ATS (applicant tracking) , enabled the creation of a 250+ candidate talent pool, and improved hiring manager engagement.
- Reduction reliance on external agencies.
- Enhanced onboarding to improve early retention and feedback from new starters.
- Out-perform many FE peers, with an average time-to-hire more than 50% faster than sector averages.
- Expanding the use of AI and automation.
- Continued embedding of EDI across all recruitment activity.
- Continued strengthening the College’s employer brand.
- Note to continue workforce planning and associated CPD to address the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper, which called for a “data-driven national view of skills needs” and a “specialist and prestigious FE workforce.”

Members questioned some of the trends in the data and noted the difficulties in recruiting in some areas. A Tarbet assured the Committee of the work being undertaken to make improvements through the road map with some quick wins and some more longer-term plans.

Gender Pay Report 2025 – Paper GBF&R25/1284b. Natalee Hill introduced the paper which updated members on the position in respect of the statutory Gender Pay Report and progress in respect of the College’s aim to reduce the Gender Pay Gap. She highlighted:

- Mean pay gap has decreased by 1.5%
- Median pay gap has increased by 4.68%
- The percentage of women employed in the Upper Quartile has increased by 7%.
- Overall, the percentage of male staff working at the College has fallen by 2%.
- Voluntary inclusion of ethnicity & disability pay gap information
- Plans to review the strategy for lower paid roles and recruitment language to encourage more diverse applications.

Members noted the report with no concerns raised but recognised the legal obligation to report on the gender pay gap annually and publish this on Government and College website. They therefore **recommended** this to the Governing Body for publication.

Action: A Currie

Equal Pay Audit 2025 – Paper GBF&R24/1284c. Natalee Hill updated the Committee on the position in respect of the voluntary equal pay audit for 2025. They noted for gender, disability and ethnicity most grades showed pay gaps within Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) acceptable tolerance with the exception of the Apprentice Trainer role which required remedial action to align to acceptable tolerances.

Members were informed that the Equal Pay Audit report is voluntary and not published however the College is required to ensure that under the Equality Act 2010, men and women receive equal pay for equal work. It was highlighted that the UK government is reviewing the equal pay framework to potentially extend rights to ethnic minority and disabled workers in the future.

Members noted the report.

Chris Hare informed members of the positive feedback he had gained from new staff at Induction around their onboarding experience. He and the Committee thanked Abi Tarbet and Natalee Hill for the continued improvements made by the People Team.

Julia Thompson, Abi Tarbet and Natalee Hill left the meeting.

6 Medway School of Arts (MSA) Update – verbal

Jim Mawby joined the meeting to update the Committee on the recruitment at MSA.

He informed members that the enrolment numbers had doubled to 45 with 22 foundation and 23 pathway students. He appreciated this was still below business plan, but the Committee and Exec agreed they had underestimated the time it would take to build a Brand and get traction re student numbers. He assured members that costs are continually monitored and reduced where required.

The Committee challenge the impact on the payback period and recognised the School will take longer than anticipated to break even. J Mawby reminded members of the non-financial benefits of the School and the plans to work with the Universities to further promote the courses. It was agreed that J Mawby and M Peat would review the income and expenditure and report back to the next meeting.

Action: J Mawby/Peat

The Committee asked financial support would be useful to support further marketing/branding. They were informed that current students are also getting involved with the marketing and this is being presented on all appropriate platforms.

J Mawby informed the Committee of a significant increase of visitors at a recent open event and increased number of applicants via UCAS. The College will have more details on these from February 2026.

He informed members that detailed papers re MSA were being reported to GR&A and QTL Committee and the Chair encouraged members to read these when available.

Members thanked J Mawby for the update and looked forward to further details at the next meeting. [He left the meeting.](#)

Action: J Mawby

7 Draft Management Accounts to the end of September 2025 - Paper GBF&R25/1285

Martin Peat introduced paper GBF&R25/1285, the MKC draft management accounts and the MKCTS draft management accounts to the end of September 2025.

Members noted the Group position had improved from the budget.

[This item was minuted as confidential due to the content.](#)

Members **accepted** the accounts and thanked M Peat.

8 Policies for Approval

Members were reminded that only policies with major changes are presented to the Committee for approval and the Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are completed before presentation. The Committee considered the following policies:

- a. Procurement Policy – only minor job and DFE title changes.
- b. Tuition and Exams Fee Policy – only minor changes re job titles and DFE title plus a minor fee change by £50.
- c. Apprenticeship Tuition and Exams Fee – only minor changes.
- d. MKC Short Term Treasury Policy - a new paragraph had been added as required by the college financial handbook - **approved**.
- e. MKC Long Term Investment Policy – a new paragraph had been added as required by the colleges financial handbook - **approved**.

Considered under the People Team item for approval:

- f. EDI Policy - This policy had undergone a comprehensive review and edit, including an assessment of inclusive language, readability, and consistency in naming conventions. It had been considered and agreed as a draft by the EDI Committee to ensure alignment with legislative requirements – **approved**.

- g. MKC Anti-Harassment & Anti-Bullying Policy – following feedback from the F&R Committee at a previous meeting, this policy had undergone a comprehensive review and edit, including an assessment of inclusive language, readability, and consistency in naming conventions – **approved**.
- h. MKC Disciplinary Policy - following feedback from the F&R Committee at a previous meeting, the policy had undergone a comprehensive review and edit, including an assessment of inclusive language, readability, and consistency in naming conventions – **approved**.

Members scrutinised all major amendments and **approved** the policies for **recommendation** to the Governing Body.

Action: A Currie

Standing items received for information:

9 Decarbonisation Project Update – Paper GBF&R25/1287

Martin Peat updated members on progress with the project highlighting:

- Energisation had taken place on both campuses with some disruption but minimal impact overall. The Solar and Air source heating were now working and producing data for collation.
- An issue at Medway was managed effectively and could not have been foreseen, it only disrupted teaching and learning for a small number of students for one day.
- The Salix grant is secured and there are no issues with the delay to the project.
- Negotiations continue to minimise impact on the final budget.
- Both campuses are in the commission stage with Medway nearly complete, both will be by the end of the month.
- The College was successful in winning a prestigious Green Gown Award for Climate Action 2030 and has been nominated for further awards.

Members thanked and congratulated M Peat and the team for the successful commissioning.

10 Investment Strategy Update - Paper GBF&R25/1288

Martin Peat updated members on the investment report to 30 September 2025.

Members noted the original investment had increased and is progressing well.

They thanked M Peat for the update and look forward to hearing feedback from the meeting with the Fund Manager at the next meeting.

11 Risk Register Review

Martin Peat presented a list of risks relevant to the Committee. It was agreed that several had been covered by the agenda items and papers presented but following changes to the College's Risk Strategy the Committee recommended the following risks be amended regarding their risk appetite:

- Failure to meet Business Planning targets for the Medway School of Arts
- Failure to achieve Higher Education enrolment and funding targets
The above two risks to be amended to within appetite as the Committee have agreed to continue with the provision.
- Failure to manage construction and development projects adversely affecting normal operations.
- Failure to prevent breach of policies or values.
The above two risks to be amended to within appetite.

Action: M Peat to amend
Action: A Currie recommend to the GR&A Committee

12 Any Other Business

Agenda for 25 February 2026 – approved. The Business Case for Maidstone item will be discussed by Exec and C Hare will inform the Chair if it should remain on the agenda.

Action: C Hare

DfE Financial Health Letter/Dashboard – M Peat explained the document which confirmed the College has Outstanding financial health.

The Chair thanked Martin Peat on behalf of the Committee for his contributions, support and many excellent papers over the years. They particularly thanked him for the excellent progress with the green agenda and for keeping the College safe and secure in financial terms. The Committee wished him well in his retirement and looked forward to working with the new CFO at future meetings.

13 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 25 February 2026 at 5pm on teams.

The meeting closed at 18.58hrs.