BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Finance & Infrastructure Committee

Tuesday 24 February 2026 at 5.00pm **Room K-TO-624, Kingsway Campus** (MS Teams option available)

Minute of the Finance & Infrastructure Committee meeting held on Tuesday 24 February 2026 at 5.00pm in Room K-TO-624 Kingsway Campus and via Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT:	Brian Lawrie (Chair)	Robert Young
	Stephen Oakley	Simon Hewitt
	Ged Bell	Donald Mackenzie
	Derek Stewart	Laurie O'Donnell
	Colin Smith	Simon Hewitt
	Jenna Lawrence	Donna Fordyce

IN ATTENDANCE:	Steve Taylor (Vice Principal Support Services and Operations)	
	Andy Ross (Director of Infrastructure)	Nicky Anderson (Director of Finance)
	Billy Grace (Head of Estates and Sustainability)	Megan MacQueen (Executive Coordinator)

1. WELCOME

B Lawrie welcomed everyone to the Finance and Infrastructure Committee and highlighted that he was keen to change the way papers were presented to remove the need for these to be summarised by College staff. This change was welcomed.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted from Derek Smith, Kirstin Marsh and Julie Grace.

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONNECTION & INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest or connection.

4. MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee meeting held on 2 December 2025 was approved as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

6. FINANCE

i) Financial Sustainability

S. Hewitt provided a verbal update highlighting that good progress had been made on the savings with substantial in-year savings achieved . B. Lawrie thanked S. Hewitt for the ongoing updates on financial sustainability and on the recent Scottish Government budget. S. Hewitt confirmed that savings achieved through voluntary severance and other measures have reduced the projected deficit from £2.34m to £0.8m.

Staff briefings have been held in recent weeks to update colleagues on the position. Despite the challenging context, student retention and satisfaction have improved compared with previous years. The current savings plan is complete; residual risks (including those relating to unions) are being closed out.

An update will be issued to the Board and to staff in the coming weeks.

Recent momentum and sector campaigning have had a national impact. Funding allocations remain fixed, and the College is engaging with the SFC regarding flexibility in allocation.

ii) Budget Monitoring Report

The report was noted. Savings are primarily attributable to staffing reductions. The section on ongoing projections highlights the need for continued caution. B. Lawrie noted that the report evidences the substantial work underway across the College.

iii) Draft Financial Strategy

Presented for noting. B. Lawrie opened discussion.

L. O'Donnell asked whether the recent ministerial letter should be incorporated and it was confirmed that this would be reviewed for alignment. B. Lawrie emphasised linkage to relevant external documents as well as internal strategies.

D. Mackenzie asked about the risk of losing students to local universities; S. Hewitt confirmed this remains a risk. S. Hewitt advised that SFC guidance on additional funded places has changed, but the overall risk remains.

D. Fordyce commended the document's layout and clarity / accessibility. G. Bell asked whether the document had been shared with staff; N. Anderson confirmed it has not yet been circulated in full, though key elements have been communicated through staff briefings and financial updates.

S. Hewitt noted unmet demand for January starts with approximately 200 students unable to secure a place; SLT has discussed tracking and following these journeys where possible. In response to R. Young's question on organisational agility, S. Hewitt noted fixed staff costs have increased from c.80% to over 90%, which inevitably impacts on flexibility and agility.

B. Lawrie queried whether references to the "cost of living crisis" should be reframed, this will be reviewed and updated for the final version. The link to whole College risks was also noted and S. Taylor advised that the overall risk register can be hyperlinked within the final strategy.

In response to S. Oakley, N. Anderson advised the strategy cannot guarantee reduced future savings requirements but would help with the earlier identification and as such would guide planning.

In response to a query from D. Fordyce, S. Hewitt confirmed that “management agents” fees relate to industry bodies such as CITB providing apprentices. Subject to the noted amendments, the paper was approved for submission to the Board. **N Anderson to progress.**

B. Lawrie thanked the SLT and N. Anderson for the quality of the paper.

7. GARDYNE THEATRE UPDATE

N. Anderson provided an update. Gardyne Theatre Limited ceased trading on 31 December 2025. Work is ongoing to implement a new operating model for the theatre, with a number of local groups already booked.

Student productions will now be delivered from the Gardyne Theatre rather than The Space, with the first show scheduled for the end of May.

B. Lawrie welcomed progress and emphasised the importance of community involvement. A. Ross added that the offer would be finalised before wider promotion, though groups who have historically used the theatre have already been contacted.

S Taylor reminded the Committee that the legal dissolution of GTL would take a number of months to be progressed.

8. INFRASTRUCTURE

i) Infrastructure Vision Update

Paper for noting. B. Lawrie highlighted risks arising from the Scottish Government elections and key sector figures stepping down. Additional sector funding may become available and is expected to be prioritised towards colleges with ongoing infrastructure challenges.

S. Hewitt noted that the proposed Green Skills Hub would host Energy Skills Partnership, linking to every college in Scotland. RAAC remains a significant concern and campus development priorities must reflect this.

R. Young queried timelines for the OBC and S Hewitt summarised the current re-work being undertaken as part of the feasibility stage prior to progression of the OBC stage, hopefully for summer 2026. The need to ‘land’ the OBC in line with funding availability was highlighted.

ii) Estates Update

Paper for noting. B. Lawrie welcomed the positive updates. B. Grace confirmed the list provided is a definitive summary of all projects and associated costs.

9. PROCUREMENT

A short report was presented for approval. The Committee approved the UNIDESK system.

10. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Approved with no changes.

11. SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT

Report for noting. J. Lawrence reported that the friendly environment created within the quiet session on the open day was well received.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 26 May 2026 at 5pm, room K-TO-624, Level 6, Kingsway Campus

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
Updated Financial Strategy to go to BOM for Approval	Nicky Anderson	17 March 2026