Southport Education Group

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE (2025/2026)

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1. The membership shall be a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 governors, to include the Principal/CEO and Chair of the Corporation.

1.2. It is noted the Chair of the Corporation may be required to take any necessary action (Chair's Action) to maintain the minimum membership of any Committee.

1.3. Independent Governors' membership of the Committee will not exceed their term of office. Membership of the Committee will end in line with a member's term of office as a Corporation member, or at the request of the Corporation in order to refresh overall Committee membership.

1.4. Governors who serve on the Resources Committee are not eligible to serve on the Audit Committee.

1.5. Committee membership may include associate members, whose skills strengthen and are complementary to those of the Committee. Any such appointees will serve for a two-year term of office which is renewable by the Corporation on the recommendation of the Governance Committee.

1.6. Associates shall be eligible for re-appointment at the end of that period, subject to evidence of ongoing objectivity and satisfactory attendance and engagement.

1.7. Staff and Student Governors are not prohibited from Committee membership; however, careful consideration should be given as to whether this is the most appropriate Committee for those members, considering the Committee's role in oversight of staff performance and pay, as well as financial decisions and recommendations.

2. QUORUM

2.1 The quorum for meetings shall be 3 members, with independent governors constituting a majority of those present. Associate members are to be considered independent when calculating quorum.

2.2 If the quorum is not achieved, any agenda items requiring a decision will either be dealt with through a written resolution or deferred to the next scheduled meeting.

3. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

3.1 The Committee will meet at least termly in each academic year, in line with reporting and regulatory requirements.

3.2 With the agreement of the Chair of the Committee, additional or extraordinary meetings can be called as necessary to meet urgent business needs between scheduled meetings. Where possible, 7 days' notice of the meeting date will be provided; however, the expectation for 7 clear days for review of papers may not be possible for extraordinary meetings.

3.3 Extraordinary meetings will only deal with the specific items they have been called to review, with minutes and actions not taken as a standing item at these meetings.

3.4 Minutes and actions will be taken at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Summary of Areas Within the Committee's Remit

The Committee is responsible for overseeing the effective use of College resources covering the following areas:

- Financial management and financial strategy, including solvency, asset safeguarding and value for money;
- Staffing (HR policies, pay frameworks and deployment);
- Estates and accommodation strategy, utilisation and environmental sustainability;
- Information Technology (IT) strategy and digital infrastructure;
- Marketing strategy and its alignment with resources, student numbers and buildings;
- Subcontracting arrangements and performance;
- Policies relating to finance, fees, investments, borrowing, procurement, write-offs and losses.

In carrying out its responsibilities, the Committee must have due regard to all relevant statutory, regulatory and sector guidance applicable to further education corporations. This includes, but is not limited to: the Department for Education's College Accounts Direction, the College Financial Handbook, the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Colleges, DfE's Subcontracting funding rules for post-16 education and training, DfE's post-16 funding assurance review guidance, and HM Treasury's Managing Public Money, together with any subsequent updates issued by the Department for Education, HM Treasury or other appropriate oversight bodies

4.2 Areas for Review and Oversight

The Committee will review, monitor and advise (without exercising approval powers) on the effective and efficient use of resources and strategy delivery. This section is limited to ongoing oversight and performance monitoring; matters intended for Corporation decision sit under section 4.4.

4.2.1. Financial Oversight

- Arrangements for ensuring the College's solvency, safeguarding its assets and securing value for money;
- Monitoring reports on the finances of the College at each meeting, advising the Corporation on progress towards achieving the agreed financial objectives;
- Identification of any novel, contentious or repercussive transactions requiring DfE approval (to be highlighted to the Corporation).

4.2.2. Strategic Oversight

- Deployment of financial and non-financial resources, including staff and property, advising on effectiveness and efficiency (including staff utilisation);
- Effectiveness of the Marketing Strategy, including oversight of enrolment, ensuring links to utilisation of financial resources, staff and buildings, as well as consideration for the impact of student numbers (termly/standing item);
- Implementation of the Accommodation Strategy; monitoring performance against estates key indicators, including room utilisation, environmental sustainability, the condition and maintenance of the estate, planned site improvements, and the effective use of estates-related budgets.
- To oversee the College's progress toward achieving its environmental and sustainability targets, monitoring performance against agreed indicators and advising the Corporation on risks, compliance and improvement actions.
- Monitoring progress of the IT Strategy, overseeing progress against identified actions;
- College arrangements for subcontracting provision, performance monitoring and value for money.

4.3 Areas for Review and Approval (Delegated Authority)

Within the limits set by the Financial Regulations, DfE guidance, and Managing Public Money, the Committee has delegated authority to approve the following:

4.3.1. Financial Decisions

- Variations in expenditure and capital expenditure requirements (including loans) that are within delegated budgetary control and are not considered material; items outside these limits will be reviewed and recommended to the Corporation;
- Repayment of loans within delegated financial limits and in line with DfE guidance on Managing Public Money; any item beyond delegated limits or requiring DfE approval will be reviewed ahead of seeking Corporation approval;
- Purchase of goods, services and contracts within delegated budgetary limits, ensuring value for money;
- Write-offs and losses within delegated thresholds; items meeting DfE thresholds (financial or reputational) will be escalated for Corporation endorsement and DfE approval.

4.3.2. Financial Policies

- Policies relating to the payment of fees, debt and financial support, including debt recovery (as referenced in the student/learning contract); note - the overarching Tuition Fees Policy requires full Corporation approval;
- Policies for assessment and allocation of financial support, covering access, transport, childcare and residential support, with reference to equal opportunities.

4.3.3. Staffing Policies

- Sickness and absence management;
- Family-friendly policies (e.g. maternity, paternity, bereavement, adoption, flexible working, working hours);
- Ill health, including alcohol and substance abuse policy;
- Harassment and bullying, including sexual harassment where maintained as a separate policy;
- CPD and appraisal policies;
- Staff policies/handbook including relationships, IT use, smoking, intellectual property (IP) and any other relevant and associated matters.

4.4 Areas for Review then Recommendation to the Corporation

The Committee will review and recommend to the Corporation the following matters (with DfE approval sought as required under Managing Public Money or other statutory guidance):

4.4.1 Financial Strategy and Controls

- Annual Estimates of Income and Expenditure;
- Financial Statements;
- Material variations in expenditure
- Capital projects or loans exceeding delegated limits (recommending DfE approval is sought where necessary);
- Policies relating to investment and borrowing, including leasing and credit agreements;
- Any indemnities, letters of comfort and guarantees (seeking DfE approval where these exceed delegated authority);
- Write-offs and losses exceeding Committee limits and ensuring DfE approval where thresholds are met (financial or reputational).

4.4.2 Policies and Frameworks

- Updates to accounting policies and Financial Regulations (including delegated authority limits);
- Overarching Tuition Fees Policy;
- Supply Chain Fees & Charges Policy and other fees and charges policies that have a strategic impact;

- Staff pay and conditions framework (excluding designated senior postholders, which sits within the Remuneration Committee's remit) to include discipline, capability and grievance policies.

4.4.3. Staffing and HR Decisions

- Ensure severance, compensation and ex-gratia payments exceeding delegated limits are supported by a business case and presented for Corporation approval, or endorsement ahead of seeking DfE approval (where Managing Public Money limits are exceeded).

4.4.4. Strategic Estates, sustainability and IT

- To review and recommend to the Corporation for approval the long-term Estates Strategy, including future developments, capital plans, and the optimisation of the College estate to support delivery of educational and strategic objectives.
- To review and recommend to the Corporation for approval the College's long-term IT and digital infrastructure strategy, ensuring it supports operational resilience, security, efficiency and the delivery of high-quality teaching, learning and business functions.
- To review and recommend to the Corporation for approval the College's long-term sustainability strategy, including environmental objectives, associated performance targets, and plans aligned to national frameworks such as the AoC Climate Action Roadmap.

4.4.5. Subcontracting

- Recommendations relating to subcontracting arrangements where Corporation approval is required.

5. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

5.1 The Chair will be appointed by the Corporation for a two-year term of office.

5.2 In the event of the resignation of the Committee Chair (either as Chair or as a Governor) during the year, the procedure outlined in the Corporation's Standing Orders will be used to appoint a replacement Chair.

5.3 In the temporary absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will chair the meeting; should both be absent, a Chair will be appointed from amongst the Governor members of the Committee for that meeting only.

5.4 At the start of each academic year, the Committee will appoint a Vice-Chair from its members to serve as Vice-Chair for one academic year. At the end of the term of office, subject to compliance with all other standing orders and bye-laws, they may be re-elected. This may be an independent governor or an associate member, but not a staff governor, student governor, parent governor or the Principal/CEO.

6. CLERKING ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 The Director of Governance and Compliance will provide clerking for the Committee. In the absence of the Director of Governance and Compliance, members can nominate a member to act as Clerk and take a record of the meeting.

6.2 Although the permanently appointed Governance Professional cannot be a member of the Committee, a member acting as Clerk on a single-meeting basis remains a member of the Committee, can vote and counts towards quorum.

7. REPORTING TO THE CORPORATION

7.1 The minutes of each Committee meeting will be circulated to the full Corporation.

7.2 The Chair of the Committee (or an agreed representative) will provide a verbal report to governors at the next full Corporation meeting.

8. GENERAL

8.1. Decisions to be made at meetings of the Committee will be determined by a majority of the votes of the governor members present and voting.

8.2. Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair will have a second or casting vote.

Membership 2026/2027

- Margaret Boneham (Independent) – Committee Chair
- Michelle Brabner (Principal/CEO)
- Colin Davies (Independent) – Committee Vice Chair
- Rob Firth (Associate)
- Claire Moffat-Lonsdale (Independent)
- Mike Naden (Independent)
- Paul Walker (Corporation Chair)

Chair – Margaret Boneham (Independent). Appointed 1 January 2025 for a term of two years.

Vice-Chair – to be decided by a Committee vote at the first meeting of each academic year (2026/2027: Colin Davies).