Esher Sixth Form College

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 11 March 2026 at 6.00pm
Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Present:
Mark Nelligan, Chair
Claire Douglas, Vice Chair (CDO)
Tom Clark (TCL)
Mark Aulds (MAU)
Liz Gilroy-Scott (LGI)
Oliver Schuster (OSC)
Dan Hards, Principal

Stephanie Wiles, Director of Finance and Estates, (Advising Officer)
Catherine Davies, (Clerk)

1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Mark Aulds declared his interest as Health and Safety Link Governor at Esher Church of England High School.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All Trustees were present.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting of 25th November 2025 were <u>approved</u> as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

F&E1 002 - Chair to review how the size of the student roll, decline in birth rate and size of the campus should be considered in the medium term. **The Chair noted this is a medium term point and will be reviewed in the coming year.**

5. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS, PLUS FORECAST OUTTURN, CASHFLOW AND COMMENTARY FOR 4 AND 5 MONTHS TO 31.12.25 AND 31.01.26.

The Director of Finance and Estates introduced the Management Accounts for months 4 and 5 to 31st January 2026. She made the following points:

- Other income is above budget due to the receipt of the ECF mentor backfill and time off grant from the DfE – which was not budgeted for.
- The HMRC VAT claim was received in February; no further claims can be made until HMRC queries have been actioned and agreed which is a slow process.
- The National Insurance grant for September 2025 to March 2026 has been received and the grant for the remainder of the academic year will be received in September 2026.
- Cash flow is lower than budgeted due to the delay in receiving the VAT claim.

TCL suggested that the Director asks the VAT advisors to write to HMRC on behalf of the College and set out how the issues arose and why they won't happen again and this should help resolve the issue.

The Chair reviewed the cash flow at 31 January 26 against the net cash movement in this period and noted the difference is due to capital spend and payments and receipts not always falling in line with accounting treatment.

The Chair asked for more details regarding capital expenditure and the Director replied that as well as the new classroom block the Capital Plan will outline other projects.

The Committee approved the Review of Management Accounts, cashflow and commentary for months 4 and 5 to 31st January 2026.

6. CAPITAL BUDGET

The Director of Finance and Estates introduced the capital budget and made the following points:

- The rear gate work is expected to take place in the Summer and the Committee agreed with this capital spend.
- A majority of the capital budget has been allocated to the 2 CIF bids with the outcomes due in May. The CIF bids are related to lintel repairs and fire doors. If bids are successful, the budgeted amount will contribute towards the cost of carrying out all the work. If the bids are unsuccessful then the budget will be used to carry out as much work as possible on lintel repairs and fire door replacements.
- Other projects include a new office above Reception and a new toilet area in the Tower.
- A project has been planned to add more solar panels to the roofs (due to an increased capacity of the grid) but this project is currently without an allocated budget.

The Committee asked for more details regarding the fire door replacement programme and the Director of Finance and Estates explained the priority schedule used to decide on the order in which the doors are replaced. The Director added that the Fire Risk Assessment had not raised fire doors as an issue, the priority schedule had been drawn up following input from Surrey Fire Brigade.

The Chair asked for more details regarding the lintel replacement and the Director of Finance and Estates replied that priority will be given to the lintels that are in the most need of replacement.

The Committee agreed an additional budget of £94,000 and agreed on allocation following the outcome of the CIF bids.

7. UPDATE REGARDING REMOVAL OF TEMPORARY CLASSROOMS

The Director updated the Committee that the temporary classrooms are still on site due to windy weather preventing their removal during February half term. The removal is planned during the Easter break; rent is no longer being invoiced, and the provider is covering insurance costs.

8. DRAFT SCHOOL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL CHECKLIST

The Director of Finance and Estates updated the Committee that this document is due to be submitted on 12th March and small changes can be made.

The Director gave an overview of the questions including:

Question 4 : The Principal asked for his recent Accounting Officer training to be included.

Question 11b: The Committee noted the Audit Committee meets twice a year and noted the commentary at the end of the report that 2 meetings a year are sufficient for a College of this size. TCL agreed with this approach.

Question 18: The Chair asked for the text to be amended to "The College is oversubscribed and maintains a reserve list." The Director agreed.

The Committee approved the draft School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool Checklist subject to amendments to questions 4 and 18.

Action: Director of Finance and Estates to amend questions 4 and 18 of the SRMA.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Director of Finance and Estates informed the Committee that there had been 33 accidents this academic year; none required notification to RIDDOR or HSE. This is a reduction in the number of accidents compared to this time last year.

Normal maintenance and servicing continues. The annual external fire risk assessment carried out in February granted the level "tolerable" to the College which is the highest level that can be achieved for a site of this size.

MAU asked if "near miss" reporting is in place and the Director replied that it is not in place and was not raised by the Audit of Health and Safety that took place last year.

MAU asked for an update regarding Health and Safety training and the Director replied that the Estates Manager has completed IOSH refresher training and other training is planned for estates staff. The Director gave an overview of training in place for all staff including the new starter induction and annual fire safety updates at the September Inset day.

10. MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABLITY GROUP MEETING OF 3 MARCH 2026

The Director of Finance and Estates briefed the Committee regarding the meeting and noted the Climate Action Plan put together (for free) by Lets go Zero – a Government organisation. Green Week is taking place this week.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENTS OF PLANNED ACTIVITY

The Director of Finance and Estates noted the gross emissions have reduced between 2020 and 2025 despite an increase in floor area.

The Committee thanked the Director for her briefing.

12. WHAT ARE THE THREE THINGS WE HAVE DONE IN THIS MEETING THAT HAVE MADE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE COLLEGE?

- Asking VAT advisors to write to HMRC re VAT claim process.
- Amendments to SRMA
- Robust challenge of financial statements and budgets.
- Prioritization of capital spend.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Principal briefed the Board regarding the 16-19 Capacity Fund available via Surry County Council (the guidance has yet to be published). The Principal and Director of Finance and Estates asked for support from the Committee to apply for funding for a potential classroom block project when the guidance is issued and the Committee agreed.

The Principal and the Chair thanked the Director of Finance and Estates for her service to the College over 14 years including academization, expansion of the Estate and excellent financial planning.

A recruitment process has been completed and the candidate offered the role of Director of Finance and Estates has the necessary financial qualifications for the role.

15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING –

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 23rd June 2026 at 6pm

The meeting closed at 6.57pm
Attendance was 100 %

Signed and date ....

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

1	Chair to review how the size of the student roll, decline in birth rate and size of the campus should be considered in the medium term. **The Chair noted this is a medium term point and will be reviewed in the coming year.**
2	Director of Finance and Estates to amend questions 4 and 18 of the SRMA.