



REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 JULY 2024

Key Management Personnel, Board of Governors and Professional Advisers

Key management personnel

Key management personnel are defined as members of the College's Executive Management Team and were represented by the following in 2023/24:

Ms P M Brennan-Barrett - Principal and Chief Executive (Accounting Officer)

Mr J Lancaster – Principal and CEO Elect

Mr P Leavey - Deputy Principal – Teaching, Learning & Success

Mr J Wood – Deputy Principal – Finance and Corporate Affairs

Mr G Brough – Vice Principal - Resources

Ms J Hutt – Vice Principal – People & Organisational Development

Mr P O'Hara - Vice Principal - Curriculum & Student Progress

Ms J Deery – Vice Principal – 16-18 Curriculum & Student Access

Ms C Meadows – Director of MIS

Board of Governors

A full list of Governors is given on page 13 of these financial statements.

Ralph Devereux acted as Clerk to the Corporation from 01 August 2023 to 18 April 2024

Geraldine Hulley was Acting Clerk to the Corporation from 02 May 2024 – 31 July 2024

Professional advisers

Financial statements auditors and reporting accountants:

RSM UK Audit LLP

Chartered Accountants

Rivermead House

7 Lewis Court

Grove Park

Leicester

LE19 1SD

Internal Auditors:

Validera

Unit 3

Crompton Court

Burntwood Business Park

Attwood Road

Staffordshire

WS7 3GG

Bankers:

Lloyds Bank PLC

249 Silbury Boulevard

Secklow Gate West

Milton Keynes

MK9 1NA

Solicitors:

Eversheds Sutherlands (International) LLP

One Wood Street

London

EC2V 7WS

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Strategic Report

NATURE, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES:

The governing body present their annual report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2024.

Legal status

The Corporation was established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 for the purpose of conducting Northampton College. The College is an exempt charity for the purposes of Part 3 of the Charities Act 2011.

Mission

The College's mission as approved by its members:

"To enhance the lives of our students and other customers, maximising their potential through learning."

Public Benefit

Northampton College is an exempt charity under Part 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and its principal regulator is the Secretary of State for Education. The members of the Governing Body, who are trustees of the charity, are disclosed on page 13.

In setting and reviewing the College's strategic objectives, the Governing Body has had due regard for the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and particularly upon its supplementary guidance on the advancement of education. The guidance sets out the requirement that all organisations wishing to be recognised as charities must demonstrate, explicitly, that their aims are for the public benefit. In delivering its mission, the College provides the following identifiable public benefits through the advancement of education:

- High-quality teaching
- Widening participation and tackling social exclusion
- Progression to employment or further and higher education
- Provision of a wide range of Apprenticeships
- Excellent employment record for students
- Strong student support systems
- Links with employers, industry and commerce.

Implementation of Strategic Plan

The College's strategic plan 'Putting Skills in Focus' sits alongside quality and financial plans. The Corporation monitors the performance of the College against these plans. The plans are reviewed and updated regularly. The College's continuing key strategic objectives are:

- Quality teaching, learning and skills
Quality is paramount. Our highest priority is to ensure that our students achieve well and grow during their time in college so that they are ready to move on with confidence into further study, employment or self-employment.
- Be an excellent learning organisation
Our aim is to use the resources available to us in the most efficient way possible so that we develop and grow through effective planning.
- Be the college in the community – drive productivity and grow the economy

We are passionate about our community. The College belongs to Northamptonshire and exists to serve the interests of local people. We will listen carefully to the communities we serve and develop our offer alongside other organisations to make sure we support wider economic prosperity and productivity.

- Remain financially stable.

Within the College, specific objectives, linked to the strategic priorities, are regularly reviewed by senior College managers and governors:

Financial objectives

The College's key financial objectives are to:

- Maintain robust financial health, allowing sustained investment and ensuring financial resilience
- Achieve the College's overall financial plan by ensuring that commercial reality drives decisions and directions
- Ensure sound business planning
- Use data, research and information effectively
- Maximise operational efficiency

A series of performance indicators have been agreed to monitor the successful implementation of the policies.

Performance indicators

The College is committed to observing the importance of sector measures and indicators, including the ESFA financial health scores.

Key Performance Indicator	Measure/Target	2023/24
16-18 student number targets	3,718	4,308
Student achievement	91%	91%
Education EBITDA as % of operating income	>/= 8%	6.8%
Adjusted Current Ratio	>/= 1.6	3.2
Borrowing as % operating income	< 20%	0.3%
Staff costs (excl FRS) as % of adjusted income	< 65%	66.5%
Financial Health Score	>/= 240	250

The College is required to complete the annual Finance Record for the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The Finance Record produces a financial health grading. The College's most recent ESFA assessment is an Outstanding financial health grading.

FINANCIAL POSITION
Financial results

The College incurred a surplus for the year of £2,596,000 (2023: surplus of £1,657,000). A reconciliation of the surplus for the year with the underlying operating result is shown below:

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Surplus for the year	2,596	1,657
Adjustment for non-operating items:		
Depreciation and amortisation	3,904	3,863
Capital grants released	(2,865)	(2,789)
Deficit on disposal of assets	-	3
Investment income	(628)	(49)
Interest payable	1	2
Increase/(Decrease) in Holiday Pay Provision	89	(73)
FRS 102 Pension costs less contributions payable	(696)	324
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Underlying operating surplus	2,401	2,938
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Total comprehensive income of £1,900,000 (2023: £2,194,000) is after charging net actuarial adjustments in respect of pension schemes of £696,000 (2023: crediting £537,000).

The College has accumulated reserves of £37,485,000 (2023: £35,585,000) and bank and cash balances of £20,406,000 (2023: £17,536,000), including Local Government Pension Scheme pension liability £Nil (2023: £Nil) and debt of £89,000 (2023: £156,000).

Tangible fixed asset additions during the year amounted to £1,780,000 (2023: £682,000).

The College has significant reliance on education sector funding bodies, largely from recurrent grants. In 2023/24 the funding bodies provided approximately 87% of the College's total income.

Treasury policies and objectives

Treasury management is the management of the College's cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

The College has a separate treasury management policy in place.

Short-term borrowing for temporary revenue purposes is authorised by the Accounting Officer. All other borrowing requires the authorisation of the Corporation. Following reclassification of colleges to the central government sector in November 2022, all borrowing would also require approval from the Department for Education.

Cash flows and liquidity

The net cash inflow from operating activities was £3,578,000 in the year (2023: £3,038,000).

The net cash inflow of £2,870,000 includes capital grants received from ESFA of £310,000; acquisition of fixed assets of £1,780,000, movements in working capital and the management of other resources, as detailed on the Statement of Cash Flows on page 30.

Reserves Policy

The College had no formal Reserves Policy for the year ended 31 July 2024 but recognised the importance of reserves in the financial stability of an organisation, whilst ensuring that adequate resources are provided for the College's core business. The College currently holds no designated or restricted reserves. At the balance sheet date, the Income and Expenditure account reserve stands at £30,389,000 (2023: £28,489,000). This is after an assessed pension obligation of £Nil (2023: £Nil). It is the Corporation's intention to generate annual operating surpluses over the life of the Strategic Plan to offset any deficits which may arise in respect of pension schemes, as well as to invest in the infrastructure and operations of the College. The Corporation approved a Reserves Policy for future years on 27 June 2024. This policy recognises that College reserves may be required to support future investment in estates and facilities, and following significant student growth the College is actively considering its future estate needs and funding options.

CURRENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Student numbers

In 2023/24 the College has recognised £28,121,000 (2023: £24,171,000) from funding body recurrent grants, excluding income from apprenticeships, based on activity delivered.

Excluding apprenticeships, the College had 6,297 funded and 326 non-funded students (2023: 6,313 funded and 299 non-funded students).

Student achievements

Students continue to prosper and to achieve at the College despite an ongoing increase in the proportion of students coming to the College with more complex barriers to learning and the College's high previous achievement, forecast achievement rates in 2023/24 (91.3%) are consistent with 2022/23 (91%).

Curriculum developments

The College continues to see an increase in students with complex barriers to learning, including mental health and wellbeing. College staff have continued to work intensively with students to address lost learning and help them achieve and progress.

The College has a regional reputation for curriculum innovation and change. It has continued to introduce new courses in many areas of the curriculum to meet student needs. A particular strength is in making students ready for the next stage in their lives.

In 2023/24 the College has extended its T-level qualification offer alongside existing vocational study programmes and has collaborated with other educational providers in a Local Skills Improvement Fund project, enhancing learning opportunities and equipment across the region.

The College retains a developing HE offer, largely through a number of HNCs and HNDs together with initial teacher training programmes.

The College is helping students move into work through of its Apprenticeship programme. In 2023/24 the College had 482 Apprentices in learning (2022/23: 554).

The College continues to invest in the delivery of maths and English to all its full-time students, providing additional support where this has been necessary for students who are experiencing complex barriers to learning.

The College continues to improve student outcomes through rigorous target setting and regular monitoring of progress at individual, course, section and school levels.

Payment performance

The Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, which came into force on 1 November 1998, requires colleges, in the absence of agreement to the contrary, to make payments to suppliers within 30 days of either the provision of goods or services or the date on which the invoice was received. The College's policy is to pay suppliers as soon as practicable after a debt becomes due, and within 30 days where no other agreement has been made. The College incurred no interest charges in respect of late payment for this period.

Events after the end of the reporting period

None relevant to these accounts.

Future prospects

The College governors approved a three-year financial plan in June 2024 which sets financial objectives for the period.

The College has been allocated ESFA funding income totalling £34,604,000 for 2024/25, excluding apprenticeship income.

In addition, the College received a facility of £210,000 in 2024/25 for 19+ Advanced Learning Loans.

The College has developed its planning and monitoring processes to ensure that it continues to be efficient and capable of maintaining activity at optimum levels commensurate with levels of funding. Alongside this activity, the College is continuing to explore ways of diversifying funding and extending operations.

The College continues to play a full role in strategic partnerships across the South East Midlands region, including within the Local Skills Improvement projects in collaboration with other providers.

The College has developed a Higher Education strategy and has successfully applied to be on the Office for Students' register of HE providers.

In 2023/24, the College received capital allocations from ESFA totalling £310,000 which will support investment in equipment for the College's expanding range of T-levels.

The College places great emphasis on improving the quality of its learning delivery and in improving leadership and management. The College was inspected in October 2024 and was judged as a 'Good' college in all aspects.

The College remains well placed to deliver its mission to enhance the lives of our students and other customers, maximising their potential through learning.

RESOURCES:

The College has various resources that it can deploy in pursuit of its strategic objectives.

Tangible resources include the main College site of 8.62 ha at Booth Lane, Northampton; the town centre campus at Lower Mounts, Northampton; and a 2.56 ha site at Daventry.

Financial

The College has £37 million of net assets (including a £Nil pension liability) and long term debt of £89,000 (2023: £36 million of net assets after a £Nil pension liability and long term debt of £156,000).

People

During 2023/24, the College employed 476 full time equivalent people of whom 214 (45%) were teaching staff.

Reputation

The College has a good reputation locally and nationally. The College's recent Ofsted inspection confirms that the College is Good in all aspects. Maintaining a quality brand is essential for the College's success at attracting students and external relationships.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES:

The College has continued to develop and enhance its Business Planning and Monitoring and Risk Management processes. These ensure an effective level of internal control, securing the protection of the College's assets and reputation.

Based on the strategic plan, in the year ended 31 July 2024, the Risk Management Group (which consists of senior managers from across the College) undertakes a comprehensive and regular review of the risks to which the College is exposed. They identify systems and procedures, including specific actions to mitigate any potential impact on the College. These internal controls are then implemented and their impact is assessed.

In addition to the annual review, the Risk Management Group will also consider any risks which may arise as a result of a new area of work being undertaken by the College.

A Strategic and Corporate Risk Register is maintained which is reviewed by the Audit Committee at each of its meetings. The risk register identifies the key risks, the likelihood of those risks occurring, their potential impact on the College and the actions being taken to reduce and mitigate the risks. Risks are prioritised using a consistent scoring system. A revised Board Assurance Framework has been developed and was approved by the Corporation in October 2024.

Outlined below is a brief description of the Key Strategic Risks which the College faces and the controls and actions which mitigate these risks. Not all factors are within the College's control. Other factors besides those listed below may also adversely affect the College.

1. The College fails to manage its finances failing to deliver its target financial performance
 - Business Planning and stringent Resource Allocation
 - Regular budgetary monitoring and close control of resources
2. Students not achieving their required learning outcomes
 - Self-Assessment Review and Quality Improvement Plan
 - Monitoring processes and School of Academic & Vocational Support
3. Failure to recruit target student numbers
 - Excellent Information, Advice & Guidance developing reputation and marketing activity

4. Failure to meet changing stakeholder expectations
 - Close liaison with employers and employer representative bodies to ensure responsiveness
 - College provision regularly reviewed to ensure relevance and sustainability
5. College's Cyber Security compromised
 - Regular reviews and close working with JISC
 - Cyber Essentials quality mark achieved.
6. Impact of Government funding decisions on financial stability and the College mission
 - Regular horizon scanning and mitigation through curriculum offer
 - Maintenance of strong financial position and resilience

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS

Northampton College works extensively within its community and has many stakeholders. These include:

- Students;
- Education sector funding bodies;
- Staff;
- Local employers;
- Local Authorities;
- Local Chambers of Commerce and Employer Representative Bodies;
- The local community;
- Other FE and HE institutions and partners;
- Trade unions;
- Professional bodies and Trade Associations; and
- Local schools.

The College recognises the importance of these relationships and engages in regular communication with stakeholders through a variety of routes.

Equal opportunities and employment of disabled persons

Northampton College is committed to being a community where everyone can contribute and be recognised and valued for who they are. The College strives to provide an inclusive, respectful and considerate environment in which all individuals are treated with dignity and respect at work and are supported to accomplish their goals. We respect and value positively differences in race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief and age.

As such, the College is committed to both the elimination of unlawful discrimination and the positive promotion and celebration of Equality, Inclusion and Belonging throughout all aspects of its work.

The College's "Dignity, Diversity and Equality" Policy Statement is published on the College's website. It sets out our commitment to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The College publishes an Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report to ensure compliance with all relevant equality legislation including the Equality Act 2010. The College undertakes equality impact assessments on all new policies and procedures. Equality impact assessments are also undertaken for existing policies and procedures on a prioritised basis.

The College considers all employment applications from disabled persons, bearing in mind the aptitudes of the individuals concerned, and guarantees an interview to any disabled applicant who meets the essential criteria for the post. Where an existing employee becomes disabled, every effort is made to ensure that employment with the College continues. The College's policy is to provide training, career development and opportunities for promotion which, as far as possible, provide identical opportunities to those of non-disabled employees.

Disability statement

The College seeks to achieve the objectives set down in the Equality Act 2010, in particular through the following:

- (a) As part of the redevelopment and maintenance of its buildings, the College installed lifts and ramps so that most facilities allow access to people with a disability. In new buildings all areas are accessible.
- (b) There is a list of specialist equipment, such as audio facilities, computer applications and assistive technologies, which the College can make available for use by students.
- (c) The admissions policy for all students is available on the College Website. Appeals against a decision not to offer a place are dealt with under the complaints policy.
- (d) The College has made a significant investment in the appointment of specialist lecturers and staff to support students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Additional Learning Support Assistants also provide a variety of support for learning. There is a continuing programme of staff development to ensure the provision of a high level of appropriate support for students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- (e) Specialist programmes are described in programme information guides, and achievements and destinations are recorded and published in the standard College format.
- (f) Counselling and welfare services are described on the College Website and in course directories/College Student Guides – these are issued to students together with the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure leaflets at induction.

Trade union facility time

The Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 require the College to publish information on facility time arrangements for trade union officials at the College.

The data below covers the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Relevant union officials

Numbers of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	FTE employee number
2	2

Percentage of time spent on facility time

Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	0
1-50%	2
51-99%	0
100%	0

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time	£11,309
Total pay bill	£21,045,717
Percentage of total pay bill spent on facility time	0.05%

Paid trade union activity

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time	2.15%
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Disclosure of information to auditors

The members who held office at the date of approval of this report confirm that, so far as they are each aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the College's auditors are unaware; and each member has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the College's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved by order of the members of the Corporation on 12 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Anne - Marie Kilday.

AM Kilday
Chair of Board of Governors

Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control

The following statement is provided to enable readers of the annual report and accounts of the College to obtain a better understanding of its governance and legal structure. This statement covers the period from 1st August 2023 to 31st July 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

The College endeavours to conduct its business:

- i. in accordance with the seven principles identified by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership);
- ii. in full accordance with the guidance to colleges from the Association of Colleges in The Code of Governance for English Colleges (“the Code”); and
- iii. having due regard to the principles and guidance of the UK Corporate Governance Code 2018 insofar as we consider it applicable to the further education sector.

In the opinion of the Governors, the College complies with all the provisions of the Code, and it has complied throughout the year ended 31 July 2024. The Governing Body recognises that, as a body entrusted with both public and private funds, it has a particular duty to observe the highest standards of corporate governance at all times. In carrying out its responsibilities, it takes full account of the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges issued and subsequently revised by the Association of Colleges, which it formally adopted in November 2015.

Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)
The Corporation

The members who served on the Corporation during the year and up to the date of signature of this report were as listed in the table below.

Name	Date of Appointment (Original Apt)	Term of Office	Date of Resignation	Status of Apt (External unless stated)	Corporation Meetings attended 2023/24	Committees served
Pat Brennan-Barrett	01/09/2013	30/08/24	30/08/24	Accounting Officer	6/6	1,3,4
Jason Lancaster	01/09/2024	N/A		Accounting Officer	N/A	1,3,4
David Bailey	06/10/2022	06/10/2026		Independent	4/6	1,2
Becky Bradshaw	30/11/2021	29/11/2025	31/07/24	Independent	2/6	1
Steve Bunker	05/10/2023	04/10/2027		Staff	4/5	1
Philip Hilton	07/11/2012	04/11/2024	31/07/24	Vice Chair	6/6	1,2,5
Anne-Marie Kilday	09/03/2023	08/03/2027		Chair from 01/08/24	6/6	1,3
Paul Nutter	06/10/2022	05/10/2026		Independent	5/6	1
Mark Robbins	14/05/2019	12/05/2027		Independent	5/6	1,2,3
Geraldine Schofield	27/07/2011	31/07/2025	31/07/2024	Independent	1/6	1,3,4,5
Helen Scott	06/02/2018	04/02/2026	31/07/2024	Chair	6/6	1,3,4
David Smith	11/05/2019	10/05/2024	31/12/2024	Independent	4/6	1,2,3
Michael Watkins	06/10/2022	05/10/2026	31/07/2024	Independent	1/6	1
Rod Wood	01/08/2021	31/07/2025		Independent	5/6	1,2,4
Janet Baines	01/05/2024	30/04/2025		Co-optee	N/A	2
Paul Beers	01/08/2024	31/07/2028		Independent	N/A	1,2,3
Lynn Drinkald	01/08/2024	31/07/2028		Independent	N/A	1,2
Alexander Owen	10/12/2024	09/12/2028		Independent		1,3
Alric Pagon	10/12/2024	09/12/2028		Independent		1
Kay Sellick	10/12/2024	09/12/2028		Independent		1,3

Laura Crandley	10/12/2024	09/12/2028		Independent		1,2
Luke Bowers	25/11/2024	31/07/2025		Co-optee		3
Keira White	17/10/2024	31/07/2025		Student	N/A	1
Chidiebere Uleme	17/10/2024	31/07/2025		Student	N/A	1
Molly Allen	01/08/2023	31/07/2024		Student	1/5	1
Nehmat Ahmed	01/08/2023	31/07/2024		Student	0/5	1
Julie Teckman	06/10/23	05/09/27		Independent	4/4	1, 3
Neus Garriock	01/03/24	29/02/28		Independent	1/2	1
Mr R Devereux has acted as Clerk to the Corporation 1 August 2021 – 18 April 2024 Ms G Hulley was acting Clerk to the Corporation from 02 May 2024; permanent Clerk from 1 September 2024.						

Key to Committees:

1. Corporation
2. Audit Committee
3. Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee (QTLA)
4. Governance Committee
5. Remuneration Committee

It is the Corporation's responsibility to bring independent judgement to bear on issues of strategy, performance, resources and standards of conduct.

The Corporation is provided with regular and timely information on the overall financial performance of the College together with other information such as performance against funding targets, proposed capital expenditure, quality matters and personnel-related matters such as health and safety and environmental issues. The Corporation operates an approved schedule of regular meetings.

In addition to the five main Corporation meetings held during 2023/24, the Corporation held an additional meeting in August 2023 to agree a revised pay award due to an improved financial outlook. The Corporation conducts its business through a number of committees. Each committee has terms of reference, which have been approved by the Corporation. These committees are Search and Governance; Remuneration; Audit; Task & Finish and Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment. Full minutes of all Corporation meetings, except those deemed to be confidential by the Corporation, are available on the College's website at www.northamptoncollege.ac.uk or from the Clerk to the Corporation at:

Northampton College
 Booth Lane
 Northampton
 NN3 3RF

The Clerk to the Corporation maintains a register of financial and personal interests of the governors. The register is available for inspection at the above address.

Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)

All governors are able to take independent professional advice in furtherance of their duties at the College's expense and have access to the Clerk to the Corporation, who is responsible to the Board for ensuring that all applicable procedures and regulations are complied with. The appointment, evaluation and removal of the Clerk are matters for the Corporation as a whole.

Formal agendas, papers and reports are supplied to governors in a timely manner, prior to Board meetings. Briefings are also provided on an ad hoc basis.

The Corporation has a strong and independent non-executive element and no individual or group dominates its decision-making process. The Corporation considers that each of its non-executive members is independent of management and free from any business or other relationship which could materially interfere with the exercise of their independent judgement.

There is a clear division of responsibility in that the roles of the Chairman and Accounting Officer are separate.

Appointments to the Corporation

Any new appointments to the Corporation are a matter for the consideration of the Corporation as a whole. The Corporation has a Governance Committee, comprised of two independent members and the Accounting Officer, which is responsible for the selection and nomination of any new member for the Corporation's consideration. The Corporation is responsible for ensuring that appropriate training is provided as required.

Members of the Corporation are appointed for a term of office not exceeding four years and may seek re-appointment for further periods.

Corporation performance

The Corporation undertook two external reviews of governance to the year ended July 2024. The reviews were conducted by Stone King and Assynt Lead & Learn, which reported in April 2024. The reviews identified strengths in governance including that there was strong evidence that the Board was proficient and consistently impacted positively on college strategy, outcomes and effectiveness. The Corporation has adopted an action plan to respond to recommendations, including those relating to:

- Governance self-assessments
- Link governor scheme
- Board reporting framework and strategic events
- Induction
- Risk management
- Governor succession planning

Other areas were implemented since May 2024: recruitment of an experienced Governance Professional; review and implementation of governance framework to include all aspects of Corporation and Committee management; cover sheets to clarify governor expectations as well as links to risk, finance and teaching and learning; development of detailed workplans; recruitment of six highly qualified independent governors and one additional co-opted member; strengthened induction programme and CPD programme for all governors; and, increased membership of the Audit Committee.

Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)
Corporation development activities

In addition to scheduled meetings, the Corporation holds at least one strategy event annually. This event supports the development of members of the Corporation, including presentations and discussion of the College's strategic context and any key changes in the environment. Individual briefings are available to members. The Corporation and the Clerk regularly receive broader updates on the activities of the College alongside its scheduled activities.

Remuneration Committee

The Corporation has adopted the AoC Code of Good Governance, incorporating the Senior Post Holder Remuneration Code. A Remuneration Committee is established to consider and determine the salaries and other forms of compensation for Senior Post Holders, as required. The Remuneration Committee comprises three independent members of the Corporation. In 2023/24 the Committee met once to consider the Remuneration Code, terms of reference and the remuneration of the Senior Post Holder.

Details of remuneration for the year ended 31 July 2024 are set out in note 6 to the financial statements.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee comprises six members of the Corporation (excluding the Chair of the Corporation and Accounting Officer). A co-opted member was appointed during 2023/24.

Audit Committee Member	Number of Meetings Attended
Mark Robbins (Chair)	4/4
Philip Hilton	4/4
David Bailey	3/4
Rod Wood	2/3
David Smith	N/A
Janet Baines	1/1

The Committee operates in accordance with written terms of reference approved by the Corporation.

The Audit Committee met four times during 2023/24 and provides a forum for reporting by the College's internal, regularity and financial statements auditors, who have access to the Committee for independent discussion, without the presence of College management. The Committee also receives and considers reports from the main FE funding bodies as they affect the College's business.

The College's internal auditors review the systems of internal control, risk management controls and governance processes in accordance with an agreed plan of input and report their findings to management and the Audit Committee.

Management is responsible for the implementation of agreed audit recommendations and internal audit undertakes periodic follow-up reviews to ensure such recommendations have been implemented.

The Audit Committee also advises the Corporation on the appointment of internal, regularity and financial statements auditors and their remuneration for both audit and non-audit work as well as reporting annually to the Corporation.

Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)

Internal control

Scope of responsibility

The Corporation is ultimately responsible for the College's system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness. However, such a system is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve business objectives, and can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The Corporation has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Accounting Officer for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the College's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which they are personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to them in agreements between Northampton College and the funding bodies. The Accounting Officer is also responsible for reporting to the Corporation any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of College policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Capacity to handle risk

The Corporation has reviewed the key risks to which the College is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls and arrangements for compliance with legal and regularity matters including those relating to the regularity and propriety of the use of public funding that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Corporation is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the College's significant risks that has been in place for the year ended 31 July 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts. This process is regularly reviewed by the Corporation and in detail by the Audit Committee.

The risk and control framework

The system of internal control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures including the segregation of duties, and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular, it includes:

- comprehensive budgeting systems with an annual budget, which is reviewed and agreed by the governing body
- regular reviews by the governing body of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance
- clearly defined capital investment control guidelines
- the adoption of formal project management disciplines, where appropriate.

Northampton College has an internal audit service, which operates in accordance with the requirements of the ESFA's *Post 16 Audit Code of Practice*. The work of the internal audit service is informed by an analysis of the risks to which the College is exposed, and annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. The analysis of risks and the internal audit plans are endorsed by the Corporation on the recommendation of the Audit Committee. At a minimum annually, the Head of the Internal Audit Service (HIAS) provides the governing body with a report on

Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)

internal audit activity in the College. The report includes the HIAS's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's system of risk management, controls and governance processes.

Risks faced by the corporation

The Corporation evaluates and manages risk through a comprehensive risk register. The register records the inherent risk and residual risk after mitigation controls. These evaluations assess the severity of the impact and the likelihood of each risk on a 5 point scale. The College has a Risk Management Group which meets termly to review the risk register, implement mitigation measures and identify new and enhanced risks to the Corporation.

The Audit Committee reviews the risk register at every meeting and reports into the Board. A revised and updated risk management process and Board Assurance Framework was approved by the Corporation in October 2024.

Control weaknesses identified

In June 2024 an external fraud diversion payment occurred. No financial loss was incurred. An independent investigation report identified recommendations for improvements in controls. The report was considered by the Audit Committee and Corporation and appropriate actions are being taken in response to the incident.

The College has a full internal audit programme that sits within a three year internal audit strategy. The programme is driven by the risk register and current environmental risks. During 2023/24 no significant risks were identified; however, all agreed recommendations are implemented and progress reported to each Audit Committee meeting. Implementation is also checked each year by the internal audit service.

As a result of its work the Internal Audit Service has concluded that for 2023-24

Overall, in our opinion, based upon the reviews performed during the year, Northampton College has:

*adequate and effective risk management.
adequate and effective governance; and
adequate and effective control processes.*

Responsibilities under funding agreements

The system of internal control has been in place in Northampton College for the year ended 31 July 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts. Through this system of internal control and its oversight, the Corporation meets its statutory responsibility for effective and efficient use of resources, solvency and the safeguarding of the institution's assets, together with its contractual responsibilities under funding agreements and contracts with the ESFA.

Following the classification of colleges to the central government sector from 29 November 2022, the ESFA chief executive communicated these changes to college accounting officers. The College has reviewed its policies, procedures and approval processes and updated them where required to ensure compliance with the new requirements. Training was provided for Corporation and management team members and processes introduced to identify and address any transactions for which DfE approval may be required.

Statement from the audit committee

On the basis of the system of internal control, reports received from the auditors appointed by Northampton College and other sources of audit information, including H&S consultants and ESFA, as set out in the Board Assurance Framework, and on the assurances of the College's management regarding action taken in response to audit recommendations, the Audit Committee is of the opinion that for 2023-24 the College's procedures and systems of internal control, governance, risk management (RM), control processes for the effective and efficient use of resources, solvency of the institution and the safeguarding of its assets are adequate and effective.

Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control (continued)

Review of effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, the Principal has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. Their review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by:

- the work of the internal auditors
- the work of the executive managers within the College who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework
- comments made by the College's financial statements auditor and regularity reporting accountant in their management letters and other reports

The Accounting Officer has been advised on the implications of the result of their review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Audit Committee, which oversees the work of the internal auditor and other sources of assurance, and ongoing plans to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system are in place.

The executive management team receives reports setting out key performance and risk indicators and considers possible control issues brought to their attention by early warning mechanisms, which are embedded within the departments and reinforced by risk awareness training. The executive management team and the Audit Committee also receive regular reports from internal audit and other sources of assurance, which include recommendations for improvement. The Audit Committee's role in this area is confined to a high-level review of the arrangements for internal control.

The Corporation receives regular reports from the executive management team and the Audit Committee, which address key risks. The emphasis is on obtaining the relevant degree of assurance and not merely reporting by exception. At its December 2024 meeting, the Corporation confirmed the annual assessment of effectiveness for the year ended 31 July 2024 taking account of events since 31 July 2024.

Based on the advice of the Audit Committee and the Accounting Officer, the Corporation is of the opinion that the College has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control, and has fulfilled its statutory responsibility for "*the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the body and the safeguarding of their assets*".

Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Corporation considers that the College has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. The College's three-year forecasts and financial projections contain severe downside scenarios, including funding pressures and cost growth. The Corporation is of the opinion that it has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, and for this reason will continue to adopt the going concern basis in the preparation of its Financial Statements.

Approved by order of the members of the Corporation on 12 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



A-M Kilday

Chair of Board of Governors



J Lancaster

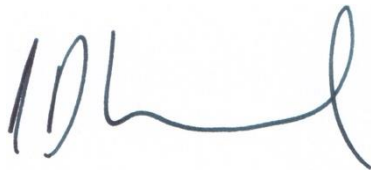
Accounting Officer

Statement on the College's Regularity, Propriety and Compliance with funding body terms and conditions of funding

As Accounting Officer, I confirm that the corporation has had due regard to the framework of authorities governing regularity, propriety and compliance, and the requirements of grant funding agreements and contracts with the ESFA and has considered its responsibility to notify ESFA of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with those authorities and terms and conditions of funding.

I confirm on behalf of the corporation that after due enquiry, and to the best of my knowledge, I am able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the corporation, or material non-compliance with the framework of authorities and the terms and conditions of funding, under the corporation's grant funding agreements and contracts with ESFA, or any other public funder. This includes the elements outlined in the "Dear accounting officer" letter of 29 November 2022 and ESFA's bite size guides.

I confirm that no instances of material irregularity, impropriety or funding non-compliance, or non-compliance with the framework of authorities have been discovered to date. If any instances are identified after the date of this statement, these will be notified to ESFA.



J Lancaster
Accounting Officer

Date: 12 December 2024

Statement of the Chair of Board of Governors

On behalf of the corporation, I confirm that the accounting officer has discussed their statement of regularity, propriety and compliance with the board and that I am content that it is materially accurate.



AM Kilday
Chair of Board of Governors

Date: 12 December 2024

Statement of Responsibilities of the Members of the Corporation

The members of the Corporation (who act as trustees for the charitable activities of the College) are required to present audited financial statements for each financial year.

Within the terms and conditions of the corporation's grant funding agreements and contracts with the ESFA and DfE and any other relevant funding bodies, the Corporation is required to prepare financial statements which give a true and fair view of the financial performance and position of the Corporation for the relevant period.

The bases for the preparation of the financial statements and strategic report are the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting for Further and Higher Education, ESFA's College Accounts Direction, Accounts Direction issued by the Office for Students and the UK's Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

In preparing the financial statements, the corporation is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- assess whether the corporation is a going concern, noting the key supporting assumptions, qualifications or mitigating actions, as appropriate (which must be consistent with other disclosures in the accounts and auditor's report)
- prepare financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to assume that the College will continue in operation.

The Corporation is also required to prepare a strategic report, in accordance with paragraphs 3.23 to 3.27 of the FE and HE SORP, that describes what it is trying to do and how it is going about it, including information about the legal and administrative status of the corporation.

The Corporation is responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the Corporation, and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements are prepared in accordance with relevant legislation including the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and Charities Act 2011 and relevant accounting standards. It is responsible for taking steps that are reasonably open to it to safeguard its assets and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

The Corporation is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of its College website(s); the work carried out by auditors does not involve consideration of these matters and, accordingly, auditors accept no responsibility for any changes that may have occurred to the financial statements since they were initially presented on the website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the Corporation are responsible for ensuring that expenditure and income are applied for the purposes intended and that the financial transactions conform to the authorities that govern them. In addition, they are responsible for ensuring that funds from ESFA, and any other public funds, are used only in accordance with the accountability agreement, funding agreements and contracts and any other conditions, that may be prescribed from time to time by ESFA, or any other public funder including the Office for Students. This responsibility includes that any transactions entered into by the corporation are within the delegated authorities set out in the "Dear accounting officer" letter of 29 November 2022 and ESFA's bite size guides.

Statement of Responsibilities of the Members of the Corporation (continued)

Members of the corporation must ensure that there are appropriate financial and management controls in place to safeguard public and other funds and ensure they are used properly. In addition, members of the corporation are responsible for securing economic, efficient and effective management of the corporation's resources and expenditure so that the benefits that should be derived from the application of public funds from ESFA, DfE and other public bodies are not put at risk.

Approved by order of the members of the Corporation on 12 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



AM Kilday
Chair of Board of Governors

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE CORPORATION OF NORTHAMPTON COLLEGE**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Northampton College (the "College") for the year ended 31st July 2024 which comprise the college statement of comprehensive income, the college balance sheet, the college statement of changes in reserves, the college statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and the Accounts Direction issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the College's affairs as at 31st July 2024 and of the College's surplus of income over expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Accounts Direction issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the college in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the governors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the college's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the governors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Report and Financial Statements other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The governors are responsible for the other information contained within the Report and Financial Statements. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Office for Students' Accounts Direction

In our opinion, in all material respects:

- funds from whatever source administered by the college for specific purposes have been properly applied to those purposes and managed in accordance with relevant legislation;
- funds provided by the Office for Students, UK Research and Innovation (including Research England), the Education and Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education have been applied in accordance with the relevant terms and conditions; and
- the requirements of the Office for Students' accounts direction for the relevant year's financial statements have been met.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations required for our audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Office for Students' accounts direction requires us to report to you if:

- the College's grant and fee income, as disclosed in the notes to the accounts, has been materially misstated.

Responsibilities of the Corporation of Northampton College

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Corporation's Responsibilities set out on pages 21 to 22, the Corporation is responsible for the preparation of financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Corporation determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Corporation is responsible for assessing the College's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Corporation either intend to liquidate the College or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in

accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The objectives of our audit are to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding compliance with laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, to perform audit procedures to help identify instances of non-compliance with other laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements, and to respond appropriately to identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations identified during the audit.

In relation to fraud, the objectives of our audit are to identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud, to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud through designing and implementing appropriate responses and to respond appropriately to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit.

However, it is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud, the audit engagement team:

- obtained an understanding of the nature of the sector, including the legal and regulatory frameworks that the College operates in and how the college are complying with the legal and regulatory frameworks;
- inquired of management, and those charged with governance, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, including any known actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud;
- discussed matters about non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessment of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

As a result of these procedures we consider the most significant laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the financial statements are FRS 102, Further and Higher Education SORP, the College Accounts Direction published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and Regulatory Advice 9: Accounts Direction published by the Office for Students'. We performed audit procedures to detect non-compliances which may have a material impact on the financial statements which included reviewing financial statement disclosures.

The most significant laws and regulations that have an indirect impact on the financial statements are those which are in relation to the Education Inspection Framework under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, Keeping Children Safe in Education under the Education Act 2002 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. We performed audit procedures to inquire of management and those charged with governance whether the college is in compliance with these laws and regulations and inspected correspondence and inspected correspondence with licensing or regulatory authorities.

The audit engagement team identified the risk of management override of controls and income recognition as the areas where the financial statements were most susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. Audit procedures performed included but were not limited to testing manual journal entries and other adjustments

and evaluating the business rationale in relation to significant, unusual transactions and transactions entered into outside the normal course of business, challenging judgments and estimates and substantive testing of the existence of income.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at <http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Corporation, as a body, in accordance with the Funding Agreement published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and our engagement letter dated 5th December 2022. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Corporation, as a body, those matters we are engaged to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Corporation, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

RSM UK Audit LLP

RSM UK AUDIT LLP

Chartered Accountants
Rivermead House
7 Lewis Court
Grove Park
Leicester
Leicestershire
LE19 1SD
Date: 18 December 2024

Statement of Comprehensive Income

	Notes	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
INCOME			
Funding body grants	2	34,035	30,090
Tuition fees and education contracts	3	1,073	986
Other income	4	2,857	2,682
Investment income	5	628	49
Total income		38,593	33,807
EXPENDITURE			
Staff costs	6	22,846	20,286
Staff restructuring costs	6	31	104
Other operating expenses	7	9,571	7,879
Depreciation and amortisation	10 and 11	3,904	3,863
Interest and other finance costs	8	(355)	15
Total expenditure		35,997	32,147
Surplus before other gains and losses		2,596	1,660
Loss on disposal of assets		-	(3)
Surplus before tax		2,596	1,657
Taxation	9	-	-
Surplus for the year		2,596	1,657
Re-measurement of net defined benefit pension liability	22	(696)	537
Total Comprehensive Income for the year		1,900	2,194
Represented by:			
Unrestricted comprehensive income for the year		1,900	2,194

Statement of Changes in Reserves

	Income and expenditure reserve	Revaluation reserve	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 31st July 2022	26,295	7,096	33,391
Surplus for the year	1,657	-	1,657
Other comprehensive income	537	-	537
Total comprehensive income for the year	2,194	-	2,194
Balance at 31st July 2023	28,489	7,096	35,585
Surplus for the year	2,596	-	2,596
Other comprehensive income	(696)	-	(696)
Total comprehensive income for the year	1,900	-	1,900
Balance at 31st July 2024	30,389	7,096	37,485

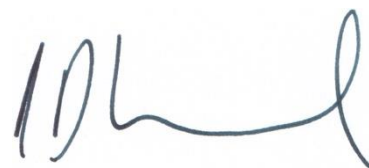
Balance sheet as at 31 July

	Notes	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Fixed assets			
Tangible Fixed assets	10	71,464	73,584
Intangible Fixed assets	11	-	4
		71,464	73,588
Current assets			
Debtors	12	1,173	1,079
Cash at bank and in hand	19	20,406	17,536
		21,579	18,615
Less: Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	13	(10,220)	(8,008)
Net current assets		11,359	10,607
Total assets less current liabilities		82,823	84,195
Creditors - amounts falling due after more than one year	14	(45,327)	(48,599)
Provisions			
Defined benefit obligations	16	-	-
Other provisions	16	(11)	(11)
Total net assets		37,485	35,585
Unrestricted Reserves			
Income and expenditure account (including pension deficit of £Nil - 2023: £Nil)		30,389	28,489
Revaluation reserve		7,096	7,096
Total reserves		37,485	35,585

The financial statements on pages 27 to 54 were approved and authorised for issue by the Corporation on 12 December 2024 and were signed on its behalf on that date by:

Anne-Marie Kilday.

AM Kilday
Chair of Board of Governors



J Lancaster
Accounting Officer

Statement of Cash Flows

	Notes	2024	2023
		£'000	£'000
Operating activities			
Net cash from operating activities	18	3,578	3,038
Investing activities			
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets		-	-
Investment income		628	49
Withdrawal of deposits		-	-
Capital grants received		511	303
Grants received		-	2,132
Payments made to acquire tangible and intangible fixed assets		<u>(1,780)</u>	<u>(683)</u>
		<u>(641)</u>	<u>1,801</u>
Financing activities			
Interest paid		-	-
Proceeds of new borrowing		-	-
Repayments of amounts borrowed		<u>(67)</u>	<u>(74)</u>
		<u>(67)</u>	<u>(74)</u>
Increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year		<u>2,870</u>	<u>4,765</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		<u>17,536</u>	<u>12,771</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	19	<u>20,406</u>	<u>17,536</u>

Notes to the Accounts

1 Accounting Policies

General information

Northampton College is a Corporation established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 as an English general college of further education. The address of the College's principal place of business is given on page 14. The nature of the College's operations is set out in the Strategic Report.

Basis of accounting

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting for Further and Higher Education* (the FE HE SORP), the *College Accounts Direction* and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 – “*The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland*” (FRS 102) under the historical cost convention. The College is a public benefit entity and has therefore applied the relevant public benefit requirements of FRS 102.

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been applied consistently to all the years presented, except where otherwise indicated.

The financial statements are presented in sterling which is also the functional currency of the College.

Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest whole £1,000, except where otherwise indicated.

Basis of Consolidation

The financial statements are in respect of the College.

In accordance with FRS 102, the activities of the student union have not been consolidated because the College does not control those activities.

Going concern

The activities of the College, together with the factors likely to affect its future development and performance are set out in the Strategic Report. The financial position of the College, its cash flow, liquidity and borrowings are described in the Financial Statements and accompanying notes.

The College's forecasts and financial projections indicate that it will be able to operate within the existing facilities and covenants for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the College has a reasonable expectation that it has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, and for this reason will continue to adopt the going concern basis in the preparation of its Financial Statements.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

1 Accounting Policies (continued)

Recognition of Income

Revenue grant funding

Government revenue grants include funding body recurrent grants and other grants and are accounted for under the accrual model as permitted by FRS 102. Funding body recurrent grants are measured in line with best estimates for the period of what is receivable and depend on the particular income stream involved. Adult Education Budget ('AEB') grant funding income recognised is a best estimate of the amount receivable in accordance with the annual main funding guidance published by the ESFA and either determined as part of the reconciliation process or by separate agreement between the college and the ESFA at the reporting period end date. Any subsequent agreement to determination of the AEB funding after the reporting end date which is not provided for in the annual main funding guidance is not reflected in the income recognised. 16-18 learner-responsive funding is not normally subject to reconciliation and is therefore not subject to contract adjustments and is recognised when receivable.

Levy funded and ESFA funding for co-investment model apprenticeship income is measured in line with best estimates of the provision delivered in the year.

The recurrent grant for the Office for Students represents the funding allocations attributable to the current financial year and is recognised when received or receivable.

Grants from non-government sources, including grants relating to assets, are recognised in income when the performance related conditions have been met and the grants will be received. Income received in advance of performance related conditions being met is recognised as deferred income within creditors on the balance sheet and released to income as the conditions are met.

Capital grant funding

Government capital grants are capitalised once utilised, held as deferred income and recognised in income over the expected useful life of the asset, under the accrual model as permitted by FRS 102. Other, non-governmental, capital grants are recognised in income when the College is entitled to the funds subject to any performance related conditions being met. Income received in advance of performance related conditions being met is recognised as deferred income within creditors on the Balance Sheet and released to income as conditions are met. The deferred income is allocated between creditors due within one year and those due after one year.

Fee income

Income from tuition fees, including employer funding for co-investment funded apprenticeships, is recognised in the period for which it is received.

Investment income

All income from short-term deposits is accrued in the period in which it is earned on a receivable basis.

Other income

Income from the supply of services is recognised at fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents the value of services to the extent there is a right to consideration.

Notes to the accounts (continued)**1 Accounting Policies (continued)****Accounting for post-retirement benefits**

Post-employment benefits to employees of the College are principally provided by the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). These are multi-employer defined benefit plans.

Teachers' Pension scheme (TPS)

The TPS is an unfunded scheme. Contributions to the TPS are calculated so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the College in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by qualified actuaries on the basis of valuations using a projected unit method.

The TPS is a multi-employer scheme and there is insufficient information available to use defined benefit accounting. The TPS is therefore accounted for as a defined contribution plan and the contributions recognised as an expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Income in the periods during which services are rendered by employees.

Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments.

Northamptonshire Local Government Pension scheme (LGPS)

The LGPS is a funded scheme and the assets of the scheme are held separately. The assets of the LGPS are measured using closing fair values. LGPS liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date.

The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and the costs of scheme introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs as incurred.

Net interest on the net defined benefit liability/asset is also recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in interest and other finance costs.

Re-measurement comprising actuarial gains and losses, the effect of the asset ceiling and the return on scheme assets (excluding amounts included in net interest on the defined benefit liability) are recognised immediately in other comprehensive income.

Short term Employment benefits

Short term employment benefits such as salaries and compensated absences (holiday pay) are recognised as an expense in the year in which the employees render service to the College. Any unused benefits are accrued and measured as the additional amount the College expects to pay as a result of the unused entitlement.

Enhanced Pensions

The actual cost of any enhanced ongoing pension to a former member of staff is paid by a college annually. An estimate of the expected future cost of any enhancement to the ongoing pension of a former member of staff is charged to comprehensive income in the year that the member of staff retires. In subsequent years a charge is made to provisions in the balance sheet using the enhanced pension spreadsheet provided by the funding bodies.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

1 Accounting Policies (continued)

Non-current Assets - Tangible Fixed Assets

Land and buildings

Freehold land is stated in the balance sheet at Fair Value Existing Use Value at 1 August 2014 (the date of transition to FRS102), and then subsequently measured on the basis of deemed cost, based on this revalued amount.

Other tangible fixed assets are stated in the balance sheet at cost or deemed cost, less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Buildings inherited from the Local Education Authority which have been revalued to fair value on or prior to the date of transition to the 2015 FE HE SORP are measured on the basis of deemed cost, being the revalued amount at the date of that revaluation.

On adoption of FRS 102, the College followed the transitional provision to retain the book value of buildings, which were revalued in 1993, as deemed cost but not to adopt a policy of revaluations of these properties in the future.

Assets under construction

Assets under construction are accounted for at cost, less any identified impairment loss, based on the value of architects' certificates and other direct costs, incurred to 31 July. They are not depreciated until they are brought into use.

Equipment

Expenditure costing less than £1,000 per individual item are recognised in expenditure in the period of acquisition. Equipment inherited from the local education authority is included in the balance sheet at valuation, which is based on its original cost less depreciation on a basis consistent with assets purchased after incorporation. All other equipment is capitalised and recognised at cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation and residual values

Freehold land is not depreciated. Depreciation on other assets is calculated, using the straight line basis, to write off the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life as follows:

Freehold buildings	between 10 and 50 years
Major adaptations to buildings	between 10 and 50 years
Leasehold land and buildings	the shorter of the duration of the lease and 50 years
Computer equipment	3 years
Vehicles	between 3 and 5 years
Tools, equipment and furniture	between 5 and 10 years
Fixtures and fittings	10 years
Mechanical and electrical plant	15 years

Residual value is calculated on prices prevailing at the reporting date, after estimated costs of disposal, for the asset as if it were at the age and in the condition expected at the end of its useful life. Subsequent costs, including replacement parts, are only capitalised when it is probable that such costs will generate future economic benefits. Any replaced parts are then derecognised. All other costs of repairs and maintenance are expensed as incurred.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

1 Accounting Policies (continued)

Intangible assets

Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Intangible assets are amortised to the Statement of Comprehensive Income on a straight-line basis over their useful lives, and for purchased computer software this is between 3 and 5 years.

Impairments of fixed assets

An assessment is made at each reporting date of whether there are indications that a fixed asset may be impaired or that an impairment loss previously recognised has fully or partially reversed. If such indications exist, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the asset.

Shortfalls between the carrying value of fixed assets and their recoverable amounts, being the higher of fair value less costs to sell and value-in-use, are recognised as impairment losses. Impairment of revalued assets are treated as a revaluation loss. All other impairment losses are recognised in comprehensive income.

Recognised impairment losses are reversed if, and only if, the reasons for the impairment loss have ceased to apply. Reversals of impairment losses are recognised in comprehensive income or, for revalued assets, as a revaluation gain. On reversal of an impairment loss, the depreciation or amortisation is adjusted to allocate the asset's revised carrying amount (less any residual value) over its remaining useful life.

Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs are recognised as expenditure in the period in which they are incurred.

Leased Assets

Finance leased assets

Leasing agreements which transfer to the College substantially all the benefits and risks of ownership of an asset are treated as finance leases.

Assets held under finance leases are recognised initially at the fair value of the leased asset (or, if lower, the present value of minimum lease payments) at the inception of the lease. The corresponding liability to the lessor is included in the balance sheet as an obligation under finance leases. Assets held under finance leases are included in tangible fixed assets and depreciated and assessed for impairment losses in the same way as owned assets.

Minimum lease payments are apportioned between the finance charge and the reduction of the outstanding liability. The finance charges are allocated over the period of the lease in proportion to the capital element outstanding.

Operating leases

All other leases are operating leases. Costs in respect of operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term to the Statement of Comprehensive Income. Any lease premiums or incentives relating to leases are spread over the minimum lease term.

Notes to the accounts (continued)**1 Accounting Policies (continued)****Investments***Other investments*

Current asset investments are included in the Balance Sheet at cost less impairment.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash includes cash in hand, deposits repayable on demand and overdrafts. Deposits are repayable on demand if they are in practice available within 24 hours without penalty.

Cash equivalents are short term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value. An investment qualifies as a cash equivalent when it has maturity of 3 months or less from the date of acquisition.

Financial instruments

The College has chosen to adopt Sections 11 and 12 of FRS 102 in full in respect of financial instruments.

Financial assets and liabilities

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the College becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial liabilities and equity are classified according to the substance of the financial instrument's contractual obligations, rather than the financial instrument's legal form.

All financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at transaction price (including transaction costs), except for those financial assets measured at fair value through the profit or loss, which are initially measured at fair value (which is normally the transaction price excluding transaction costs), unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction. A financial asset or financial liability that is payable or receivable in one year is measured at the undiscounted amount expected to be received or paid net of impairment, unless it is a financing transaction. If an arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, the financial asset or financial liability is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Financial assets and financial liabilities are offset only when there is a current legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and the intention to either settle on a net basis, or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Derecognition of financial assets and liabilities

A financial asset is derecognised only when the contractual rights to cash flows expire or are settled, or substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership are transferred to another party, or if some significant risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party. A financial liability (or part thereof) is derecognised when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expires.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

1 Accounting Policies (continued)

Taxation

The College is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the College is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by sections 478-488 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

The College is partially exempt in respect of Value Added Tax, so that it can only recover around 1% of the VAT charged on its inputs. Irrecoverable VAT on inputs is included in the costs of such inputs and added to the cost of tangible fixed assets as appropriate, where the inputs themselves are tangible fixed assets by nature.

Provisions and contingent liabilities

Provisions are recognised when the College has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required to settle the obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation is recognised at present value using a pre-tax discount rate. The unwinding of the discount is recognised as a finance cost in the statement of comprehensive income in the period it arises.

A contingent liability arises from a past event that gives the College a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the College. Contingent liabilities also arise in circumstances where a provision would otherwise be made but either it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured reliably.

Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

Agency arrangements

The College acts as an agent in the distribution of Bursary support funds from the funding bodies. Payments received from the funding bodies and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the income and expenditure of the College where the College does not have control of the economic benefit related to the transaction.

Notes to the accounts (continued)**1 Accounting Policies (continued)****Critical accounting judgements and estimation uncertainty**

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectation of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

- *Tangible fixed assets*

Tangible fixed assets are depreciated over their useful lives taking into account residual values, where appropriate. The actual lives of the assets and residual values are assessed annually and may vary depending on a number of factors. In re-assessing asset lives, factors such as technological innovation and maintenance programmes are taken into account. Residual value assessments consider issues such as future market conditions, the remaining life of the asset and projected disposal values.

- *Local Government Pension Scheme*

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate.

Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 22, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore, a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 July 2024. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

The actuarial valuation incorporates a judgemental assumption of the existence of a minimum funding requirement for the Local Government Pension Scheme. This impact of this judgement is reflected in estimating the asset ceiling in measuring and recognising any surplus in the scheme. This judgement is based on an assessment of the nature of the scheme as a statutory scheme, the inherent implied continuance, and the operation of the primary and secondary contributions. The judgment is subject to inherent uncertainty.

- *Impairment of fixed assets*

The College considers whether tangible fixed assets are impaired. Where an impairment is identified the estimation of the recoverable amount of the asset or the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit is required. These will require an estimation of the future cash flow and selection of an appropriate discount rate in order to calculate the net present value of those cashflows.

Notes to the accounts (continued)
2 Funding body grants

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Recurrent grants		
Education and Skills Funding Agency – 16-18	25,856	21,087
Education and Skills Funding Agency – adult	2,196	3,014
Education and Skills Funding Agency – apprenticeships	2,175	2,128
Office for Students - HE	69	70
Specific grants		
Education and Skills Funding Agency		
Teachers' Pension	771	615
Capacity and Delivery	14	276
Tuition Funding	483	449
Other Funding	246	234
Releases of government capital grants	2,225	2,217
Total	34,035	30,090

3 Tuition fees and education contracts

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Tuition fees - FE	645	610
Tuition fees – HE income from taught awards (exclusive of VAT)	423	371
Education contracts	5	5
Total	1,073	986

4 Other income

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Catering	768	615
Other grant income	1,212	1,297
Release of non-funding body capital grants	640	572
Miscellaneous income	237	198
Total	2,857	2,682

5 Investment income

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Income from bank deposits	628	49

Notes to the accounts (continued)
6 Staff costs and key management personnel remuneration

The average number of persons (including key management personnel) employed by the College during the year, expressed as average headcount and calculated on a monthly basis, was:

	2024	2023
	Number	Number
Teaching staff	214	211
Non-teaching staff	262	264
	476	475

Staff costs for the above persons:

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Wages and salaries	17,172	15,067
Social security costs	1,658	1,426
Other pension costs	3,634	3,650
Payroll sub-total	22,464	20,143
Contracted out staffing services	382	143
	22,846	20,286
Staff restructuring costs – contractual	31	91
Staff restructuring costs – non-contractual	-	13
Total staff costs	22,877	20,390

Severance Payments

The College paid Nil severance payments in the year (2023: 12), disclosed in the following bands:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
£0 to £25,000	-	12
	-	12

Included in staff restructuring costs are special severance payments totalling £Nil (2023: £13,000).

Notes to the accounts (continued)
6 Staff costs and key management personnel remuneration (continued)
Key management personnel compensation

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the College and are represented by the College's Executive Management Team which during 2023/24 comprised the Principal; Principal and CEO Elect; Deputy Principal – Teaching, Learning & Success; Deputy Principal of Finance and Corporate Affairs; Vice Principal - Resources; Vice Principal – People & Organisational Development; Vice Principal – Curriculum & Student Progress; Vice Principal – 16-18 Curriculum & Student Access; and Director of MIS.

Emoluments of Key management personnel, Accounting Officer and other higher paid staff

	2024	2023
	Number	Number
The number of key management personnel including the Accounting Officer was:	<u>9</u>	<u>7</u>

Key management personnel (including the Accounting Officer) compensation is made up as follows:

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Salaries	909	713
Employer's National insurance	<u>117</u>	<u>91</u>
	1,026	804
Pension contributions	<u>177</u>	<u>94</u>
Total key management personnel compensation	<u>1,203</u>	<u>898</u>

There were no amounts due to key management personnel that were waived in the year, nor any salary sacrifice arrangements in place.

The number of other staff who received annual emoluments, excluding pension contributions and employer's national insurance but including benefits in kind, in the following ranges was:

	Other Staff	
	2024	2023
	No.	No.
£60,001 to £65,000	3	2
£65,001 to £70,000	2	3
£70,001 to £75,000	1	-
£75,001 to £80,000	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	7	6

Notes to the accounts (continued)

6 Staff costs and key management personnel remuneration (continued)

The above compensation includes amounts payable in 2023/24 to the Accounting Officer (who is also the highest paid officer) of:

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Salary	178	164
Payments in lieu of pension contributions	37	34
Pension contributions	-	-
Total emoluments	215	198

The College has adopted the Association of Colleges Senior Staff Remuneration Code, has regard to the Higher Education Senior Staff Code issued by the Committee of University Chairs and has followed the minimum requirements of the Codes. The remuneration of the Accounting Officer for 2024 was approved by the Corporation, based on qualitative and quantitative measures of performance and benchmarking information. The Accounting Officer was not involved in setting their remuneration. A similar approach was used to determine the remuneration of other key management personnel.

The relationship between the accounting officer's emoluments, expressed as a multiple of all other employees (excluding agency staff) based on full-time equivalents, is set out below for both basic salary and total remuneration. Emoluments include bonuses paid and employers pension contributions.

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Basic salary as a multiple of median basic salary of staff	5.6	6.1
Total remuneration as a multiple of median total remuneration of staff	5.6	6.0

Governors' remuneration

The Accounting Officer and the staff members only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking their roles of Principal and staff members under contracts of employment and not in respect of their roles as governors. The other members of the Corporation did not receive any payments from the college in respect of their roles as governors.

The total expenses paid to or on behalf of the Governors during the year was £1,339; 2 governors (2023: £729; 2 governors). This represents travel and subsistence expenses and other out of pocket expenses incurred in attending Governor meetings and other events in their official capacity.

The total expenses paid to or on behalf of the Executive Management Team during the year was £4,973; 5 staff (2023: £3,341; 5 staff). This represents travel and subsistence expenses and other out of pocket expenses incurred in their college duties.

Notes to the accounts (continued)
7 Other operating expenses

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Teaching costs	2,621	1,793
Non-teaching costs	3,408	3,120
Premises costs	3,542	2,966
Total	9,571	7,879

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
The deficit/surplus before taxation is stated after charging:		
Fees payable to RSM UK Audit LLP in respect of both audit and non audit fees:		
Financial statements audit	49	47
Internal audit	25	13
Hire of assets under operating leases	21	27
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	3

Included within expenditure are the following transactions. There were no individual transactions exceeding £5,000.

	Total	Individual items above £5,000	
		Amount	Reason
		£'000	£
Write off and losses	1	-	Not applicable

8 Interest and other finance costs

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Interest on provisions	1	2
Net interest on defined pension liability (note 22)	(356)	13
Total	(355)	15

9 Taxation

The members do not believe the College was liable for any corporation tax arising out of its activities during this period or in the previous period.

Notes to the accounts (continued)
10 Tangible fixed assets

	Land and Buildings		Equipment	Assets in the course of construction	Total
	Freehold £'000	Short leasehold £'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or valuation					
At 1 August 2023	87,030	51	35,700	-	122,781
Additions	-	-	1,780	-	1,780
Disposals	-	-	(985)	-	(985)
At 31 July 2024	87,030	51	36,495	-	123,576
Depreciation					
At 1 August 2023	21,397	19	27,781	-	49,197
Charge for the year	1,467	1	2,432	-	3,900
Elimination in respect of disposals	-	-	(985)	-	(985)
At 31 July 2024	22,864	20	29,228	-	52,112
Net book value at 31 July 2024	64,166	31	7,267	-	71,464
Net book value at 31 July 2023	65,633	32	7,919	-	73,584

Tangible fixed assets with a net book value of £48,277,000 (2023: £49,937,000) have been financed with Exchequer funds through for example, the receipt of capital grants. Should these assets be sold, the College may be liable to surrender the proceeds.

Land was valued on 1 August 2014 (on transition to FRS102) at Fair Value Existing Use Value by Lambert Smith Hampton a firm of independent chartered surveyors.

Buildings and other tangible fixed assets inherited from the LEA at incorporation were originally valued by the College on a depreciated replacement cost basis with the assistance of independent professional advice. If inherited fixed assets had not been revalued before being deemed as cost on transition they would have been included at a historical cost of £Nil.

Notes to the accounts (continued)
11 Intangible fixed assets

	Software £'000	Total £'000
Cost		
At 1 August 2023	729	729
Additions	-	-
At 31 July 2024	<u>729</u>	<u>729</u>
Amortisation		
At 1 August 2023	725	725
Charge for the year	4	4
At 31 July 2024	<u>729</u>	<u>729</u>
Net book value at 31 July 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net book value at 31 July 2023	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>

12 Debtors

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	485	356
Prepayments and accrued income	430	439
Amounts owed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency	244	284
Amounts owed by other bodies	14	-
Total	<u>1,173</u>	<u>1,079</u>

13 Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Other loans	44	66
Trade creditors	1,734	1,382
Retentions on building contracts	-	12
Other taxation and social security	707	493
Accruals and deferred income	934	870
Holiday Pay Provision	474	385
Deferred Income – government revenue grants	1,894	1,240
Deferred income – other grants	1,438	756
Deferred income – government capital grants	2,995	2,804
Total	<u>10,220</u>	<u>8,008</u>

Notes to the accounts (continued)
14 Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Other loans	45	90
Deferred income – other grants	-	1,376
Deferred income – government capital grants	45,282	47,133
Total	45,327	48,599

15 Maturity of debt

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Loans are repayable as follows:		
Other loans:		
In one year or less	44	66
Between one and two years	30	44
Between two and five years	15	46
	89	156

Summary of other loans at 31 July 2024:

Lender	Final repayment date	Type	Interest rate	Due within one year	Due in more than one year
				£'000	£'000
Salix Finance Ltd	2027	Energy efficiency loans	Nil	44	45
				44	45

Loans due within one year are included in creditors in note 13 and amounts due in more than one year are included in note 14.

Notes to the accounts (continued)
16 Provisions for liabilities

	Defined benefit obligations £'000	Enhanced Pensions £'000	Total £'000
At 1 August 2023	-	11	11
Amounts utilised	(1,800)	(2)	(1,802)
Additions/(Reversed) in the year	1,800	2	1,802
At 31 July 2024	-	11	11

Defined benefit obligations relate to the liabilities under the College's membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme. Further details are given in Note 22.

The enhanced pension provision relates to the cost of staff who have already left the College's employment. This provision has been recalculated in accordance with guidance issued by the funding bodies.

The principal assumptions for this calculation are:

	2024	2023
Price inflation	2.80%	2.80%
Discount rate	4.80%	5.00%

17 Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1 August 2023 £'000	Cash Flows £'000	Other Changes £'000	At 31 July 2024 £'000
Cash and cash equivalents	17,536	2,870	-	20,406
Other Loans	(156)	67	-	(89)
Net Funds	17,380			20,317

Notes to the accounts (continued)
18 Notes to the statement of cashflows

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Surplus after tax for the year	2,596	1,657
Adjustment for:		
Depreciation and amortisation	3,904	3,863
Capital grants released	(2,865)	(2,789)
Investment income	(628)	(49)
Deficit on sale of fixed assets	-	3
Decrease in provisions	-	(40)
Pension costs less contributions payable	(696)	324
Operating cash flow before movements in working capital	<u>2,311</u>	<u>2,969</u>
Increase in debtors	(94)	(306)
Increase in creditors due within one year	1,361	375
	<u>3,578</u>	<u>3,038</u>

19 Cash and cash equivalents

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>20,406</u>	<u>17,536</u>

20 Capital commitments

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Contracts for future capital expenditure not provided	<u>242</u>	<u>131</u>

Notes to the accounts (continued)
21 Lease obligations

The total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	Other assets	
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Payment due		
Not later than one year	18	24
Later than one year and not later than five years	7	33
Total lease payments due	25	57

22 Defined benefit obligations

The College's employees belong to two principal post-employment benefit plans: the Teachers' Pension Scheme England and Wales ("TPS") for academic and related staff and the Local Government Pension Scheme ("LGPS") for non-teaching staff, which is managed by Northamptonshire County Council. Both are multi-employer defined-benefit plans.

Total pension cost for the year

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Teachers' Pension Scheme: contributions paid	2,174	1,679
Local Government Pension Scheme:		
- Contributions paid	1,800	1,660
- FRS102 (28) charge	(340)	311
Charge to Statement of Comprehensive Income	1,460	1,971
Total pension cost for the year within staff costs	3,634	3,650

The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries. The latest formal actuarial valuation of the TPS was 31 March 2020 and of the LGPS 31 March 2022.

Contributions amounting to £720,000 (2023: £488,000) were payable to the schemes at 31 July and are included within creditors.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. The TPS is an unfunded scheme and members contribute on a 'pay as you go' basis – these contributions, along with those made by employers, are credited to the Exchequer.

Notes to the accounts (continued)**22 Defined benefit obligations (continued)****Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme**

Not less than every four years the Government Actuary ("GA"), using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS. The aim of the review is to specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors.

The latest actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2020 and in accordance with The Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2023 and the Employer Contribution Rate was assessed using agreed assumptions in line with the Directions and was accepted at the original assessed rate as there was no cost control mechanism breach.

The valuation report was published in October 2023. The key results of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- Total scheme liabilities for service (pensions currently payable and the estimated cost of future benefits) of £262 billion
- Value of notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the proceeds from the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222 billion
- Notional past service deficit of £40 billion
- Discount rate is 1.7% in excess of CPI

As a result of the valuation, new employer contribution rates were set at 28.68% of pensionable pay from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2027 (compared to 23.68% under the previous valuation including a 0.08% administration levy). DfE paid a teacher pension employer contribution grant to cover additional costs during the 2021/22 academic year and currently through to July 2025.

The pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £2,174,000 (2023: £1,679,000).

The TPS is a multi-employer pension plan and there is insufficient information to account for the scheme on as a defined benefit plan so it is accounted for as a defined contribution plan.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined-benefit plan, with the assets held in separate funds administered by Northamptonshire County Council. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 July 2024 was £2,248,000 of which employers' contributions totalled £1,800,000 and employees' contributions totalled £448,000.

The agreed contribution rates for the year ended 31 March 2025 is 25.4% for employers, and between 5.5% and 12.5% for employees depending on salary.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of an FE body in the statutory sector closure, where there is no transfer or merger, outstanding Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 12 November 2024.

Notes to the accounts (continued)
22 Defined benefit obligations (continued)
Principal Actuarial Assumptions

The following is based on a full actuarial valuation of the fund at 31 March 2022 updated to 31 July 2024 by a qualified independent actuary:

	At 31 July 2024	At 31 July 2023
Rate of increase in salaries	3.25%	3.50%
Future pensions increase	2.75%	3.00%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.00%	5.05%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.75%	3.00%
Commutation of pensions to lump sums - pre April 2008 service	50.0%	50.0%
Commutation of pensions to lump sums – post April 2008 service	75.0%	75.0%

The consumer prices index (CPI) assumption applied and noted above is that which was set under the scheme rules in March 2022 rather than reflective of the CPI experience rate at 31 July 2022.

The current valuation reflects the expected increase in benefits and therefore liability as a result of Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) equation between men and women which is required as a result of the removal of the Additional State Pension.

The assumed life expectations on retirement at age 65 are:

	At 31 July 2024 Years	At 31 July 2023 years
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	20.5	20.5
Females	24.0	24.0
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	21.4	21.5
Females	25.1	25.2

The College's share of the assets in the plan at the balance sheet date were:

	Fair value at 31 July 2024 £'000	Fair value at 31 July 2023 £'000
Equities	26,864	28,314
Bonds	14,192	10,961
Property	7,603	5,937
Cash	2,028	457
Total fair value of plan assets	50,687	45,669
Actual return on plan assets	4,158	92

Notes to the accounts (continued)
22 Defined benefit obligations (continued)

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Fair value of plan assets	50,687	45,669
Present value of plan liabilities	(40,919)	(38,786)
Net pensions asset	9,768	6,883
Restriction to level of asset ceiling	(9,768)	(6,883)
Net pensions liability	-	-

The value of the college's share of net assets has been restricted due to the effect of the asset ceiling being the maximum value of the present of the economic benefits available in the form of the unconditional right to reduced contributions from the plan. A corresponding charge has been made to other comprehensive income in the period.

Amounts recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income in respect of the plan are as follows:

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Amounts included in staff costs		
Current service cost	1,460	1,940
Past service cost	-	31
Total	1,460	1,971

Amounts included in interest costs

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Interest on plan assets	2,328	1,561
Interest on pension liabilities	(1,972)	(1,574)
	356	(13)

The College is aware that the Court of Appeal has recently upheld the decision in the Virgin Media vs NTL Pension Trustees II Limited case. The decision puts into question the validity of any amendments made in respect of the rules of a contracted-out pension scheme between 6 April 1997 and 5 April 2016. The judgment means that some historic amendments affecting s.9(2B) rights could be void if the necessary actuarial confirmation under s.37 of the Pension Schemes Act 1993 was not obtained. Until further investigations have been completed by the UK Government's Actuary's Department and/or any legislative action taken by the government, the potential impact if any, on the valuation of scheme liabilities remains unknown.

Notes to the accounts (continued)
22 Defined benefit obligations (continued)
Total amount recognised in Other Comprehensive Income

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Return on pension plan assets	1,830	(1,469)
Changes in assumptions underlying the present value of plan liabilities	(2,526)	2,006
Amount recognised in Other Comprehensive Income	(696)	537

Asset and Liability Reconciliation

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations		
Defined benefit obligations at start of period	38,786	44,379
Current service cost	1,460	1,940
Past service cost	-	31
Interest cost	1,972	1,574
Contributions by Scheme participants	448	414
Changes in demographic assumptions	(82)	(505)
Changes in financial assumptions	(1,614)	(11,496)
Other experience gains and losses	1,337	3,600
Estimated benefits paid	(1,388)	(1,151)
Defined benefit obligations at end of period	40,919	38,786
Changes in fair value of plan assets		
Fair value of plan assets at start of period	45,669	44,166
Interest on plan assets	2,328	1,561
Return on plan assets	1,830	(1,469)
Employer contributions	1,800	1,660
Contributions by Scheme participants	448	414
Other experience gains and losses	-	488
Estimated benefits paid	(1,388)	(1,151)
Fair value of plan assets at end of period	50,687	45,669

Notes to the accounts (continued)**23 Related party transactions**

Due to the nature of the College's operations and the composition of the Board of Governors (being drawn from local public and private sector organisations) it is inevitable that transactions will take place with organisations in which a member of the Board of Governors may have an interest. All transactions involving organisations in which a member of the Board of Governors may have an interest are conducted at length and in accordance with the College's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures.

Disclosure of key management compensation and expenses paid to or on behalf of governors is given in note 6.

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON REGULARITY TO THE CORPORATION OF NORTHAMPTON COLLEGE AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION ACTING THROUGH EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

Conclusion

We have carried out an engagement, in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 5th December 2022 and further to the requirements of the accountability agreement, grant funding agreements and contracts with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (the "ESFA") and the Department for Education (the "DfE") or those of any other public funder, to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Northampton College during the period 1st August 2023 to 31st July 2024 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1st August 2023 to 31st July 2024 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for conclusion

The framework that has been applied is set out in the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice (the Code) issued by the ESFA and in any relevant conditions of funding concerning adult education notified by a relevant funder.

We have complied with the independence and other ethical requirements of the FRC's Ethical Standard and the ethical pronouncements of the ICAEW. We also apply International Standard on Quality Management (UK) 1 Quality Management for Firms that Perform Audits or Reviews of Financial Statements, or Other Assurance or Related Services Engagements and accordingly maintain comprehensive systems of continuing quality management. We believe the assurance evidence we have obtained is sufficient to provide a basis for our conclusion.

Responsibilities of Corporation of Northampton College for regularity

The Corporation of Northampton College is responsible, under the grant funding agreements and contracts with the ESFA and the requirements of the Further & Higher Education Act 1992, subsequent legislation and related regulations and guidance, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received are applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. The Corporation of Northampton College is also responsible for preparing the Governing Body's Statement of Regularity, Propriety and Compliance.

Reporting accountant's responsibilities for reporting on regularity

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Code.

The objective of a limited assurance engagement is to perform such procedures as to obtain information and explanations in order to provide us with sufficient appropriate evidence to express a negative conclusion on regularity. A limited assurance engagement is more limited in scope than a reasonable assurance engagement and the procedures performed vary in nature and timing from, and are less in extent than for a reasonable assurance engagement; consequently a limited assurance engagement does not enable us to obtain assurance that we would become aware of all significant matters that might be identified in a reasonable assurance engagement. Accordingly, we do not express a positive opinion.

We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1st August 2023 to 31st July

2024 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our work included identification and assessment of the design and operational effectiveness of the controls, policies and procedures that have been implemented to ensure compliance with the framework of authorities including the specific requirements of the grant funding agreements and contracts with the ESFA and those of any other public funder and high level financial control areas where we identified a material irregularity is likely to arise. We undertook detailed testing, on a sample basis, on the identified areas where a material irregularity is likely to arise where such areas are in respect of controls, policies and procedures that apply to classes of transactions.

This work was integrated with our audit of the financial statements and evidence was also derived from the conduct of that audit to the extent it supports the regularity conclusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Corporation of Northampton College and the Secretary of State for Education acting through the ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Corporation of Northampton College and the Secretary of State for Education acting through the ESFA those matters we are required to state in a report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Corporation of Northampton College and the Secretary of State for Education acting through the ESFA for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

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