



# ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2023/24



# CONTENTS

<b>SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
OVERVIEW.....	3
INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT FROM THE PRINCIPAL .....	3
PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COLLEGE .....	5
COLLEGE STRATEGIC AMBITION .....	5
<b>SECTION 2 – PERFORMANCE REPORT .....</b>	<b>11</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	12
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.....	12
KEY CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT DURING 2023/24 .....	13
EQUALITIES, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION.....	14
FAIR WORK .....	15
NET-ZERO AND SUSTAINABILITY.....	15
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE .....	16
<b>SECTION 3 – ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT.....</b>	<b>19</b>
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE REPORT .....	20
DIRECTORS’ REPORT.....	20
STATEMENT OF BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES .....	22
GOVERNANCE STATEMENT.....	23
REMUNERATION AND STAFF REPORTS.....	33
PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS .....	38
REGISTERED ADDRESS.....	38
<b>SECTION 4 – INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>SECTION 5 – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.....</b>	<b>45</b>
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME .....	46
BALANCE SHEET.....	47
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN RESERVES.....	48
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS .....	49
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES .....	50
<b>NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1 – SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL ACCOUNTS DIRECTION.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2 – GLOSSARY OF TERMS .....</b>	<b>69</b>

# SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

## Overview

This section of the financial statements is designed to give an overview of high-level College performance and developments during 2023/24. This information should be considered alongside other sections of these statements in understanding how the financial management and performance supports the College in achieving its high-level outcomes.

## Introductory Statement from the Principal

I am delighted to introduce this report, which reflects the outcomes of another exciting and successful year for Borders College.

A strong, vibrant, sustainable College is a key element in the economic development of the Scottish Borders and the wider South of Scotland. It is therefore important to the local economy that we, in partnership with employers and other key stakeholders, deliver a responsive training offer which is aligned to regional and national priorities. The College is engaged regionally, in the Scottish Borders at the Community Planning Partnership and in the South of Scotland at both the Regional Economic Partnership and the Convention of the South of Scotland

The College is a key partner in the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal as we look to deliver on the skills requirements to support sustainable construction for the Region, and also the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, specifically in ensuring the South of Scotland has the necessary skills to ensure sustained economic development for the communities we serve. We are continuing in our role as part of the Capital City Partnership (Data Driven Innovation) project developing digital skills in focussed curriculum areas to ensure a match with employability. This is highlighted in health care courses where students learn the importance of data in decision-making within the health sector.

Our BSTEM Sustainable Construction Hub, located in Hawick, continues to develop and delivers a range of Sustainable Construction training programmes to industry. In 2023/24 we successfully secured additional funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund to expand and extend our Green Skills programme. Our use of the Innovation Voucher scheme, continues to support a number of businesses to develop new products and services to assist productivity and growth.

In response to the June 2021 publication of the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) report "*Coherence and Sustainability: A Review of Tertiary Education and Research*" as a lead institution in the South of Scotland pathfinder initiative, partnering with both Dumfries and Galloway College and Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) we successfully concluded two separate projects. With Dumfries and Galloway College, our South of Scotland Digital Skills Hub provides seamless learning pathways from school to post graduate qualifications in digital skills.

Following its launch in June 2023, our joint Rural Skills Pathways prospectus, developed with SRUC, defines clear learning pathways for programmes including animal care, equine and veterinary nursing, horticulture and landscaping, conservation, forestry and gamekeeping, and agriculture. This follows our strategy to enable as many students as possible to fulfil their potential, while remaining in the Scottish Borders.

In continuing and developing our support for the digital economy, our cyber security programmes go from strength to strength and, for 2023/24, we launched our e-sports lab, which has proved incredibly popular.

In partnership with The University of Edinburgh and other Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal partners, we continue to develop and deliver a range of Data Science/Digital programmes. We are also developing further partnerships with other universities, with the overarching principle of increasing opportunities for our Scottish Borders.

Our effectiveness in delivering for our Region is reflected in our success rates. We remain above the sector average in this regard; however, we have seen the negative impact of students leaving for employment as a result of cost-of-living pressures. We therefore experienced a slight dip in all modes of study, with the exception of part-time further education which saw a 3% improvement. In our modern apprenticeship programmes, we improved our achievement percentage by 1.5% to 83.0% and are the second-top performing college provider in Scotland.

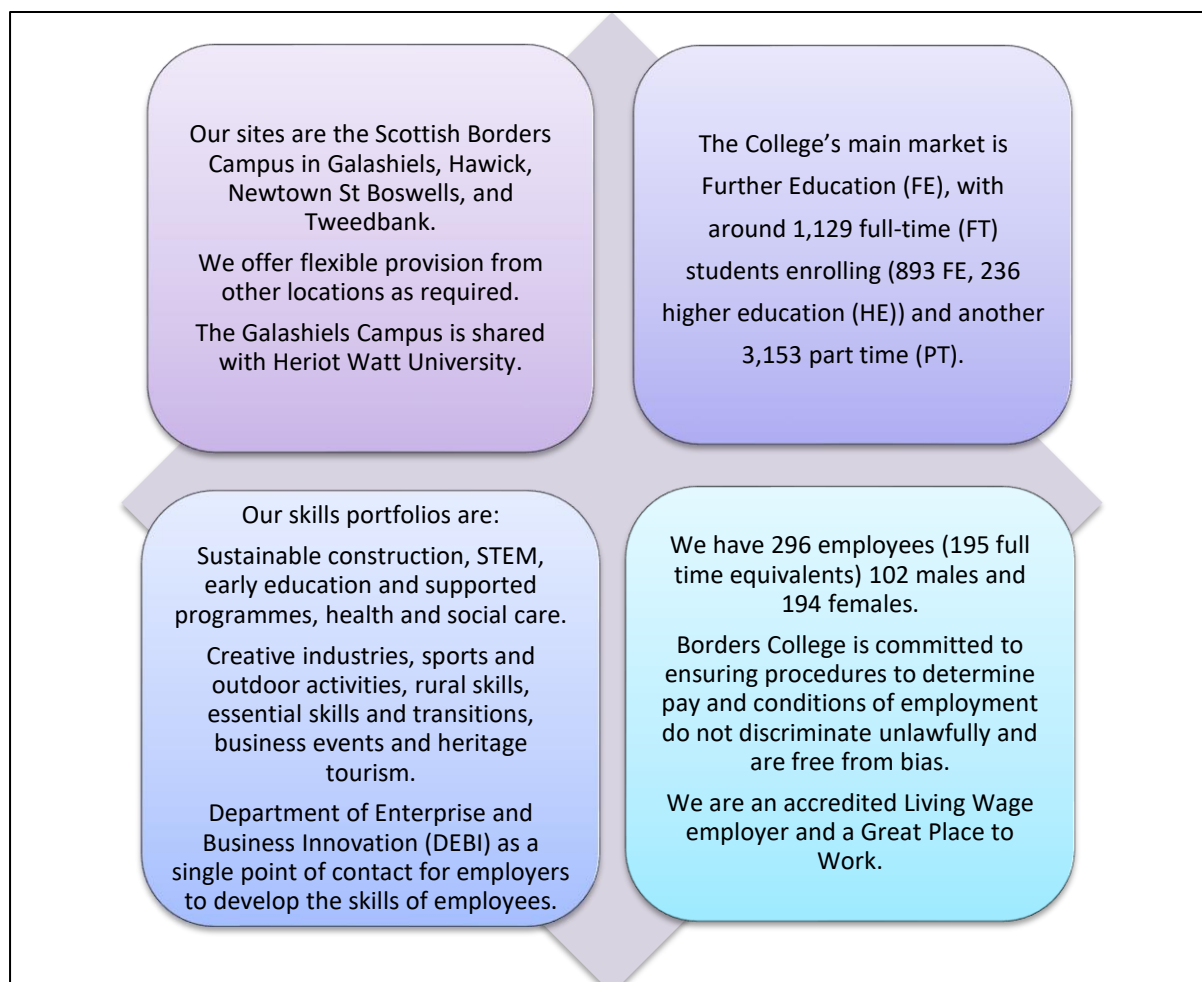
In ensuring and enhancing quality, we know how important it is to reflect and respond to the needs and opinions of our staff, students and stakeholders. We were successful in retaining accreditation as a Great Place to Work in 2024 and our student satisfaction remained very positive at 93%. Our annual engagement visit from Education Scotland was also overwhelmingly positive, and we have already addressed the identified areas for development.

In financial terms, despite the challenging external environment, the College performed relatively well; however, our final reported deficit was impacted by the removal of the Scottish Government-funded grant for the nationally negotiated job evaluation project for support staff. This resulted in a reported deficit of £1.2M. Prior to the adjustment, the Statement of Comprehensive Income would have reflected a deficit of £60k, slightly better than budget, achieved as a result of our efficient and effective resource planning, supported by a robust monitoring cycle. Looking forwards and considering our current expectations of public funding levels together with other external factors, we do not believe that such a result will be achievable in future years without significant changes to our operating model. This is now the most significant risk facing the College and is recognised by our Board as our highest priority to address.

Pete Smith, Principal and CEO

## Purpose and Activities of the College

The College is the Regional College for the Scottish Borders with 73% of its funding from the Scottish Funding Council.



## College Strategic Ambition

In June 2020, the Board agreed the College Strategic Ambition, which covers up to 2025. The College's Strategic Ambition is "to continue to be the learning and training provider of choice for employers, students and staff". The Ambition sets three strategic objectives, which guide our work, our values and behaviours. The Ambition is underpinned with a suite of supporting strategies.

## Strategic Objectives

In achieving our ambition, our strategic objectives are:

We will create high quality learning and training opportunities which are  
**relevant, enabling and flexible.**

We will **proactively engage** with our **community and stakeholders** to ensure our practice reflects their needs.

We will take a **leading role** in **enabling an inclusive, resilient and sustainable Scotland.**

## Values

Our values underpin who we are and how we behave. Our strategy will be delivered through our values-based culture and contribute to our distinctive approach.

For our students, staff and community, we will be:

**Inspiring**  
**Innovative**  
**Collaborative**  
**Inclusive**  
**Empowering**



## Behaviours

In demonstrating our values, we will:



## Annual Priorities

To ensure the College meets its strategic ambitions and objectives, an Annual Priority Action Plan is agreed, and regular monitoring of actions is reported to the Board. The actions link directly to the agreed strategies. The progress on the priorities during 2023/24 is detailed below:

### **Re-align curriculum to take account of SFC targets, while also supporting regional and national priorities.**

The College has introduced a new curriculum planning process for the 2024/25 curriculum, which has improved decision-making for course development and planning of the future curriculum.

### **Enhance existing links and develop new and effective links and partnerships to enable increased student placements and reduce reliance on core.**

The College has achieved 43 new business contacts during the year and has increased its external income by 1.5% in partnership with funders such as Scottish Borders Council Shared Prosperity Fund and Robertson Trust.

**Increase opportunity for student voice to impact and influence College strategy and operational decisions.**

Student representation is at all Board Committees and the Student Experience Committee has been re-constituted. Student Class representative numbers remain stable, and the level of engagement has shown an improved quality and consistency.

**Improve clarity of learner pathways and number of opportunities.**

New articulation agreements have been developed with UHI Argyll, SRUC and Abertay University. The number of students articulating to degree level course has increased by 2% in comparison to 2022/23.

**Advance plans to optimise College estates.**

A condition survey has been completed for the Galashiels campus and has completed a feasibility study for the future of the landbased campus. Heriot Watt University has indicated their intention to withdraw from the shared campus from October 2026. The impact of the withdrawal is being assessed and plans are in progress to maximize the usage and efficiency of the whole estate.

**Enhance functionality and improve resilience of communications network.**

The transition from the previous system which used desktop phones to a VOIP system, which is fully integrated within staff computers, was fully completed in October 2023. A full survey and health check of the network infrastructure has been completed and tender documents have been developed to allow for a full procurement of the required upgrades to be completed during 2024/25.

**Through the implementation of pro-monitor and the realignment of Student Support Services, increase success rates for our most vulnerable students.**

The implementation is complete, and the new system has allowed increased monitoring, resulting in increased success rates for retained students.

**Deliver further CO<sub>2</sub>e reductions towards goal of Net-Zero.**

Technical evaluation and design was completed to remove fossil fuels as the primary source of heating on the Galashiels campus. This will allow a bid to be made as soon as a funding source is available. The purchase of three electric vehicles has also reduced the CO<sub>2</sub> emission of the vehicle fleet.

**Enable Stakeholders to make a positive contribution to environmental sustainability.**

Sustainability Champions page was launched to allow like-minded individuals to share knowledge and experiences. The monthly magazine continues to highlight sustainability activity for the coming months, which link to the Colleges sustainability goals.

**Deliver a staff training and development programme to support our value-based culture and ensure our people are supported in developing their skills.**

A Training programme was developed and agreed to ensure identified skills needs met. Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) launched across the College and two individuals identified to undertake Level 5 award and then lead and support the required cultural change required to implement TIP across the College.

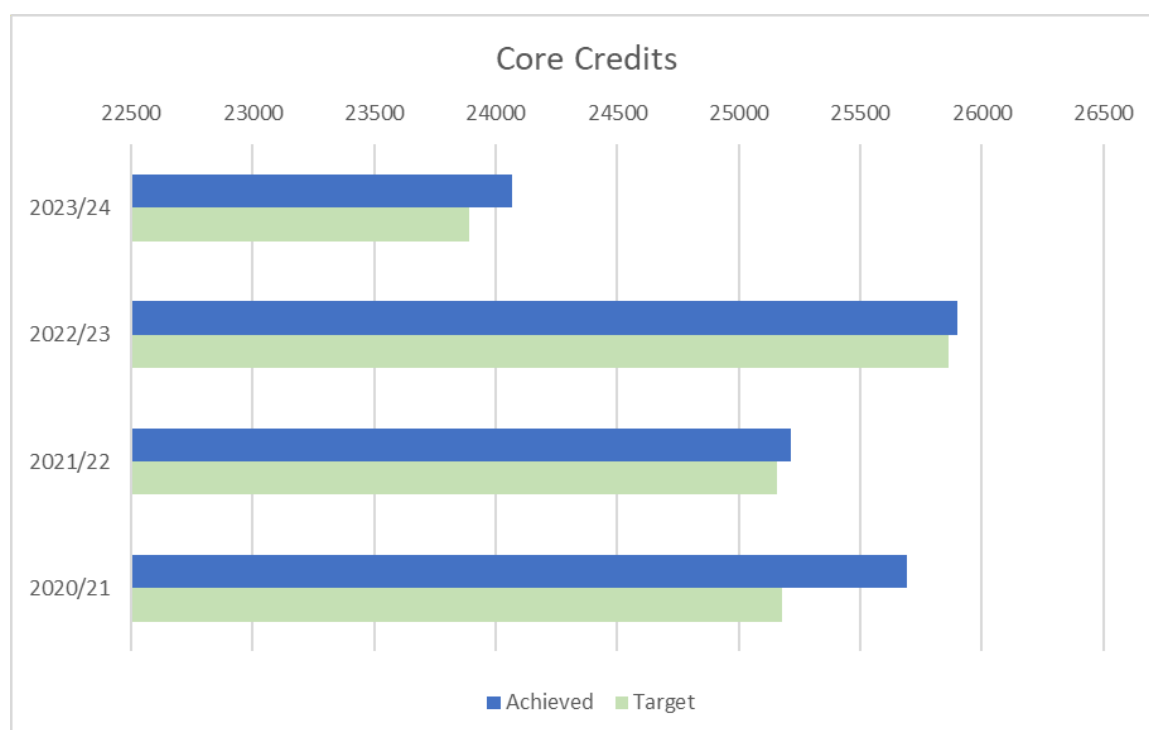


### Further Embed Equalities as part of our inclusive culture.

During 2023/24 Borders College equalities and awareness calendar has recognised a number of cross-college campaigns through events addressing Inclusion, Community Safety, Men and Women's Health, Neurodiversity, Mental Wellbeing, Pride, and Corporate Parenting. An equalities programme is planned for 2024/25 which keeps EDI as a driver for promoting an inclusive culture.

## Student Success

Student success is at the heart of the College; it has continued to achieve its core credit outcomes and is generally above the sector average. The table below shows the core credits for the last four years against the outcome agreement targets. During 2023/24, the students attending the College achieved a total 24,069 credits, against a target of 23,891. The College has consistently achieved its credit thresholds. The College remained above the sector average achievement. More detail on student success can be seen from page 12.



The percentage of students overall who are satisfied with their college experience remains high at 93% (Student Experience and Engagement Survey, March 2024). Our targets are 90%, a level which is achieved overall and for the majority of the indicators.

## Teaching Performance

Education Scotland completed their Annual Engagement Visit (AEV) on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023. During the visit, the AEV team explored overarching themes such as learner progress and outcomes, approaches to ensuring the quality of learning, including professional update and learner engagement. 32 positive progressions, and only two areas for development were noted. This was a most positive AEV visit and report, and it was clear that Education Scotland are satisfied with student outcomes, leadership, learning and teaching at Borders College.



Borders College works with four awarding bodies (Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA), City & Guilds, Institute of Motor Industry (IMI) and the Scottish Joint Industry Board). For academic session 23/24, there were 44 External Verification (EV) visits, with 37 from SQA. Last academic session the College engaged with 38 external verification visits from awarding bodies. 35 out of the 38 qualifications reviewed had no recommendations. SQA highlighted many areas of good practice from peer observation wheel and student support questionnaires, 3 out of 38 had minor recommendations, and with subsequent support from the quality team all recommendations were fully met within the recommended timescale. We are currently second in Scotland for Modern Apprenticeship outcomes.

100% of employers surveyed would recommend Borders College as their training provider.

## **Financial Performance**

The College generated a deficit before other gains and losses in the year of £1.226m (2022/23 – deficit of £0.683m), with total comprehensive net expenditure showing a deficit of £0.039m (2022/23 – net expenditure surplus of £3.917m). This final position is after actuarial adjustments in respect of pension funds, which is a gain of £2.606m for 2023/24 (2022/23 – gain of £3.245m).

After transfer of £0.275m from the revaluation reserve and applying an asset ceiling adjustment to the pension fund of £4.086m, the cumulative surplus on the Income and Expenditure reserve decreased by £2.431m, from £6.235m surplus to £3.804m surplus. Detailed information of the total movement in reserves can be seen on page 48.

The College is reporting total net assets of £13.211m in its balance sheet (2022/23 – £13.250m). There was a large increase in assets due to the revaluation of fixed assets (£2.667m) however, due to a change in the accounting treatment of the Support Staff and Middle Management Job Evaluation project, accrued income of £1.166m has been removed from trade & other receivables as these funds have been returned from Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to Scottish Government (SG).

This change in accounting treatment of the Job Evaluation project removes the certainty of receiving government funding to cover the cost of the project and has increased the College's deficit position in 2023/24 by £1.166m. As the College was unaware of the return of the funding from SFC to SG when the 2022/23 Accounts were signed a prior year adjustment is not necessary.

## **Key Risks**

The Board has established a Strategic Risk Register, which considers matters which may impact on the College's ability to deliver on its strategic objectives. Risks and mitigating factors are kept under review by the Executive and Leadership Teams monthly, and reported to the Board and Committees.

Further detail on the Risk Register is set out on page 28.

## Going Concern

The Balance Sheet of 31 July 2024 shows Net Current Assets of £1.195m (2022/23 – £1.657m) and Total Net Assets of £13.211m (2022/23 – £13.250m). The SFC has indicated to the College expected funding challenges for future years and has set a flat cash allocation for the period 2024/25. The Board has approved a financial plan up to 2024/25 on that basis. The financial plan sees the College operate to deficit budget for the 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27 and a requirement to identify savings to reduce these deficits and move to a break even for future years.

Audit Scotland guidance ‘Going Concern in the Public Sector’ states that “the use of the going concern basis of accounting will always be appropriate for public bodies”. This remains unless the services delivered by the organisation will cease to be delivered by the public sector.

The comments on page 31 to these financial statements outline the Board’s assessment of going concern. Accordingly, the Board considers that it is appropriate to consider that the College is a “going concern” and these financial statements have been prepared on that basis.

## Future Priorities

Due to the very challenging position overall of the Further Education sector and the additional challenges that Borders College have with the decision of Heriot Watt University to discontinue shared services and shared accommodation in 2026, the Senior Leadership Team and Board have agreed to focus on key themes which will ensure the College is able to achieve a long-term sustainable position. The themes are:

1. **Curriculum Planning and Design:** Engaging with SFC to build a case for increased student activity, which would allow skills demand of employers and students to be met. This will be supported by partnership working with all key partners to develop robust regional skills planning and delivery propositions. Additional student activity will also be sought via commercial courses and grant-funded opportunities.
2. **Estate and Infrastructure Planning:** A full review of the estate will be undertaken, and plans developed to ensure the estate is fit for purpose and meets the needs of the future curriculum. The plan will include financial sustainability of the estate and opportunities to increase commercial use.
3. **Financial Planning:** To achieve a long-term financial sustainability position, all processes will be reviewed to increase efficiency, fixed costs will be challenged and minimized, and commercial opportunities will be pursued for both the curriculum and the estate.
4. **Workforce Planning:** the delivery of the themes will have direct implications on the future workforce. Workforce plans and implications will be developed and assessed for all projects and areas of transformation.

## SECTION 2 – PERFORMANCE REPORT



## Introduction

This section of the report provides a detailed analysis of the College's performance against financial and non-financial indicators and gives a commentary on the key financial outcomes for the year, with figures extracted from the Balance Sheet as well as the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure for the year.

It defines the relationships between the College's national and regional drivers, its Strategic Plan, performance measurement framework and Risk Register. It also discusses the College's wider performance in relation to environmental and social matters.

## Academic Performance

Borders College Strategic Ambition 2020-2025 sets out how we will respond to our regional and national socio-economic priorities. As a progressive organisation, the College is part of a number of innovative and economic development projects, working alongside key partners, universities and an extensive network of employers.

Borders College works collaboratively with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Education Scotland (ES) to plan and manage adjustments and support improvement. This collaboration supports our strategy in ensuring that our student outcomes are in the top quartile of colleges nationally.

Mode	Level	21/22	22/23	23/24	22/23 Sector Average	Variance from 22/23	Variance from sector average
<b>Learner Success</b>							
Full-Time	FE	63.0	68.2	67.2	63.6	-1.0	3.6
Full-Time	HE	65.5	65.6	65.5	65.5	-0.1	0.0
Part-Time	FE	72.2	76.4	79.3	77.3	2.9	2.0
Part-Time	HE	85.4	88.5	84.5	78.6	-4.0	5.9
<b>Learner Partial Success</b>							
Full-Time	FE	8.4	7.3	7.5	11.1	0.2	-3.6
Full-Time	HE	12.4	13.1	12.7	14.0	-0.4	-1.3
Part-Time	FE	18.8	13.7	7.9	12.2	-5.8	-4.3
Part-Time	HE	6.6	1.4	1.0	12.0	-0.4	-11.0
<b>Total Withdrawals</b>							
Full-Time	FE	28.6	24.5	25.2	25.3	0.7	-0.1
Full-Time	HE	22.1	21.2	21.8	20.6	0.6	1.2
Part-Time	FE	9.1	9.9	12.8	10.6	2.9	2.2
Part-Time	HE	7.9	10.2	14.4	9.4	4.2	5.0

(The 2023/24 numbers are still to be finalised due to audit review.)

The College continued to perform well in Foundation Apprenticeships, providing apprenticeships across five subject areas to 89 students during 2023/24, with approximately 9% entering onto fast-track awards, which enable them to complete the full award within one academic year.

The College realised a slight increase in withdrawals, with the cost of living being a major factor for withdrawals.



## Key Curriculum Development During 2023/24

The Board approved key priorities as part of the 2023/24 regional outcome agreement. Work on the priorities has progressed during the year and has contributed to the continued student success and levels of student satisfaction. Below highlights some of this progress:

### Fair Access and Transitions

- Received funding from Local Employment Partnership to provide a Student Support Officer to support 'Find Your Vibe' course for individuals who left school without a positive destination to make an informed decision in their future.
- Introduced Pro-monitor for the recording of all student support throughout the College. This new system enables a holistic approach to Student Support.
- Global Citizenship embedded into curricular delivery, and staff and students are nominated by their peers or colleagues and recognised for their achievements.
- 12 students and 2 staff engaged in an exchange programme with Centennial College Toronto and experienced a two-week placement as part of the 'Turing Project'.
- Recognised for our high numbers of female students in Agriculture (NC course 12 out of 24), this was featured on BBC Radio 4's Farming Today and also local and national press, which resulted in a visit from MSP Rachel Hamilton.
- Launched summer programme to Fast Track current NHS employees to HNC Healthcare Practice and on the pathway to a career in Nursing.
- Launched an Esports classroom to help students transition from school into a computing discipline by providing digital skills to allow students to progress on our computing pathway from Level 5 to Level 8, then on to University.
- Aligned Student Support Services to enable students to access support services to meet their individual needs.
- Developed and launched a bespoke training programme: Construction Futures, a unique collaboration with Galashiels Academy, Morrison Construction, Powering Futures and DYW.
- Developed our Green Skills offer to support local businesses to train and upskill in areas to support jobs for the green economy and transition to Net-Zero.

### High Quality Learning Teaching and Support

- Introduced New Curriculum Planning process to incorporate good governance in the decision-making process to ensure our portfolio offer meets student needs, offers either articulation or employment prospects.
- Introduced a 'survive and thrive' campaign at the start of the academic session
- Introduced 'resilience training' for all full-time students at the start of the academic session as part of our Global Citizenship campaign.
- Piloted the new College calendar within the Landbased department. This allowed students and staff the time to reflect and focus on targeted support.

### Partnership, Participation and Student Experience

- The Student's Association developed two student surveys to reengage with students on matters that are relevant to their success at Borders College. The Student's Association significantly increased participation in student surveys, making us the 5<sup>th</sup> in Scotland encouraging students to complete the 'NUS BIG Survey 2022' out of colleges and universities, as we received 113% of our expected response rate.

- Continue to work in partnership with SRUC in the development of articulation and co-creation of courses such as Animal Care courses aligning to SRUC Vet Nursing courses.
- Working in partnership with South of Scotland Enterprise and Business Gateway to deliver workshops throughout the academic year to support delivery of Enterprise NPA.
- Working alongside the University of Edinburgh and DDI to establish the foundations of an entrepreneurial campus at Borders College.
- Staff training to support the development of construction retrofit programmes and hydrogen technologies to ensure that the curriculum keeps pace with skills demands as we decarbonise our built environment.
- Work in partnership with Live Borders, Scottish Rugby Union, Scottish Borders Care, NHS and Royal Voluntary Service to provide valuable workshops throughout the academic year alongside contextualized placements.

#### Learning with impact

- Worked in partnership with Napier University in the development of a 2+2-degree programme in Business Management.
- Continued to be the 4<sup>th</sup> largest provider of Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland.
- Enhanced delivery in sustainability and retrofit delivery to meet the needs of our students and partners.
- Success at the Albas Awards, with three students (Horse Care, Gamekeeping and Animal Care) all award winners.
- Staff at NSB developed a Trees and Timber course to meet regional demand.
- Ecosystem fund, supported by Scottish Enterprise, provided entrepreneurial activity to students across the curriculum by employing an Entrepreneur in Residence (first college in Scotland) who developed partnerships with Techscaler, South of Scotland Enterprise, ScotEdge and University of Edinburgh, amongst others. An online student start-up zone has been launched for all students in the College, and the start of a student start-up competition that provided £1,000 in financial support for successful submissions for students to explore their business idea.
- Upgrading of our Gas Training Area and Woodworking machine shop to provide the latest equipment and machinery to enhance the learning experience of our full-time students and apprentices in Construction.

## Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

The College has made significant progress with the agreed outcomes within its Equality Outcomes Action Plan. This plan further enhances equality, diversity and inclusion for students and staff. Progress achieved with key actions in 2023/24 are listed below:

- Increase in the number of staff and students receiving Global Citizenship awards, which acknowledge effort and contribution towards an inclusive culture.
- A Trauma Informed Programme is being implemented across the College, which supports a trauma-informed culture at an institutional level.
- 'Equally Safe' plan has been updated, clearly outlining the College's approach to preventing and addressing violence against women and girls. This takes a collaborative approach within the College and with external partners, services and organisations.

- Student Induction shares key messages on the College's approach to equality, diversity and an inclusive culture.
- Report for Support online reporting tool has been developed to support students and staff to feel safe and confident to report incidents of bullying, harassment, racism, gender-based violence and other similar concerns.
- Staff diversity monitoring has been refreshed to improve disclosure rates in order to better support and reflect the diversity of the workforce.
- Continued focus on reducing gender imbalance across identified curricular areas has been delivered by addressing gender segregation in promotions, pilot projects and data analysis.
- Corporate Parenting training delivered to staff received positive feedback, with staff reporting an increased understanding of their role and the role of the College.
- Mental Health Action Plan aligns to the College's Mental Health Strategy, which sets out a series of actions that addresses how the College community will be supported.

## **Fair Work**

Borders College adopts fair work practices which comply with the seven Fair Work First requirements of:

- Payment of at least the Real Living Wage
- Provide appropriate channels for effective workers' voice, such as trade union recognition
- Investment in workforce development
- No inappropriate use of zero hours contracts
- Action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workforce
- Offer flexible and family friendly working practices for all workers from day one of employment
- Oppose the use of fire and rehire practice

Additional commentary can be found [here](#).

## **Net-Zero and Sustainability**

Borders College is committed to working towards a more sustainable world, and over the last 11 years has implemented big projects and little actions, which together have resulted in a significant reduction in our carbon emissions. Borders College continues on this sustainability journey, with net-zero by 2045 as the ultimate destination. The strategic objectives are:

- Influence positive, sustainable behaviours across the wider community.
- Develop awareness of, and implement, good sustainable practice in all of our learning programmes.
- Promote sustainable innovation and the adoption of technological breakthroughs with our employers and students.
- Adopt best ethical, sustainable and social practice in our operations and supply chain.



The implementation of the strategy has continued across both the estate and the curriculum. Key activities completed during the period are summarised below. The full report, which was presented to the Regional Board on 14 December 2023, is available [here](#).

- Completion of feasibility studies and development of funding application to remove gas as the primary/secondary heating source. Awaiting funding to be identified.
- Waste management contract in place, which ensures the College will be zero-to-landfill.
- New cycling infrastructure, with bikes purchased and available to staff and students.
- Sustainability embedded in procurement exercises and working with APUC to establish future monitoring and reporting options.
- Ecology and nature skills incorporated into Countryside Skills and Level 6 Animal Care courses.
- Construction courses for schools delivered with focus on efficient use of resources, recycling and reuse of materials to minimise waste.
- Green Skills course delivered to wider community via funding from Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Short courses developed and delivered for Air and Ground Source Heating Pumps, introduction to renewables, EV charging installation, Renewable Awareness and many others.
- Further roll out of developed assessment template to monitor improvement against base lining of curriculum for the 17 Sustainability Development Goals.
- Sustainability calendar highlights and encourages changes to behaviours in different areas each month throughout the year. There were 26 events during the year.

To date, the College has seen a 48% (*from base line categories*) reduction in its annual carbon emissions from the 2015 base line.

## Financial Performance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting for Further and Higher Education 2019 Edition, the Financial Reporting Standards FRS102 and the 2023/24 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HM Treasury and in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards. They conform to the revised Accounts Direction and other guidance issued by the Scottish Funding Council and Audit Scotland.

The funds previously held by Scottish Funding Council for the Support Staff and Middle Management Job Evaluation project has been returned to Scottish Government. The College was unaware of the return of the funding when the 2022/23 Accounts were signed. There is therefore no prior year adjustment necessary to the 2022/23 figures.

The Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council state they remain committed to the project but will not provide written assurance on the funding of project. The income of £1.166m has therefore been removed from SFC Grant income on the Statement of Comprehensive Income. This has resulted in a deficit position of £1.226m.

The full financial statements are detailed in section 5 of this document. The following table gives a summary of key financial and operating information.

## Adjusted operating position

The Statement of Comprehensive Income presents financial performance during the accounting period in accordance with the SORP. The Adjusted Operating Position (AOP) is intended to reflect the underlying operating performance after allowing for material one-off or distorting items required by the SORP, or other items out with the control of the College. The AOP is therefore designed to smooth any volatility in reported results arising from FRS 102 and also to recognise that some of the reported costs do not have an immediate cash impact on the College. The College's underlying operating position is shown below.

	2023/24 £000	2022/23 £000
<i>Deficit before other gains and losses</i>	(1,226)	(683)
<b>Add back:</b>		
<i>Depreciation (net of deferred capital grant release) – note 1</i>	344	220
<i>Net service cost pension adjustment – note 2</i>	79	598
<i>Net interest cost pension adjustment – note 3</i>	(46)	67
<i>Donation to Arm's Length Foundation – note 4</i>	-	-
<i>Costs of support staff &amp; middle management job evaluation exercise not matched by revenue – note 6</i>	1,166	-
<b>Deduct:</b>		
<i>Cash Budget for Priorities – Revenue funding allocated to loan repayments – note 5</i>	252	252
<b>Underlying operating surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>(50)</b>

### Notes for adjusting items:

1. Depreciation does not have a cash impact on the College and capital expenditure will largely be funded by government grants, therefore the charge is taken out. See note 11 for depreciation and note 18 for deferred capital grants.
2. The adjustment to the pensions charge represents the total charged to staff costs, less cash contributions paid. See note 27.
3. The net interest cost is the interest accumulated on the pension asset/liability and this is offset against the current year's interest earned on pension assets. See note 27.
4. The donation to Arm's Length Foundation is a donation of the generated surplus to the Borders Further Education Trust. No donation has been made during 2023/24 or 2022/23.
5. Cash budget for priorities is included in income but the loan repayment is not reflected in the costs, therefore this amount is adjusted. See table of cash budget for priorities spend. This relates to the purchase of the Scottish Borders Campus in 2009 from Heriot Watt University.
6. The provision of costs of the support staff & middle management job evaluation project are not matched by revenue income to date.

## Treasury Management

The College is classified as a public body and is required to conduct all its banking with the Government Banking Service, currently operated by the Royal Bank of Scotland. The College is required to minimise the cash balances it holds, with excess deposited within the Government Banking Service. The cash position is reported to the Scottish Funding Council and Finance & Resources Committee of the College on a regular basis. The average monthly cash balance held by the College during 2023/24 was £3,994k (£3,988k 2022/23). The largest element of the cash balance held is for the Life Cycle Maintenance Fund.

## Creditor Payment Policy

The College complies with the CBI prompt payment code and has a policy of paying its suppliers within 30 days of invoice unless the invoice is contested. The average payment period during 2023/24 was 3 days (23 days 2022/23). At the time of writing, no interest has

been paid under the late payment of Commercial Debts (interest) Act. All disputes are handled as quickly as possible.

Signed

Pete Smith  
Principal and CEO

## SECTION 3 – ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT





# Corporate Governance Report

## Introduction

The Corporate Governance Report explains the College's governance structures and how they support the achievement of the College's strategic goals. The report incorporates:

- Directors' Report
- Statement of Board Responsibilities
- Governance Statement
  - Statement of Compliance
  - Governance Structure
  - Corporate Strategy
  - Board's Statement of internal control
  - Going Concern

Borders College is a further education corporation, established under the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, as amended by the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013. It is funded directly by the SFC.

It is a registered charity (Scottish Charity Number SC021180), is on the Scottish Charity Register and is entitled, in accordance with Section 13(1) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, to refer to itself as a charity registered in Scotland. It is recognised by HMRC as a charity for the purposes of Section 505, Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 and is exempt from corporation tax on charitable activities. It receives no similar exemption in respect of Value Added Tax (VAT).

## Directors' Report

The Board comprises independent members, two nominated student members, one elected teaching staff member, one elected support staff member, and the Principal. From January 2024 there was also opportunity for an elected Teaching Union Member and an elected Support Staff Union Member to join the Board. The roles of Chair and Vice Chair are distinct from the role of the Principal. In line with good governance practice, the Board has appointed one of its members as Senior Independent Member to whom any member of the Board can refer to for advice or to raise any matters of concern.

The Board Secretary maintains a register of financial and personal interests of members, insofar as these relate to the activities of the College. The register is available on the Regional Board website via the [enclosed link](#).

The table below lists the Board members for 2023/24.

Name	Date of Appointment	Date of Resignation	Status of Appointment	Committees Served
<b>R McCowan</b>	01/02/22		Chair	
<b>P Smith</b>	05/09/22		Principal	Finance & Resources, Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience
<b>A Buckenham</b>	15/02/23	26/06/24	Academic Staff Member	Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience
<b>P Cathrow</b>	18/01/21		Independent Member	Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience
<b>C Gillie</b>	18/01/21		Independent Member	Audit & Risk
<b>J McBeath</b>	01/02/19	24/03/24	Independent Member Vice Chair from 24/2/23-24/03/24.	Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience
<b>A McKerracher</b>	01/07/21	21/02/24	Support Staff Member	Audit & Risk
<b>J Elder</b>	28/02/24		Support Staff Member	Audit & Risk
<b>L Mirley</b>	18/01/21	01/12/23	Independent Member	Finance & Resources
<b>D Roberts</b>	01/07/22		Independent Member, Vice Chair from 25/03/24	Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience (to 28/05/24) Audit & Risk (from 29/05/24)
<b>V Key</b>	01/07/22		Independent Member, Senior Independent Member from 24/2/23	Audit & Risk (to 13/3/24) Finance & Resources (from 14/3/24)
<b>U Mbaezue</b>	01/07/22		Independent Member	Finance & Resources
<b>B Quinn</b>	01/07/22		Independent Member	Finance & Resources
<b>P Macdonald</b>	01/04/23		Independent Member	Audit & Risk
<b>S Hamilton-Green</b>	01/04/23	27/02/24	Independent Member	Finance & Resources
<b>L Hastie</b>	15/01/24		Independent Member	Audit & Risk
<b>N Sparks</b>	15/01/24		Independent Member	Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience
<b>D Ormiston</b>	15/01/24		Independent Member	Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience
<b>C Alder</b>	18/06/23		Student Member	Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience
<b>M Hall</b>	22/11/23	22/06/24	Student Member	Audit & Risk

The Executive Leadership Team is responsible for the day-to-day management of the College activities and operations. The table below details the Executive Team members at 31 July 2024.

Designation	Name
Principal	Pete Smith
Vice Principal Student Experience	Anne-Marie Sturrock
Vice Principal Finance & Corporate Services	Kirsty Robb

## Statement of Board Responsibilities

The Board is responsible for the administration and management of the College's affairs, including an effective system of internal control, and is required to present audited financial statements annually. An independent Board Secretary supports the work of the Board.

The Board is responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the College and enable it to ensure that the financial statements are prepared in accordance with applicable legislation, FRS 102 and relevant accounting standards.

The financial statements and related notes are prepared in accordance with the SFC Accounts Direction, which incorporates requirements from the Financial Memorandum and other formal disclosures that the SFC require the Board to make.

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

- select suitable accounting policies, and apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the College will continue in operation
- ensure that funds from SFC are used only for the intended purposes and in accordance with the Financial Memorandum and any other SFC conditions
- ensure that there are appropriate financial and management controls to safeguard public funds and funds from other sources
- safeguard the assets of the College and detect and prevent fraud
- secure the economic, efficient and effective management of resources and expenditure.

The Board delegates specific authority and processes to committees. These committees are accountable to the Board. The committees and a summary of their terms of reference are shown on page 24.

The Principal is responsible for reporting to the Board any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control. The FReM requires government bodies to provide a Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities. The SFC Chief Executive is the Accountable Officer for the College sector and is required to provide a governance certificate of assurance covering all institutions to the Principal Accountable Officer of the Scottish Government, based upon certificates of assurance provided by institutions.

The Principal is required to provide an annual Certificate of Assurance to the SFC (to coincide with their Financial Year End of 31 March). The latest return was on 4 April 2024, which confirmed that controls have been, and are, working well. There were no significant matters arising in the College which would require to be raised specifically in the governance statement.

The terms and conditions of the Financial Memorandum between SFC and the Board of the College require the Board, through its designated office holder (the Principal), to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the College and the surplus or deficit and cash flows for that year.



## Governance Statement

### Introduction

Borders College is committed to exhibiting good practice in all aspects of corporate governance. This governance statement is written to assist the reader of the financial statements understand how the principles have been applied.

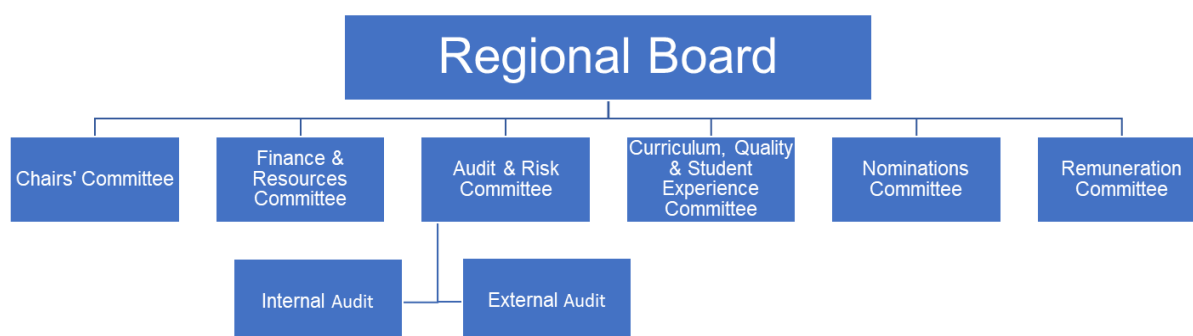
This governance statement supplements the information provided in the financial statements. It sets out the governance structures, risk management and internal control processes that have been operating in the College in the year to 31 July 2024 and reports the Board's assessment of the effectiveness of these arrangements.

### Statement of Compliance

The Board complies with all the principles of the 2022 Code of Governance for Scottish Colleges, and it has complied throughout the year ended 31 July 2024.

### Governance Structure

The Board operates a formal structure of Board and Committee meetings with clear terms of reference for each Committee. The structure is shown in the diagram below.



The Board and all Committees are supported by clear agendas, minutes and supporting papers, reports and information. These all support good planning, decision making and governance.

Agendas and reporting cycles have been developed and agreed to ensure the Board and Committees can review and monitor the College's effectiveness, progress and performance against key priorities.

Committee	Responsibilities
Audit & Risk Committee Chair C Gillie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agreeing the internal audit work programme, considering their and SFC reports as they affect the College</li><li>• Monitoring of audit recommendations</li><li>• High level review of the arrangements for internal control, including risk management, FOI, GDPR and procurement, obtaining the relevant degree of assurance</li><li>• Liaising with the internal and external auditors</li><li>• Approval of Financial Regulations</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversight of risk management arrangements</li> </ul>
Finance & Resources Committee Chair L Mirley/B Quinn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the financial management, including treasury management strategy and financial plans</li> <li>• Recommends the annual budget to the Board and receives Business Review reports comparing actual and budget, and other financial indicators</li> <li>• Asset management and strategy development, monitoring and review</li> <li>• Approval of spend between £100,000 and £249,999</li> </ul>
Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience Committee Chair P Cathrow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the quality and standard of the curriculum provision</li> <li>• Monitor the direction and performance of the Future Skills Strategy and the Business Growth &amp; Employer Engagement Strategy</li> <li>• Approve the Outcome Agreement and Evaluation &amp; Enhancement Plan</li> </ul>
Remuneration Committee Chair V Key	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the remuneration and performance framework for the most senior staff, including the Principal</li> <li>• Review redundancy terms and conditions as required</li> </ul>
Chairs' Committee Chair R McCowan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise on selection/appointment of Principal &amp; Board Secretary</li> <li>• Consider proposed severance packages</li> <li>• Manage grievance procedure for staff where grievance against the Principal</li> </ul>
Nominations Committee Chair R McCowan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine and oversee process for recruitment of members</li> </ul>

## Board Effectiveness

The Board actively evaluates its own effectiveness via an appraisal system, which involves the Chair meeting with each member annually during their term of office (except for the student member, due to their appointment being for one year) to discuss their objectives and training needs. The Senior Independent Member leads the annual appraisal of the Chair, alone or in conjunction with the Vice Chair.

In accordance with the 2022 Code of Good Governance for Scottish Colleges, Board evaluation arrangements are supplemented every 3-5 years by a comprehensive externally facilitated evaluation of Board effectiveness with a resulting development plan. An external evaluation was undertaken in 2021 and approved by the Board at its meeting in March 2021. The report is available on the Regional Board website [here](#).

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

A self-evaluation survey is also completed by each Board Member. The results of the self-evaluation survey were incorporated into the Board Development and Enhancement Plan 2023/24 which was approved by the Board on 26 October 2023.

The table below details the attendance of Members at the Board and Committee meetings

Name	Board	Audit & Risk	Finance & Resources	Curriculum, Quality & Student Experience
<b>R McCowan</b>	6/6		3/4	
<b>P Smith</b>	6/6		4/4	3/3
<b>A Buckenham</b>	5/6			2/3
<b>P Cathrow</b>	4/6			3/3
<b>C Gillie</b>	6/6	3/4		
<b>C Alder</b>	6/6	2/4*		3/3
<b>J McBeath</b>	3/4			2/2
<b>A McKerracher</b>	3/3	3/3		
<b>L Mirley</b>	2/3		1/2	
<b>D Roberts</b>	6/6	1/1		1/2
<b>V Key</b>	6/6	2/3	1/2	
<b>U Mbaezue</b>	6/6		3/4	
<b>B Quinn</b>	6/6		4/4	
<b>P Macdonald</b>	5/6	3/4		
<b>S Hamilton-Green</b>	0/3		1/2	
<b>N Sparks</b>	3/3			1/1
<b>L Hastie</b>	2/3	0/1		
<b>D Ormston</b>	2/3			1/1
<b>M Hall</b>	3/4	0/3		
<b>J Elder</b>	2/3	0/1		

\*Attended as Substitute for M Hall

The Nominations Committee met twice during 2023/24.

The Remuneration Committee met once during 2023/24.

The Chairs' Committee did not meet during 2023/24.

## Appointments to the Board

The Regional Chair is appointed by Scottish Ministers through the Public Appointments process. The Nominations Committee is responsible for identifying other new members, considering extensions of tenure for existing members and considering nominations for co-opted members.

The recruitment process for appointing new Board members involves advertising in local or national press, targeted letters to relevant organisations, extensive use of social media, and existing Board members identifying potential new members. All applicants are required to undergo the same selection process, which is submission of a written application and interview by the Nominations Committee, and a person external to the College will also be on the interview panel. Members of the interview panel are required to confirm whether they have any prior knowledge of the applicants before the interview process is undertaken.

The Nominations Committee make recommendations to the Board concerning appointments, with the full Board retaining responsibility for approval of new members, extensions and co-options. Any such appointment is also subject to approval by Scottish Ministers. The Committee remains committed to attracting a diverse membership of the Board.

Members are appointed for an initial period of four years, which can be extended for a further four years. Only in exceptional circumstances, and where compelling reasons exist, may a further extension of up to two years be approved.

During the period, six members of the Board have resigned, and four new members have joined. The details of these can be found in the table on page 21.

## **Corporate Strategy**

The Board has responsibility for the ongoing strategic direction of the College, for the approval of major developments and for the receipt of regular reports from the College Executive on the day-to-day operations of its business and progress on the strategic aims.

In respect of its strategic and development responsibilities, each year the Board holds joint development events with the College Executive and Senior Leadership team. During 2023/24 two events were held focusing on the role of the College in delivering economic recovery, risks to the College and scenario planning for the future. The events focused on risk management, curriculum planning, financial planning, estate planning and regional skills planning.

## **Board Statement of Internal Control**

The Board takes its responsibilities for internal control and its effectiveness very seriously. These systems are designed to manage, rather than eliminate, the risk of failure achieving the business objectives and can only provide reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The Board is the College's governing body. It is responsible for providing independent judgement on issues relating to the College's strategic direction, reputation, financial wellbeing, the wellbeing of staff and students and standards of academic conduct and probity. The Board is ultimately responsible for the College's system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness. It is supported by committees with specific areas of remit.

The Board has delegated day-to-day responsibility to the Principal for maintaining a sound system of internal control which supports the achievement of the College's strategies and policies, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which it is personally responsible, in accordance with responsibilities in the Financial Memorandum between Borders College and the SFC.

The College's system of internal control includes the following elements:

- A strategic ambition supported by service strategies, annual priorities, enabled by revenue, capital and cash flow budgets reviewed and agreed by the Board
- Regular review by the Board of KPIs, targets, risks and financial results involving variance reporting and forecasts
- Comprehensive Financial Regulations approved by the Audit & Risk Committee setting out:
  - clear definitions of responsibilities and authority delegated to managers, including segregation of duties, and arrangements for holding managers to account
  - clearly defined requirements for approval and control of income and expenditure, with investment decisions being subject to detailed appraisal and review according to processes and levels set by the Board

- Comprehensive and robust risk management arrangements for identification, assessment, and management of risks to an acceptable level
- College-wide quality planning arrangements, including self-assessment of compliance with quality indicators set by Education Scotland
- The adoption of formal programme and project management and controls, where appropriate
- A professional Internal Audit team, whose programme is approved by the Audit & Risk Committee and whose head provides an annual report with an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's system of internal control, including internal financial control.

The Board operates a clear scheme of delegation and financial procedures that strengthen and inform internal control arrangements. These are reviewed regularly, with the Financial Regulations being revised and approved during 2023/24.

The College internal audit service is provided by wbg (formerly Wylie and Bisset) and operates in accordance with the requirements of the SFC's Financial Memorandum. The audit plan is informed by:

- discussion with the Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services)
- an analysis of the risks to which the College is exposed
- resource required to meet the identified audit needs
- a review of previous audits and reports
- an assurance mapping exercise
- identification of key controls.

The analysis of risks and the internal audit plan is approved by the Audit & Risk Committee.

Annually, the Internal Auditors provide the Board with a report on internal audit activity in the College. The report takes account of the following work:

- An assessment of whether or not the internal controls are reliable as a basis for producing the financial accounts
- A review of the College's procedures in place to promote and secure value for money
- A review and appraisal of financial and other controls operated by the College
- A review of the established policies and procedures adopted by the College
- A review of accounting and other information provided to management
- Compliance and substantive audit testing where appropriate

The Audit Committee also receive regular reports from the College's Internal and External Auditors. During 2023/24, the Internal Auditors undertook the following reviews:

Audit Area	Conclusion	Number of recommendations (& action grades)		
		Low	Med	High
Education Maintenance Allowance	n/a	-	-	-
Student Support Funds	n/a	-	-	-
Credits	n/a	-	-	-
Student Retention	Strong	2	-	-
Student Records	Strong	-	-	-
Purchasing & Procurement	Strong	1	-	-

Income Collection & Credit Income	Strong	1	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	-	-

Two of the four recommendations have been fully implemented and the remaining two remain on track to complete in line with the agreed target dates. There were nine recommendations from previous years' audits which have now been fully implemented during 2023/24.

The report for 2023/24 includes their independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's system of risk management, control and governance processes. Their opinion states that "Borders College did have adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes to manage its achievement of the College's objectives at the time of our audit work. In our opinion, the College has proper arrangements to promote and secure value for money". A link to the full report presented to the Audit & Risk Committee on 3 October 2024 can be found [here](#).

## Risk Management

The Board, in conjunction with the Executive Team, maintains a Strategic Risk Register. The Register identifies the most significant risks to the College. Risks are identified, analysed and evaluated. Existing controls are detailed, and additional actions agreed to increase the mitigations, reduce the risk score and ensure the risk is within or below the risk appetite agreed by the Board.

The Board undertook a full review of its risk management reporting and monitoring process during 2023/24. The review looked to simplify the monitoring and reporting, ensure all risks are allocated to the appropriate Committee and incorporate risk appetite into the Risk Register.

The levels of risk appetite agreed are shown below

Risk Appetite	Description	Risk Appetite Score
<b>Averse (lower than 7)</b>	Avoidance of risk and uncertainty in achievement of key deliverables or initiatives is key objective. Activities undertaken will only be those considered to carry virtually no inherent risk.	<b>Lower than 7</b>
<b>Minimal (between 7-9)</b>	Preference for very safe business delivery options that have a low degree of inherent risk with the potential for benefit/return not a key driver. Activities will only be undertaken where they have a low degree of inherent risk.	<b>between 7-9</b>
<b>Cautious (between 10-14)</b>	Preference for safe options that have low degree of inherent risk and only limited potential for benefit. Willing to tolerate a degree of risk in selecting which activities to undertake to achieve key deliverables or initiatives, where we have identified scope to achieve significant benefit and/or realise an opportunity. Activities undertaken may carry a high degree of inherent risk that is deemed controllable to a large extent.	<b>between 10-14</b>
<b>Open (between 15-19)</b>	Willing to consider all options and choose one most likely to result in successful delivery while providing an acceptable level of benefit. Seek to achieve a balance between a high likelihood of successful delivery and a high degree of benefit and value for money. Activities themselves may potentially carry, or contribute to, a high degree of residual risk.	<b>between 15-19</b>
<b>Hungry (20 and above)</b>	Eager to be innovative and to choose options based on maximizing opportunities and potential higher benefit even if those activities carry a very high residual risk.	<b>20 and above</b>

Each risk is allocated to a Committee or to the Board and these are reported and monitored at each meeting. The Board also receives the full Risk Register at all meetings. All reports to Committees and the Board detail the current scores, risk appetite score, agreed actions and the progress of actions. New risks or changes to risk scores are approved by the Committee and Board.

The Audit & Risk Committee monitors the effectiveness of the risk management arrangements, with reports summarising the reports to each Committee and reviews undertaken by the Senior Leadership Team.

The Risk Register is reviewed monthly by the Senior Leadership Team and updates on key agreed actions are provided to the Committees for risks assigned to them.

All Committee and Board reports are required to consider the risk implications and any additional mitigations. These are then linked to the Strategic Risk Register. The table below summarises the current Strategic Risk Register as at 31 July 2024.

	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Appetite</b>	<b>Score</b>
Financial Stability	1.1 Commercial income targets not fully reached.	Open	9
	1.2 Delivery of College outcomes unaffordable	Cautious	16
Student Experience	2.1 Student application numbers low	Cautious	12
	2.2 Students are not adequately supported to enable them to complete their studies	Cautious	9
Objectives/ Strategies	3.1 College does not meet its sustainability targets	Open	6
	3.2 College unable to recruit, retain and maintain effective and skilled staff	Cautious	6
	3.3 Closure/disruption/denial of access to site facilities	Minimal	6
	3.4 Disruption or failure of IT/Digital services or infrastructure	Minimal	9
Statutory Duties	4.1 College breaches GDPR and/or data legislation	Averse	6
	4.2 College does not meet its PREVENT and Safeguarding duties	Averse	4
	4.3 College does not meet its equality & diversity duties	Averse	4
	4.4 College does not adhere to Health & Safety legislation	Averse	6

All risks other than 1.2 “Delivery of College outcomes unaffordable” are within or below the agreed risk appetite. Risk 1.2 score is reflective of the College sector financial position and is a key risk to the College.

The Board recognises the increased financial risks facing the Education sector due to pay uncertainty, inflationary pressures, and reducing funding. Additional scrutiny and monitoring have been included to reflect the high level of risk.



## Data Security

All staff are required to undertake IT Security and Data Protection training on induction and refresher within two years. During the annual staff review, staff are instructed to refresh where necessary and reminders are sent to line managers to ensure staff have completed the necessary mandatory training modules. During 2023/24 additional training was given to all staff, focusing on data security and password design.

There were no reportable data events during 2023/24 (last year nil).

## Audit Fees

The table below details the audit fees (excluding VAT) for internal and external auditors:

	2023/24	2022/23
Internal Audit – wbg (formerly Wylie & Bisset)	8,760	9,855
External Audit – Azets Audit Services	26,730	25,210

Additional fees of £5,000 (plus VAT) were paid to Azets during 2023/24 (£4,395 in 2022/23) for VAT advice.

## Review of effectiveness

The Principal has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. His review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by:

- the work of the internal auditors
- the work of the senior managers within the College who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework
- comments from the College's external auditors in their management letters and reports

The Principal has been advised on the implications of his review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Audit and Risk Committee, which oversees the work of the internal auditor and considers the findings of the external auditors. Based on the assurances, the Principal is assured the auditors have access and have been provided with all necessary information.

To enable the Principal, as Accountable Officer to provide the Scottish Funding Council with a certificate of assurance a review is undertaken by Officers annually of key internal controls. This review includes completion of the "Schedule of required assurance" and the completion of the Certificate of Assurance prescribed by Scottish Funding Council. The Certificate was provided to SFC on 4 April 2024.

Based on the Strategic Ambition, the College develops annual priorities and undertakes a comprehensive review of risks. They identify specific actions that should mitigate the adverse impact and exploit positive uncertainty. Internal controls are implemented and the subsequent year's appraisal will review the effectiveness of risk mitigation. In addition to the annual review, the Senior Leadership Team also consider risks relating to new areas of work.

The Strategic 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 risks. Risks are rated using a consistent scoring system and a risk appetite level, agreed by the Board. All risks are assigned to senior managers to manage. Senior Leadership Team regularly considers the potential impact and likelihood of risks materialising and opens or recommends closing risks as appropriate. The updated register is presented for review to each meeting of the Board and its Committees. Mitigating actions have been effective in reducing risk exposure on many of our risks.

The Senior Leadership Team and the Audit & Risk Committee receive regular reports from the internal auditors, which include recommendations for improvement.

The Audit & Risk Committee's role is confined to a high-level review of the arrangements for internal control. The emphasis is on obtaining the relevant degree of assurance and not merely reporting by exception. At its 3 December 2024 meeting, the Audit & Risk Committee carried out the annual assessment for 2023/24 by considering documentation from senior management and internal audit and taking account of events since 31 July 2024. The Audit & Risk Committee provide assurance to the Board via an Annual report to the Board from the Audit & Risk Committee.

## **Significant Control Issues/Weaknesses**

In completing this governance statement there have been no exceptions or issues raised for inclusion by internal or external auditors in respect of significant issues/weaknesses.

## **Going Concern**

In accordance with the FReM, the College has prepared its financial statements on a going concern basis as we have not been informed by the Scottish Government, through the Scottish Funding Council, of the intention for dissolution without transfer of services or function to another entity of the Higher and Further Education provision. The going concern assessment is focussed on the short term (next 12 months). The Board has approved a 2024/25 budget which, based on the latest assumptions, will result in a deficit position. As a public body Audit Scotland consider “going concern” as a separate issue from financial sustainability. As a public sector body, the organisation is a “going concern” unless there is an intention by the government to discontinue a body’s operations or transfer their functions out with the public sector. There is no indication that this is the case for Further Education and its services

The activities of the College are 73% funded by the Scottish Government through the Scottish Funding Council to provide Higher and Further Education. The Regional Board and the Executive Team are responsible for ensuring that these funds are used to meet this purpose and the operations within the College to achieve this support financial sustainability for the College. The Regional Board has an agreed Strategic Ambition and agreed funding from the Scottish Funding Council for 2024/25, which provides for reasonable certainty of credit income in 2024/25.

The Board and the Finance & Resources Committee have had full sight of all financial forecasts. These forecast positions will continue to be regularly reviewed by the College. Mitigating actions are being established should they be necessary to implement to support, and include:

- Ongoing engagement with SFC and other external agencies within the education landscape to support economic recovery and secure funding sources through the College to provide education and training activities to individuals and businesses.
- Review of staffing structures and the non-staff cost base across the forecast period to align with rising costs and real time funding cuts as indicated within SFC funding assumptions.
- Rigorous budgeting, forecasting and ongoing reporting against budget.
- Ongoing drive for year on year operational efficiencies, including opportunities to rationalise the estate.
- Streamlining business processes and systems using technology and digital skills.
- Maximising income from commercialisation.

The longer-term financial position for the College is, as with many areas of the public sector, more challenging. The Regional Board acknowledges these challenges and is working with Scottish Funding Council and the Senior Leadership Team to develop longer term plans to meet these challenges.

## **Conclusion**

The Board considers that there is an ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the College's operations, which reflects the strategic priorities and significant risks facing the College. This process has been in place for the year ended 31 July 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. The Board and Principal are satisfied that the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable. The Board is satisfied that the internal control arrangements comply with all required regulatory standards and that all necessary disclosures have been made to aid the reader in understanding this report and financial statements.

## Remuneration and Staff Reports

The remuneration of senior staff, Board members and other public appointees is outlined as follows and has been audited by the College's auditors. Remuneration policy, sickness absence data, equalities, diversity and inclusion, disability, staff involvement, health and safety, and disclosures under The Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 are not subject to audit.

### Remuneration Policy

The remuneration of the Chair of the Board is set by the Scottish Government. Remuneration of the Principal and senior management is agreed by the Remuneration Committee. The Committee takes into account public pay policy, pay awards to other categories of staff and guidance from the SFC and Scottish Government.

### Remuneration (including salary) and Pension entitlements

The following table provides detail of the remuneration and pension interests of senior management:

Name & Role	Year ended 31 July 2024			Year ended 31 July 2023		
	Salary £000's	Pension Benefit £000's	Total £000's	Salary £000's	Pension Benefit £000's	Total £000's
R McCowan – Chair	20-25	-	20-25	20-25	-	20-25
A Cox - Principal (to 4/9/22) (Full year value)	-	-	-	10-15 (110-115)	0-5	10-15
P Smith – Principal (from 5/9/22) (Full year value)	120-125	105-110	225-230	100-105 (110-115)	135-140	240-245
J Grant – Exec Dir of Enterprise & Business Innovation (to 16/8/23) (Full year value)	0-5 (75-80)	0-5	0-5	70-75	25-30	100-105
A M Sturrock – Vice Principal Student Experience	80-85	20-25	100-105	70-75	-	-
K Robb – Vice Principal Finance & Corporate Services (from 27/9/22) (Full year value)	75-80	55-60	135-140	60-65 (70-75)	120-125	185-190

Note:

- The salaries in the table above represent the amount earned in the financial year and include salary, bonuses, overtime and other allowances (as applicable)
- The value of pension benefits is calculated as the real increase in pension multiplied by 20 plus the real increase in any lump sum less the contributions made by the individual. The x20 multiplier aims to bring public bodies in line with other industries in disclosing an assessed cumulative pension benefit for a standard 20-year period which is the estimated life span following retirement.
- The details in this table are subject to audit

### Remuneration of senior post holders

Details of the remuneration of senior post holders is set out in Note 6 to the accounts, on page 56.

There were no payments to senior post holders in relation to compensation of early retirement or loss of office in 2022/23 or 2023/24.

There were no payments to past senior post holders in 2022/23 or 2023/24.

## Accrued Pension Benefits

Pension benefits for employees are provided through the Scottish Teacher's Superannuation Scheme (STSS), a defined benefit scheme which is notionally funded and contracted out of State Earnings-Related Pension Scheme, and the Scottish Borders Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Both are Career Average Revalued Earnings schemes. This means that pension benefits are based on the revalued average of pensionable years' pay and the number of years that the person has been a member of the scheme.

Normal retirement age is linked to the member's individual State Pension Age.

Contribution rates are set annually for all employees and can be found in note 27. LGPS members with pre-01 April 2009 service have an automatic entitlement to a lump sum. Members with only post 01 April 2009 service have no automatic entitlement to a lump sum.

Members may opt to give up (commute) pension for lump sum up to the limit set by the Finance Act 2004. The accrual rate guarantees a pension based on final pensionable salary and years of pensionable service.

## Senior Manager's Pension

Pension benefits are provided to senior officials on the same basis as all other staff. The accrued pension benefits for senior officers are set out in the table below, together with the pension contributions made by the College.

	As at 31 July 24		1 Aug 2023 to 31 July 24		At 31 July 24	At 31 July 23	
Name & Role	Accrued pension at pension age £000's	Accrued lump sum at pension age £000's	Real increase in pension £000's	Real increase in lump sum £000's	CETV £000's	CETV £000's	Real increase in CETV £000's
A Cox - Principal (to 4/9/22)	-	-	-	-	-	206	
P Smith – Principal (from 5/9/22)	65-70	90-95	5-7.5	2.5-5	1,311	1,192	118
J Grant – Exec Dir of Enterprise & Business Innovation (to 16/8/23)	0-5	-	0-2.5	-	51	46	5
A M Sturrock – Vice Principal Student Experience	20-25	55-60	0-2.5	0-2.5	516	454	23
K Robb – Vice Principal Finance & Corporate Services (from 27/9/22)	40-45	60-65	2.5-5	0-2.5	860	794	66

## Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV)

A CETV is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time.

The value has been calculated based on the age at which the person will first become entitled to receive a pension on retirement without reduction on account of its payment at that age; without exercising any option to commute pension entitlement into a lump sum; and without any adjustment for the effects of future inflation. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits from their total pensionable service and not just their current appointment.

In considering accrued pension benefits figures the following should be taken into account:

- the figures for pension and lump sum are illustrative in light of the assumptions set out above and do not reflect the actual benefits that an individual may receive on retirement
- the accrued benefits figures reflect the pension contributions that both the employer and the scheme member have made.

## Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV funded by the employer. It does not include the increase due to inflation, or contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

## Exit Packages

5 employees (2023 – 12) left under voluntary exit terms during the year. They received a total payment of £75,756 (2023 - £176,383). The table below shows the packages by cost band.

Bands	Year to 31 July 2024			2023
	Number of compulsory redundancies	Number of other departures agreed	Total number of exit packages by cost band	Total number of exit packages by cost band
< £10,000	-	1	1	6
£10,001 - £25,000	-	4	4	3
£25,001 - £50,000	-	-	-	3
Total number of packages	-	5	5	12
Total cost (£)	-	75,756	75,756	176,383

## Payment for loss of office

There were no additional payments incurred for loss of office.

## Fair Pay

Colleges are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest paid official and the median remuneration of their workforce. The 25th and 75th percentiles have also been included in the table over with comparators for previous year. The ratios are between the highest earning director's total remuneration and the ratio. Data has been provided for comparison to the median salary only as there have been no benefits paid.

	2023/24 £	2022/23 £	% Change	2023/24 Ratio	2022/23 Ratio
Highest paid official total remuneration (fte)	120,181	115,000	4.5	-	-
Lowest paid official (fte)	22,516	19,838	13.5	-	-
Staff average (salary & allowances)	37,040	22,040	68.1	-	-
Ratios – salary only [no additional allowances before tax were paid to College staff]					
Median	37,965	34,465	-	3.2	3.3
25th percentile	28,455	23,768	-	4.2	4.8
75th percentile	43,357	43,357	-	2.8	2.7

The College is an accredited Living Wage Employer. The large % change in the lowest paid official reflects the increase in the Real Living Wage. Support staff pay awards were implemented for 22/23 and 23/24 in June 2024.

## Number of senior managers by band

Remuneration (actual) of senior post holders, including Principal (excluding employers' NI and pension contributions) are summarised in the table below.

Band	2024	2023
£60,001 to £70,000		1
£70,001 to £80,000	1	2
£80,001 to £90,000	1	
£90,001 to £100,000		
£100,001 to £110,000		1
£110,001 to £120,000		
£120,001 to £130,000	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

## Salaries and related costs

	Year to 31 July 2024			Year to 31 July 2023
	Directly employed staff	Seconded and agency staff	Total	Total
Wages and salaries	7,862,016	348,391	8,210,407	8,421,556
Social security costs	746,088		746,088	765,238
Other pension costs	1,661,751		1,661,751	2,158,489
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,269,855</b>		<b>10,618,246</b>	<b>11,345,283</b>
Average number of FTE	195.2	6.6	201.8	214.6

The College employed 102 males and 194 females during 2023/24. At the time of approval of the Remuneration and Staff Report, senior management comprised two females.

Voluntary staff turnover for 2023/24 was 8.9%, last year 12%.



## **Sickness absence**

The total number of days lost per full-time equivalent (FTE) to sickness absence during 2023/24 was 9.9 days (2022/23 was 11.3 days), a decrease of 1.4 days from last year. This decrease is due to a reduction in long term sickness absence.

## **Employment Policies**

Key employment policies are subject to National Bargaining which means that any changes, other than those which are to meet legislation, are unable to be made. This is a constraint on the College and restricts us from being able to be more progressive in our policy making.

During 2023/24 we have been re-accredited as Disability Confident which ensures that robust and fair processes are in place to support continued employment and provide appropriate support, training and reasonable adjustments to maintain the ability for disabled individuals to remain in work. This also ensures that there are opportunities for career development and promotion.

These initiatives are supported by our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policies which require an Equality Impact Assessment to be carried out on policies, procedures and any significant changes that are proposed.

## **Trade Union facility time**

Facility time is the provision of paid or unpaid time off from an employee's normal role to undertake Trade Union duties and activities as a Trade Union representative. There is a statutory entitlement to reasonable paid time off for undertaking Trade Union duties. There is no statutory entitlement to paid time off for undertaking Trade Union activities. In accordance with the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017, we are required to publish specific information on trade union officials and facility time. This information is to be published by 31 July each year.

This information is available on the College's website [here](#).

## **Equalities, diversity and inclusion**

The College takes equality, diversity and inclusion very seriously and has fully embedded it within all its decision making. This includes having an Equality and Diversity Policy available to all staff on its intranet which can be accessed [here](#)

Every two years, in line with legislation, the College also publishes a number of reports on its website which detail the progress it is making towards meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and how the College is mainstreaming this duty to ensure that everyone who learns or works at Borders College receives the best possible experience. The most recent reports are available [here](#). Details of key areas of improvement during the period of the report are shown within the performance section on page 13. Everyone is treated with dignity and respect and their views help shape and improve our services (eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation).

## Health and safety

The College recognises and accepts its duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees, so far as is reasonably practicable. The Health and Safety Policy and Procedures are held on the Colleges website and can be found [here](#) and these are reviewed on a regular basis. The Health and Safety Committee meet quarterly to monitor issues. The Committee includes membership from all staff areas, trade unions, Student representative, a Regional Board Member and representatives from Heriot Watt University for the shared campus in Galashiels.

In 2023/24 the College reported four incidents under the reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (last year there were four). All incidents were student related. All attended hospital for treatment and were then discharged and sent home. The full Health and Safety reports can be found within the Regional Board papers [here](#).

There were no follow-up actions from the Health and Safety Executive for any incident.

## Professional Advisors

The College's professional advisors during the period to 31 July 2024 are shown below

### External Auditors

Azets Audit Services  
Quay2  
139 Fountainbridge  
Edinburgh  
EH3 9QG

### Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland  
35 Bank Street  
Galashiels  
TD1 1EP

### Internal Auditors

Wbg Services LLP (formally known as  
Wylie Bisset)  
168 Bath Street  
Glasgow  
G2 4TP

### Solicitors

Thornton Law LLP  
Citypoint, 3rd Floor  
65 Haymarket Terrace  
Edinburgh  
EH12 5HD

## Registered Address

Scottish Borders Campus, Nether Road, Galashiels TD1 3HE

**The Accountability Report was approved by order of the members of the Borders College Regional Board on 12 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:**

R McCowan  
Chair

P Smith  
Principal and CEO



## SECTION 4 – INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT





# Independent auditor's report to the Board of Management of Borders College, the Auditor General for Scotland and the Scottish Parliament

## Reporting on the audit of the financial statements

### Opinion on financial statements

We have audited the financial statements in the annual report and accounts of Borders College for the year ended 31 July 2024 under the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 and section 44(1) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. The financial statements comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Reserves, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes to the Accounts. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the accompanying financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the college's affairs as at 31 July 2024 and of its deficit 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 requirements of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Funding Council, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, and regulation 14 of The Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)), as required by the [Code of Audit Practice](#) approved by the Auditor General for Scotland. 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 were appointed by the Auditor General on 18 May 2022. Our period of appointment is five years, covering 2022/23 to 2026/27. We were 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 Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. Non-audit services prohibited by the Ethical Standard were not provided to the college. 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 basis of accounting**

We have concluded that the 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 to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

These conclusions are not intended to, nor do they, provide assurance on the college's current or future financial sustainability. However, we report on the college's arrangements for financial sustainability in a separate Annual Audit Report available from the [Audit Scotland website](#).

## **Risks of material misstatement**

We report in our separate Annual Audit Report, the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement that we identified and our judgements thereon.

## **Responsibilities of the Board of Management for the financial statements**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Board Responsibilities, the Board of Management (the Board) is responsible for the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with the financial reporting framework, and for such internal control as the Board determines 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 Board 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 there is an intention to discontinue the college's operations.

## **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 decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities outlined above to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Procedures include:

- Enquiry of management, internal audit, and those charged with governance concerning the College's operations, the key policies and

procedures, and the establishment of internal controls to mitigate risks related to fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, together with their knowledge of any actual or potential litigation and claims and actual, suspected and alleged fraud;

- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Assessing the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations considered to have a direct material effect on the College's financial statements and the operations of the College through enquiry and inspection;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management bias and override of controls, including testing of high-risk journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, including high value year end close down journals and journals with no identified user ID, evaluating the rationale of any significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing key accounting estimates including valuation of land and buildings and pension asset/liability;
- Other audit procedures responsive to the risk of fraud, non-compliance with laws and regulation or irregularity including testing the occurrence and accuracy of income, assessing the completeness of non-pay expenditure and testing the completeness of year end accruals; and
- Assessing whether the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence and capabilities to identify or recognise non-compliance with laws and regulations.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is affected by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the college's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed.

Irregularities that result from fraud are inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error as fraud may involve collusion, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. The capability of the audit to detect fraud and other irregularities depends on factors such as the skilfulness of the perpetrator, the frequency and extent of manipulation, the degree of collusion involved, the relative size of individual amounts manipulated, and the seniority of those individuals involved.

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

## **Reporting on regularity of expenditure and income**

### **Opinion on regularity**

In our opinion in all material respects the expenditure and income in the financial statements were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.

### **Responsibilities for regularity**

The Board is responsible for ensuring the regularity of expenditure and income. In addition to our responsibilities in respect of irregularities explained in the audit of the financial statements section of our report, we are responsible for expressing an opinion on the regularity of expenditure and income in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000.

## **Reporting on other requirements**

### **Opinion prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland on the audited parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report**

We have audited the parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report described as audited. In our opinion, the audited parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report have been properly prepared in accordance with the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Funding Council.

### **Other information**

The Board is responsible for the other information in the annual report and accounts. The other information comprises the Performance Report and the Accountability Report excluding the audited parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report.

Our responsibility is to read all 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.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon except on the Performance Report and Governance Statement to the extent explicitly stated in the following opinions prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland.

### **Opinions prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland on the Performance Report and Governance Statement**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:



- the information given in the Performance Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Funding Council; and
- the information given in the Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Funding Council.

## **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We are required by the Auditor General for Scotland to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the audited parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of these matters.

## **Conclusions on wider scope responsibilities**

In addition to our responsibilities for the annual report and accounts, our conclusions on the wider scope responsibilities specified in the Code of Audit Practice are set out in our Annual Audit Report.

## **Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the parties to whom it is addressed in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and for no other purpose. In accordance with paragraph 108 of the Code of Audit Practice, we do not undertake to have responsibilities to members or officers, in their individual capacities, or to third parties.

Chris Brown, (for and on behalf of Azets Audit Services)  
 Quay 2  
 139 Fountainbridge  
 Edinburgh  
 EH3 9QG  
 Date:

Chris Brown is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 21 of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000.

## SECTION 5 – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS





## Statement of Comprehensive Income

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
<b>Income</b>			
SFC grants	1	10,136	11,580
Tuition fees and education contracts	2	1,306	1,273
Other grant income	3	1,256	1,092
Other operating income	4	1,581	1,594
Investment income	5	81	15
<b>Total income</b>		<b>14,360</b>	<b>15,554</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Staff costs	6	10,270	10,915
Exceptional restructuring costs		97	165
Other operating expenses	7	3,773	3,627
Donation to charitable trust	10	-	-
Impairment	13	-	-
Depreciation	11	1,389	1,388
Interest and other finance costs	8	57	142
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>15,586</b>	<b>16,237</b>
<b>Deficit before other gains and losses, and tax</b>		<b>(1,226)</b>	<b>(683)</b>
Taxation	9	-	-
<b>Deficit for the year</b>		<b>(1,226)</b>	<b>(683)</b>
Gain/(loss) on disposal of fixed asset	11	-	5
Net gain on revaluation of fixed assets	11	2,667	1,350
Actuarial gain/(loss) in respect of pension schemes	27	2,606	3,245
Asset ceiling adjustment	27	(4,086)	-
<b>Total comprehensive expenditure for the year</b>		<b>(39)</b>	<b>3,917</b>
Represented by:			
Endowment comprehensive income for the year		-	-
Restricted comprehensive income for the year		-	-
Unrestricted comprehensive expenditure for the year		(39)	3,917
<b>Total comprehensive expenditure for the year</b>		<b>(39)</b>	<b>3,917</b>

All items of income and expenditure relate to continuing activities.

The Statement of Comprehensive Income is prepared under the FE/HE SORP. The SORP does not permit colleges to reflect the non-cash budget for depreciation in the Statement of Comprehensive Income. Note 31 provides details of the adjusted operating position on a Central Government accounting basis. SFC grant income is significantly lower than the previous year due to a change in the accounting treatment of the Support Staff and Middle Management Job Evaluation project.

## Balance Sheet

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Fixed assets	11	31,601	30,101
Net pension fund asset	20	-	948
		31,601	31,049
<b>Current assets</b>			
Trade and other receivables	12	1,050	2,728
Investments (assets held for resale)	13	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents	14	3,554	3,881
		4,604	6,609
Less: Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(3,409)	(4,952)
<b>Net current assets</b>		1,195	1,657
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		32,796	32,706
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	16	(16,733)	(18,319)
<b>Provisions</b>			
Net pension fund liability	20	(565)	-
Other provisions	19	(2,287)	(1,137)
<b>Total net assets</b>		<b>13,211</b>	<b>13,250</b>
<b>Restricted reserves</b>			
Income & expenditure reserve – endowment reserve	21	22	22
Income & expenditure reserve – restricted reserve	22	-	-
<b>Unrestricted reserves</b>			
Income & expenditure reserve – unrestricted	23	3,804	6,235
Revaluation reserve		9,385	6,993
<b>Total reserves</b>		<b>13,211</b>	<b>13,250</b>

The financial statements on pages 46 to [Error! Bookmark not defined.](#) 67 were approved by the Regional Board on 12 December 2024 and signed on its behalf on that date by:

**R McCowan**  
Chair

**P Smith**  
Principal and CEO

## Statement of Changes in Reserves

	Endowment	Income & Expenditure Reserve		Revaluation Reserve	Total
	(note 21)	Restricted (note 22)	Unrestricted (note 23)		
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Balance at 1 August 2022</b>	<b>22</b>	-	<b>3,434</b>	<b>5,877</b>	<b>9,333</b>
Deficit from the income & expenditure statement	-	-	(683)	-	(683)
Other comprehensive income	-	-	3,250	-	3,250
Transfers between revaluation and income & expenditure reserve	-	-	234	(234)	-
Revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	1,350	1,350
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	-	2,801	1,116	3,917
<b>Balance at 1 August 2023</b>	<b>22</b>	-	<b>6,235</b>	<b>6,993</b>	<b>13,250</b>
Deficit from the income & expenditure statement	-	-	(1,226)	-	(1,226)
Other comprehensive income	-	-	2,606	-	2,606
Asset ceiling adjustment			(4,086)		(4,086)
Transfers between revaluation and income & expenditure reserve	-	-	275	(275)	-
Revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	2,667	2,667
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	-	(2,431)	2,392	(39)
<b>Balance at 31 July 2024</b>	<b>22</b>	-	<b>3,804</b>	<b>9,385</b>	<b>13,211</b>

## Statement of Cash Flows

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
<b>Cash flow from operating activities</b>			
Deficit for the year		(1,226)	(683)
<b>Adjustment for non-cash items</b>			
Depreciation	11	1,389	1,389
Impairment	13	-	-
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	12	1,678	(638)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	15	(3,358)	(746)
Increase in other provisions	19	1,150	(10)
Increase/(decrease) in pension provisions	20	33	665
<b>Adjustment for investing or financing activities</b>			
Investment income	5	(81)	(15)
Interest payable	8	57	142
Profit/(loss) on sale of fixed asset		-	5
<b>Net cash inflow from operating activities</b>		(358)	109
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Investment income	5	81	15
Non-current investment disposal			-
Receipt of deferred capital grants	18	229	212
Payments made to acquire fixed assets	11	(222)	(512)
		88	(285)
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Interest paid	8	(57)	(142)
			(142)
<b>Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<b>(327)</b>	<b>(318)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year	14	3,881	4,199
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year	14	3,554	3,881

# Statement of Accounting Policies

## 1. Basis of Preparation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 and the Accounts Direction issued by the SFC that requires compliance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2019: Accounting for Further and Higher Education, and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standards 102 (FRS 102). The financial statements must also comply with the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM), the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and Consolidated Budgeting Guidance (CBG).

The College is a public benefit entity and has applied the relevant public benefits requirements of FRS 102.

## 2. Basis of Accounting

In preparing the financial statements, the College is required to make estimates and assumptions that affect reported income, expenses, assets, and liabilities. Use of available information and application of judgement are inherent in the formation of estimates, together with past experience and expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results in the future could differ from such estimates.

The College is satisfied that the accounting policies are appropriate and applied consistently. Key sources of estimation have been applied as follows:

<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Basis of Estimation</b>
Valuation of buildings	College buildings are of a specialist nature and are valued on the depreciated replacement cost basis. Irrecoverable VAT is capitalised, based on the partial exemption calculation.
Useful economic lives of buildings and equipment	Buildings are depreciated over their expected remaining useful economic life as assessed by an independent, qualified valuer.
Recoverable amount of trade debtors	Trade debtors are reviewed by appropriately experienced senior management team members with appropriate provision for non-payment of debt being charged to the financial statements as required.
Obligations under the LGPS	The Board has relied on the actuarial assumptions of qualified actuaries which have been reviewed and are considered reasonable and appropriate.
Life Cycle Maintenance Fund (LCMF)	The LCMF was established on co-location of Borders College and Heriot Watt University, on the Netherdale campus at Galashiels in 2009. It is a long-term lifecycle cost provision designed to provide for the lifecycle maintenance of the campus. The fund covers the main building on the Galashiels campus, primarily focusing on the softer elements of maintenance such as decoration within the first 10 years, the funds focus in the coming period is on more significant items such as heating and plant. Both parties contribute an annual sum to the



LCMF and maintenance costs are paid from the provision. The projected funding to be provided for was calculated at the time by Gardiner and Theobald after completing an in-depth life cycle review and has been subject to regular reviews within Campus management and externally. Hardies Property and Construction Consultants completed a full review at year 10 to ensure the appropriateness and adequacy of the cost projections and the contribution levels.

### **3. Recognition of Income**

Income from the sale of goods or services is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income when the goods or services are supplied to the external customers or the terms of the contract have been satisfied.

Fee income is stated gross of any expenditure which is not a discount and credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income over the period in which students are studying. Where the amount of the tuition fee is reduced, by a discount, income receivable is shown net of the discount.

All income from short-term deposits and investments is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income on a receivable basis.

Funds the College receives and disburses as paying agent on behalf of a funding body are excluded from the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

#### *Grant funding*

Government revenue grants, including the recurrent grants from the SFC, are recognised in income over the periods in which the College recognises the related costs for which the grant is intended to compensate. Where part of a government grant is deferred, it is recognised as deferred income within creditors and allocated between creditors due within one year and due after more than one year as appropriate.

Grants from non-government sources are recognised in income when the College is entitled to the income and performance-related conditions of the grant have been 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 the conditions are met.

### **4. Tangible Fixed Assets**

#### *Land and buildings*

Land and buildings are stated in the Balance Sheet at depreciated replacement cost on the basis of a valuation carried out in July 2022; with this data updated for July 2023 values. Irrecoverable VAT is capitalised based on the partial exemption calculation. Freehold land associated with the buildings and undeveloped freehold land is not depreciated. New buildings are depreciated over their expected useful economic life to the College of up to 50 years.

A review for impairment of fixed assets is carried out if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount of the fixed asset may not be recoverable. Major improvements to buildings, where no new floor space is created, are depreciated over a term consistent with their useful life, to a maximum of the remaining undepreciated life of the building.

Buildings under construction are accounted for at cost, based on the value of architects' certificates and other direct costs incurred to 31 July 2024. Finance costs that are directly attributable to the construction of buildings are capitalised as part of the cost of those assets. Buildings are not depreciated until they are brought into use.

#### *Subsequent expenditure on existing fixed assets*

Where significant expenditure is incurred to tangible fixed assets it is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income in the period it is incurred, unless it meets one of the following criteria, in which case it is capitalised and depreciated on the relevant basis:

- where the subsequent expenditure provides an enhancement of the economic benefits of the tangible fixed asset in excess of the previously assessed standard of performance;
- where a component of the tangible fixed asset that has been treated separately for depreciation purposes and depreciated over its individual useful economic life, is replaced or restored; or
- where the subsequent expenditure relates to a major inspection or overhaul of a tangible fixed asset that restores the economic benefits of the asset that have been consumed by the entity and have already been reflected in depreciation.

#### *Revaluation reserve*

Surpluses arising on the revaluation of the College's properties are transferred to the revaluation reserve. Additional depreciation charged on the revalued amount of these assets is transferred from revaluation reserve to the Statement of Comprehensive Income together with any surplus or deficit on disposal.

#### *Equipment*

Equipment costing less than £3,000 per individual item, unless it is part of a group of items purchased as part of a discrete project, is written off to the Statement of Comprehensive Income in the period of acquisition. During 2021-22 we implemented a change in accounting policy which means we no longer capitalise grouped items and any other spend of less than £3,000. All other equipment is capitalised at cost. Capitalised equipment is depreciated over its useful economic life as follows:

Plant, equipment, furnishings and fittings	- up to 10 years
Computer equipment	- up to 8 years
Motor vehicles and general equipment	- up to 8 years
Buses	- up to 8 years

Where equipment is acquired with the aid of specific Government grants the related grant is credited to a deferred capital grant account and released to the Statement of Comprehensive Income over the expected useful economic life of the related equipment.

#### *Leased assets*

Costs in respect of operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term. Leasing agreements that transfer to the College substantially all the benefits and risks of ownership of an asset are treated as if the asset had been purchased outright. The assets are included in fixed assets and the capital elements of the leasing commitments are shown as obligations under finance leases. The lease rentals are treated as consisting of capital

and interest elements. The capital element is applied to reduce the outstanding obligations and the interest element is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income in proportion to the reducing capital element outstanding. Assets held under finance leases are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term or the useful economic lives of equivalent owned assets. Assets held under hire purchase contracts that have the characteristics of finance leases are depreciated over their useful lives.

#### *Maintenance of premises*

The cost of long-term and routine corrective maintenance is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income in the period which it is incurred.

#### *Impairment of assets*

Any reduction in the recoverable amount of fixed assets arising from impairment reviews are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income or Statement of Changes in Reserves as appropriate.

### **5. Investments**

Fixed asset investments that are not listed on a recognised stock exchange are carried at historical cost less any provision for impairment in their value. Current asset investments are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of their original cost and net realisable value.

### **6. Foreign Currency Translation**

Transactions denominated in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate of exchange ruling at the dates of the transactions. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated into sterling either at year end rates or, where there are related forward foreign exchange contracts, at contract rates. The resulting exchange differences are dealt with in the determination of income and expenditure for the financial year.

### **7. Taxation**

The College is registered under Scottish Charity Number SC021180 and is a "Charity" within the meaning of Section 506(1) of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act (ICTA) 1988. Accordingly, the College is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income and capital gains received within categories covered by Section 505 of the ICTA 1988 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Charitable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income and gains are applied to exclusively charitable purposes.

The College has no similar exemption in respect of Value Added Tax (VAT). Non-recoverable VAT arising from expenditure on non-trading activities is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

### **8. Financial Instruments**

Financial instruments are recognised in the Balance Sheet when the College becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. All of the College's financial instruments are classified as 'basic' in accordance with Chapter 11 of FRS 102. All of the College's financial instruments are measured at transaction price.

Financial assets are derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from asset to expire, or when the College has transferred substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership. Financial liabilities are derecognised only once the liability has been extinguished through discharge, cancellation or expiry.

Cash and cash equivalents: liquid resources include sums on short term deposits with recognised banks and building societies and government securities.

## **9. Provisions**

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.

## **10. Pension Schemes**

Retirement benefits to employees of the College are provided by the STSS and the LGPS. Contributions to the STSS are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income 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 quinquennial valuations using a prospective benefit method.

The assets of the LGPS are measured using closing market values. LGPS liabilities are measured using the projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liability. The increase in the present value of the liabilities of the scheme expected to arise from employee service in the period is charged to the operating surplus. The expected return on the scheme's assets and the increase during the period in the present value of the scheme's liabilities, arising from the passage of time, are included in pension finance costs. The contributions are determined by qualified actuaries on the basis of triennial valuations using the projected unit method for the LGPS.

## **11. Bursary and Discretionary Funds**

The College administers Bursary and Discretionary Funds from the SFC, on behalf of its students, acting as paying agent on behalf of SFC. Unexpended funds are included in creditors.

## Notes to the Accounts

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
<b>1. SFC grants</b>			
SFC FE recurrent grant (including fee waiver)		9,878	9,904
Support Staff & Middle Management Job Evaluation Write-off		(1,166)	-
HE & FE childcare funds	28b	40	34
SFC Capital grants		289	245
Release of SFC deferred capital grants	18	889	931
Other SFC grants		66	142
Flexible Workforce Development Fund		159	318
ESF (Developing Scotland's Workforce)		(19)	6
		10,136	11,580
<b>2. Tuition fees &amp; education contracts</b>			
Further education fees – UK		345	238
Higher education fees – home & EU		310	287
SDS contracts		464	579
Education contracts		187	169
		1,306	1,273
<b>3. Other grant income</b>			
Release of deferred capital grants – other government	18	156	237
European Union Funds		-	2
Other grants (revenue & capital)		1,100	853
UK based charities (revenue & capital)		-	-
		1,256	1,092
<b>4. Other operating income</b>			
Exam & registration fees		-	-
Income from academic departments		41	34
Sundry income		230	176
Catering & residences		-	-
Hire of accommodation & equipment		1,310	1,384
		1,581	1,594
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because catering operations are managed by an external agency, catering income is netted off other operating expenditure to match catering expenditure.</li> <li>Hire of accommodation and equipment includes the recovery of costs from Heriot Watt University per the agreed Service Level Agreement.</li> </ul>			
<b>5. Investment income</b>			
Investment income on endowments	21	-	-
Other investment income		35	15
Net return on pension scheme	27	46	-
		81	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest received on discretionary funds increases support funding available for HE students therefore it is not included in the College's Statement of Comprehensive Income or Cash Flow Statements.</li> </ul>			

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
<b>6. Staff costs</b>			
Wages and salaries		7,862	7,992
Social security costs		746	765
Other pension costs (including FRS 102 adjustment)		1,662	2,158
		10,270	10,915
Exceptional restructuring costs		97	165
		10,367	11,080
Teaching departments		3,916	4,702
Teaching and other support services		1,388	866
Administration and central services		4,424	4,672
Premises		542	675
		10,270	10,915
Exceptional restructuring costs		97	165
		10,367	11,080
Senior post holders' emoluments:			
Salaries		281	330
Pension contributions		55	63
Total emoluments		336	393
		£	£
The above senior post holder emoluments include amounts paid to the Principal(s) of:			
Salary		120,181	116,086
Pension contributions		21,581	20,856
		Number 2023/24	Number 2022/23
Average number of full-time equivalent staff, including senior post holders, during the year was:			
Teaching departments		64	81
Teaching and other support services		36	23
Administration and central services		79	84
Premises		16	18
		195	206
Remuneration of senior post holders (actual cost), including the Principal (excluding employers' NI and pension contributions):			
£60,001 to £70,000		-	1
£70,001 to £80,000		1	2
£80,001 to £90,000		1	-
£100,001 to £110,000		-	1
£120,000 to £130,000		1	-
		3	4

- Pension contributions for senior post holders are employers' contributions to the STSS and LGPS and are paid at the same rate as for other employees.

	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2024 Number	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 Number
Staff costs (continued)				
Staff costs are analysed as:				
Staff on permanent contracts	9,786	185	10,387	196
Staff on temporary contracts	484	10	528	10
	10,270	195	10,915	206

## 7. Analysis of expenditure by activity

	Other operating expenses £000	FE & HE childcare fund £000	Depreciat ion £000	Interest & other finance costs £000	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
Teaching departments	986	40	1,389	57	2,472	2,466
Teaching and other support services	12				12	16
Administration & central services	1,373				1,373	1,377
Catering & residences	13				13	73
Premises	1,349				1,349	1,225
Donation to charitable trust	-				-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,733</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>5,219</b>	<b>5,157</b>

	£000	£000
Other operating expenses include:		
External auditors' remuneration – external audit of these financial statements	27	25
External auditors' remuneration – non-audit services	5	5
Internal auditors' remuneration – internal audit services	9	11
Operating lease rentals – land, buildings & equipment	75	75

## 8. Interest and other finance costs

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
On loans, repayable in less than five years		57	75
Net charge on pension scheme	27	-	67
		57	142

## 9. Taxation

The College does not have a current or deferred liability to corporation tax in respect of the year (2023 £Nil).



	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
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## 10. Deficit for the year

The deficit for the year is comprised as follows:

College deficit		(1,226)	(683)
Donation to Borders Further Education Trust		-	-
		(1,226)	(683)

## Donation to Charitable Trust

Following the re-classification of Borders College as a public body by ONS, the College is unable to generate and retain its own reserves for future investment. Cash backed reserves at 31 March 2014 and any future surplus generated can be donated to a charitable trust to be used in the future for the benefit of learners and potential learners at Borders College. The Borders Further Education Trust is an independent charity approved by OSCR (charity number SC044668). Transactions with this body are carried out at arm's length.

## 11. Fixed assets

	Note	Assets under construction £000	Land & buildings £000	Plant & equipment £000	TOTAL £000
<b>Cost or valuation</b>					
As at 31 July 2023		124	29,467	4,516	34,107
Additions		78	55	89	222
Disposals		-	-	-	-
Revaluation		-	1,665	-	1,665
Reclassifications		(123)	58	65	-
As at 31 July 2024		79	31,245	4,670	35,994
<b>Depreciation</b>					
As at 31 July 2023		-	438	3,568	4,006
Charge for year		-	1,074	315	1,389
Disposals		-	-	-	-
Revaluation		-	(1,002)	-	(1,002)
As at 31 July 2024		-	510	3,883	4,393
<b>Net book value</b>					
As at 31 July 2023		124	29,029	948	30,101
As at 31 July 2024		79	30,735	787	31,601
<b>Net book value</b>					
Inherited		-	986	-	986
Financed by govt capital grant	18	79	15,753	600	16,432
Other		-	13,996	187	14,183
As at 31 July 2024		79	30,735	787	31,601

- Land and buildings were revalued at July 2022 by Ryden Chartered Surveyors in the capacity of independent valuer. The basis of valuation adopted was depreciated replacement cost and the valuation was made in accordance with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Global Standards 2022. The July 2022 data has been re-calculated using 2024 values which provides an increase in valuation of £1,665k. Land and buildings with a net book value of £30,596,705 have

been funded from exchequer funds. These assets may not be disposed of without prior approval of the SFC.

- Plant and equipment includes assets under hire purchase and finance leases with a net book value of £Nil (2023 £Nil).

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
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The depreciation charge for the period is analysed as follows:

Depreciation based on cost		387	402
Depreciation based on valuation dated July 2022		1,002	986
		1,389	1,388

Owned assets		1,318	1,316
Assets held under hire purchase and finance leases		71	72
		1,389	1,388

## 12. Trade & other receivables

Amounts falling due within one year:

Trade receivables		165	1,143
Prepayments and accrued income		822	1,530
Amounts due from subsidiary undertakings			-
		987	2,673
<b>Amounts falling due after one year</b>		<b>63</b>	<b>55</b>
		1,050	2,728

## 13. Investments (assets held for resale)

The College does not have any assets held for resale in respect of the year (2023 £Nil).

## 14. Cash and cash equivalents

College funds		3,316	3,768
Bursary funds		216	91
Other student support funds		-	-
Endowment funds	21	22	22
		3,554	3,881

## 15. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Trade payables		97	551
Other creditors and accruals		1,611	2,874
HE discretionary funds	28	1	1
Bursary funds	28	216	91
Other creditors (Netherdale)	17	472	407
Deferred capital grants (Government)	18	1,012	1,028
		3,409	4,952

## 16. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

Other creditors and accruals		818	1,132
Other creditors (Netherdale)	17	495	967
Deferred capital grants (Government)	18	15,420	16,220
		16,733	18,319

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
<b>17. Other creditors (Netherdale)</b>			
Amounts falling due within one year		472	407
Amounts due after more than one year		495	967
		967	1,374

### Deferred Consideration

During 2006/07 the College acquired the Scottish Borders Campus of Heriot Watt University for a consideration of £4.75m. The cost of acquiring the Campus will be repaid to the University over a 17.5-year term, commencing in April 2009, the date on which the College moved to the refurbished campus. No interest is payable on the consideration. The cost of the campus acquisition is within Land and Buildings in note 11.

### 18. Deferred capital grants (government)

	SFC £000	Other govt £000	2024 Total £000	2023 Total £000
<b>As at 1 August</b>				
Land and buildings	14,427	2,142	16,569	17,365
Equipment	540	139	679	839
	14,967	2,281	17,248	18,204
<b>Grants received in year</b>				
Land and buildings	5	-	5	108
Equipment	224	-	224	104
	229	-	229	212
<b>Released to Statement of Comprehensive</b>				
Income				
Land and buildings	720	101	821	903
Equipment	169	55	224	265
	889	156	1,045	1,168
<b>As at 31 July</b>				
Land and buildings	13,712	2,041	15,753	16,570
Equipment	595	84	679	678
	14,307	2,125	16,432	17,248

### 19. Other provisions

	2024 Lifecycle costs - Netherdale £000	2024 Lifecycle costs – Other sites £000	2024 Restructu ring costs £000	2024 Job Evaluation project £000	2024 Total £000	2023 Total £000
<b>As at 1 August</b>	1,097	0	40	0	1,137	1,147
Released to Statement of Comprehensive Income	(115)	-	(40)	-	(155)	(171)
Virement Provision	(276) 97	276 -	- 42	- 1,166	- 1,305	- 161
<b>As at 31 July</b>	803	276	42	1,166	2,287	1,137

Given the uncertainty about the timing of payments arising from the conclusion of the Job Evaluation project, this cost is now being recognised as a provision rather than the previously accrued expenditure within Creditors.

## 20. Pension provision

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
<b>Scottish Borders Council Pension Fund</b>	27		
Scheme assets		31,955	26,122
Scheme liabilities		(28,434)	(25,174)
Surplus/(deficit) in the scheme – pension asset		3,521	948
Asset ceiling adjustment		(4,086)	-
Early retirement pension costs (unfunded)		(565)	948

Hymans Robertson LLP have provided the College with guidance and professional support in understanding the net asset position for the financial statements in accordance with Audit Scotland guidance, and based on the actuary's assessment, an Asset Ceiling Adjustment has been applied to the pension obligations as at 31 July 2024, no adjustment was required at July 2023.

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
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## 21. Endowment Reserves

Restricted net assets relating to endowments are as follows:

George Heron Wilson Bequest	21	21
Robert Noble Trust	1	1
	22	22

Represented by:

Cash and cash equivalents	22	22
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## 22. Restricted Reserves

The restricted reserve represents the proceeds from the sale of exchequer funded assets that are being held for reinvestment in future estates' expenditure.

## 23. Unrestricted Reserves

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
General reserve		4,369	5,287
Pension reserve	27	(565)	948
		3,804	6,235

## 24. Capital and other commitments

No provision has been made for the following capital commitments:

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
Commitments contracted for		116	51
Expenditure authorised but not yet contracted		326	242
		442	293

## 25. Lease obligations

Annual rental commitments under operating leases are as follows:

	Note	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
Land, buildings and equipment			
Leases that expire in less than one year		17	-
Leases that expire between one and five years		47	75
Leases that expire later than five years		-	-
		64	75

Future minimum operating lease payments due:

Land, buildings and equipment			
That expire in less than one year		64	75
That expire between one and five years		35	99
That expire later than five years		-	-
		99	174

## 26. Contingent liabilities

The College had no contingent liabilities at 31 July 2024 (2023 £nil).

## 27. Pension schemes

Different categories of staff were eligible to join one of two schemes:

Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme (STSS)

Scottish Borders Council Local Government Pension Fund (LGPS)

		2024 £000	2023 £000
<b>The total pension charge is analysed as follows:</b>			
STSS - contributions paid		783	726
LGPS - contributions paid	736		
LGPS – FRS 102 charge	79		
		815	1,374
Unfunded pensioner payments		64	58
Charge to the Statement of Comprehensive Income (staff costs)		1,662	2,158

### Scottish Teachers Superannuation Scheme

- a) Borders College participates in the Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme. The scheme is an unfunded statutory public service pension scheme with benefits underwritten by the UK

Government. The scheme is financed by payments from employers and from those current employees who are members of the scheme and paying contributions at progressively higher marginal rates based on pensionable pay, as specified in the regulations. The rate of employer contributions is set with reference to a funding valuation undertaken by the scheme actuary. The last four-yearly valuation was undertaken as at 31 March 2020. This valuation informed an increase in the employer contribution rate from 23% to 26% of pensionable pay from April 2024 and an anticipated yield of 9.6% of total pensionable pay.

- b) Borders College has no liability for other employers' obligations to the multi-employer scheme.
- (c) As the scheme is unfunded there can be no deficit or surplus to distribute on the wind-up of the scheme or withdrawal from the scheme.
- (d) The scheme is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme.
- (e) It is accepted that the scheme can be treated for accounting purposes as a defined contribution scheme in circumstances where Borders College is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme.
- (f) Contribution rates are set every four years as a result of an actuarial valuation of the fund. The last triennial valuation of the fund was at 31 March 2020. The valuation set the contribution rates for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2027. The employer contribution rate for the period from 1 April 2024 is 26% of pensionable pay. The employee rate applied is variable and is anticipated to provide a yield of 9.6% of pensionable pay.
- (g) Borders College's level of participation in the scheme is 0.10% based on the proportion of employer contributions paid in 2023-24.

### Scottish Borders Council Local Government Pension Fund

The scheme is a defined benefit statutory scheme administered in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Scotland) Regulations 2014 and currently provides benefits based on career average revalued earnings. The scheme, as specified in the regulations, is financed by payments from employers and from those current employees who are members of the scheme and pay contributions at progressively higher marginal rates based on pensionable pay.

Contribution rates are set every three years as a result of an actuarial valuation of the fund. The last triennial valuation of the fund was at 31 March 2023. The valuation set the contribution rates for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2028. The minimum employer contribution rate was set at 17% and calculated cost of future accruals set to 21.9%. There are no minimum funding requirements in the LGPS but the contributions are generally set to target a funding level of 100% using the actuarial valuation assumptions.

On the employers' withdrawal from the Fund, a cessation valuation will be carried out in accordance with Regulation 62 which will determine the termination contribution due by the employer, based on the assumptions deemed appropriate by the fund actuary.

### Assumptions

The principal financial assumptions used to calculate scheme liabilities under FRS 102 are:

	31 July 2024 %p.a.	31 July 2023 %p.a.
Salary increases	3.45	3.70
Pension increases	2.75	3.00
Discount rate	5.00	5.05

### Demographic assumptions

Life expectancy is based on the Fund's VitaCurves with improvements in line with the CMI 2023 model, with a 15% weighting of 2023 (and 2022) data, a 0% weighting of 2021 (and 2020) data,

standard smoothing (Sk7), initial adjustment of 0.25% and a long-term rate of improvement of 1.5% p.a. for both males and females. Based on these assumptions, the average future life expectancies at age 65 for the Employer are summarised below:

	<b>Males Years</b>	<b>Females Years</b>
Current Pensioners	20.5	23.3
Future Pensioners	21.1	24.9

Figures assume members aged 45 as at the last formal valuation date.

Life expectancies for the prior period end are based on the Fund's VitaCurves. The allowance for future improvements is shown below:

<b>Current Pensioners</b>	<b>Future Pensioners</b>
CMI 2022 model, with a 25% weighting of 2022 data, a 0% weighting of 2021 (and 2020) data, standard smoothing (Sk7), initial adjustment of 0.25% and a long-term rate of improvement of 1.5% p.a.	CMI 2022 model, with a 25% weighting of 2022 data, a 0% weighting of 2021 (and 2020) data, standard smoothing (Sk7), initial adjustment of 0.25% and a long-term rate of improvement of 1.5% p.a.

Please note that the mortality assumptions used to value the Obligations in the Employer's Closing Position are different to those used to value the Obligations in the Employer's Opening Position.

### **Commutation**

An allowance is included for future retirements to elect to take 65% of the maximum additional tax-free cash up to HMRC limits.

### **Scheme assets**

The major categories of plan assets as a percentage of total plan assets as at 31 July are:

	<b>31 July 2024 %</b>	<b>31 July 2023 %</b>
Asset Breakdown		
Equities	33	35
Bonds	35	36
Property	28	28
Cash	4	1
	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The College's fair value of plan assets is approximately 3.0% (2023 3.0%).

The current service cost includes an allowance for average administration expenses of 0.8% of payroll. The present value of funded liabilities comprises approximately: £12,894,000 (employee members), £5,377,000 (deferred pensioners) and £9,598,000 (pensioners) as at 31 July 2024.

	<b>31 July 2024 £000</b>	<b>31 July 2023 £000</b>
<b>Charged to staff costs</b>		
Current service cost	(916)	(1,318)
Administration expenses		
Past service cost, including curtailments	(7)	(74)
<b>Total charged to staff costs</b>	<b>(923)</b>	<b>(1,392)</b>

### **Charge for net return on pension scheme**



Interest on assets	1,326	973
Interest on cost	(1,280)	(1,040)
<b>Net interest charged</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>(67)</b>
<b>Charge to other comprehensive income</b>		
Return on assets less interest	944	(2,812)
Other actuarial gains/ (losses)		
Change in financial assumptions	1,016	7,277
Change in demographic assumptions	590	359
Experience gain/(loss)	56	(1,579)
<b>Actuarial Gain/(Loss)</b>	<b>2,606</b>	<b>3,245</b>
<b>Total charge to the Statement of Comprehensive Income</b>	<b>1,729</b>	<b>1,786</b>
<b>Analysis of the movement in deficit during the year</b>		
Surplus/(Deficit) in scheme at the start of the year	948	(1,632)
Service costs	(923)	(1,392)
Employer contributions	844	794
Net interest costs	46	(67)
Actuarial (loss)/gain	2,606	3,245
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) at the end of the year</b>	<b>3,521</b>	<b>948</b>
<b>Asset ceiling cap applied to valuation at 31 July 2024</b>	<b>(4,086)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) in scheme as disclosed in financial statements</b>	<b>(565)</b>	<b>948</b>

Hymans Robertson LLP have provided the College with guidance and professional support in understanding the net asset position for the financial statements in accordance with Audit Scotland guidance, and based on the actuary's assessment, an Asset Ceiling Adjustment has been applied to the pension obligations as at 31 July 2024, no adjustment was required at July 2023.

#### 28a. FE bursaries and other student support funds

	2024 FE bursary £000	2024 EMAs £000	2024 Other £000	2024 Total £000	2023 Total £000
<b>Balance b/fwd</b>	91	-	-	91	35
Allocation received in year	2,466	98	20	2,584	2,686
Expenditure	(2,250)	(98)	(20)	(2,368)	(2,603)
Repaid to funding council as clawback	(91)	-	-	(91)	(27)
College contribution to funds	-	-	-	-	-
Intra-region allocations	-	-	-	-	-
Virements	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance c/fwd</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>					
Repayable to SFC as clawback	216	-	-	216	91
Retained by college for students	-	-	-	-	-

- These grants are available solely for students; the College acts only as paying agent. The grants and related disbursements are therefore excluded from the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

## 28b. FE & HE childcare funds

	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
<b>Balance b/fwd</b>	-	-
Allocation received in year	40	34
Expenditure	(40)	(34)
Funds repaid to funding council as clawback	-	-
Virements	-	-
<b>Balance c/fwd</b>	-	-
<b>Represented by:</b>		
Repayable to funding council as clawback	-	-
Retained by College for students	-	-

- FE & HE childcare fund transactions are included within the College Statement of Comprehensive Income in accordance with the Accounts Direction issued by SFC.

## 29. Related party transactions

Borders College is a body incorporated under the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 and receives funding from the SFC.

Scottish Borders Council and the SFC are registered as related parties. During the year, Borders College had various material transactions with these bodies and a number of other colleges and higher education institutions.

Due to the nature of the College's operations and the composition of its Board (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 may have an interest. All transactions, involving organisations in which a member of the Board may have a material interest, are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with normal project and procurement procedures.

The College had no other transactions with non-public bodies in which a member of the Board has an interest and that, in aggregate, exceeded £6,000.

The College had transactions during the year or worked in partnership with, the following publicly funded or representative bodies in which members of the Board hold, or held, official positions.

Member	Organisation	Position
P Smith	APUC	Director
P Smith	BFET	Trustee
D Roberts	Lantra	Trustee/Director
D Roberts	Southern Upland Partnership	Trustee/Director
D Roberts	SRUC	Emeritus Professor
L Mirley	Eildon Housing Association	Director of Business Support
P MacDonald	Oberlanders Group LLP	Managing Partner
D Ormiston	TD1 Youth Hub	Chief Executive
L Hastie	University of Edinburgh	Deputy Head of Maintenance Operations
A Buckenham	Pearson Education	Author
P Cathrow	SOSEP	Economic Infrastructure Development Project Manager

Organisation	Income		Balance included in trade receivables	
	2024 £	2023 £	2024 £	2023 £
Borders Further Education Trust (BFET)	36,172	1,840	-	780
Eildon Housing Association	10,438	4,636	1,600	1,200
Scottish Borders Council	121,118	104,077	7,100	2,450
South of Scotland Economic Partnership	5,161	6,903	-	1,903
Southern Uplands Partnership	72	-	-	-

Organisation	Expenditure		Balance included in trade creditors	
	2024 £	2023 £	2024 £	2023 £
Lantra	3,940	3,504	504	68
Oberlanders Group LLP	49,134	-	-	-
Scottish Borders Council	189,671	167,114	96,143	84,393
University of Edinburgh	442	-	-	-

Under FRS 102, members of senior management are classed as key management personnel as they have authority and responsibility for the planning, directing and control of the organisation. Detail of the remuneration paid to senior managers is within the Remuneration and Staff Report. All transactions with related parties are in line with normal terms and conditions of sale and purchase.

### 30. Events after the reporting period

There are no events to report.

### 31. Non-cash Budget for Depreciation

	Year ended 31 July 2024 £000	Year ended 31 July 2023 £000
Deficit before other gains and losses (FE/HE SORP basis)	(1,226)	(683)
Add: Non-cash allocation for depreciation (net of deferred capital grant)	344	220
Operating surplus/(deficit) on Central Government accounting basis	(882)	(463)

Following reclassification, incorporated colleges received a non-cash budget to cover depreciation but this additional budget is not recognised under the FE/HE SORP accounting rules. Colleges may show a deficit equivalent to net depreciation as a result of having to meet Government accounting rules and the requirement to spend the entire cash allocation.

Under the FE/HE SORP, the College recorded an operating deficit of £1,226k for the year ended July 2024 (2023 £683k). After adjusting for the non-cash allocation provided under government rules, the College shows an 'adjusted' deficit of £882k (2023 adjusted deficit of £463k) on a Central Government accounting basis.

# Appendix 1 – Scottish Funding Council Accounts Direction

## Accounts Direction for Scotland's Colleges 2023-24

1. It is the Scottish Funding Council's direction that institutions comply with the 2019 Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting for Further and Higher Education (SORP) in preparing their annual report and accounts.
2. Institutions must comply with the accounts direction in the preparation of their annual report and accounts in accordance with the Financial Memorandum with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) or the Regional Strategic Body (RSB) (for assigned colleges).
3. Incorporated colleges and Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board are also required to comply with the Government Financial Reporting Manual 2023-24 (FReM) where applicable. In cases where there is a conflict between the FReM and the SORP, the latter will take precedence.
4. Incorporated colleges and Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board must send two copies of their annual report and accounts to the Auditor General for Scotland by 31 December 2024.
5. The annual report and accounts should be signed by the chief executive officer / Executive Director and by the chair, or one other member of the governing body.
6. Incorporated colleges and Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board should reproduce this Direction as an appendix to the annual report and accounts.

Scottish Funding Council

18 September 2024 and subsequent amendments

## Appendix 2 – Glossary of terms

AOP	Adjusted operating position
ALF	Arm's Length Foundation (Borders Further Education Trust or BFET)
BCSA	Borders College Students Association
BFET	Borders Further Education Trust (also known as ALF or Arm's Length Foundation)
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CETV	Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (value of pension scheme benefits)
Co2	Carbon dioxide
CPD	Continuing professional development
EIS	Educational Institute for Scotland
ESF	European Social Fund
ESP	Energy Skills Partnership
EU	European Union
FEFT	Further Education Full-Time
FEPT	Further Education Part-Time
FFR	Financial Forecast Return
HEFT	Higher Education Full-Time
HEPT	Higher Education Part-Time
FRC	Financial Reporting Council
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent staff numbers
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs
HNC/D	Higher National Certificate / Diploma
HR	Human resources
I&E	Income & Expenditure
ICTA	Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988
ISA	International Accounting Standards
IT	Information Technology
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LGBT+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transsexual +
LGPS	Scottish Borders Local Government Pension Scheme
MA	Modern Apprenticeship
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OSCR	Office of the Scottish Charity Register
QTR1	First quarter of the financial year
SBC	Scottish Borders Council
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SEC	Student Experience Committee
SFC	Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council
SIMD1	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation - most deprived
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SORP	Statement of Recommended Practice
SOSE	South of Scotland Enterprise
SSES	Student satisfaction and engagement survey
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Maths
STSS	Scottish Teachers Superannuation Scheme
tCo2	Tons of carbon dioxide
VAT	Value added tax

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