

Strategic Plan 2026 - 2029

Hartlepool College



Strategic Plan – Foreword



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PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE



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Reflecting on the period since 2022, Hartlepool College can be justifiably proud of what it has achieved in circumstances that have continued to test the resilience and adaptability of the further education sector. Against a backdrop of national skills reform, economic uncertainty, workforce pressures and structural change in regional governance, the College has not only remained stable, it has continued to strengthen its performance, reputation and impact.

Academically, the College has sustained high standards of quality and continuous improvement. The annual self-assessment cycle has resulted in consecutive 'outstanding' judgements, underpinned by strong learner outcomes, high expectations and consistently effective teaching, learning and assessment. This strength has been externally validated through engagement with the Department for Education at annual strategic conversation meetings and peer challenge from colleges with established outstanding track records. These endorsements provide assurance of both the robustness of internal quality assurance and the maturity of the College's approach to improvement.

Alongside academic performance, the College has delivered significant growth in apprenticeships and adult education, reaffirming its long-standing commitment to supporting people into work, progression and higher-level learning. Apprenticeship provision now serves a broad regional footprint across Tees Valley, County Durham and Tyne and Wear, while adult provision has remained closely aligned to employer demand and devolved skills priorities. These developments reflect the College's clear focus on employment outcomes and its responsiveness to labour market need.

Financially, the College has consolidated its recovery following an earlier period of intervention. For several consecutive years the College has delivered secure and sustainable financial performance, strengthening cashflow, maintaining positive operating results and enabling investment in people, facilities and curriculum. This financial stability has proved essential in allowing the College to respond proactively to policy reform and seize growth opportunities rather than being constrained by them.

The period from 2022 to 2025 has also seen the College significantly expand and deepen its strategic partnerships. Building on earlier collaborations such as the Civil Engineering Skills Academy with Seymour Civil Engineering, partnerships have grown to encompass health and care, construction, advanced manufacturing and clean energy. Notable developments include the establishment of specialist capital facilities, strengthened collaboration with University Hospitals Tees, Centrica, and X-Energy, bringing enhanced employer engagement through Industry Advisory Boards across all curriculum areas. These partnerships have increasingly become transformational rather than transactional, shaping curriculum design, investment decisions and learner pathways.

The College enters the 2026–2029 strategy period with confidence and optimism. National reforms set out within the Skills and Post-16 Education Act continue to align strongly with the College's technical and professional strengths, particularly in advanced, higher-level and employer-responsive provision. Regionally, evolving arrangements following the transition from Local Enterprise Partnerships to Mayoral Strategic Authorities have created new opportunities for influence and collaboration. Growth plans across the Tees Valley and the wider North East, including clean energy, advanced manufacturing,

net-zero technologies and infrastructure development, present significant demand for the skills in which the College specialises.

At the same time, the College recognises its responsibility to contribute to broader civic priorities. There are increasing opportunities to embed sustainability within curriculum and estates development, to extend participation in education and training, and to further enhance equality, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of College life. These themes are no longer peripheral; they are integral to long-term economic resilience and social mobility.

As always, challenges remain. Inflationary pressures, workforce shortages and competition for specialist talent continue to exert pressure across further education. Demographic change and high levels of economic inactivity within the local area add further complexity. However, in its more than 175-year history, Hartlepool College has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to adapt, innovate and lead through periods of uncertainty. The next phase of the College's strategy will draw upon this experience, ensuring that the organisation remains resilient, ambitious and firmly focused on transforming lives through education.





Strategic Statement

Much has been written in recent years about Hartlepool and the surrounding area, particularly in relation to economic challenge, social inequality and entrenched disadvantage. While some of the data and commentary understandably present difficult realities, Hartlepool College continues to offer a different narrative, one defined by ambition, opportunity and belief in the potential of every individual. Through education and skills, the College consistently challenges assumptions and works against prevailing contextual barriers to create positive life chances.

The College's mission, *Excellence in Further and Higher Education to Transform Students' Lives*, underpins everything we do. Central to this mission is an unwavering commitment to high expectations for every learner, irrespective of background or starting point. For this mission to be realised, the College is clear that students and staff must operate within an environment that is both inclusive and safe, grounded in shared values and genuine mutual respect for one another. Inclusive means offering a curriculum that reflects the diversity of our learners and meets a wide spectrum of need. This includes supporting students with high or complex needs who may not have had the opportunity to thrive previously, alongside those aspiring to progress into higher level

professional, technical and academic pathways. The College is therefore committed to providing a broad, high quality curriculum across a range of professional and technical disciplines, ensuring aspiration, progression and ambition are accessible to all.

Safe means more than compliance; it is about creating a culture where students and staff can be themselves, speak openly and feel respected. Issues relating to social disadvantage, inequality and personal challenge must be discussed without stigma, supported appropriately, and addressed without lowering expectations. The College promotes a zero tolerance approach to behaviour that undermines dignity or safety, reinforced through the It's Never OK platform, which sets clear expectations around conduct, respect and accountability. This platform underlines the College's commitment to dignity, safeguarding and a culture where inappropriate language, harassment or discrimination are explicitly challenged.

Safety also extends to physical and mental wellbeing. The College actively promotes understanding of health and safety responsibilities, positive wellbeing practices, and emotional resilience, ensuring learners are prepared not only for study

but for the realities of the modern workplace and wider society. Mutual respect, between students, between staff, and across the College community, is fundamental to this environment and is modelled, expected and upheld consistently.

Building on this foundation, a core driver of the College's intent is to ensure that every student acquires the knowledge, skills, qualifications, behaviours, attitudes and confidence required to succeed beyond College. Progression into sustained employment is the ultimate aim for all learners. For some, this will be through apprenticeships and direct entry into the workforce; for others, progression into higher education will be a key stepping stone prior to employment. Whatever the route, the College is committed to preparing learners to meet challenge, adapt to change and contribute positively as skilled workers and responsible citizens.

An essential element of the College's intent is its role as a key civic institution within the community. The College ensures that its curriculum is closely aligned to local, regional and national labour market intelligence, responding dynamically to skills demand and economic growth priorities. Curriculum planning is shaped by the strategic economic ambitions

of the Tees Valley Combined Authority and the wider North East, alongside national industrial priorities. These align with supra regional strategies that identify health and life sciences, energy and clean technologies, advanced manufacturing and digital industries as key growth sectors, supported by enabling areas such as construction and professional services.

Through this clear intent, Hartlepool College remains focused on transforming lives, strengthening communities and supporting sustainable economic growth, driven by high expectations, respect for others, and an uncompromising commitment to doing what is right.

Our Mission

“Excellence in further
& higher education
to transform
students' lives”



Strategic Statement

The delivery of the College's strategic intent is structured across three interconnected levels, with a clear and consistent golden thread of high expectations running throughout all decision making, planning and practice.

High expectations are of fundamental strategic importance to the College. They shape the culture, inform behaviour, and set the benchmark for performance across teaching, learning, assessment, and support. This uncompromising commitment to excellence establishes the tone for everything the College does and underpins the successful delivery of its strategic priorities.

Strategic Level

At a strategic level, the College's objectives are supported and driven by six subsidiary strategies, each designed to translate ambition into action. These focus on:

1. Teaching, learning and assessment.
2. Curriculum strategy.
3. Workforce development.
4. Stakeholder engagement and partnership.
5. Estates strategy.
6. IT and digital strategy.

Collectively, these strategies define the expectations the College holds of itself and provide a coherent framework for ensuring that the strategic aims set out in this plan are delivered effectively, consistently and sustainably.

Operational Level

At an operational level, College leaders and middle managers place focused attention on four critical processes that directly influence quality and performance:

1. Design and delivery of a high-quality curriculum.
2. Consistent application of effective pedagogy.
3. Strong and responsive pastoral support for learners.
4. Effective management of resources.

Rigorous attention to these core processes, combined with a culture of reflection and continuous improvement, ensures that strategic intent is translated into high-quality day-to-day practice and positive learner outcomes.

Tactical Level

At a tactical level, the role of all staff is central to successful implementation. The College therefore expects a consistent focus on:

1. Maintaining high expectations for all learners.
2. Delivering a well-sequenced and structured curriculum.
3. Embedding high-quality teaching and learning practice.
4. Providing effective pastoral care and support.
5. Full adherence to key policies and procedures, including health and safety, safeguarding and Prevent.

Through consistent attention to these expectations and a shared commitment to ongoing improvement, the College ensures that high standards are sustained in every classroom, workshop and learning environment.

The impact of this strategic plan will be assessed and evaluated through the milestones and performance measures set out in support of the strategy, providing clear assurance of progress, accountability and continuous improvement.





Engineering Project Presentation Day
Wednesday May 4th 2022

Stephen Reynolds
TT Electronics

Engineering Project
Programme number 53

Customer Requirements & Rationale

Describe process of manufacturing (from manufacturing)
Identify production issues (Quality Management)
Quality Management (Plan-Do-Check-Act)
Identify issues (Quality Management)
Identify issues (Quality Management)

Project Overview

The project is to complete a new...
The project is to complete a new...
The project is to complete a new...

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The Strategic Aims:

Hartlepool College aims to:

Strategic Aim 1: Deliver teaching, learning and assessment practice which results in exceptional outcomes for all learners.

Strategic Aim 2: Offer a curriculum that is aspirational and meets the needs of learners, parents/carers, employers, and stakeholders.

Strategic Aim 3: Elevate our culture as a form of competitive advantage.

Strategic Aim 4: Steward an effective and efficient resource to support and promote outstanding provision.

Strategic Aim 5: Build and nurture transformational stakeholder partnerships.





Strategic Aim 1: To deliver teaching, learning and assessment practice which results in exceptional outcomes for all learners

Context

High quality teaching, learning and assessment sit at the very heart of Hartlepool College and underpin every aspect of the learner experience. They form the bedrock upon which the College's mission, values and ambitions are built, and they are fundamental to meeting the expectations of learners, parents and carers, employers and wider stakeholders. The College's approach to quality is founded on consistency, ambition and evidence informed practice, ensuring that learners are challenged, supported and prepared to succeed.

How Will This Be Achieved?

The College recognises that outstanding education can only be delivered within an environment that is safe, respectful and inclusive. Creating and sustaining such an environment is therefore a foundational priority. The College operates a robust framework of policies and procedures relating to health and safety, safeguarding and housekeeping, and these are consistently applied to ensure that learners can study and develop with confidence. Alongside statutory requirements, key platforms such as It's Never OK, Prevent and e safety are embedded within student induction and reinforced through the tutorial programme, establishing clear behavioural expectations and promoting personal responsibility, respect and wellbeing.

This strategic aim is central to the College's mission and long term intent. It is underpinned by a well developed Teaching, Learning and Assessment Handbook, which articulates the College's pedagogical principles and sets clear expectations for high quality practice. These principles emphasise the central role of the teacher in shaping learning, the importance of establishing the right climate through high expectations, the critical impact of high quality instruction on learner success, and the shared responsibility of all staff in developing learners' language, literacy and numeracy.

The Handbook also defines a clear and consistent Teaching Standard, which sets out what effective teaching looks like in every lesson. This includes strong lesson openings that orientate and focus learners, the purposeful recall of prior knowledge, the careful sequencing and chunking of new content so that it builds logically on what learners already know, the provision of appropriately challenging work, and the regular assessment of learning to inform next steps. Lessons are brought to a close in ways that consolidate learning and reinforce key knowledge and skills. It is through the consistent application of these expectations that high standards are sustained across the College.

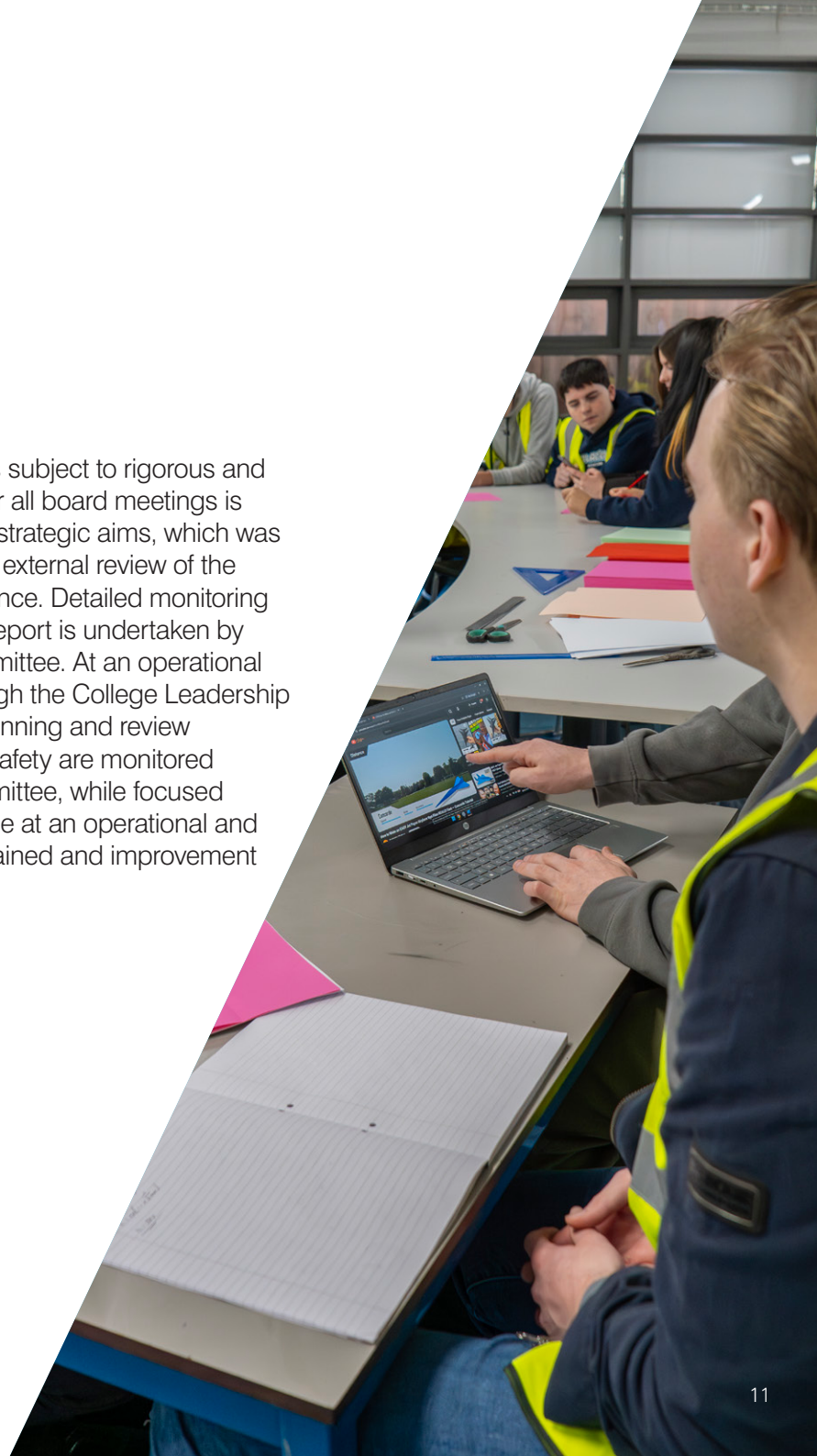
The College is firmly committed to inclusive practice and recognises that high expectations must be matched by the right levels of support. A comprehensive range of student support services ensures that learners are able to access timely and appropriate assistance when they need it. This includes support with finance, careers guidance, university applications and progression planning. Student Success Coaches play a crucial role in maintaining close relationships with learners and providing targeted encouragement and intervention. Additional Learning Support staff deliver personalised one to one provision for learners with identified needs, while the Learning Cores provide essential support in developing independent study skills and academic confidence. Taken together, these support functions work in tandem with high quality teaching, learning and assessment to enable every learner to achieve their potential.

Risks and assurance

The College recognises that failure to deliver this strategic aim would carry significant risks. These include the potential mishandling of safeguarding concerns, non compliance with health and safety legislation, and academic performance failing to meet expected standards. These risks are actively mitigated through strong governance, clear accountability and a culture of continuous improvement.

Monitoring progress

Progress against this strategic aim is subject to rigorous and systematic oversight. The agenda for all board meetings is structured around the College's five strategic aims, which was recommended after the most recent external review of the College's board and overall governance. Detailed monitoring on the College's Self-Assessment Report is undertaken by the Curriculum and Standards Committee. At an operational level, performance is reviewed through the College Leadership Committee and regular business planning and review meetings. Compliance and learner safety are monitored through the Health and Safety Committee, while focused curriculum reviews provide assurance at an operational and tactical level that standards are sustained and improvement is continuous.





Strategic Aim 2: Offer an aspirational curriculum that meets the needs of learners, parents and carers, employers and stakeholders

Context

For more than 175 years, Hartlepool College of Further Education has delivered a strong and trusted technical curriculum that equips learners and employers with the knowledge, skills, behaviours and qualifications required to succeed. This long standing focus on technical and professional education remains one of the College's defining strengths. In the current policy context, national reforms set out through the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper and the Skills and Post 16 Education Act present significant opportunities to further develop and enhance this offer, particularly in relation to advanced, higher and employer led technical education.

Regionally, the College operates within a dynamic and evolving economic landscape. Strategic economic priorities identified by the Tees Valley Combined Authority and the wider North East continue to shape demand for skills across a range of growth sectors that closely align with the College's curriculum strengths. Alongside this, the College remains firmly committed to inclusion and social mobility, ensuring that learners from Hartlepool and the wider area can access high quality provision from entry level through to higher education and advanced technical study. This breadth of provision is essential in supporting aspiration, widening participation and meeting diverse learner needs.

How Will This Be Achieved?

Delivery of this strategic aim is supported by a clear and responsive curriculum strategy, which provides the framework for planning, review and continuous improvement. This strategy is firmly rooted in robust labour market intelligence and reflects the needs of employers and communities across two interconnected economic geographies: the Tees Valley and the wider North East, via its Industry Advisory Boards, where the College works closely with employers operating across both areas, ensuring its curriculum offer remains relevant, forward looking and closely aligned to real workforce demand.

Strategic economic plans for both regions identify priority sectors that also feature prominently within national and pan regional growth agendas. In response, the College will continue to align and refine its curriculum to support skills development in health, biologicals and life sciences, energy and clean technologies, advanced manufacturing, digital industries, construction and professional services. These sectors represent both current demand and future opportunity, and they underpin the College's ambition to contribute meaningfully to regional economic growth and productivity, experience long-term unemployment.

At the more operational and tactical levels, efforts will be made to ensure all programmes have a curriculum which is well-organised, structured and sequenced to afford learners the opportunity to develop the necessary knowledge, skills, behaviours, attitude and confidence to progress – whether this to be to higher education or into the world of employment.

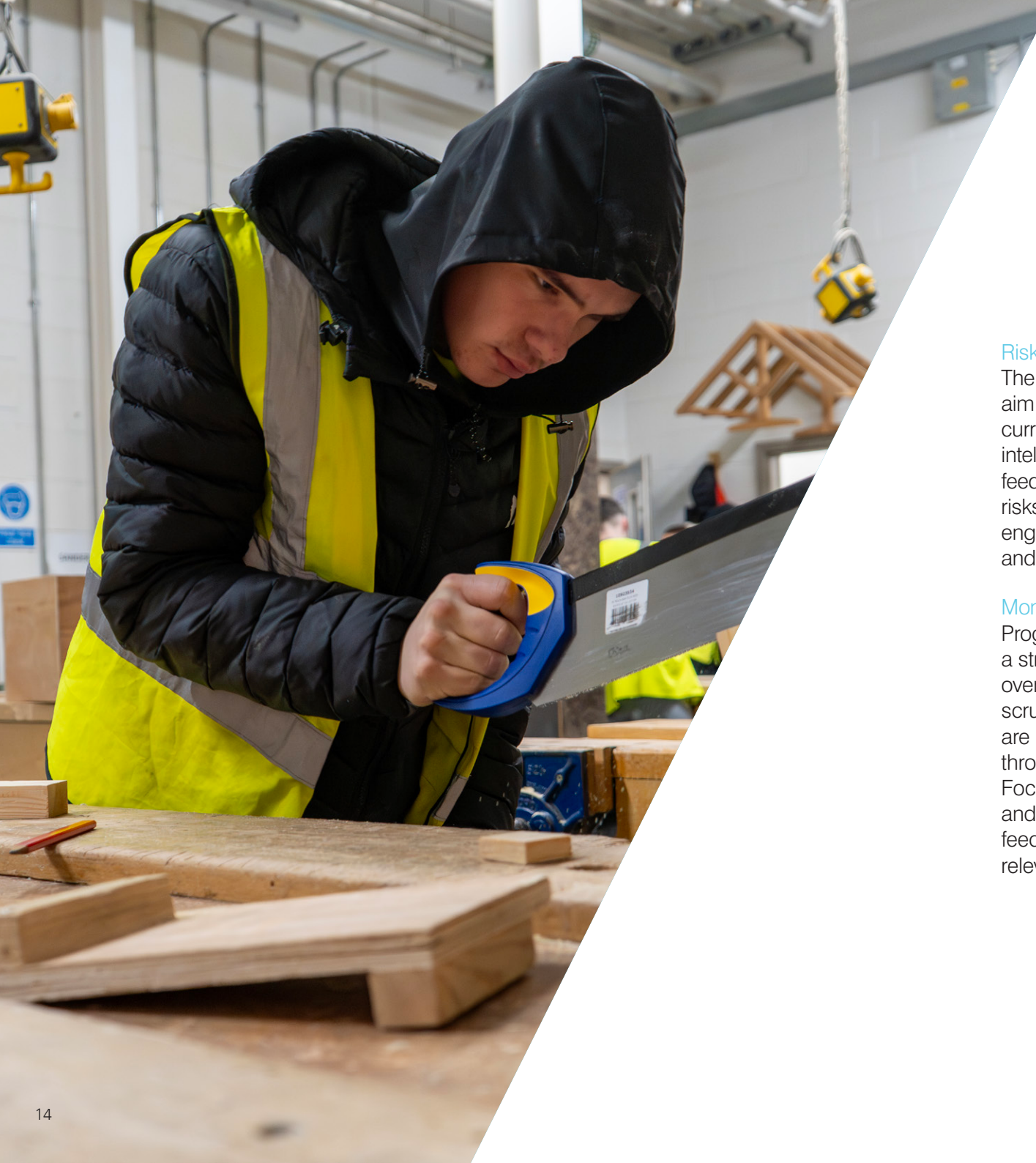
Labour market intelligence plays a central role in informing governance and strategic oversight. It directly shapes governors' strategic planning discussions and underpins the College's Stakeholder Strategy, which emphasises sustained dialogue and consultation with employers, industry bodies and partner organisations. This engagement ensures that curriculum design, investment decisions and delivery models remain responsive and evidence based.

In parallel, the College's commitment to inclusion remains paramount. The curriculum offer is designed not only to meet the needs of those progressing smoothly through education, but also to support learners who are perceived as being furthest from the labour market. The College has a long established and successful track record of working with learners with high or complex needs and those experiencing long term unemployment, ensuring that pathways into further learning, employment and progression are accessible and realistic.

At an operational and tactical level, the College places strong emphasis on the quality of curriculum design and delivery. All programmes are expected to be well organised, clearly structured and coherently sequenced, enabling learners to develop knowledge and skills progressively over time. This approach supports the acquisition not only of qualifications, but also the behaviours, attitudes and confidence required to progress successfully into higher education or sustained employment. Through consistent application of these principles, the College ensures that aspiration is embedded within every curriculum pathway.

Curriculum planning processes are carefully designed to support this approach. Lessons and programmes are deliberately sequenced to ensure that knowledge and skills are developed progressively over time. Schemes of work and knowledge organisers play a central role in making curriculum intent explicit and in supporting both staff and learners to understand what is to be learned and why. These documents also set out clear approaches to formative and summative assessment, enabling progress to be monitored accurately and ensuring that learners develop the substantive and disciplinary knowledge required to achieve and progress.





Risks and assurance

The College recognises that failure to achieve this strategic aim would present clear risks. These include the potential for curriculum provision to become misaligned with labour market intelligence, as well as the risk of negative learner or employer feedback adversely affecting the College's reputation. These risks are mitigated through strong governance, employer engagement and regular curriculum review informed by data and stakeholder insight.

Monitoring progress

Progress against this strategic aim is monitored through a structured and rigorous assurance framework. Strategic oversight is provided by the Governing Board, with detailed scrutiny and challenge. Operational delivery and performance are reviewed by the College Leadership Committee and through regular business planning and review meetings. Focused curriculum reviews provide detailed operational and tactical assurance, while ongoing learner and employer feedback ensures that the curriculum remains responsive, relevant and high quality.

Strategic Aim 3: Elevate a culture that acts as a form of competitive advantage

Context

The College's most valuable asset is its workforce. It is through the collective expertise, commitment and professionalism of staff that the strategic aims set out in this plan will be realised. The quality of teaching and assessment, the strength of pastoral support, operational efficiency and the effectiveness of performance development and improvement are all directly shaped by culture. As the College looks ahead to the next three years, continuing to strengthen what it does and how it does it – , while actively reducing inconsistency – , will remain a defining priority.

Developing a strong, positive and purposeful organisational culture is therefore not incidental; it is a deliberate strategic choice. A culture rooted in high expectations, professionalism and mutual respect supports staff to perform at their best, retain talent and sustain improvement over time. It also enables the College to respond effectively to challenge, change and opportunity while maintaining a clear focus on learners and stakeholders.

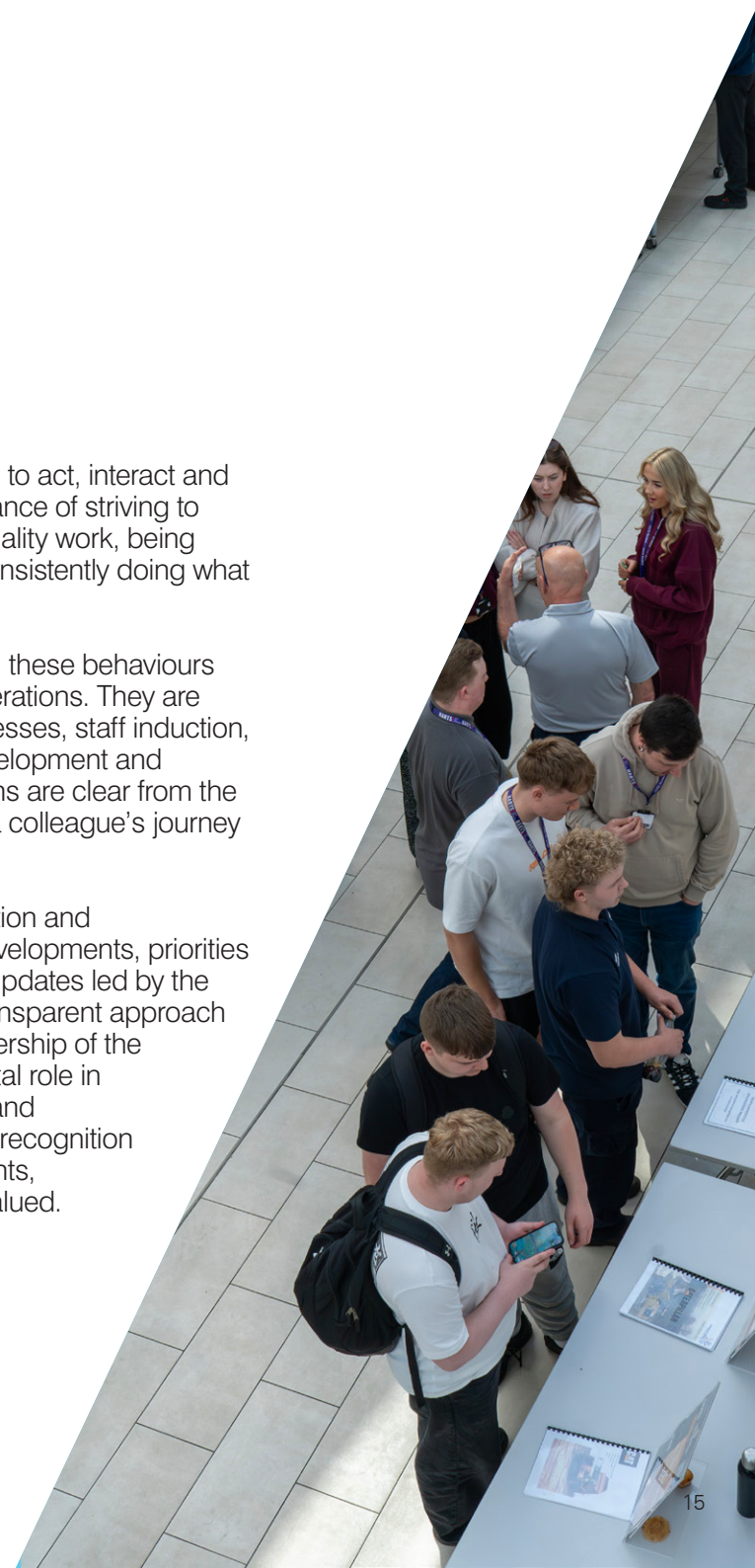
How Will This Be Achieved?

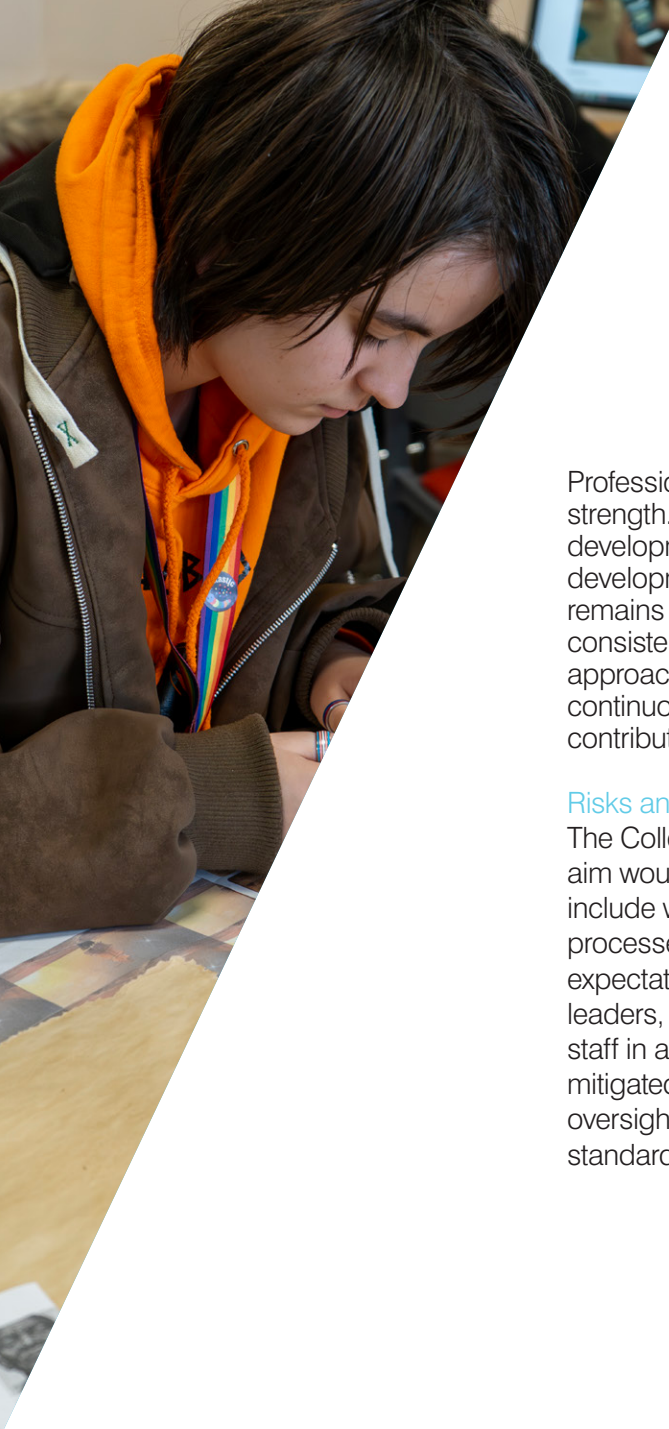
Delivery of this strategic aim is underpinned by a comprehensive workforce development strategy, which provides a coherent framework for recruitment, development, engagement and retention. Central to this approach is a shared set of four staff behaviours, which apply to all roles across the

organisation and define how staff are expected to act, interact and lead. These behaviours emphasise the importance of striving to improve oneself and others, producing high quality work, being constructive, positive and encouraging, and consistently doing what is right for the College.

Rather than existing as aspirational statements, these behaviours are embedded into the fabric of day to day operations. They are reflected within recruitment and selection processes, staff induction, probation arrangements and performance development and progress reviews. This ensures that expectations are clear from the outset and reinforced consistently throughout a colleague's journey with the organisation.

Significant emphasis is placed on communication and engagement. Staff are kept informed of key developments, priorities and challenges through regular briefings and updates led by the Principal and senior leaders. This open and transparent approach helps to build trust, alignment and shared ownership of the College's direction. Recognition also plays a vital role in reinforcing positive culture. Staff contributions and achievements are celebrated through ongoing recognition and enhanced through annual recognition events, ensuring that success is acknowledged and valued.





Professional development remains a key enabler of cultural strength. Investment in high quality continuous professional development, including industry insights and sector specific development opportunities, ensures that staff expertise remains current and that expectations around quality are consistently understood and enacted. Together, these approaches support a culture of reflection, learning and continuous improvement, enabling staff to grow while contributing positively to organisational performance.

Risks and assurance

The College recognises that failure to achieve this strategic aim would present significant organisational risks. These include weaknesses in recruitment, selection or socialisation processes, underperformance linked to inconsistent expectations, the loss or long term absence of key senior leaders, and challenges in recruiting and retaining high quality staff in a competitive labour market. These risks are actively mitigated through clear workforce planning, strong governance oversight and consistent application of agreed behaviours and standards.

Monitoring progress

Progress against this strategic aim is overseen at multiple levels to ensure clear accountability and assurance. Strategic scrutiny is provided by the Full Governing Board, with detailed challenge and review through the College's own Question of the Day for all staff to provide feedback anonymously. Operational responsibility sits with the College Leadership Committee, supported by regular business planning and review meetings at both operational and tactical levels. Focused curriculum reviews also provide insight into how culture is experienced in practice and how it continues to support high quality delivery across the organisation.

Strategic Aim 4: Steward an effective and efficient resource to support and promote exemplary provision

Context

Over the lifetime of this strategy, the College recognises that financial and operational pressures will continue to shape the further education landscape. Rising costs, external funding constraints and wider economic uncertainty mean that the delivery of strategic ambition must be underpinned by robust financial management and disciplined use of resources. The importance of sustained financial stability, characterised by strong cashflow, healthy operational surpluses and effective management of debt, cannot be overstated. It is through sound financial stewardship that the College is able to invest strategically in its workforce, curriculum and estate, ensuring long term sustainability and resilience.

Alongside financial pressures, the College operates within an increasingly complex regulatory environment. Enhanced expectations around data protection, information governance and cybersecurity present both challenge and risk, particularly as digital systems become ever more critical to operational continuity and learner experience. Managing these risks effectively is therefore integral to protecting the College's assets, reputation and ability to deliver high quality provision.

How Will This Be Achieved?

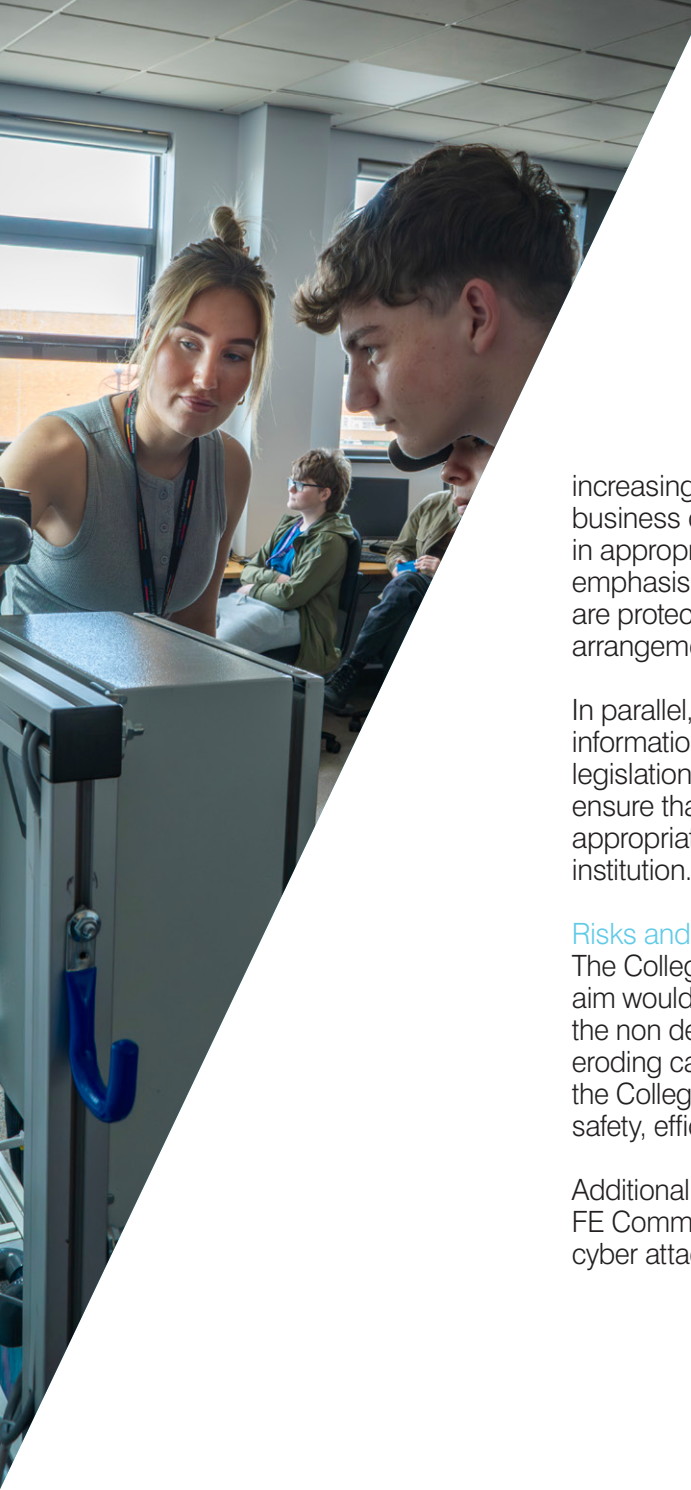
The College's approach to strategic planning is well established and designed to ensure coherence between ambition and

delivery. Governors undertake an annual strategic review of the external environment, complemented by an embedded cycle of business planning and performance review. Together, these processes allow the College to continuously assess emerging opportunities and risks, respond to change and maintain close alignment between strategic intent and operational activity. This disciplined approach minimises the risk of strategic drift and ensures that resources are deployed in line with agreed priorities.

The estates strategy plays a central role in supporting this aim. It provides a clear framework for capital investment, maintenance planning and sustainability, enabling the College to maintain safe, modern and industry relevant learning environments. Capital development opportunities secured through initiatives such as the Town Deal and T Level investment have strengthened specialist facilities, while ongoing maintenance and improvement activity ensures the estate remains fit for purpose. Sustainability is a key consideration within estates planning, with targeted action to reduce environmental impact and establish clear pathways towards net zero ambitions over the life of the strategy.

Complementing this, the IT and digital strategy sets out how technology will be used to enhance efficiency, effectiveness and resilience. Digital systems are





increasingly critical to teaching, learning, assessment and business operations, and the College is committed to investing in appropriate infrastructure, capability and security. A strong emphasis is placed on cyber resilience, ensuring that systems are protected against evolving threats and that contingency arrangements are in place to minimise disruption.

In parallel, the College maintains rigorous arrangements for information governance and compliance with data protection legislation. Clear policies, staff training and robust controls ensure that personal and organisational data are managed appropriately and securely, safeguarding both learners and the institution.

Risks and assurance

The College acknowledges that failure to deliver this strategic aim would present significant organisational risk. These include the non delivery of financial budgets, inflationary pressures eroding cashflow and leading to potential liquidity issues, or the College estate being managed in a way that compromises safety, efficiency or quality.

Additional risks include intervention by funding bodies or the FE Commissioner, breaches of financial covenants, successful cyber attacks that disrupt operations, and weaknesses in

information governance or electronic security. These risks are actively mitigated through strong systems of control, clear accountability and continuous monitoring.

Monitoring progress

Progress against this strategic aim is monitored through robust governance and management structures. Overall strategic oversight is provided by the Full Governing Board, supported by detailed scrutiny through the Audit Committee at both strategic and operational levels. Day to day implementation and performance are overseen by the College Leadership Committee, with regular business planning and review meetings providing operational and tactical assurance that resources remain aligned to strategic priorities and are being used effectively.

Strategic Aim 5: Build and nurture transformational stakeholder partnerships

Context

Hartlepool College recognises that no organisation operates in isolation, and this is particularly true within the further education sector. The College's past achievements, current performance and future ambitions have been, and will continue to be, strengthened through effective partnership working. Central to this strategic aim is a clear distinction between partnerships that are transformational rather than transactional, delivering long term mutual value rather than short term gain.

Transformational partnerships play a critical role across all areas of the College's strategy. They shape and strengthen curriculum design, enhance learner outcomes, support workforce responsiveness, and enable the effective and efficient use of resources. Through meaningful collaboration, partners contribute expertise, insight and opportunity, ensuring that provision remains relevant, ambitious and aligned to economic and community need. These relationships are also fundamental to the College's role as a key civic institution, supporting inclusive growth and acting as an anchor for skills, employment and progression within the community it serves.

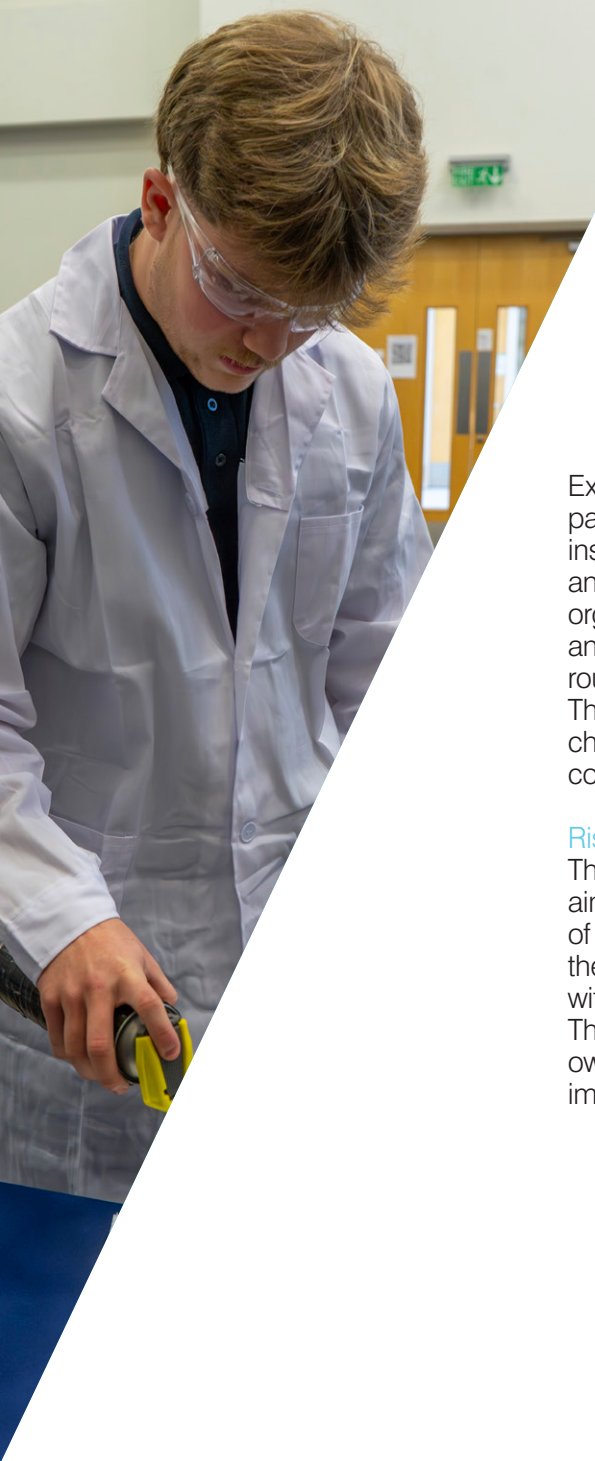
How Will This Be Achieved?

The delivery of this strategic aim is supported by a comprehensive stakeholder strategy, which sets out the breadth, depth and diversity of the College's stakeholder

network. This strategy identifies key internal and external partners and establishes clear expectations around engagement, collaboration and impact. It ensures that partnership activity is purposeful, coordinated and aligned to the College's overriding strategic objectives.

At an operational level, partnership development is embedded within the College's strategic planning processes. Heads of School play a central role in this work by developing and maintaining forward looking three year plans that identify and nurture partnerships most relevant to their curriculum and learner cohorts. This approach ensures that partnership activity is not peripheral but integral to programme design, delivery and continuous improvement. The voice of students, parents and carers, and employers is a critical driver of this work. Feedback and insight from these groups actively inform quality improvement and curriculum development, directly supporting the delivery of Strategic Aims 1 and 2. Equally, the staff voice plays an important role in shaping organisational culture and partnership effectiveness, reinforcing the link between this aim and Strategic Aim 3. Listening, responding and acting on stakeholder feedback ensures that relationships remain dynamic, relevant and impactful.





Externally, the College works closely with a wide range of partners, including employers, schools, higher education institutions, government agencies, community organisations and local and regional authorities. Partnerships with organisations such as Teesside University, local authorities and sector specific employers support clear progression routes, curriculum innovation and workforce development. These relationships enable the College to respond effectively to changing economic circumstances while maintaining a strong commitment to inclusion and opportunity.

Risks and assurance

The College acknowledges that failure to deliver this strategic aim would introduce a number of risks. Ineffective management of key stakeholders could weaken trust and collaboration, while the non delivery of income targets or rising costs associated with partnership activity could impact financial sustainability. These risks are mitigated through structured governance, clear ownership of partnership relationships and regular review of impact and value for money.

Monitoring progress

Performance and progress against this strategic aim are subject to clear governance oversight. Strategic accountability rests with the Full Governing Board, ensuring that partnership activity supports the College's long term objectives. Operational leadership is provided through the College Leadership Committee, with detailed monitoring and evaluation taking place through regular business planning and review meetings at operational and tactical levels. These arrangements ensure that partnerships remain effective, aligned and transformational.

Acknowledgements

The College would like to thank the key stakeholders who provided valuable insight and feedback on this Corporate Strategy.

Stakeholders that the College engages with are categorised into four different groups.

Civic	Employer	Education	Community
Tees Valley Combined Authority	Wilton Engineering	Manor Academy	The PFC Trust
Association of Colleges	Unipres	Dyke House Academy	Hartlepool Sport
North East Chamber of Commerce	Darchem Engineering	Ward Jackson Primary	Barclays
Hartlepool MP	NEC Software Solutions	Gateshead College	HCFE's Parent Voice
Hartlepool Development Corporation	Caterpillar	Bishop Auckland College Group	
Mayoral Development Corporation	Gestamp Tallent	Newcastle College	
Hartlepool Borough Council	University Hospitals Tees	Teesside University	
Cleveland Police	Science Industry Apprenticeship Consortium		
Cleveland Fire Brigade			

Hartlepool College



Author: Gary Riches, Deputy Principal and CEO of Hartlepool College