

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting of the **Staffing Committee**
held on Wednesday 1st June 2022 at 9.00 am via Microsoft Teams

- PRESENT:** Mrs Gillian McDowell (Committee Chair)
Mrs Patricia McCaffrey
Mr Michael Skuce
Ms Alana Jones-Campbell
Ms Anne McCleary
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Dr Jill Cush, Deputy Chief Executive
Mrs Eimear Rushe, Head of Human Resources
Mr Leo Murphy (Interim Chief Executive)
Mr John Moss, Head of Faculty BECLS (*Item 7.0 only*)
Mrs Sabrina Bernhardt, Secretary to the Governing Body Admin
- APOLOGIES:** Dr Nicholas O'Shiel, Chair of the Governing Body

1.0 PRELIMINARIES AND APOLOGIES

At the outset, the Committee Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees to the last Staffing Committee meeting prior to the Summer Break. The Committee Chair acknowledged Mr Skuce last attendance at a Staffing Committee meeting. On behalf of the Committee, Mrs McDowell thanked him for his contribution and wished him well for the future.

An apology was tendered on behalf of Dr Nicholas O'Shiel.

2.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

No conflict of interest declarations were made.

3.0 SAFEGUARDING

No safeguarding matters were raised.

4.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 04 Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 23rd March 2022

There were no matters arising.

5.0 KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 05.01 Key Strategic Issues
- Paper 05.02 Key Strategic Issues Management Update

At the outset Mr Leo Murphy stated that the Key Strategic Issues Updates for all Committee Meetings is in urgent need for review due to being operational. With

reference to paper 05, Mr Murphy noted his assumption that the Key Strategic Issues Management Update had been read by members and proceeded to provide further updates by exception.

5.1 COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience

Mr Murphy reported that the College is currently in the transition phase with staff returning to campus. It is anticipated that the 'business as usual' approach will be introduced in September 2022.

5.2 Centre for People and Workforce Development

Mr Murphy informed the Committee that the College has developed a new Graduate Teaching Academy. He welcomed this new initiative, which will support talent management within skills shortage areas. Mr Murphy indicated talent management is a challenge for all colleges within the sector.

5.3 Review of Culture & Structure

In relation to the Technical Services Structure review, Mr Leo Murphy reported that Mr Paul Wade has been appointed as new Technical Services Manager. Mr Murphy has confidence that Mr Wade's knowledge and experience will mitigate challenges within the Technical Services team.

5.4 Collaborations (including Shared Services)

Mr Murphy highlighted that the STS/Jane HR Project has made good progress and asked Mrs Rushe to give a short update. Mrs Rushe, Head of HR, informed the Committee that testing took place on Saturday 28th May 2022 and since then the new system, which is more efficient with a better functionality, is now live with no issues reported from South West College.

5.5 Staff Recruitment and Retention

Mr Murphy reported that Mrs Elizabeth Shackels, Quality Assurance Manager, has been offered the Curriculum Director position in Southern Regional College. He stated that Mrs Shackels would be a big loss given her skills and experience after 30 years of service. Mrs Shackels will commence her new employment on 8th August 2022.

The Committee chair thanked Mr Murphy for his update. No questions were raised.

6.0 MANAGEMENT REPORT

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 06 Management Report
- Paper 06.01 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report
- Paper 06.02 Fair Employment Monitoring Return
- Paper 06.03 Commentary - Fair Employment Monitoring Return
- Paper 06.04 Staff Resource Report
- Paper 06.04a Social Inclusion Transition Plan
- Paper 06.05 Fixed-Term Contracts Report
- Paper 06.06 Sickness Absence Report March 2022
- Paper 06.07 New Start Programme
- Paper 06.08 Revised Equal Opportunities, Good Relations and Cultural Diversity Policy
- Paper 06.09 Draft Employee Standards Policy (May 2022).

With reference to paper 06, Mrs Gillian McDowell noted her assumption that the Management Report had been read by members and asked Mrs Rushe to proceed to provide further updates by exception.

6.1 Health, Safety & Wellbeing and Equality

Ref: Management Report Section 1.0 and Paper 06.01 – 06.03

Mrs Rushe referred to the recent recommendation from an internal audit report relating to the Work Placement Policy and guidance documents and notes that the policy is currently undergoing a total review. It is envisaged that this review will be completed shortly.

The College will become stricter with Placement Providers to make sure they declare that they evidence that appropriate policies, risk assessments and safe systems of work are in place to protect a student.

Mrs Rushe reported that good progress has been made in relation to appointments of internal SWC First Aiders.

Mrs Rushe highlighted the low number of COVID-19 cases within the College in April 2022 amongst staff and students. She thanked the NHS and Vaccination Centres.

Mrs Rushe went on to praise the good ongoing work in relation to Health and Wellbeing and Equality as stated in the Management Report. In relation to Equality, Mrs Rushe confirmed that the Interim Chief Executive and herself will meet with Donal Collins from the Equality Commission during the summer.

6.2 Human Resources

6.2.1 Appointments

Ref: Management Report Section 3.1 and Paper 06.04

Mrs Rushe quantified the number of staff appointments made since the March 2022 committee meeting. She highlighted two important appointments – Mr Paul Wade, Technical Services Manager, and Mrs Chloe Skelton, Technical Supervisor for Omagh Campus. Mr Murphy commented on the new important role of the Internal Communications Officer for which Shirley Patterson was appointed.

AGREED: that the appointments listed in paper 06.04 be ratified by the Chair of the Governing Body on behalf of the Governing Body.

6.2.2 Staff Requests

Ref: Management Report Section 3.1 and Paper 06.04

Mrs Rushe quantified the number of staff requests that have been received since the March 2022 committee meeting.

Mrs Rushe made the committee aware that Mr Leo Murphy and Dr Jill Cush recently called emergency meetings due to financial / budgetary issues where it was agreed that each post will be need to be adjudicate and the majority are likely to be delayed. Mrs Rushe asked for the posts to be approved in principle.

Mr Murphy stressed the uncertainty around budgetary pressure and extra controls need to be put in place.

Mr Skuce raised the issue that while approving staff requests the Committee members are not made aware if the budget is available to cover the costs. Mrs Rushe advised that a spreadsheet with back up information for each post is submitted to Secretary of

the Governing Body together will all other papers. Mr Skuce request that high level financial information is made available to the committee members going forward.

AGREED: that the staff requests listed in paper 06.04 be approved in principle by the Chair of the Governing Body on behalf of the Governing Body.

6.2.3 Other Resourcing Issues

Ref: Management Report Section 3.1 and Paper 06.04

Mrs Rushe quantified the number of upcoming maternity leaves and associated staff requests.

Mrs Rushe sought approval for all received Career Break requests as listed in paper 06.04. She advised that since the submission of the papers a further request for a two year career break has been received from the Secretary to the Governing Body. Mrs Rushe also sought backfill approval. The Committee Chair advised she is in favour of this career break request and noted that the position needs to be replaced. Following Mr Skuce's queries, Mrs Rushe confirmed that caring responsibilities / family commitments have been noted as the reason for the career break requests.

AGREED: that the career break requests listed in paper 06.04, as well as that verbally reported above, be approved by the Chair of the Governing Body on behalf of the Governing Body.

Mrs Rushe went on to seek approval for all received flexible working and flexible retirement requests as listed in paper 06.04. Mrs Rushe explained that one request is due to ill health. Due to the age of the staff member, there will be cost implications for the College. This information is currently being sought from the pension provider. The committee members agreed to recommend approval to this request in principle. Mrs Rushe also noted that one staff member has since decided to withdraw her application for flexible retirement.

Mrs Rushe noted that the current Risk and Compliance Officer / Data Protection Officer / Cookstown Campus Manager has also indicated either to retire or to request a flexible retirement. Discussions took place in relation to the importance of the Data Protection Officer role and options around flexible retirement. The Committee agreed to allow College Management the opportunity to explore both options fully.

The Committee also agreed that the Quality Assurance Manager position should be advertised externally.

AGREED: that the recommendations made in this section of the Staff Resource Report, be noted / supported as appropriate.

Mrs Rushe referred to the Death in Service section of paper 06.04 and the sad passing of the long serving colleague Mrs Jacqueline McDowell on 3rd April 2022. The College is continuing to support colleagues and Mrs McDowell's family.

Mrs Rushe highlighted paper 06.04a, drafted by Mr Ciaran McManus, which proposes a transition plan for a one-year period where it is proposed that current supervisors of the Centre for Excellence step up and share the workload. Mr Murphy stated that he supports this proposal and due to the current budget uncertainties a welcomed solution.

Following a question from Mrs McCaffrey, Dr Cush advised that this transition plan has been drafted after a risk assessment. The Centre for Excellence consists of four major projects that will end and the way forward is unclear at this stage.

The split roles are not related to the Structure review.

AGREED: that the recommendations made in this section of the Staff Resource Report, be noted / supported as appropriate.

AGREED at a later point in the meeting: that the Governing Body be requested to grant delegated authority to the Interim Chief Executive to ratify routine appointments over the Summer months, if required, with a list of all such appointments to be submitted to the Governing Body for retrospective ratification at its next meeting.

7.0 RESOURCE PLANNING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, CREATIVE AND LIFE SCIENCES FACULTY

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 07 Resource Planning and Workforce Development in the Built Environment, Creative and Life Sciences Faculty

Mr John Moss, Head of Faculty, joined the meeting for this item (10am).

Mr Moss began his presentation with a breakdown of staff and areas within the Faculty noting a steadily growth in staff. The BECLS Faculty only employs a small number of Support Staff but Mr Moss stressed the importance of these roles, which are vital and have an enormous impact on delivery.

He then provided an analysis of staff deployment throughout the year. He drew attention to the staff deployment rate of 99.69%.

Mr Moss commented on the broad range of Continuous Professional Development undertaken by staff in 2021/22 and noted in particular the new PBL / EPIC Bronze Training.

In reporting on faculty priorities, Mr Moss highlighted the enhanced calibre of lecturing staff for blended/cross campus delivery and the strategic CPD due to emerging technologies and laboratory techniques. Mr Moss also informed the Committee that funding has been secured for a European Mobility Programme for USA and Canada.

In concluding his presentation, Mr Moss commented on the awareness of budgetary pressure and asked for the Staff Development budget for the BECLS Faculty to remain the same.

Mr Moss acknowledged and thanked all his staff for their commitment.

Mrs Rushe added that one Lecturer from the BECLS Faculty recently completed his CIT with the highest marks and it is known to be the best project UU have seen to date.

Mr Murphy stated that collaborative work across all NI Colleges has lessened in recent years and the work involved needs to increase again with the motto 'Collaborate More – Compete Less'.

Following a question from the Committee Chair, Mr Moss asked for the Staff Development budget to be protected as much as possible and not to be cut.

Mr Moss withdrew from the meeting at this juncture (10.14am).

6.0 MANAGEMENT REPORT (CONTINUED)

6.2 Human Resources (CONTINUED)

6.2.5 Fixed Term Contracts

Ref: Management Report Section 3.1 and Paper 06.05

Mrs Rushe highlighted that the College is actively looking into re-deployments for various staff aligned to the Youthscape Programme.

Following a query from a Committee member, Mrs Rushe advised that one position is due a job title/job description review and not a re-deployment.

AGREED: that the fixed term contracts proposals detailed paper 06.04 be ratified by the Chair of the Governing Body on behalf of the Governing Body.

6.2.6 Performance Management

Ref: Management Report Section 3.2 and Paper 06.06

Mrs Rushe drew attention to the Sickness Absence Report for March 2022, the Return to Work Update and the Appraisal graphics in the Management Report.

6.3 Workforce Development

Ref: Management Report Section 4.0

The updates provided in the Management Report on workforce development were referenced.

6.4 Other

Ref: Management Report Section 5.0

AGREED: that the Equal Opportunities, Good Relations and Cultural Diversity Policy be recommended to the Governing Body for approval.

8.0 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE'S PERFORMANCE

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 08 Partially Completed Review of Committee's Performance

With reference to paper 08, it was noted that the review had been partially completed by the Secretary to the Governing Body. The Committee Chair then sought members' views on the self-assessment with the resulting review provided as Appendix A.

Ms McCleary noted issues with accessing the Staffing Committee reports and papers due to the high amount of submitted papers. She would suggest high-level summaries and overviews on strategic level. Mr Murphy referenced the 'Minute Pad', which is a Governance Platform currently being used by Principals. The Committee Chair feels a demonstration and further information would be beneficial.

9.0 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2022/23

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 09 Schedule of Meetings 2022/23

Discussions took place relating to the meeting locations. Due to the effectiveness of MS TEAMS meetings and the high attendance rate, all committee members agreed that the first meeting in the new academic year should take place face-to-face and the remainder via MS TEAMS (subject to review, if required).

AGREED: acceptance of the proposed schedule of Staffing Committee meetings for 2022/23.

10.0 REVIEW OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 10 Outstanding Actions.

A revised list of outstanding actions is provided in Appendix B.


11.0 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

No further business was raised.

The meeting went into confidential session (10:45am).

**CONFIRMED AND ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING BODY AT A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY
22 JUNE 2022**

CHAIRMAN



DATE 22/06/2022

REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE OF STAFFING COMMITTEE 2021/22

		Yes	No	Comments
Terms of Reference				
1	Does the Staffing Committee have written terms of reference?	✓		
2	Were the terms of reference reviewed by the Committee and approved by the Governing Body in this academic year?	✓		Reviewed in September 2021 by the Committee and approved by the GB in November 2021.
3	Has the Committee complied with the provisions of its terms of reference in its proceedings throughout the year?	✓		
Programme of Business				
4	Did the Committee agree a programme of business for the academic year?	✓		Agreed by the Committee at its September 2021 meeting.
5	Did the Committee cover all business listed in the programme of business?	✓		
6	Have all actions identified by the committee been satisfactorily delivered?		✓	2021/22 Equality Progress Report deferred to September 2022 meeting to align with Equality Commission timeframe.
7	Was there any business that members feel do not need to be covered next year?		✓	Change Management Team updates.
8	Was there any additional business that members feel should be included next year?	✓		
Skills, Knowledge and Competences of Members				
9	Does the appropriate mix of skills, knowledge and competences exist within the Committee to perform most effectively?	✓		
Governing Body Key Performance Indicators				
10	Did attendance levels at Committee meetings average at least 65%?	✓		96.5%.
11	Did Committee meetings generally last no more than two hours?		✓	Average 2 hours 20 minutes
Additional Comments				
12				

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Meeting Date	Minute Ref	Action
01/06/2022	6.2.2	Review financial information supplied on staff request forms and consider how high-level information might be shared with Committee members.
01/06/2022	8.0	Mr Murphy to send the Committee Chair further information in relation to the 'Minute Pad'.