

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting of the **Governing Body of South West College**
held on Tuesday 6 September 2022 at 5:30 pm
in the Boardroom, Omagh Campus

PRESENT:

Ms Siobhan Breen
Mrs Deborah Brown
Dr Frances Campbell
Ms Elaine Grier
Mr Brian Ingram
Mrs Sandra Isherwood
Ms Alana Jones Campbell (*via MS Teams*)
Mrs Patricia McCaffrey (*via MS Teams*)
Mr Seamus McCaffrey
Ms Anne McCleary (*from item 6.0*)
Mrs Gillian McDowell (*from item 5.0*)
Mr Michael McGuckin
Ms Caitlyn McLoughlin (*via MS Teams*)
Mrs Joanne Moore
Mr Leo Murphy, Interim Chief Executive
Dr Nicholas O'Shiel, Chairman

IN ATTENDANCE:

Dr Jill Cush, Deputy Chief Executive
Ms Celine McCartan, Incoming Chief Executive
Mrs Fiona McCauley, Secretary to the Governing Body

APOLOGIES:

Dr Lynsey Quinn

1.0 PRELIMINARIES

Dr O'Shiel welcomed all present to the meeting. He extended a particular welcome to Dr Campbell and Mr Ingram on their first attendance at a Governing Body meeting and encouraged them to contribute to the meeting from the outset. Dr Campbell and Mr Ingram then introduced themselves and spoke of their enthusiasm to support the College in their role as governors.

Dr O'Shiel then acknowledged the last attendance at a Governing Body meeting of Miss McLoughlin and Mrs Moore before the end of their terms of office on 30 September 2022 and thanked them both for the value brought by them to the College. Miss McLoughlin and Mrs Moore commented favourably on their experience as governors and thanked members for their support during their tenure.

Dr O'Shiel also acknowledged the forthcoming end of Mr Murphy's term as Interim Chief Executive and recorded his appreciation to Mr Murphy for his service to the College at a crucial and challenging time. Mr Murphy responded to wish the College, the Governing Body and the incoming Chief Executive well and comment on his confidence in the team in place. He went on to speak of the opportunity presented to strengthen the working relationship between North West Regional College and South West College as the two colleges serving the west of the province.

Dr O'Shiel noted Mrs McCartan's attendance at the meeting in an observational capacity and concluded by encouraging members to retain focus on students, staff and the curriculum.

2.0 APOLOGIES

No apologies were tendered at this juncture. At a later stage in the meeting apologies were tendered on behalf of Dr Quinn who was unable to join the meeting due to technical difficulties.

It was noted that Mrs McDowell would join the meeting in due course.

3.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

No conflict of interest declarations were made.

4.0 MINUTES OF AND MATTERS ARISING FROM A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 JUNE 2022

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 03 Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body held on Wednesday 22 June 2022.

In response to a question on the influence of Land & Property Services (LPS) on the timeframe for the disposal of the Fairview site, Mr Murphy explained that as a Non-Departmental Public Body the College must use the services of LPS in the valuation of the site.

AGREED: on the proposal of Mr McCaffrey and seconded by Ms Breen, that the above minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record. These minutes were subsequently digitally signed on behalf of the Chair of the Governing Body.

5.0 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

Review of Further Education Delivery Model – Dr O'Shiel advised that some early feedback on the outcome of the first stage of the Review of the Further Education Delivery Model had been shared with principals and chairs and that further details will be made available by the Department for the Economy in due course.

Mrs McDowell joined the meeting at this juncture.

Connect & Plan Day – Dr O'Shiel reported that he had attended the Connect & Plan Day in August 2022 and added that he, as well as Mr Murphy and Ms McCartan, had addressed staff at the event.

Ministerial Visit – Dr O'Shiel informed members that he had accompanied Minister Lyons on his visit to the Erne Campus on A-Level results day in August 2022 where they met with staff and students.

Discussions with Trade Unions – Dr O'Shiel, supported by Mr Murphy, explained that discussions continue with trade unions regarding the lecturers' pay claim.

Change Management Committee – Dr O'Shiel reported on the Change Management Committee meetings held in July and August noting that the recommendations made in the reports produced by the Change Management Team will be developed into a Strategic Improvement Plan for the approval of the Governing Body in due course.

Ms McCleary joined the meeting at this juncture.

6.0 INCOMING CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Dr O'Shiel reminded members that Ms McCartan would take up post as Chief Executive on 26 September 2022 and proceeded to invite her to address the meeting.

Ms McCartan began by thanking governors for the invitation to attend the meeting and by commenting on her eagerness to take up post later in the month.

She went on to report on the meetings that had been held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the Chair of the Staffing Committee, the Chair of the Principals Group, senior managers and the Director of Further Education, DfE, as well as on her attendance at a Change Management Committee meeting and the Connect & Plan Day.

Ms McCartan then provided early thoughts on areas of focus in the forthcoming months, namely College Performance, Change Management and the Review of the Further Education Delivery Model, and highlighted the correlation between these areas and students, staff and stakeholders.

She concluded by speaking of her plans to establish herself as Principal & Chief Executive and to communicate her vision across the College. She also encouraged members to take every opportunity to engage with the College and its staff and students in order to develop a clear understanding of the College's operations.

7.0 INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

Budget – Mr Murphy reminded the meeting of the fluid budgetary position reported in June 2022 and advised that the risk had reduced somewhat following the receipt of an element of budget cover for cost of living pressures. He cautioned of the potential for in-year pressures and the unavailability of additional allocations through monitoring rounds as had been the case in previous years. He also recommended that a close examination of PFI contracts is undertaken to ascertain whether savings can be identified.

In response to questions and comments, it was suggested that a resource is identified to manage the PFI contracts, that legal support will be required to upskill staff on the contracts and that the Finance & General Purposes Committee consider the above in advance of the Annual PFI Contracts Review Meeting.

Enrolments – Mr Murphy reported a marginal reduction in Further Education enrolments, continued growth in Apprenticeship enrolments and some slippage in full-time Higher Education enrolments. Dr Cush drew attention to the converse impact of strong Higher Level Apprenticeship enrolments on full-time Higher Education enrolments. Concerns were raised regarding the level of awareness of college Higher Education provision amongst local post primary schools and the opportunity to market college provision through primary schools links was noted. It was suggested that school principals are invited to visit the campuses to learn about the provision in place and that social media marketing posts are shared with schools for dissemination to parents through social media channels.

Marketing – Mr Murphy detailed the marketing that had taken place in recent weeks and noted the potential negative impact of the cost of living increases on enrolments to part time courses.

8.0 CORPORATE OBJECTIVES / ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 07 Draft 2022/23 College Development Plan.

Dr Cush explained that colleges are required to produce and publish a College Development Plan on an annual basis. With reference to paper 07, she then took the meeting through the draft 2022/23 College Development Plan highlighting South West College's regional operating environment in section 4 and the planned activity for 2022/23 in relation to qualifications, employer engagement, social inclusion and overall college performance as detailed in section 5.

In response to questions and comments from members, it was noted that colleges are measured against common metrics, that each student may generate multiple enrolments and that the potential risk relating to Confucius provision would result in a reduction in enrolments. The need to protect social inclusion activity was also highlighted as was the need for policy intervention to differentiate the provision of schools, colleges and universities.

9.0 APPOINTMENTS

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 08 Committee Membership Proposal.

Vice Chair of the Governing Body - Mrs McCauley referenced the end of the term of office of the former Vice Chair and sought nominations for a governor to fill the Vice Chair position.

AGREED: on the proposal of Dr O'Shiel, seconded by Dr Campbell, that Mrs McDowell be elected to the position of Vice Chair of the Governing Body.

Committee Membership – Mrs McCauley explained that a committee membership proposal had been developed following an analysis of the skills of new governors and committee membership requirements resulting in the proposal presented in paper 08.

AGREED: on the proposal of Mrs McDowell, seconded by Mrs Moore, adoption of the Committee Membership Proposal detailed in paper 08.

10.0 REGISTER OF INTERESTS

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 09 Register of Governors' Interests.

The Secretary to the Governing Body drew attention to the register of governors' interests contained in paper 09 and requested timely notification of any changes in governors' interests during the 2022/23 year.

11.0 MANAGEMENT STATEMENT & FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 10.01 Management Statement & Financial Memorandum
- Paper 10.02 Appendices to Management Statement & Financial Memorandum.

It was noted that the Management Statement & Financial Memorandum must be tabled at a meeting of the Governing Body annually for the information of members.

12.0 DECLARATION OF HOSPITALITY OR GIFTS RECEIVED OR OFFERED

No declarations were made under this heading.

Dr O'Shiel provided assurances that the Register of Hospitality and Gifts is reviewed annually by the Chair of the Governing Body.

13.0 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

At the invitation of the Chair, Mrs Brown confirmed that all staff and students are back on campus and spoke of the benefits of this to students in terms of safeguarding as well as of the resultant positive atmosphere on all campuses. She also made the meeting aware of the continued demand for the College's social inclusion provision through referrals despite the reduced availability of funding.

14.0 REFLECTION ON EFFECTIVENESS OF MEETING

In response to questions and comments from members, the meeting was advised that draft programmes of business for each committee had been developed for review by the committees in the forthcoming weeks; that it had been agreed that Governing Body meetings would be held in-person and committee meetings held virtually with this to be kept under review; and that tours of college facilities would be arranged for governors. It was also suggested that departmental presentations are delivered to governors at a dedicated strategy event rather than at committee meetings.

Ms Breen, Mrs Brown and Ms McLoughlin withdrew from the meeting at this juncture. The meeting then went into confidential session.

CONFIRMED BY THE GOVERNING BODY AT A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2022

CHAIRMAN



DATE 16/11/2022