

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting of the **Governing Body** of **South West College**
held on Wednesday 13 September 2017 at 5:45 pm
in the Boardroom, Omagh Campus, Mountjoy Road, Omagh

- PRESENT:**
- Mr Joseph Martin (Chairman)
 - Mr Michael McAlister (Chief Executive)
 - Mr Peter Archdale
 - Mr Samuel Hodson
 - Mrs Joanne Lucas
 - Mrs Margaret Martin (*via video conference*)
 - Mr Wilbert Mayne
 - Mrs Patricia McCaffrey
 - Mr Seamus McCaffrey (*Items 1.0 – 13.0*)
 - Mrs Monica McGeary (*via video conference*)
 - Mr Michael McGuckin
 - Mr Michael Skuce (*via video conference*) (*Items 1.0 – 10.0*)
 - Mr Derek Weir
- IN ATTENDANCE:**
- Mr Keith Dornan, Technical Services Intern
 - Mrs Fiona McCauley, Secretary to the Governing Body
 - Mr Sean O'Donnell, Acting Head of Finance (*Item 6.0 only*)
- APOLOGIES:**
- Mr Wilson Matthews
 - Mr Gerard O'Hanlon

1.0 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair of the Governing Body, Mr Martin, welcomed all present and extended a particular welcome to Mr McAlister to this, his first, meeting of the Governing Body as Chief Executive.

Apologies were tendered on behalf of Mr Matthews and Mr O'Hanlon.

2.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

No conflict of interest declarations were made.

3.0 MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28 JUNE 2017

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 03 Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body held on Wednesday 28 June 2017 (Pages 1 – 6).

AGREED: on the proposal of Mr Weir and seconded by Mrs Martin, that the public section of the above minutes (Pages 1 - 6) be accepted as a true and accurate record. This section of the minutes was subsequently signed by the Chairman.

4.0 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5.0 CORPORATE OBJECTIVES 2017/18

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 05 Draft Annual Operating Plan 2017/18.

With reference to paper 05, the Chief Executive provided a brief overview of the draft Annual Operating Plan 2017/18 and explained that it would be updated and finalized on receipt of outstanding information.

He then apprised the meeting of Department for the Economy (DfE) proposals to withdraw the requirement for College Development Plans (CDP) in future in favour of a five-year cross-departmental corporate plan. A discussion then ensued during which members sought input into the departmental corporate strategy; reflected on the close alignment of the College's objectives with governmental policy; commented on the need to consider local circumstances and stakeholders in the development of colleges' strategic plans as well as on the risks of a more generic approach; and recommended the development of a CDP to sit alongside the departmental corporate strategy.

With regard to the cuts made to the Entitlement Framework budget, and, in response to a query from a member on its impact, the Chief Executive reported a small reduction in enrolments in 2017/18 and explained that measures will be taken to mitigate further reductions in future years.

6.0 BUDGET 2017/18

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 06 Budget Summary 2017/18.

Mr Sean O'Donnell, Acting Head of Finance, joined the meeting at this juncture.

The Acting Head of Finance began by reminding members that the College is operating on the basis of an indicative budget as no confirmed budget allocation has been granted by DfE due to the absence of an operating NI Assembly.

With reference to paper 06, he then presented a high level overview of the indicative 2017/18 budget during which he highlighted the projected deficit of £3,127k as well as the projected cash position of -£525k; explained the factors contributing to the variances from prior year figures; and provided assurances on the sufficiency of the cash balance. He went on to emphasize the interim and prudent nature of the budget

presented; advise that a revised budget will be drafted on receipt of clarity on income; and note the expectation of an operating break-even or surplus position for the year.

In response to questions from members, the Acting Head of Finance, supported by the Chief Executive, commented on the benefit of the monthly monitoring meetings held with budget holders as well as on the ongoing efforts to reduce part-time lecturing costs; reported the capital allocation of £550k; highlighted the projected increase in expenditure on the Erne Campus development; explained that allocations for inescapable costs had been withdrawn for all colleges; and alerted members to the proposals for a sectoral value for money audit on colleges' engagement with the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD). Members also discussed the risks posed by the absence of a Minister for the Economy.

On conclusion of the discussions, the Acting Head of Finance undertook to update the Finance & General Purposes Committee as further information becomes available.

Mr O'Donnell was thanked for his presentation and withdrew from the meeting at this juncture.

7.0 REPORT OF ERNE CAMPUS PROJECT BOARD

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members

- Paper 07 30 June 2017 Erne Project Board Meeting Minutes.

The Chief Executive informed the meeting that a two-week extension to the deadline for submission of tenders from pre-qualified Integrated Supply Teams has been granted bringing the deadline to early October. Members then commented on the significance of the project as well as on their responsibilities in its development and, in light of this, it was suggested that a report is provided to the Governing Body at its meetings to update members on progress and highlight any matters of concern.

8.0 GOVERNANCE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 08.01 Review of Performance Against 2016/17 Key Performance Indicators
- Paper 08.02 Proposed 2017/18 Key Performance Indicators.

The Chairman reported the Governing Body's achievement of 11 of its 12 key performance indicators for 2016/17. Referring to the increasing number of meetings extending beyond the recommended two-hour duration, he then requested the co-operation of committee chairs in enhancing the efficiency of committee meetings.

AGREED: adoption of the proposed 2017/18 Governance Key Performance Indicators.

9.0 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF THE AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

In response to an invitation for nominations for the position of Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, Mrs McGeary commented on Mrs McCaffrey's suitability for this role in light of her qualifications, experience and skills and went on to nominate her for re-appointment to the position of Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee.

AGREED: on the proposal of Mrs McGeary, seconded by Mr Skuce, that Mrs McCaffrey be re-appointed to the position of Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee. The nomination was accepted by Mrs McCaffrey.

10.0 POLICY REVIEWS

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 10.01 Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members
- Paper 10.02 Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members - Policy Review Summary
- Paper 10.03 Student Hardship Fund Policy & Procedure 2017/18
- Paper 10.04 E-Governance Framework.

With reference to the Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members, the Chairman highlighted the importance of this code and commended members for their adherence to it. In reviewing the E-Governance Framework, members commented on the significance of the forthcoming General Data Protection Regulation and it was suggested that an information session is arranged to inform members of their responsibilities under this legislation.

AGREED: adoption of the revised Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members and the revised E-Governance Framework and approval of the Student Hardship Fund Policy & Procedure 2017/18.

Mr Skuce withdrew from the meeting at this juncture.

11.0 MANAGEMENT STATEMENT & FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 11 Management Statement & Financial Memorandum.

The Management Statement & Financial Memorandum was noted by the meeting.

12.0 REGISTER OF INTERESTS 2017/18

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 12 Register of Governors' Interests.

The Secretary to the Governing Body drew attention to the register of governors' interests contained in paper 12 and requested timely notification of any changes in governors' interests during the 2017/18 year.

13.0 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chairman began by acknowledging the new phase in the development of the College as well as the new phase in the development of Further Education. He then spoke of the importance of meaningful sectoral collaboration as well as of the importance of maintaining standards and meeting the needs of the College's stakeholders. He went on to advise that DfE's Director of Further Education will join the Governing Body at its next meeting where she will update members on the departmental strategy and provide an opportunity for discussion.

The Chairman also apprised the meeting of changes within Colleges NI, his address to staff at the Welcome Back Day in August, and the recommendation that governors sitting on Erne Project sub-committees serve as members of the committee in an advisory capacity and do not hold the position of committee chair.

During a subsequent discussion, members stressed the necessity for close consideration of the needs of stakeholders in setting the strategic direction of the College and in developing collaboration activities, and it was proposed that a special meeting is held to inform the development of strategic plans. Members also reflected on the function and activities of Colleges NI and suggested that, with the staffing and membership changes taking place, an opportunity to review the function of the organization has arisen.

In concluding the discussions, the Chairman expressed his appreciation to all present for their service to the College.

Mr McCaffrey withdrew from the meeting at this juncture.

14.0 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

The Chief Executive reported the following matters:

- **QAA Review of Higher Education** – A review of the College's higher education provision will take place in early March by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education;
- **Invest NI Education Strategy** – The Chief Executive will engage with Invest NI in the development of its Education Strategy;
- **Institution of Innovation & Knowledge Exchange (IKE) NI** – The College has been awarded the Investors in Innovation standard by the UK IKE and has been selected as their NI base. The formal launch of the IKE NI will take place in the Dungannon campus on 8 November 2017;
- **Fire Safety** – A report is awaited following a fire safety survey of the Enniskillen Fairview campus in the wake of the Grenfell Tower incident.

15.0 DECLARATION OF HOSPITALITY OR GIFTS RECEIVED OR OFFERED

No declarations were made under this heading.

16.0 CORRESPONDENCE

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 16 Revised Governor Remuneration Circular.

The revised governor remuneration circular was noted.

17.0 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

No further business was raised.

18.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 15 November 2017 at 5:30 pm in the Enniskillen campus.

19.0 EVALUATION OF MEETING

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 22 Governing Body Meeting Evaluation Form.

Concern was raised regarding the timeliness of the availability of full paper sets for meetings and it was agreed that meeting evaluations are undertaken by exception going forward.

The Staff Governor, Mrs Lucas, the Student Governor, Mr Hodson, and the IT Intern, Mr Dornan, withdrew from the meeting at this juncture. The meeting then went into private session and concluded at 7:50 pm.

CONFIRMED BY THE GOVERNING BODY AT A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2017

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____