

## SOUTH WEST COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting of the **South West College Governing Body**  
held on Wednesday 26 April 2017 at 5:40 pm  
in the Boardroom, Omagh Campus, Mountjoy Road, Omagh

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**PRESENT:**

- Mr Joseph Martin (Chairman)
- Mr Malachy McAleer (Chief Executive)
- Mr Peter Archdale
- Mr Samuel Hodson
- Mrs Joanne Lucas (*via video conference*)
- Mrs Margaret Martin (*via video conference*)
- Mr Wilson Matthews
- Mr Wilbert Mayne (*via video conference*)
- Mrs Patricia McCaffrey
- Mr Seamus McCaffrey
- Mrs Monica McGeary (*via video conference*)
- Mr Michael McGuckin (*via video conference*)
- Mr Stephen Moss (*via video conference*)
- Mr Gerard O’Hanlon
- Mr Michael Skuce (*via video conference*)
- Mr Derek Weir

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

- Mr Michael McAlister, Deputy Chief Executive
- Mrs Fiona McCauley, Secretary to the Governing Body

### **1.0 WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND PRELIMINARIES**

It was noted that all members were present.

### **2.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS**

The Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive declared an interest in the ‘Selection Panel Business’ agenda item and undertook to withdraw from the meeting for this item.

### **3.0 MINUTES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 03 Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body held on Wednesday 8 March 2017 (Pages 1 – 8).

**AGREED: on the proposal of Mr Skuce and seconded by Mr Matthews, that the public section of the above minutes (Pages 1 - 8) be accepted as a true and accurate record. This section of the minutes was subsequently signed by the Chairman.**

#### **4.0 MATTERS ARISING**

##### **4.1 2017/18 Budget**

*Min. Ref. 8.0*

The Chief Executive confirmed that he had written to the Department for the Economy regarding the future financial stability of the College and that the response received had previously been circulated to all governors.

##### **5.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION, QUALITY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 MARCH 2017**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 05.01 Minutes of a meeting of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee held on 22 March 2017
- Paper 05.02 Student Union Constitution
- Paper 05.03 Existing and Planned Partnerships across NI, Ireland and Europe.

In presenting her report of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee meeting held on Wednesday 22 March 2017, Mrs Martin, Committee Chair, drew attention to the paper circulated listing the existing and planned partnerships across NI, Ireland and Europe, commented on the breadth, depth and diversity of current and developing partnerships and congratulated those involved in securing €525k from Erasmus+ to provide valuable work experience opportunities to 180 students.

She went on to refer to the presentation received from the Head of Curriculum on the performance and strategic plans of the Health & Life Services department and identify resourcing as the primary challenge reportedly facing departmental management. She then directed members to the comprehensive overview of the management report found in section 5.0 of the minutes and highlighted the recommendations made by the Committee for approval of the Student Union Constitution and for nomination of herself, as Chair of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee, as the Governing Body's representative in the oversight of Higher Education.

With reference to the Student Union Constitution, members discussed the legal status of the Student Union as well as the associated implications, particularly in relation to insurance and data protection, and requested that clarity on this be brought to the next meeting of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee.

In response to a query from the Committee Chair on the status of the business case to undertake a feasibility study into the development of a Social Impact Bond, the Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Department for the Economy (DfE) approval has been granted and that Department of Finance (DoF) approval is awaited. Members expressed frustration at the delay experienced in this matter.

**AGREED: on the proposal of Mrs Martin, seconded by Mr O'Hanlon, adoption of the minutes of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee meeting and approval of the nomination of Mrs Martin as the Governing Body's representative in the oversight of Higher Education.**

## **6.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH 2017**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 06.01 Minutes of a meeting of the Staffing Committee held on Wednesday 29 March 2017 (Pages 1 – 7)
- Paper 06.02 Staff Resource Report
- Paper 06.03 Fixed Term Contracts Report
- Paper 06.04 Flexi Time Policy
- Paper 06.05 Student Internship Policy
- Paper 06.06 Probation Procedure for Support Staff
- Paper 06.07 Additional Requests.

Mrs McGeary, Chair of the Staffing Committee, began her report of the Staffing Committee meeting held on Wednesday 29 March 2017, by referring to the presentation received from the Head of Curriculum on resource planning and workforce development in the Health & Life Services department and commenting on the report received on the range of international opportunities afforded to students.

She then went on to explain that sickness absence levels remain within target and are closely monitored; note that four staff had left under the Voluntary Exit Scheme in March 2017; draw attention to the Committee's endorsement of a pilot programme to financially support a number of part-time lecturers to undertake teaching qualifications; update the meeting on the implications of the delay in the progress of the Systems, Technology & Services Project particularly in relation to the payroll function; list the Committee's revised strategic priorities; refer to the Committee's recommendation for approval of the revised Flexi-Time Policy, Student Internship Policy and Probation Procedure for Support Staff; highlight the Chair of the Governing Body's ratification of the appointments, staff requests, fixed term contract recommendations and other resource issues detailed in the minutes; and report on the confirmation received on the authority of the Chair of the Governing Body to ratify routine staff requests, fixed term contract proposals and appointments recommended for approval by the Staffing Committee on behalf of the Governing Body.

Members then commented on the financial investment made in staff training and the difficulty in mandating supported staff to remain in the employment of the College and, with reference to paper 06.07, the Chief Executive confirmed management endorsement of the additional requests.

**AGREED: on the proposal of Mrs McGeary, seconded by Mr Skuce, adoption of the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting (pages 1 – 7) and the recommendations therein as well as approval of the additional requests listed in paper 06.07.**

## **7.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5 APRIL 2017**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 07.01 Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 5 April 2017
- Paper 07.02 Bad Debt Write Off Proposal

- Paper 07.03 Financial Regulations.

In commencing the report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 5 April 2017, Mr McGuckin, Committee Chair, alerted members to the annual PFI Contracts Review Meeting that had taken place with Belfast Educational Services during the committee meeting and reported that proactive input into lifecycle maintenance planning had been requested by the College and that the appointment of an officer to manage the PFI contracts is pending. Referring to the presentation received by the Committee from the Head of Business Development, he then reported on the performance of the innovation centres against the strategic objectives set for 2016/17 and the value of the EU funding received in 2016/17.

Moving on to the Management Report, Mr McGuckin explained that there had been no significant variance against budget in the seven months to 28 February 2017; that much of the £7m cash reserves had been committed to capital projects; that colleges will transfer their banking services to Danske Bank in August 2017; and, with reference to the DfE accounting period, that the College underspend of £145k in the year to 31 March 2017 represents 9.9% of the sectoral underspend of £1.5m. He also updated the meeting on the discussions held on the impact of Brexit under the Key Strategic Issues agenda item and highlighted the Committee's recommendation for approval of the amended Financial Regulations and the Bad Debt Write Off Proposal previously circulated.

In response to a query from a member on the bad debt write off proposal, the meeting was informed of the bad debt recovery process and assured that all reasonable avenues had been exhausted in pursuing the debts proposed to be written off.

**AGREED: on the proposal of Mr McGuckin, seconded by Mr Hodson, adoption of the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting and the recommendations therein.**

## **8.0 ERNE CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 08 Draft Minutes of a Meeting of the Erne Campus Project Board held on Friday 7 April 2017.

The Chief Executive reported that planning approval has been granted for the Erne Campus and that the addendum to the business case to construct to PassivHaus and BREEAM Outstanding standards has been approved by DfE with final approval from the DoF pending. He also explained that archaeology works have completed with no adverse findings and that it is anticipated that tenders will be invited from pre-qualified firms in early May.

The Chairman then expressed his gratitude to all parties involved for the effort invested in the project and mentioned in particular the assistance provided by Fermanagh & Omagh District Council and Mr Niall Murray, DfE. He went on to pay tribute to the Chief Executive for his huge contribution to the project and his achievement in bringing it to the current state of readiness to tender. These remarks were endorsed by Mr Skuce in his capacity as a member of the Erne Campus Project Board.

In response to questions and comments from members, the Chief Executive explained that options are being explored in relation to the proposed bridge linking the campus with the Queen Elizabeth Road; that an application for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund is under development to create a 'Centre of Making' in the former workhouse building; the remit of the Business Change Team; and the income generation targets to be met through curriculum development. He also alerted the meeting to the impact of the delay in the award of planning approval on the dates of key milestones noting in particular expected occupation in January 2020.

#### **9.0 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

With reference to the award by the Education & Training Inspectorate of the highest level of confidence in South West College's quality assurance and quality improvement planning arrangements for the seventh successive year, the Chairman expressed his thanks and congratulations to all college staff for their contribution to this achievement. He then informed all present of the timeframe for the appointment of a new Chief Executive and noted that further discussions would be held in confidential session.

#### **10.0 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS**

The Chief Executive had no further business to report.

#### **11.0 DECLARATION OF HOSPITALITY OR GIFTS RECEIVED OR OFFERED**

No declarations were made under this heading.

#### **12.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

No correspondence was reported.

#### **13.0 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS**

No further business was raised.

#### **14.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 28 June 2017 at 5:30 pm in the Dungannon campus.

#### **15.0 EVALUATION OF MEETING**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 14     Governing Body Meeting Evaluation Form.

It was noted that the picture quality of the video conference had been poor and that connection had been lost on a number of occasions. It was also noted, however, that the sound had been particularly clear.

***Mrs Lucas, Mr Hodson and Mr Moss 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 28 JUNE 2017**

**CHAIRMAN** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_