

## SOUTH WEST COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting of the **South West College Governing Body**  
held on Wednesday 25 April 2018 at 5:10 pm  
in the Boardroom, Dungannon Campus, Circular Road, Dungannon

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**PRESENT:** Mr Joseph Martin (Chairman)  
Mr Michael McAlister (Chief Executive)  
Mr Peter Archdale  
Mrs Joanne Lucas  
Mrs Margaret Martin  
Mr Wilson Matthews  
Mr Wilbert Mayne  
Mrs Patricia McCaffrey  
Mr Seamus McCaffrey (*via video conference*)  
Mrs Monica McGearry  
Mr Michael McGuckin  
Mr Stephen Moss  
Mr Michael Skuce  
Mr Derek Weir

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Dr Jill Cush, Deputy Chief Executive (*Item 12.0 only*)  
Mrs Carol Anne Deeny, Legal & Compliance Officer (*Item 10.0 only*)  
Dr Gary Husband, University of Stirling (*Item 5.0 only*)  
Mrs Fiona McCauley, Secretary to the Governing Body

**APOLOGIES:** Mr Samuel Hodson

### **1.0 PRELIMINARIES AND APOLOGIES**

Mr Martin, Chair of the Governing Body, began by welcoming all present to the meeting. He extended a particular welcome to Mrs Lucas on her return following a period of absence and tendered apologies of behalf of Mr Hodson.

He then drew attention to the new video conferencing equipment in place and explained the behaviours required to optimise the experience of the member joining via video conference from the Omagh campus.

He concluded by advising that Mr Matthews was currently attending his last meeting of the Board as his term of office would expire on 9 June 2018 following eight years of service to the Governing Body of South West College, but that he would be eligible to attend the forthcoming meetings of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee and Finance & General Purposes Committee.

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

No conflict of interest declarations were made.

### **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 7 March 2018 (Pages 1 – 7).

**AGREED: on the proposal of Mr Archdale and seconded by Mr Skuce, that the above minutes (Pages 1 - 7) be accepted as a true and accurate record. This section of the minutes was subsequently signed by the Chairman.**

### **4.0 MATTERS ARISING**

*Min Ref 11.2 – Review of Colleges NI*

With reference to minute 11.2, the Chairman reported that it has been agreed that Colleges NI would be wound down on 30 June 2018. He added that an alternative collaborative forum for college Chairs and Chief Executives may be established in due course. In responding to members' questions he explained the implications of this for Colleges NI staff and confirmed that financial reconciliations would be undertaken and a reimbursement of fees made if appropriate.

***Mr Moss joined the meeting at this juncture.***

### **5.0 RESEARCH INTO GOVERNING IN FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES**

CIRCULATED to those present and subsequently uploaded to the SWC Gateway:

- Paper 05.01 Project Information Sheet
- Paper 05.02 Participant Consent Form.

***Dr Gary Husband, University of Stirling, joined the meeting for this item.***

Dr Gary Husband thanked the Governing Body for agreeing to participate in the research project and proceeded to provide an overview of the project and its expected impacts. He highlighted the project's adherence to the highest ethical standards in research and provided assurances of the security and confidentiality of the data gathered and of its destruction no later than 12 months following the end date of the project. He then drew attention to the Participant Consent Form circulated and asked members to review it, and if satisfied, to provide consent to participate by completing and returning the form.

In response to questions and comments from members, Dr Husband provided further information on the data to be collected and of the analysis to be undertaken; confirmed that contributions will be anonymized in published reports; advised that the Governing Body may choose to withdraw consent for recording meetings or sections thereof; explained the purpose of the Impact Group; and noted that, as a qualitative study, no judgmental comparisons will be made.

***Dr Husband was thanked for his attendance and withdrew from the meeting at this juncture.***

It was noted that periodic feedback from the Impact Group would be provided to the Governing Body by Mrs McCauley, the College's representative on the Impact Group.

## **6.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH 2018**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 07.01 Minutes of a meeting of the Staffing Committee held on Wednesday 21 March 2018
- Paper 07.02 Staff Resource Report
- Paper 07.03 Fixed Term Contracts Report
- Paper 07.04 Additional Staff Requests.

In presenting the report of the Staffing Committee meeting held on Wednesday 21 March 2018, Mrs McGeary, Committee Chair, referred to the presentation received by the Committee on Resource Planning and Workforce Development in the Industry & Training Department and highlighted the scope for expansion of programmes enhancing social inclusion as well as the risk associated with the dependency on a small number of staff for funding application writing capacity and skills. She went on to provide an overview of the presentation received by the Committee on the Challenges Faced by Employability Programme Participants and Supporting Staff, during which she referenced the importance of close mentoring in such programmes and the pilot being undertaken to mainstream this provision. She also reported on the scrutiny undertaken in recruiting staff to these programmes and identified their target driven nature as the most challenging aspect reported by staff.

Moving on to other business covered, Mrs McGeary noted the Committee's discussion on shared services and welcomed proposals that would improve on the high level of service already provided by the College; explained the engagement being undertaken to manage sickness absences; reported that alternative means of funding are being investigated to ensure the continuation of industry placement opportunities for lecturing staff; advised that OHSAS18001 re-accreditation is being explored; and drew attention to 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.

With reference to paper 07.04, the Chief Executive provided details of the six additional staff requests listed within and advised that a discussion on future catering arrangements in the Enniskillen campus will be held at the May 2018 Staffing Committee meeting.

In response to questions from members, the Chief Executive spoke of the College's input into the councils' Local Development Plans and confirmed the College's support for the 'Dying to Work' campaign.

**AGREED: on the proposal of Mrs McGeary, seconded by Mr Weir, adoption of the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting (pages 1 – 6) and the recommendations therein as well as approval for the additional staff requests listed in paper 07.04.**

***Mrs McGeary withdrew from the meeting at this juncture.***

## **7.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION, QUALITY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH 2018**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 06.01 Minutes of a meeting of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee held on Wednesday 14 March 2018
- Paper 06.02 Disability Policy for Students
- Paper 06.03 Digital Education Strategy
- Paper 06.04 Fitness to Practice Policy.

Mrs Martin, Chair of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee, began her report of the committee meeting held on Wednesday 14 March 2018 by commenting on the value of the data provided to the Committee on the destination of Foundation Degree students progressing to other Higher Level Institutions and noting that this data will be made available to the committee on an annual basis.

She then referred to the presentation received by the Committee on the performance and strategic plans of the Health & Life Services Department and highlighted the robust measures in place to identify and support students at risk of withdrawal as well as the concerns raised regarding the sectoral underperformance against Essential Skills targets.

In relation to the Management Report, she reported on the updates provided to the Committee on higher education, the QAA quality review visit, the 'Get Engineering Careers Fair', virtualization activities, the Confucius Hub and the report cards to be used to evidence outcomes in the new Outcomes Based Accountability funding and monitoring model. She also highlighted the Committee's recommendation for approval of the Disability Policy for Students, the Digital Education Strategy and the Fitness to Practice Policy.

Mrs Martin concluded her report by informing the meeting of the College's role in the potential future development of a Social Impact Bond and of the progress made in the establishment of the Engineering & Manufacturing Hub.

A discussion took place following Mrs Martin's report on the impact of the changes to Entitlement Framework requirements on young people and on the College, during which pressures on school budgets, enhanced university entry requirements, college facilities and the progress of the inter-departmental working group were raised. The Governing Body gave its full support to the Chief Executive in seeking a resolution to the issue following this discussion.

**AGREED: on the proposal of Mrs Martin, seconded by Mr Matthews, adoption of the minutes of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee meeting and the recommendations therein including approval of the Disability Policy for Students, the Digital Education Strategy and the Fitness to Practice Policy.**

## **8.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 APRIL 2018**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 08.01 Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 11 April 2018
- Paper 08.02 Bad Debt Write Off Proposal
- Paper 08.03 Revised Cheque Signatory Listing
- Paper 08.04 Financial Regulations
- Paper 08.05 Fees & Charges Policy 2018-19
- Paper 08.06 Policy Review Summary – Fees & Charges Policy 2018/19.

In commencing his report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 11 April 2018, Mr McGuckin, Committee Chair, apprised members of the presentation received on the financial performance of the Business Development Section during which he noted the security of the College's EU funded projects in the short-term; detailed the funding outlook thereafter for each of the funding sources currently used; quantified the cross-border mobility of staff and students; and provided an overview of the progress of the business case for capital funding to establish an Engineering Centre of Excellence.

In relation to the Financial Highlights Report received, he drew attention to the increase in the projected deficit to July 2018 and explained that the accelerated depreciation of the Fairview site accounted for a large majority of the increased costs. He added that a discussion on the control of part-time lecturing costs had been held; that an application to increase the controls on departmental expenditure is under development; and that a greater analysis of part-time lecturing costs will be provided to the Committee at future meetings.

Mr McGuckin also referenced the presentation received on the Higher Education Academic Board and highlighted the Committee's recommendation for approval of the Bad Debt Write off Proposal, the revised Cheque Signatories Listing and associated Banking Mandates, the Financial Regulations and the Fees & Charges Policy 2018/19.

During the discussions that followed the report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, members were made aware of the changes made to the Fees & Charges Policy 2018/19 subsequent to its review by the Committee; sought minor amendments to the Financial Regulations in relation to references to the Department for Employment & Learning; commented on the College's relatively low Full-Time Lecturer pay costs and the income associated with the employment of part-time lecturers to release staff undertaking funded activities; and emphasized the importance of continuing the close scrutiny of budgetary control and post-Brexit outlooks in light of increasing budget pressures and suggested that more time is devoted to this at future committee meetings.

***Mrs McGeary rejoined the meeting during the above discussion.***

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

## 9.0 ERNE CAMPUS UPDATE

In updating the meeting on the progress of the Erne Campus Development, the Chief Executive reported that an event had taken place to turn the first sod on the site of the new campus and advised that a three week extension to the pre-construction phase had been agreed to allow finalization of design.

He also reported on the staff engagement that had already taken place as well as that scheduled; listed the roles within the Project Team which had recently been filled; and explained that a presentation provided on the project at a recent Building Information Modelling conference had been well received by delegates.

## 10.0 SHARED SERVICES BRIEFING

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 10.01 PSSSP – FE College Finance Benchmark Data
- Paper 10.02 PSSSP – FE College HR and Payroll Benchmark Data
- Paper 10.03 PSSSP – FE College ICT Benchmark Data
- Paper 10.04 FE Sector Shared Services Update.

***Mrs Deeny, Legal & Compliance Officer, joined the meeting at this juncture.***

With reference to paper 10.04, Mrs Deeny provided an overview of the Systems, Technology & Services (STS) Project, Enterprise Shared Services (ESS) and the Public Sector Shared Services Programme (PSSSP). She updated the meeting on the background to, current status of, and anticipated timeframe for implementation of the STS Project. She also advised that onboarding of the Further Education sector with ESS had been found to be unfeasible in the short term and that regular consultation continues with a view to identifying opportunities for engagement. She also referenced the comprehensive benchmarking data gathered for PSSSP contained within papers 10.01, 10.02 and 10.03 and added that this will be analysed to develop options on the future of shared services for the further education sector in the context of the wider public sector.

Members then commented on the need for close scrutiny of proposed shared services models before their acceptance to ensure the delivery of value for money and the maintenance or improvement of the services and standards currently in place in the College. They also discussed the performance of South West College relative to others as detailed in the benchmarking reports and sought rectification of the factual errors therein. Concerns were voiced on the implications of the use of a single supplier for the sectoral Value for Money Review and the STS systems supplier.

***Mrs Deeny withdrew from the meeting at this juncture.***

## 11.0 REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 11 Standing Orders.

The Secretary to the Governing Body explained that the biennial review of the Governing Body's Standing Orders had been undertaken and that minor presentation changes had been made.

**AGREED: on the proposal of Mr Weir, seconded by Mr Mayne, adoption of the Standing Orders.**

## **12.0 CORPORATE PLANNING**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 12.01 Further Education Sector Corporate Plan
- Paper 12.02 2018-19 Annual Development Plan
- Paper 12.03 Corporate Planning.

***Dr Cush, Deputy Chief Executive, joined the meeting at this juncture.***

Dr Cush reminded the meeting that the Department for the Economy (DfE) had tasked colleges with drafting a Corporate Plan for the sector, and individual colleges with drafting a one-year College Development Plan to underpin the budget allocation process for 2018/19.

With reference to papers 12.01 and 12.03, she then presented the draft Further Education Sector Corporate Plan highlighting its purpose, its policy context, the agreed Mission, Vision and Values and the eight commitments made. Referring to the 2018/19 Annual Development Plan in paper 12.02, she went on to provide a high level summary of the Annual Development Plan noting in particular the budget sought and the four report cards appended detailing the evidenced outcomes of the College's provision.

In response to questions and comments from members following her presentation, Dr Cush acknowledged the need for accountability in achieving the targets set and suggested that current performance monitoring mechanisms are continued; commented on the complementarity and dual focus on both further education and higher education as well as the aligned importance of all other college provision; confirmed that a three-year strategic plan will be developed covering the 2018-2021 period; and explained that a budget allocation will be made by DfE following the submission of all College Development Plans.

The Chair of the Governing Body commented on the value of the 2018/19 Annual Development Plan in articulating the College's strategic plan and as a basis for ensuring accountability. He congratulated Dr Cush, Mr McAlister and their team for their achievement in developing the 2018/19 Annual Development Plan and for their contribution to the Further Education Sector Corporate Plan.

***Dr Cush withdrew from the meeting at this juncture.***

**AGREED: on the proposal of Mr Skuce, seconded by Mrs McCaffrey, approval of the Further Education Sector Corporate Plan and the 2018/19 Annual Development Plan.**

**13.0 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

In acknowledgement of the forthcoming end of Mr Matthews' term of office as a governor of South West College, Mr Martin thanked Mr Matthews for his loyal service to the College in the past eight years and for his service as a valued member of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee and Finance & General Purposes Committee, and in particular for his service as a former Chair of the latter.

**14.0 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS**

The Chief Executive stated that he had no further business to report.

**15.0 DECLARATION OF HOSPITALITY OR GIFTS RECEIVED OR OFFERED**

No declarations were made under this heading.

**16.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

It was noted that there was no correspondence to report.

**17.0 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS**

No further business was raised.

**18.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 13 June 2018 at 5:30 pm in the Omagh campus.

**19.0 EVALUATION OF MEETING**

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 18 Governing Body Meeting Evaluation Form.

Members commented favourably on the proceedings of the meeting and provided feedback on the new video conferencing equipment.

***Mrs Lucas, Mrs Martin, Mr Matthews and Mr Moss withdrew from the meeting at this juncture. The meeting then went into private session and concluded at 7:45 pm.***

**CONFIRMED BY THE GOVERNING BODY AT A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE 2018**

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

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