

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting of the **South West College Governing Body**
held on Wednesday 7 March 2018 at 5:40 pm
in the Boardroom, Dungannon Campus, Circular Road, Dungannon

PRESENT:

- Mr Joseph Martin (Chairman)
- Mr Michael McAlister (Chief Executive)
- Mr Peter Archdale (*via video conference*)
- Mr Samuel Hodson (*via video conference*)
- Mr Wilson Matthews
- Mr Wilbert Mayne
- Mrs Patricia McCaffrey (*via video conference*)
- Mr Seamus McCaffrey (*via video conference*)
- Mrs Monica McGeary
- Mr Michael McGuckin
- Mr Stephen Moss
- Mr Michael Skuce (*via video conference*)
- Mr Derek Weir

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Fiona McCauley, Secretary to the Governing Body

APOLOGIES:

- Mrs Joanne Lucas
- Mrs Margaret Martin

1.0 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were tendered on behalf of Mrs Lucas and Mrs Martin.

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 10 January 2018 (Pages 1 – 7).

AGREED: on the proposal of Mr McGuckin and seconded by Mr Archdale, 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

With reference to minute 10.0, the Chairman reported that a meeting had been held between senior officials in the Department for the Economy (DfE) and Governing Body representatives during which the College's concerns regarding the new funding model had been raised.

5.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION, QUALITY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 JANUARY 2018

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 05.01 Minutes of a meeting of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee held on Wednesday 24 January 2018
- Paper 05.02 Student Union Constitution
- Paper 05.03 Fitness to Practice Policy
- Paper 05.04 Tutorial Policy.

Mr Matthews presented the report of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee meeting in the absence of Mrs Martin, Committee Chair. In doing so, he began by providing an overview of the presentations received on the 'Goby' and the 'Educating Digitally for Global Engagement' strategic projects and on the performance and strategic plans of the Industry & Training department.

He went on to report the resolution of the query regarding the legal status of the Student Union; outline the amendments made to the reviewed policies; and highlight the Committee's recommendation for approval of the revised Student Union Constitution, Fitness to Practice Policy and Higher Education Achievement Report & Tutorial Policy.

During the discussion that followed Mr Matthews' report, members were informed of the referral sources to the College's employability programmes and of the excellent progress made in meeting associated targets; agreed to defer approval of the Fitness to Practice Policy pending clarity on the rights of students to be legally represented in Fitness for Professional Practice interviews; and were reminded of the Governing Body's responsibility for the Student Union as an unincorporated Body.

With reference to the ongoing QAA Quality Review Visit, the Chief Executive reported on the positive feedback received to date. The Chairman then commented on the high satisfaction rates evidenced amongst students as documented in the 2018 Student Self-Evaluation Report and commended the Quality Team and the Student Governor, as Lead Student Representative, for their work in drafting the 2018 Self-Evaluation and Student Self-Evaluation Reports.

AGREED: on the proposal of Mr Matthews, seconded by Mr McCaffrey, adoption of the minutes of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee meeting and approval of the Student Union Constitution and the Higher Education Achievement Record & Tutorial Policy.

6.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 2018

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 06.01 Minutes of a meeting of the Staffing Committee held on Wednesday 31 January 2018
- Paper 06.02 Staff Resource Report
- Paper 06.03 Fixed Term Contracts Report
- Paper 06.04 Student Internship Programme Budget.

Mrs McGeary, Chair of the Staffing Committee, began her report of the committee meeting held on Wednesday 31 January 2018 by apprising members of the presentation received from the Head of Department (Business Services) on Resource Planning and Workforce Development in the Business Services department, noting in particular the initiation of a sectoral review of Essential Skills provision and the benefits derived from international curriculum activity as well as the associated resourcing pressures.

She went on to comment on the Committee's discussion on the shared services agenda, on its affirmation of the necessity for any shared services model implemented to derive beneficial outcomes for the College, and on the suggestion that best practice case studies be disseminated to colleges to inform the design of the sectoral model.

Mrs McGeary also reported the confirmation of a further tranche of the Voluntary Exit Scheme (VES) and a further phase of the Leadership & Learning Executive Coaching Programme and highlighted 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 as well as the Committee's recommendation for approval of the 2018/19 Student Internship Programme Budget.

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.

7.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2018

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 07.01 Minutes of a meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee held on Wednesday 14 February 2018
- Paper 07.02 Corporate Risk Register Review Report
- Paper 07.03 IT Disaster Recovery Policy
- Paper 07.04 Social Media Policy.

In presenting her report of the 14 February 2018 Audit & Risk Committee meeting, Mrs McCaffrey, Committee Chair, began by updating those present on internal audit activity, drawing attention to the 'satisfactory' assurance rating awarded following an internal audit review of the College's Risk Management processes and outlining the progress made by management in addressing the three outstanding recommendations from prior year audits.

Moving on to the Management Report received by the Committee, she apprised the meeting of the positive feedback received on the College's performance and governance during the Annual Accountability Review meeting with DfE; advised that awareness raising of phishing had taken place amongst staff and students following a recent increase in scam emails; noted management's confidence in reaching the curriculum targets set for 2017/18; referenced the College's preparations for the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); and commented on the assurances received by the Committee that urgent health and safety concerns will be addressed outside of formal procedures if necessary following a report on issues encountered through the requirement to undertake procurement through the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD). She also drew attention to the Committee's detailed review of the Corporate Risk Register and highlighted the Committee's recommendation for approval of the IT Disaster Recovery Policy and the Social Media Policy.

Mrs McCaffrey went on to provide a synopsis of the presentations received on risk management in the Erne Campus Project and on the 'Educating Digitally for Global Engagement' strategic project and concluded by confirming that no fraud or whistleblowing matters had been reported to the Committee.

AGREED: on the proposal of Mrs McCaffrey, seconded by Mr Skuce, adoption of the minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting and the recommendations therein.

8.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2018

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 08.01 Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 21 February 2018
- Paper 08.02 Financial Management Report
- Paper 08.03 Asset Management Policy.

Mr McGuckin, Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, alerted members to the Annual PFI Contracts Review Meeting with Belfast Educational Services that had taken place during the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 21 February 2018 and welcomed the service provider's acknowledgement of the issues raised by the Committee as well as its commitment to addressing them.

He also informed the meeting of the presentation received by the Committee on the financial performance of the Technology department and highlighted the 7% reduction in staff costs since the introduction of the VES, the good progress made in meeting virtualization targets and the expectation of reduced income in future years.

Mr McGuckin then reported on the confirmation received of the 2017/18 resource allocation, on the continued issues encountered with CPD, and on the update received on the progress of the Erne Campus Project. In concluding his report, he drew attention to the Committee's recommendation for approval of the budget presented at the September 2017 Governing Body meeting as well as its recommendation for approval of the revised Asset Management Policy.

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

9.0 ERNE CAMPUS UPDATE

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 09 18 January 2018 Erne Campus Project Board Minutes.

In response to questions and comments from members the Chief Executive reported the recruitment of four additional staff to the Erne Campus Project Team; apprised members of the design work taking place with the Integrated Consultant Team and the Integrated Supply Team in preparation for the construction phase; advised that assurances will be sought from the Project Manager and mitigation measures put in place should consideration be given to a reduction in the post-construction maintenance period; explained that virtual models of the new campus had been developed and would be used in forthcoming fit-out workshops with staff; and undertook to ensure that future update reports address communication matters to ensure adherence to community engagement obligations.

The Chairman then sought nominations for a governor to serve on the Project Board to replace Mr Skuce who had recently stood down as a member of the Project Board.

AGREED: On the proposal of Mr McGuckin, seconded by Mrs McGeary, that Mrs McCaffrey be nominated to serve on the Erne Campus Project Board.

10.0 CORPORATE PLANNING

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 10.01 Draft Sectoral Corporate Plan
- Paper 10.02 2018-19 CDP Commissioning Note
- Paper 10.03 Presentation on SWC CDP Development.

The Chief Executive reported good progress on the development of both the sectoral Corporate Plan and the 2018/19 College Development Plan, and advised that the deadline for submission of these strategies to DfE facilitates their review by the Governing Body at its next meeting.

A discussion ensued thereafter on the anticipated 2018/19 resource allocation and curriculum offer during which members articulated the need to protect entry level and Level 1 provision in alignment with social inclusion priorities, and were advised that a bid similar to the 2017/18 allocation will be made at the forthcoming bilateral meeting with DfE, and that the Governing Body would be kept abreast of related developments as they emerge.

11.0 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 11 Research Project Information Sheet.

11.1 Research into Governing in Further Education Colleges

With reference to paper 11, the Chairman reminded the meeting of the approval previously provided by the Governing Body for inclusion in an application for funding to research governing processes and practices in Further Education colleges. He then reported the award of funding for this study, provided an overview of the input required from South West College and sought approval for participation in the research project.

AGREED: that approval be granted for the College's participation in the research study.

He then sought a nomination to the Impact Group referred to in paper 11 and suggested that a briefing be provided to the Governing Body at its next meeting by the Principal Investigator.

AGREED: that Mrs McCauley, Secretary to the Governing Body, be appointed as South West College's representative on the Impact Group.

11.2 Review of Colleges NI

The Chairman apprised the meeting of the classification of Colleges NI as a Non-Departmental Public Body. Members discussed the implications of this classification for colleges and were advised that further updates would be provided in due course.

12.0 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 12.01 Value for Money Review Specification
- Paper 12.02 Letter to Principals re Value for Money Review Engagement.

TABLED at the meeting and subsequently uploaded to the SWC Gateway:

- Paper 12.03 Tribal Value for Money Benchmarking Presentation
- Paper 12.04 Value for Money Review Benchmarking Pro-Forma.

12.1 Sectoral Value for Money Review

The Chief Executive explained that the sectoral Value for Money (VfM) Review had commenced and that a meeting had been held with Tribal, the appointment consultants. He then outlined Tribal's experience in undertaking similar exercises, the various stages in the benchmarking process, the data to be analysed, the outputs expected and the anticipated timeline for completion of the task.

Members welcomed the Value for Money Review and expressed disappointment that the timelines did not facilitate consideration of its outputs in the design of the new funding model.

12.2 Voluntary Exit Scheme

The Chief Executive confirmed that a further tranche of the Voluntary Exit Scheme had been announced by DfE.

13.0 DECLARATION OF HOSPITALITY OR GIFTS RECEIVED OR OFFERED

No declarations were made under this heading.

14.0 CORRESPONDENCE

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 14 NI Civil Service Personnel Changes.

Members noted the appointment of Mr Noel Lavery as Permanent Secretary for the Department for the Economy.

15.0 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

No further business was raised.

16.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 25 April 2018 at 5:00 pm in the Dungannon campus.

17.0 EVALUATION OF MEETING

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 16 Governing Body Meeting Evaluation Form.

Members reported slow access to the SWC Gateway.

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 25 APRIL 2018

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____