
MINUTES OF THE FIFTY FIRST MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, LIMAVADY CAMPUS ON WEDNESDAY 29 JUNE 2016, COMMENCING 17:00

PRESENT:

Mr G Finnegan, Chair
 Mr M Agnew
 Mr S Atcheson
 Mr P Canavan
 Mr D Limb
 Mrs C McFarland
 Mr P Laughlin
 Mr S McGregor
 Mr L Murphy, Principal & Chief Executive
 Mr M O’Kane
 Mr B Quinn (from 18:00)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs K Duffy, Director of HR & Learner Services
 Mr P McKeown, Director of Finance & Economic Engagement
 Mr D Kinnaird, Vice Principal
 Mr W Lavery, Change Manager
 Mrs É Doherty, Governance Secretary

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

51.1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs R Dougherty, Mr S Gillespie and Mr G Killeen.

51.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS/AMENDMENTS TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Paper GB 51.2 Register of Interests - June 2016

There was no conflict of interest declarations/ any other business. The Chair referred members to the Paper with recent amendments to the Register of Interests.

51.3 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 04 MAY 2016➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Paper GB 51.3 Draft Minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 4 May 2016

The Minutes were taken as read and agreed were an accurate record of the meeting.

PROPOSED: Mr S Atcheson

SECONDED: Mr M Agnew

51.3.1 MATTERS ARISING; MAY 2016 MEETING

50.3.1 The Secretary to send members the Schedule of forthcoming presentations.

Action: Schedule sent on 4 May 2016.

50.8 Equal Opportunities Policy

Review of Advertising Media - query from member to be passed through to the Director of HR & Learner Services.

Action: Reply forwarded to member on 29 June 2016.

50.11 Correspondence

Secretary to provide members with copy of correspondence from OFMDFM re annual Report on Public Bodies appointments.

Action: Correspondence sent out on 4 May 2016.

51.4 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Paper GB 51.4 Principal's Report
Paper GB 51.4.1 'Beyond the CDP Delivery'

The Principal reported that the estimated final FLU for 2015-16 remains largely in line with previous estimates and is in the region of 97-98% of target FLU.

The 2016/17 FLU target of 6615 is expected to become increasingly challenging. The full time application rate is 89% of the previous year's trend. There are concerns about reaching the MaSN figure of 710. Discussion followed and it was agreed to review the situation again in September 2016 and, if necessary, the College will provide an early warning to the Department of shortfall concerns.

AGREED ACTION; To continue to monitor the FLU statistics and if necessary inform the Department of shortfall concerns.

Items highlighted within the report included; discussion on the difficulty in applications for the HLA in Software Development due to the extensive support required from employers to apprentices in this area. Other highlights included the Ulster University SER Process; the Maths Centre - it was confirmed that the appointment has now been made for a temporary maths lecturer; 29 staff members will leave under the VES, between 30 June and 31 March 2017; update provided on the estates including discussion on the draft Economic Appraisal on the new Strabane Estates Strategy, recent discussions have taken place with the Council. The Chair added he was keen to explore the possibility of a town centre build to aid any opportunity in the regeneration of the town. The Board decided that they were willing to allow more time for the Council to come back on a definite site/timeframe.

AGREED ACTIONS;

- **The College to invite the Council representative to the next sub-committee meeting.**
- **Update on the Council discussions to be provided at next Governing Body meeting.**

The Principal reported that the refurbishment costs for the Flying Clipper restaurant have been received for £111K.

Members were content to approve this spend.

PROPOSED; Mr M Agnew

SECONDED; Mr S McGregor

The Principal continued his report highlighting details within the Technical Innovation Report, including the Business Support update, Business Development Activities Update, European Projects Updates, Technology Enhanced Learning Update and Public Relations Events, Awards and Competitions; the Erasmus programme will continue for 2016/17. The Principal highlighted that the College collected a third of the BEST Awards at the recent event in the Foyle Arena.

The Principal brought members through his Report 'Beyond The CDP Delivery', explaining that the College Development Plan 2015/18 outlines the strategic direction for the College together with the 3 year operation plans, however other initiatives are required to help towards achieving the 'best in'.

He also reminded members that the College has a statutory and civic responsibility to be active in programmes and projects that support the traditional hard to reach learners in its programme offer and socio-economic engagement.

The Principal reported he will take a lead in moving forward three strategic imperatives for the region; Higher Education & Apprenticeships, Widening Access & Participation and Supporting the FDI proposition and embedding entrepreneurship. The resourcing of these projects has not yet been confirmed.

Members were very supportive of the initiative. An absent member, Mr G Killeen, also wished for his endorsement of the proposition to be noted.

AGREED ACTIONS;

- **To include the Department of the Communities and the Department of the Economy to the stakeholders.**
- **Mr P Canavan to realign the projects and forward to the Principal.**
- **Other pieces to be included; the Food Innovation and the Assisted Living projects.**
- **The resourcing plan to come to the Board for approval in September 2016.**

The Chair thanked the Principal for his report.

51.5 DRAFT BUDGET 2016/17

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Paper GB 51.5, Draft Budget

Mr Agnew updated members on the Draft Budget paper which is currently showing a small historic cost surplus. He added he had no concerns on the Report. The Budget is due to be submitted to the Department by 29 July 2016. Members were content to approve the Budget.

PROPOSED; Mr M Agnew

SECONDED; Mr P Canavan

51.6 AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Paper GB 51.6, Report 1 Chair's Summary Report
Draft Minutes of Meeting held on 22 June 2016
Draft Minutes of Reserved Business Meeting held on 22 June 2016

Draft Minutes/Reserved Business Minutes were taken as read. Members agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the Committee.

PROPOSED; Mr S Atcheson

SECONDED; Mr P Laughlin

Mr Atcheson reported on the recent business of the Committee, the Committee had recently undertaken a self-assessment exercise and this would now be carried out annually. He wished to thank the Director of Finance & Economic Engagement and the Secretary for their assistance with this exercise.

Prompt payment - 93% of invoices were paid within 30 days in the first 10 months to 31 May 2016, 95% of invoices in May 2016 were paid within 30 days. The Committee Chair was pleased to report on two recent reviews by Internal Audit; Strategic & Corporate Planning and Corporate Governance & Risk Management which had both been graded 'Substantial' with no issues.

The Draft Internal Audit Strategy 2015/16, 2017/18, Annual Plan & Charter was presented by the Internal Auditor at the Committee meeting. Amendments to the schedule were agreed and the Strategy will come through The Governing Body September meeting for approval.

The Review of Audit Strategy 2015-16 was also presented to the Committee by the External Auditor.

The Committee Chair stated that Financial Reporting Standards have changed the format of how financial statements will be prepared. FE colleges will have to adopt this format for the July 2016 year.

In concluding, the Committee Chair reported on the Reserved Business item in relation to correspondence received through the Committee. The Chair indicated he did not wish to discuss the matter further as members may be called upon in a future process.

The Chair thanked Mr Atcheson for his report.

51.7 EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

Paper GB 51.7 Report 1 Chair's Summary Report
Draft Minutes of meeting held on 7 June 2016

Members agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the Committee.

PROPOSED: Mr M O'Kane

SECONDED: Mr P Canavan

The Committee Chair reported that FLU was discussed at the meeting and the Committee were satisfied that the College will continue to strive to increase the applications and maximise the application to enrolment percentages. The Committee welcomed the news that a larger role out of the Outreach Programme in conjunction with the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships and the two district councils was planned for September 2016 following a successful pilot.

An update on the Maths Centre was provided to the Committee meeting, this highlighted growth in participation in the Centre, the positive student feedback and the recent appointment of a Maths Lecturer which will help develop and promote this provision.

Mr B Quinn joined the meeting at this juncture.

The sub group had met to discuss 'the Best' and will meet again before the next Committee meeting.

A member referred to previous reporting on staff development of lecturers delivering GCSE qualification in place of Essential Skills, along with concerns regarding possible redundancies. The Vice Principal reported he considered the Essential Skills provision will remain; the staffing complement did need to be reviewed, however there were no immediate concerns regarding redundancies. Going forward it was agreed that this item be included in the Education Committee Agenda for regular updates.

AGREED ACTION;

The Secretary to include 'Essential Skills/GCSE' within the Education Committee Agenda.

The Chair thanked Mr O'Kane for his report.

51.8 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Paper GB 51.8, Report 1	Chair's Summary Report
Report 2	Draft Minutes of Meeting held on 21 June 2016
Report 3	Copy of Management Accounts to 31 May 2016

Minutes were taken as read. Members agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the Committee.

PROPOSED: Mr M Agnew

SECONDED: Mr B Quinn

Members were requested to refer to Report GB 51.8, Report 1, Summary Paper which listed procurement contracts £100K and over for 2016/17. (This excluded the item listed for the Assisted Living Centre). Members were content to approve the additional items.

PROPOSED; Mr S Atcheson

SECONDED; Mr D Limb

The Chair continued his report confirming the Management Accounts to May 2016 continue to be satisfactory. The Aged Debtors Report also showed no reason for concern and the Chair commended the Finance Team staff in their great work in reducing the debt levels.

The Chair thanked Mr Agnew for his report.

51.9 STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Paper GB 51.9, Report 1	Chair's Summary Report
Report 2	Draft Minutes of Meeting held on 15 June 2016
Report 4	Articles of Government with Appendices 1,2,3
Report 5	IIP Assessment Feedback Report

Approvals were required for:-

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2016

The Minutes were taken as read. Members agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the Committee.

PROPOSED: Mrs C McFarland

SECONDED: Mr M Agnew

Staffing Issues – Career breaks; The Governing Body approved the requests for two individual career breaks.

PROPOSED; Mrs C McFarland

SECONDED; Mr S Atcheson

Continuing, the Committee Chair was pleased to report that the College had received the IIP Standard and quoted one of the many positive comments within the report;

'...the College has worked hard to address the gaps identified as a result of the continuous assessment process, which has culminated in improvements both in term of practice and culture; acknowledged by the majority of staff interviewed in the course of the assessment visit. The report confirms that the College now meets the requirements of the Investors in People Standard and therefore accreditation is awarded'.

(Ref Paper 51.9, Report 5

Executive Summary, page 3)

The Committee Chair reported that she wished to pass on congratulations to everyone in the College, to the Senior Management Team and gave a special mention to the Change Manger in recognition of his contribution to this achievement. The Chair added that this was a journey of significant transformation for the College, the IIP Standard is external validation of progress being made. This together with other external validations recently received was very encouraging and he wished to pass on his own thanks and congratulations to everyone.

The Chair referred to the recommendation on the paper (ref page 12, no 6) which indicated that the IIP has launched its new Generation 6 Standard, the new framework involves a more interactive process closely aligned to the value based system. The Chair indicated he would be keen for the College to take this on as a particular task.

The Committee Chair also reported on other Committee business which included; the College had been shortlisted for the 'Irish News Workplace and Employment Awards 2016' under the category of, 'Workplace Wellbeing', and was also a finalist in the 'Business in the Community Responsibility Awards' under the category, 'Employer of Choice'.

Policies currently out for consultation; Code of Conduct, Freedom of Information and Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance Policy.

Articles of Government

The Committee Chair reported that the review of the Articles of Government had been undertaken by the Sector to address a number of issues in the Articles. These were categorised into two broad headings, Charitable Status and Employment. The Department have asked the six Colleges to take the amended Articles through their Governing Bodies so that one standard set of amended articles can be agreed.

The issues relating to Charitable Status have been addressed to ensure Colleges can retain their charitable status. The loss of charitable status by the Sector would have tax implications in particular.

The Employment issues relate to the prescriptive nature of the detail in the Articles and the proposed changes are designed to allow for flexibility regarding the implementation of formal processes. It was highlighted that a change of Articles does not automatically amend College employment policies that have been negotiated through the negotiating committees. It was stressed that any changes to policies will be dealt with under the relevant Sector frameworks.

The Chair added that the proposals, if approved, would create space and flexibility to allow Colleges to place the best people on the various panels on a case by case basis.

A lengthy discussion ensued and clarification/explanations on different points were sought and received. A member considered College staff should have been considered as stakeholders and included in the process.

The Chair added that in his view the proposals would support governors in providing oversight and ensuring accountability in these processes.

Members were content to approve the changes within Part A, Charitable Status.

PROPOSED; Mr G Finnegan

SECONDED; Mr M Agnew

In respect to Part B, Employment

Members confirmed they were adequately informed to make a decision on the proposals. The decision was as follows:

The proposed changes to the Articles laid out in Section A – charitable status – are approved as proposed.

The proposed changes in Section B – employment – are approved as proposed, recognising that these changes may lead to changes to the following policies;

- Recruitment (senior staff);
- Disciplinary;
- Grievance;
- Dismissal;
- Redundancy

Such policy changes would be dealt with in Sector negotiations.

The decision was subject to a vote - one member voted against the decision all other members voted in favour of the decision.

PROPOSED; Mr M Agnew

SECONDED; Mr S Atcheson

The Chair thanked Mrs McFarland for her report.

51.10 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

Support Staff Election

The Chair reported details of the recent Support Staff election which took place on 22 June 2016. Mr Alex Magee was elected as Support Staff Governor and the College is currently waiting on the formal minute of Appointment to be made by the Department.

It was proposed that Mr Magee join the Audit & Risk Committee.

PROPOSED; Mr G Finnegan

SECONDED; Mr S Atcheson

The Department has also formally appointed Mrs Catherine McFarland and Mr Martin O’Kane for a further term of office from 01 July 2016 - 30 June 2020. The Chair thanked them both for their ongoing commitment and contribution to the Governing Body.

The Chair also encouraged members to complete the Governing Body self-assessment request that they received via email from the Department.

51.11 SECRETARY’S BUSINESS

The Secretary reported that from September 2016 papers will only be available to members/staff on MinutePad. Those who wish to have some training on the MinutePad please contact the Secretary.

51.12 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence received.

51.13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no Any Other Business.

51.14 RESERVED BUSINESS

Recorded Separately.

The Chair wished to thank everyone for their time and wished them a good summer break.

This part of the meeting ended at 19:40. Mr W Lavery, Mr P Canavan, Mr D Limb, Mr P McKeown, Mr D Kinnaird and Mrs K Duffy left the meeting at this juncture. The meeting then went into private session.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 28 September 2016.

SIGNED; _____ **CHAIR**

DATE; 4 October 2016