
MINUTES OF THE SEVENTY FIFTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, STRAND ROAD CAMPUS ON WEDNESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2019, COMMENCING 1700

PRESENT:

Mr G Finnegan, Governing Body Chair
Mrs R Dougherty
Mr S Gillespie (from 1730)
Dr N Hand
Mr E Kelly
Mr G Killeen
Mr S McGregor
Mr L Murphy, Principal & Chief Executive
Mr M O’Kane
Dr M O’Neill
Mrs L Taggart
Mr B Quinn

IN ATTENDANCE;

Mrs D McElwee, Acting Vice Principal, Curriculum & Information Services
Mr P McKeown, Director of Finance & Economic Engagement
Mr K McDowell, Boardroom Apprentice
Mrs É Doherty, Governance Secretary

75.1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Governing Body Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting with an extended welcome to Mr Keith McDowell who was attending his first Board meeting under the Boardroom Apprentice Programme. The Governance Secretary had agreed to take on the role as Board Buddy to Keith. A round of self introductions was made. Apologies were received from Mr P Canavan, Mr A Magee, Mrs C McFarland and Mrs K Duffy.

The Governing Body Chair wished to note the recent sad passing of Mrs Angela McConnell. Angela had been a College employee for over 25 years. Angela had been the Campus Manager in Strabane from 2010. Angela will be sadly missed and will be a significant loss to the College.

A letter of condolence has been drafted and will be forwarded to the family on behalf of the Governing Body.

75.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no conflicts of interest or any other business declared. The Register of Interests had been updated and a new entry for Mr K McDowell, Boardroom Apprentice added. Members were reminded that any changes required to the Register should be notified to the Governance Secretary.

Mr M O’Kane arrived to the meeting during this item.

75.3 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 25 JUNE 2019**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Draft Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting held on 25 June 2019

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

PROPOSED; Mr G Killeen

SECONDED; Mr E Kelly

75.3.1 MATTERS ARISING – Governing Body Meeting held on 25 June 2019

There were no matters arising from the meeting held on 25 June 2019.

The Governing Body Chair indicated he would take items 75.5 and 75.6 next on the Agenda. He invited Mrs R Dougherty, Chair of the Resources Committee to update members on the recent business of the Committee.

75.5 RESOURCES COMMITTEE**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1	Committee Chair's Summary Report
Report 2	Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 18 September 2019
Report 3	Draft Annual Report & Financial Statements 31 July 2019
Report 4	Section 75, Equality Progress Report April 2018 - March 2019

The Committee Chair reported that the first meeting had been held of the newly formed Resources Committee which replaced the Finance & General Purposes and the Staffing Committees.

The Draft Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 18 September 2019 were taken as read and agreed were an accurate record of the meeting. Members agreed to adopt the Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee.

PROPOSED; Mrs R Dougherty

SECONDED; Mr S McGregor

The Committee Chair reported that in relation to Finance matters the Director of Finance & Economic Engagement had reported issues relating to the Springtown redevelopment project, including the delay in the handover of Phase 1. The ICT Team had submitted two compensation events for services provided on the Project totalling £48K. The Principal & Chief Executive on behalf of the Board had corresponded with the Company Director, RPP Architects in early July 2019. No reply to date has been received. A follow up letter will be issued. The Committee Chair confirmed that the Committee received assurances from the Director of Finance & Economic Engagement that the College Estates Team were managing the situation. Both CPD and the Department have been advised of the issues.

The NDPB Return for August 2019 was showing a DEL Resource shortfall. The Director of Finance & Economic Engagement was hopeful that the College will receive extra funding however this is still at risk. Members of the Committee reviewed the Analysis of the Insurance Premium Report for 2019/20. The increase in premium related mainly to cover for Cyber Liability.

Prompt payment figure for 30 days to 31 August 2019 was 84%, members of the Committee were provided reasons for the decrease from previous levels and were content to accept these.

The Draft Annual Report & Financial Statements for Year end 31 July 2019 had been sent to the Department on 20 September 2019.

Continuing her report the Committee Chair provided members with an update on the key issues in relation to Staffing matters. The number of recruitment applications using the new Portal continues to increase.

The outstanding appraisals can be attributed to the summer period and the Director of HR & Learner Services is confident these will now take place.

There has been an increase in staff absence for 2018/19 against the previous year. The Committee were content with the explanations provided behind the data.

A recent data incident had taken place, a report had been completed and actions taken following an investigation.

The Committee Chair was pleased to report that the College was awarded the INSPIRE Workplace Wellbeing Award in the Category 'Excellence in Public Sector Workplace Wellbeing Initiatives'. A discussion followed on the best way to acknowledge all staff and student awards.

It was agreed to request the Marketing & PR Team to issue regular publications to recognise these awards.

The Committee Chair referred to the Annual Progress Report, Section 75 NI Act 1998 for April 2018 – March 2019. Members noted the report and the Principal and the Governing Body Chair signed off the report.

The Governing Body Chair thanked Mrs Dougherty and invited Mr L Murphy, Principal & Chief Executive to report to the Board.

75.6 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT/BUSINESS

The Principal reported that the Department have requested the Sector to draft proposals on the impact of BREXIT.

ETI will be undertaking an inspection of FE Level 3 curriculum programmes across all six Colleges at the beginning of 2020. He will keep the Board briefed of further developments.

As SRO for the Systems, Technology & Services (STS) Project the Principal reported that he had forwarded to his Sector colleagues an update on the recent developments and the plans moving forward.

The Governing Body Chair took the opportunity to thank the Principal for his continued work in this important project.

AGREED ACTION; the Principal & Chief Executive to circulate Governors a copy of the STS communication. If Governors have any queries on the communication they should pass these to the Principal.

The Principal reported that the College was delighted to support the new art installation of a scaled replica model of the huts in the old Springtown Camp.

Other positive news noted was the College had received additional funding for the Erasmus Programme to help support student exchange programmes.

The Governing Body Chair thanked the Principal for his report and returned to the Audit & Risk Committee item and invited Mr S Gillespie, Temporary Committee Chair to report on the recent business of the Committee.

75.4 AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

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| Report 1 | Committee Acting Chair's Summary Report |
| Report 2 | Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 17 September 2019 |
| Report 3 | Committee's Terms of Reference – proposed changes |
| Report 3.1 | Committee's Terms of Reference – with proposed changes included |

The Draft Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 17 September 2019 were taken as read and agreed were an accurate record of the meeting. Members agreed to adopt the Draft Minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee.

PROPOSED; Mr S Gillespie

SECONDED; Mr G Killeen

Report 3.1 Committee's Terms of Reference – with proposed changes included

PROPOSED; Mr S Gillespie

SECONDED; Mrs L Taggart

Mr Gillespie provided explanation that as a co-opted member of the Governing Body he cannot currently continue as Chair of the Committee. The Department agreed that for the purposes of the September Committee meeting he could preside as Temporary Committee Chair. This now leaves the Chair position vacant. Members discussed the issue and it was agreed to contact the Department to request a change to the Articles of Government to allow co-opted members to take on the role as

Committee Chair. A further request to the Department is to consider a Committee member to take on the role as Committee Chair for an interim period.

AGREED ACTIONS;

- **The Governance Secretary to correspond with the Department.**
- **Committee members to express their interest in taking on the role as interim Chair.**

In continuing his report, the Committee Chair stated that Price Waterhouse Cooper (PwC) on behalf of the NIAO had commenced the Audit of the College Financial Statements to 31 July 2019.

In relation to the Internal Audit Reports, the Annual Assurance Report stated that based on the Internal Audit work performed during 2018/19 an overall internal audit opinion of satisfactory level of assurance had been awarded. The Committee Chair reported there were some issues with aspects of the service provided by Internal Audit, these issues were being taken up through NIFON.

The Governing Body Chair thanked Mr Gillespie for this report.

75.7 GOVERNING BODY CHAIR'S BUSINESS

➤ **VERBAL REPORTS**

Report 1	Governor Body Assessments 2018/19
Report 2	Board Extensions to Appointments
Report 3	Committee Membership

The Governing Body Chair advised that the annual Governor Assessments will be completed in due course. For any Governor who would prefer an individual meeting with the Chair this can be arranged through the Governance Secretary.

Mr G Killeen and Mr S McGregor had agreed an extension to their terms of office for a further 9 months. Mr P Canavan has also accepted a second term of office. The Governing Body Chair thanked members for their agreement in continuing with their commitment to the Board.

Approval was requested for Mr K McDowell, Boardroom Apprentice to join the Education Committee as an attendee.

PROPOSED; Mr M O'Kane

SECONDED; Mr E Kelly

75.8 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was received from Mr N Lavery, Permanent Secretary, DfE advising that he will be retiring from the NICS at the end of November 2019. A replacement will be advised in due course. The Governing Body Chair with member's agreement will reply to Mr Lavery to thank him and wish him well.

75.9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to discuss.

75.10 RESERVED BUSINESS

Taken separately.

The Governing Body Chair brought this part of the meeting to an end, he thanked everyone for their attendance and requested those not required for the remaining items to leave the room at this juncture.

The meeting ended at 1757 and went into private session.

Date of next meeting: 13 November 2019

Signed: _____ **Chair**
Mr G Finnegan

Date: 13 November 2019

APPROVED