

**MINUTES OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, STRAND ROAD CAMPUS, ON MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2009 AT 4.00PM.**

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**PRESENT:** Mr A Rainey (Chair)  
Mr M Agnew  
Mrs J Doherty  
Mr H Faulkner (ex-officio)  
Mr S Murphy (Director)  
Mr A O'Connor

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr P McKeown (Assistant Director, Finance)  
Mr G McGuckin (Assistant Director, College Development) (until 5.15pm)  
Mr T McMahan (Estates Manager) (until 5.15pm)  
Mr D McClelland (Secretary)

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**11.1 APOLOGIES**

An apology was received from Mrs M Lestas.

**11.2 MINUTES OF THE RECENT MEETINGS**

**11.2.1 Meeting held on 15 June 2009**

It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Mr Murphy and agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

**11.2.2 Special meeting held on 24 August 2009**

It was proposed by Mr Murphy seconded by Mr Agnew and agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

**11.3 MATTERS ARISING**

**10.5 Benchmarking Information. (Ref: paper FC11.3.1)** The Assistant Director (Finance) explained that the data contained in the paper had been gathered with the co-operation of the other FE colleges. He considered that, as this was the initial year, there would be opportunity for further refinements in the future. Members expressed their appreciation of the insight the data gave to the position of the College held within the sector. They commented on aspects where the data demonstrated that the College was operating with a degree of efficiency. They also suggested particular additional information which may be useful in future years.

**Special meeting: item 2. Harmonisation of Estates Services Delivery ( Ref: paper FC11.3.2).** The Estates Manager referred to the advice received from KPMG and from the College's solicitors. In discussion members considered that,

overall, the preferred option could not be considered to represent any material change to the original contract. It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Mr O'Connor and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the option proposed by PwC be implemented.

It was agreed to take item 11.9 at this point in the agenda after which the Assistant Director (College Development) and the Estates Manager left the meeting.

#### **11.4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

No business was conducted under this heading.

#### **11.5 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS (Ref: paper FC11.5)**

The Assistant Director updated members on the College accounts for the period to 31 October 2009. The report showed actual total income of £8,982,813 and total expenditure of £7,095,814. The Assistant Director discussed some of the major variances with members. The Director pointed out that there had been some realignment of teaching & non-teaching jobs.

The Assistant Director tabled an Aged Debtors Report. He indicated that the level of debt would be substantially reduced when HE fee income was received from the Student Loan Co. He advised members that a request from the College to write off old debt, each above £750 and totalling £19065 had been approved by DEL.

#### **11.6 TENDERS ISSUED (Ref: paper FC11.6)**

The Assistant Director referred members to the paper. In reply to a member's query, he indicated that, where only a single bid was received which showed a substantial adverse variance from estimated cost, the tender was normally re-advertised. Members noted the paper.

#### **11.7 ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2008/2009(Ref: paper FC11.7)**

The Assistant Director indicated that adjustments had been made to the year's accounts for additional income which had been received and for revised valuations of buildings and land. Members suggested some minor changes to the wording of the report. It was proposed by Mr Agnew seconded by Mrs Doherty and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the annual report and financial statements for 2008/09 be approved.

#### **11.8 REVISED BUDGET 2009/2010 (Ref: Paper FC11.8)**

The Assistant Director distributed copies of a letter from DEL indicating that there would be a reduction in the recurrent grant for 09/10 of £5m across the sector. The College's share would be a reduction of £1,253,843. In the light of these changes he was presenting a revised budget to the Committee. The Director indicated that the increase in student numbers would not attract any additional funding this year and would have to be funded from existing reserves. A member expressed concern over the financial situation in the medium to long term and the

need to plan ahead. It was agreed that this matter should be discussed in detail at the next meeting of the Committee. It was proposed by Mr Agnew seconded by Mr O'Connor and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the revised budget for 2009/2010 be approved.

## 11.9 ESTATES ISSUES

**11.9.1 Accommodation at Strabane Ref: paper FC11.9)** The Estates Manager in his presentation to members referred to the original economic appraisal for accommodation at Strabane, to a statistical survey of students by location, to a Strabane Campus room utilisation survey and to the proposal for additional accommodation requirements. The Director pointed to the significant growth in student numbers particularly in 2 year full-time courses which would have a knock-on effect next year. Members expressed concern at the cost estimate contained in the proposal. It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Mr Agnew and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the proposal for additional temporary accommodation at Strabane be supported in principle subject to revised costings being brought back to the Committee.

**11.9.2 Economic Appraisal for new fitness suite at the Lawrence Building (Ref: paper FC11.10)** The Estates Manager reviewed the options contained in the appraisal. The Assistant Director (College Development) indicated that considerable benefits would be derived from having the facility on-site. The costs would be met from the College's funds. It was agreed that it would be helpful to include benefits and savings in the appraisal. It was proposed by Mr O'Connor seconded by Mrs Doherty and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the proposal for the fitness suite be approved.

## 11.10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed that an update on the new build at Boating House Lane would be given at the next meeting of the Committee.

**Date of next meeting:** Monday 8 February at 4.00pm in Strand Road Campus.

This being all the business the Chair closed the meeting at 5.45pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_