

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL 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 24 AUGUST 2009 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT: Mr A Rainey (Chair)
Mr M Agnew
Mrs M Lestas
Mr S Murphy (Director)
Mr A O'Connor

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P McKeown (Assistant Director, Finance)
Mr G McGuckin (Assistant Director, College Development)
Mr D McClelland (Secretary)

1. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Mrs J Doherty.

2. HARMONISATION OF ESTATE SERVICES DELIVERY (Ref: Minutes of meeting held with consultants on 18 August 2009 - tabled)

The Chair explained that the meeting with the consultants had been arranged to explore issues arising from their draft report. He said that, after discussion, and taking into account qualitative as well as quantitative measures, members were satisfied that Option 2A (Status Quo + Strand Road in-house + Lawrence Building PFI) offered the best way forward. The Director explained that, should this option be accepted, discussions would commence with the contractor (Graham FM) on amendment to the PFI contract. He anticipated that, with the closure of the Christchurch Lane site and the addition of the enlarged Lawrence Building, the net change should be minimal.

It was proposed by Mr Agnew seconded by Mr O'Connor and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that Option 2A be accepted as the preferred option subject to a satisfactory legal response being received that the alteration to the PFI contract would not contravene EU procurement directives.

3. NIPAC REPORT ON FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF FURTHER EDUCATION (Ref: Summary of NIPAC Report – June 2009)

The Chair referred to the report which had recently been published. The Director pointed out that its recommendations were for DEL to consider. A general discussion ensued centred around Recommendation 18 on the issue of college reserves. Comments included:

- Reserves are needed to fund growth in student numbers when these become greater than those agreed within the planning cycle

- There is a need to build up reserves over a number of years to finance new build and / or to carry out major maintenance
- Reserves are needed to equip new build
- Reserves are required to manage some staffing issues e.g. redundancy
- On occasions through the year reserves are required to prevent cash-flow problems arising.

It was agreed that DEL should be kept informed of planned use of reserves and that it would be reflected in the financial section of the College Development Plan.

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 5.55pm.

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____