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**MINUTES OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE LIBRARY, STRABANE CAMPUS ON TUESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2008 AT 5.00 PM**

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**PRESENT:** Mr E Beattie (Chair)  
Miss E Cavanagh  
Mrs J Doherty  
Mr H Faulkner  
Mr L Gallagher  
Mrs M Lestas  
Prof F Monds  
Mr S Murphy (Director)  
Mr A O'Connor

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr D McClelland (Acting Secretary)

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**5.1 APOLOGIES**

Dame Geraldine Keegan, Mr A Rainey

**5.2 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2007**

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

**5.3 MATTERS ARISING**

**4.3 (3.5) Co-option of member.** The Chair reported that enquiries were still continuing. Interest was being sought from members of Chartered Inst. of Management Accountants.

**5.4 AMENDMENTS TO THE INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNMENT**

The Chair explained that the Department had suggested 2 amendments to the Instrument of Government

- To clarify the tenure of the student member (Para. 8d)
- To amend the tenure of members filling a vacancy (Para 7)

On the proposal of Mr O'Connor seconded by Mr Murphy it was agreed to accept both amendments.

A short discussion took place on the position of other potential members to the Governing Body. Regret was expressed that the Lecturing Staff appointee had not yet taken up his membership due to his non-completion of necessary forms. Chair undertook to raise this with him.

**5.5 STAFFING COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Chair of the Committee reported on the meeting which took place on 7 January 2008. He highlighted the 2 recommendations

- that the requests from 3 members of staff be granted
- that the position in respect of proposed redundancies be noted.

On the proposal of Mr Faulkner seconded by Mr O'Connor it was agreed to adopt the minutes of the meeting.

## 5.6 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT

The Vice-Chair of the Committee reported on the meeting held on 21 January 2008. She mentioned that

- accounts at cost centre level are to be presented to the next meeting of the Committee
- the tendering procedure is to be updated at the next Committee meeting
- Day Care provision will be discussed further at the next Committee meeting.

On the proposal of Mr Gallagher seconded by Mrs Doherty it was agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the meeting.

## 5.7 EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The Chair of the Committee reported on the meeting held on 22 January 2008. He referred members to the recommendation to approve the China Development Proposal subject to having an appropriate exit strategy in the event of difficulty. A detailed discussion on the proposal took place during which the strategic fit against DEL objectives and the correctness of awarding bursaries was questioned. Members raised other particular concerns and requested the Committee to check:

- that the human resources issues in the proposal were consistent with employment law
- that a valid procurement procedure was being used
- that correct use was being made of public funds
- that real costs of the proposal would be tracked and monitored over the 2 to 3 year period

The Director proposed the removal of the bursary proposal to overcome subsidy concerns. It was proposed by Mr Faulkner seconded by Mr Gallagher and agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the Committee and that the proposal was approved in principle subject to receiving satisfactory responses to the above queries and that the GB would then be kept updated on a regular basis. The Chair of the Committee expressed his appreciation of the in-depth debate which had taken place. He noted that the proposal had dimensions beyond purely educational matters. He suggested that a template of a business plan be drawn up for future use.

## 5.8 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chair reported on the following matters:

- update on the lecturers' pay review
- C/D meeting at DEL to consider qualitative aspects of the College Development Plan
- other forthcoming meetings with Chairs of other colleges and Minister

## 5.9 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director mentioned the following matters

- a copy of the Disability Action plan was to be made available on the college's web-site
- he tabled an equality update report which was noted by members
- Planning permission for the Boating Club Lane project was now proceeding
- Strabane campus - enrolment and estate matters. The Director reported that 61 full-time, 417 p/t and 636 evening students had enrolled at Strabane. He mentioned that the IT facility in the centre of the town had been closed due to the "Training for Success" contract not being renewed. He indicated that cancellation of the lease was being negotiated. The Chair expressed surprise that the building had been closed without the knowledge of the Governing Body. A discussion on the needs of the campus then took

place. Members expressed their concern at the gross under-development of the site if a modern further education provision was to be made available to Strabane and the surrounding community. It was agreed that the Chair should write to the Department stressing the desire of the GB that the preliminary proposal previously submitted by NWI for a new build on the Strabane site be progressed as a matter of urgency.

#### **5.10 REDUNDANCY ARRANGEMENTS**

The Director reported on the confused situation which presently exists over the redundancy arrangements for staff. DEL had informed colleges they would have to postpone implementation until August. This had serious financial repercussions for the college since salaries of those being made redundant would need to continue for these additional months. Members expressed concern since this conflicted directly with the DEL requirement that colleges find 3% annual efficiency improvements. The Director indicated that a meeting had been arranged with the Department to take place this week. Due to the need for imminent action, on the proposal of Mr Faulkner seconded by Mrs Doherty it was agreed to grant the Chair and Director executive powers to act on the redundancy situation as appropriate following the outcome of the meeting.

#### **5.11 STRATEGIC PLANNING DAY**

The Chair indicated that, following the recent planning day, the Assistant Director (College Development) has been asked to prepare a draft strategic plan for the college by the end of February to contain the outcomes of the Planning Day. Chair would meet with AD to discuss. The paper would be initially circulated amongst heads of departments and senior management for their input prior to be considered by the Governing Body at the April 2008 meeting.

#### **5.12 SECRETARY'S BUSINESS**

The Secretary distributed for information

- update on members' contact details
- update of the Register of Interests. The Chair requested that a Register of Interests for senior managers also be established
- arrangements for meetings during March and April

#### **5.13 CORRESPONDENCE**

None

The Acting Secretary withdrew from the meeting at this point.

#### **5.14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

See separate minute.

**Date of next meeting.** It was agreed to meet on Tuesday 1 April 2008 at 5.00pm in the Strand Road Campus.

This being all the business the meeting ended at 7.40pm

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

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