
MINUTES OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, LIMAVADY CAMPUS ON TUESDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2007 AT 5.00 PM

PRESENT: Mr E Beattie (Chair)
Miss E Cavanagh
Mrs J Doherty
Mr H Faulkner
Dame G Keegan
Mr D McMahon (from 5.15pm)
Prof F Monds
Mr S Murphy (Director)
Mr A O'Connor (from 5.30pm)
Mr A Rainey

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D McClelland (Acting Secretary)

3.1 APOLOGIES

Mrs M Lestas

3.2 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9 OCTOBER 2007

On the proposal of Mr H Faulkner seconded by Mrs Doherty it was agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

3.3 MATTERS ARISING

2.3 (1.5) Election of staff and student members. The Director reported that the names of the elected staff and student representatives had been forwarded to DEL.

2.3 (1.5) Nominations from WELB. The Chair reported WELB had now forwarded 2 nominees to DEL.

3.4 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Mr H Faulkner was proposed by Mrs Doherty and seconded by Dame Geraldine Keegan as Vice-Chairperson. There being no other nominations Mr Faulkner was appointed unanimously.

3.5 CO-OPTION OF MEMBER TO GOVERNING BODY

It was agreed that it would be desirable to have a person with qualifications and experience in financial accounting appointed to the Governing Body. It was then agreed that the Chair should consult DEL to see if any such persons had already shown interest in governance of the sector. Members suggested other persons who could be approached if responses from DEL proved negative.

3.6 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee Chair reported on the meeting held on 12 November 2007. It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Miss Cavanagh and agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the meeting

and the recommendations contained therein. It was agreed that all members of the Governing Body should be provided with a copy of the approved 07/08 budget. The Committee Chair reported that the meeting considered it desirable for members of the Governing Body to have an opportunity to see over the college estate.

3.7 STAFFING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee Chair reported on the meeting held on 12 November 2007. It was proposed by Mr Faulkner seconded by Mr Rainey and agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the meeting and the recommendations contained therein.

The Committee Chair reported the outcome of a disciplinary hearing. There was no further discussion.

3.8 AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee Chair reported on the meeting held on 29 October 2007. It was proposed by Mr McMahan seconded by Prof Monds and agreed to adopt the draft minutes and the recommendations contained therein. It was proposed by Dame Geraldine Keegan seconded by Mr Beattie and agreed to approve the revised Risk Management Policy subject to an amendment. It was proposed by Mr McMahan seconded by Mr Beattie and agreed to approve the Corporate Risk Register subject to minor amendments.

On a separate issue the Director drew attention to the need for a representative from the Governing Body to be a member of the new build Project Management Board. It was agreed that Prof Monds would represent the Governing Body and that he would be provided with further information on the matter.

3.9 EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee Chair reported on the meeting held on 29 October 2007. It was proposed by Prof Monds seconded by Mr Murphy and agreed to adopt the draft minutes and the recommendations contained therein. The Director reported that since the meeting further analysis of the Funded Learning Units showed an improving situation. The Committee Chair reported on 3 important consultative documents issued by DEL since the meeting. It was agreed that the Director would circulate draft responses to all members of the Governing Body who would be given an opportunity to comment, final responses to then be agreed between the Committee Chair and the Director.

3.10 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chair referred to the following issues:

- Customised Training Service – no response from DEL yet
- Future budgets savings – requirement for the college to plan where and how efficiencies were going to be made. In reply to a question on a response to the government's consultative paper, the Chair indicated he would consult with other GB Chairs. It was agreed that the Finance and General Purposes Committee would take responsibility for a full review of potential financial efficiencies that could be achieved over the 3 year CSR period; and that the Education Committee would review the quality outcomes of provision delivered by NWI/LC and progress/monitor recommendations for improvements.

3.11 COMMITTEE AND BOARD WORKING

Members were in general agreement with the policy set out in the paper.

3.12 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director reported on

- Organisational restructuring – see item 3.14
- DEL policies – consultation documents referred to Education Committee members
- Redundancies – change in arrangements. It was agreed that further information would be provided at the next meeting.

3.13 ASSISTANT DIRECTORS' SALARY

It was agreed that further information was required for the next meeting.

3.14 ORGANISATION REVIEW

The Director reported on the outcome of the consultation process. As a result he recommended that

- changes be made to the role of Heads of Department
- some areas of responsibility of Assistant Directors be amended.

It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Mr Beattie and agreed to approve the organisational structure subject to the changes recommended.

Members requested further information on

- the cost differential, by management level, between past and present agreed structure
- how the roles of the Assistant Director (Curriculum), the Heads of Department and Heads of the Schools relate to each other.

3.15 NWI ANNUAL ACCOUNTS APPROVAL

3.16 LIMAVADY COLLEGE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS APPROVAL

It was agreed to take these 2 items together. The Chair reported on the unusual approval circumstances due to the merger. He reported that external auditors indicated that the accounts of both colleges were in order. It was proposed by Mr Rainey seconded by Mrs Doherty and agreed that the GB Chair and the Director should sign off the accounts for both former colleges.

3.17 APPOINTMENT OF LEGAL ADVISERS

The Chair of the panel reported on the interviews and evaluation of candidates to provide legal services to the college. On the panel's recommendation, it was proposed by Mr McMahon seconded by Mr Beattie and agreed to appoint Cleaver Fulton Rankin to provide the services which should commence as soon as possible.

3.18 QUALITY STANDARDS

It was agreed that the members of the Governing Body required a more detailed paper to consider the matter further. This should address both curriculum and organisational quality arrangements.

3.19 STRATEGIC PLANNING DAY

The Chair suggested that the purpose of the day would be to identify the key strategic issues for the college over the next 3 years, for members of the Governing Body to discuss these and to provide the SMT with comment in order that a strategic plan for the college could be developed. Some members requested that information on the starting base be provided. It was agreed that the Chair and Director would bring a further paper to the next meeting.

3.20 SECRETARY'S BUSINESS

3.20.1. Procedure for meetings. It was agreed that the Secretary would make enquiries regarding the provision of an intranet site for the exclusive access of governors where committee papers and other documents could be posted. It was also suggested that business papers should bear the sponsor/author's identity.

3.20.2 Dates of meetings: January – June 2008. These were confirmed.

The Acting Secretary withdrew from the meeting for the next item.

3.21 APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY

See separate minute.

3.22 CORRESPONDENCE

The Chair mentioned a letter he had received from the Association of Colleges offering to include interested governors on their e-mail circulation list.

3.23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A member enquired about the possibility of benchmarking across the 6 merged colleges. It was agreed that this would be a helpful idea to pursue and the Chair undertook to raise this through ANIC.

Date of next meeting. It was agreed to meet on Wednesday 5 December 2007 at 5.00pm. at the Strand Road Campus.

This being all the business the Chairperson closed the meeting at 7.50 pm