
MINUTES OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, LIMA VADY CAMPUS ON WEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2009 COMMENCING AT 5.25PM

PRESENT: Mr H Faulkner (Chair)
Mr M Agnew
Miss E Cavanagh (from 5.50pm)
Mrs J Doherty
Mr L Gallagher
Mr W McBride
Mrs G McCafferty
Mr D McMahan
Prof F Monds
Mr S Murphy (Director)
Mr T O'Connor
Mr A Rainey

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D McClelland (Secretary)

15.1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Dame Geraldine Keegan and Mrs M Lestas.

15.2 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2009

It was proposed by Mr Rainey seconded by Prof Monds and agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

15.3 MATTERS ARISING

14.3 (13.6) DEL Guidance on investment. The Director reported that no advice had been received.

14.6.2 Governors' Assessment. The Chair thanked members for their help and co-operation in his task of completing returns.

14.6.3 Appeals panels. The Director reported that no panels had been required to date.

15.4 STAFFING COMMITTEE REPORT (Ref: SC Draft Minutes – 28 October 2009)

The Acting Committee Chair referred to the following matters contained in the draft minutes

- Staffing issues
- Employment Relations Framework. The Director reported that the local branch of one of the professional associations was still not co-operating in efforts being made to improve working relations in the College. The GB Chair expressed his disappointment, as the Governing Body had already made gestures of goodwill towards staff. He said that he intended discussing the situation with the regional representative. Members were fully supportive of this course of action.
- Sector absence statistics for teaching and non-teaching staff

ACTION Secretary to publish approved minutes

- Equal opportunities Report – available from the Assistant Director (Human Resources)

It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Mr Gallagher and agreed to adopt the draft minutes including approval of the recommendations

- To grant the requests listed under Staffing Issues
- That the addendum to the Recruitment and Selection Policy be accepted.

The Director advised that the Scheme for the placing of lecturers on salary scales would now be dealt with at sector level and hence this recommendation of the Committee was withdrawn.

15.5 EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT (Ref: EC Draft Minutes – 2 November 2009)

The Committee Chair referred to the following matters contained in the draft minutes

- ILT Strategy focussing on the training of staff
- Essential Skills Update. The Director indicated that a reply had been sent to DEL but that there had been no further contact.
- Enrolment Update showing further increase in student numbers
- Academic Board & the arrangements for reporting the work of its Academic Standards Committee for HE
- Monitoring of Complaints

In reply to a member's question the Director said that on-going discussions with DEL on the specific quality standard FE colleges should be pursuing had limited the development of iP within the College.

It was proposed by Prof Monds seconded by Mrs McCafferty and agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the Committee.

Miss Cavanagh joined the meeting during the following item.

15.6 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT (Ref: FC Draft Minutes – 23 November 2009 tabled)

The Committee Chair reported on the following matters contained in the draft minutes:

- Benchmarking Information. He suggested that it would be useful to circulate the paper to all members.
- Harmonisation of Estates Services Delivery. In reply to a member's question the Committee Chair re-assured members that the Committee had given the matter very careful consideration before coming to its recommendation
- Management Accounts - there had been no major concerns during the period of the year covered.
- Revised Budget 09/10. A member commented on the knock-on affect a reduction in the recurrent grant was likely to have on college reserves.
- Accommodation at Strabane - increase in student numbers requiring additional temporary accommodation
- New Fitness Suite at the Lawrence Building.

ACTION

Secretary
to circulate
benchmarki
ng paper

It was proposed by Mr Rainey seconded by Mrs Doherty and agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the Committee including approval of the following recommendations:

- That the option proposed by PwC for the harmonising estate services delivery be implemented
- That the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2008/2009 be approved
- That the revised budget for 2009/2010 be approved
- That the proposal for additional temporary accommodation at Strabane be supported in principle
- That the proposal for a new fitness suite for the Lawrence Building be approved.

15.7 **AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE REPORT (Ref: Draft Minutes of meeting held on 23 November 2009 tabled)**

The Committee Chair referred to a number of items contained in the draft minutes including

- Progress made on Data Protection and Freedom of Information issues
- Risk Management Report. The Director indicated that action would be taken to improve the percentage of invoices paid within 30 days.
- Annual Report & Financial Statements 2008/09 – to be signed off
- External Auditor’s Annual Report 08/09 giving the College an unqualified audit opinion
- Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report to the Governing Body 08/09
- Presentation of Findings giving ‘substantial’ assurance rating in each of the two audited areas
- Conflicts of Interest Policy – a final draft
- Policies, Procedures and Guidelines – to be given further consideration by the Committee
- Letter from DEL: PAC Review of FE Colleges and request for Colleges to consider implementing specific recommendations

It was proposed by Mr McMahon seconded by Mr McBride and agreed to adopt the draft minutes of the Committee and approve the following recommendations:

- The Annual Report and Financial Statements 2008/09 be approved
- The Audit & Risk Annual Report to the Governing Body 08/09 be accepted
- The Conflicts of Interest Policy be approved
- The recommendations contained in the DEL letter on PAC Review of FE Colleges be implemented.

A member queried the accuracy of the job title description of one of the attendees as recorded in the draft minutes. It was agreed to refer this matter back to the Committee.

15.8 **CHAIRMAN’S BUSINESS**

The Chair referred to the following matters:

ACTION Secretary

1. send copy of Audit & Risk Annual Report to DEL
2. prepare reply to DEL letter & consult with GB Chair, Director & Audit Chair
3. arrange “Declaration of Interests” as standing item on agenda of every GB and Committee meeting
4. circulate copy of Conflicts of Interest policy to all members
4. Refer minute back to Audit Committee
5. write to Anne McGarrigle

1. He wished to express his appreciation of the training on Child Protection given by Mrs Anne McGarrigle prior to the Governing Body meeting. The Secretary was requested to write to her.
2. He reminded members of the Christmas lunch on Wednesday 2 December at 12.30 for 1.00pm at the restaurant in the Strand Road Campus
3. He indicated the arrangements for attending to any Governing Body business over the holiday period should it be required.

15.9 DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Ref: Paper GB15.9)

1. Enrolment Update. The Director reported that latest figures still showed considerable growth in student numbers.

2. Local Industrial Relations. This matter had already been discussed under item 15.4

3. ILEX Working Groups. The Director indicated the groups on which the College was represented. A short discussion on the future of HE in the local area followed.

ACTION

Director –
check on car
insurance
requirement

15.10 SECRETARY'S BUSINESS

The Secretary relayed a request from Finance Dept that members supply a copy of their car insurance certificate with their next travelling expenses claim. The Director said he would check that the requirement applied to members of the Governing Body.

15.11 CORRESPONDENCE

This was dealt with under item 15.7

15.12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No business was conducted under this heading.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 24 February 2010 at 5.00pm at the Strabane Campus.

This being all the business the Chair closed the meeting at 6.47pm.

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____