
MINUTES OF THE TWELFTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD AT THE STRAND ROAD CAMPUS ON WEDNESDAY 29 APRIL 2009 COMMENCING AT 5.00PM

PRESENT: Mr H Faulkner (Chair)
Mr M Agnew
Miss E Cavanagh
Mrs J Doherty
Mr L Gallagher
Dame Geraldine Keegan
Prof F Monds
Mr S Murphy (Director)
Mr W McBride
Mrs G McCafferty
Mr D McMahan
Mr A O'Connor
Mr A Rainey

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D McClelland (Secretary)

The Chair welcomed Mr Agnew to his first meeting of the Governing Body.

12.1 APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Mrs M Lestas

12.2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2009

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

12.3 MATTERS ARISING

11.5 Update on correspondence with DEL re-KPMG report. The Chair indicated that this matter would be dealt with under item 12.5.

11.7 Information on Pension Reserve. The Director reported that the information was due to be made available by August 2009.

11.11 Update on college funding negotiations with DEL. The Chair indicated that this matter would be dealt with under item 12.9.

12.4 EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT (Ref: EC Draft Minutes – 23 March 2009)

The Committee Chair drew members' attention to the following matters contained in the draft minutes.

- Draft Development Plan for Training for Success
- Quality Documents. The Committee Chair emphasized the importance of these cross-College documents. It was agreed that they should be referred to the Staffing Committee. The Chair also

ACTION

Secretary –
to publish
approved
minutes

mentioned that it would be useful to include the monitoring of complaints as an additional indicator of College performance.

- ETI Inspection Reports. Members’ attention was drawn to the curriculum area where performance was below average. The Director indicated that the action plan drawn up was being implemented and that a further report would be made to the next meeting of the Education Committee.
- Academic Board and the positive attitude of staff towards quality issues.

Members then enquired about a number of related matters including the status of Investors in People standard within the overall quality framework, the quality measures which the College had in place and benchmarking against other colleges. It was agreed that a summary of key performance indicators would be made available for the next GB meeting.

A discussion also took place on the benefits of senior staff being involved in sector-wide forums.

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

12.5 AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE REPORT (Ref: AC Draft Minutes – 23 March 2009)

The Committee Chair drew members’ attention to the following items contained in the draft minutes

- The action plan relating to the KPMG report. The GB Chair reported that a response had been sent to DEL addressing their concerns. A reply had been received which expressed appreciation for the auspicious manner in which the Audit & Risk Committee and the Governing Body had dealt with the issue. The reply also included an assurance that KPMG had been asked to correct factual inaccuracies.
- Annual Report and Financial Statements 2007/08. The Committee Chair reported that all difficulties had now been resolved and the Committee was recommending to the GB that the accounts be signed.
- Annual Audit Committee Report to the Governing Body. In response to a query the Director indicated he would check if the College was required to make the Report available to the public.

The GB Chair expressed his appreciation and thanks to the Committee Chair and members for bringing matters to a successful conclusion.

It was proposed by Dame Geraldine Keegan seconded by Mrs Doherty and agreed to adopt the draft minutes including acceptance of the following recommendations

- That the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2007/08 be signed off
- That the Annual Report of the Committee to the Governing Body be received.

Members also noted the issue of the External Auditors Report for 2007/08.

12.6 STAFFING COMMITTEE REPORT (Ref: SC Draft Minutes – 31 March 2009)

ACTION
Secretary/Director - to refer quality documents to the Staffing Committee
Director – to include monitoring of complaints as a performance indicator
Director – further report on T&T performance to next Education Committee
Director – to prepare summary of key performance indicators for next GB meeting
Director – to check on publication of Annual Audit report

The Committee Chair referred members to issues contained in the draft minutes

- Staffing issues and requests from staff.
- Redundancy issues. The Director updated members that the need for redundancy criteria was no longer an issue as matters had been resolved through re-deployment.

It was proposed by Dame Geraldine Keegan seconded by Mr Gallagher and agreed to adopt the draft minutes including approval of the recommendation to grant staffing requests.

Members also agreed to the Committee's proposal regarding notification of staff suspensions.

12.7 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE (Ref: FC Draft Minutes - 31 March 2009)

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

- Management accounts. He mentioned that the updated accounts to end of March continued to show no areas of particular concern although investment income was expected to be down. Advice had been received that appropriate College investments were covered by the Irish Government's guarantee scheme.
- Annual Report and Financial Statements 2007/08 - recommendation to sign.
- Estates Issues. The Director reported that the construction notice for the Strand Road development had now been issued and building had commenced. Negotiations on the Limavady Lifelong Learning Building were almost complete.
- Course fees 2009/10.

It was proposed by Mr Rainey seconded by Prof Monds and agreed to adopt the draft minutes including the recommendations

- To approve the signing of the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2007/08
- To approve the recommendation on Course Fees structure for 2009/10.

12.8 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chair reported on the following matters

- The recent opening of the Hairdressing & Beauty Salon in Strabane which he had found to be a very impressive occasion
- The Director and he had met with DEL to discuss the College Development Plan which DEL had accepted
- He had met with the UCU regional and local representatives to discuss issues relating to the recent pay settlement and new contract arrangements. He requested that, to enable negotiations to proceed as positively as possible, recent correspondence to staff be set aside. After discussion by members seeking assurance that it would be beneficial to do so, it was proposed by Mr O'Connor seconded by Mr Agnew and agreed to support the Chair's request.

ACTION

Director –
to develop
paper
relating to
procedures,
guidelines
and
policies

12.9 DIRECTOR’S REPORT (Ref: Paper GB12.9)

The Director referred to the following matters

- Budget 2009/10
- Procedures, Guidelines and Policies. The Director sought clarity from members in relation to documents which require Governing Body approval and those which were considered to be operational guidelines and the prerogative of senior management. After some discussion which included reference to accountability, equality legislation, the need to ensure members were discharging their statutory responsibilities and the role of Committees, no definite decision was reached. It was agreed that the Director should develop a paper on the matter including advice on the legal position for the next Governing Body meeting.
- Events Update. Members commented favourably on the list provided. In reply to a question the Director indicated that careers’ teachers from schools would be very welcome at College open days.
- A language school for Chinese students was being developed as part of the China Development Plan.

In reply to a further question the Director indicated that no proposals had come forth yet from DEL relating to further training initiatives due to the economic downturn.

12.10 UPDATE ON REGIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

The Director reported that lecturing staff had agreed a 3 year pay deal. At present their contracts were being revised. Part-time and associate lecturers’ contracts were also being re-negotiated. He was hopeful that matters will be resolved by June 2009. The Chair thanked the Director for all the work he had done in relation to these negotiations.

12.11 SECRETARY’S BUSINESS

Members agreed to adopt the draft calendar of meetings for 2009/10.

12.12 CORRESPONDENCE

None

12.13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 24 June 2009 at 5.00 pm at the Limavady campus.

This being all the business the Chair closed the meeting at 6.45 pm.

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____