

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY SEVENTH MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE, COMMENCING 12:00**PRESENT**

Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair
Dr S Fisher
Dr K Kennedy
Mr L Murphy, Principal & CE (until 13:30)
Mr B O'Neill
Mr P Thompson

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P McKeown, Finance Director (until agenda item 27.8)
Ms S Kelly, Head of HR (from agenda item 27.8)
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

APOLOGIES

Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services

27.1 WELCOME

The Committee Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

27.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no conflict of interest declarations or of any other business.

27.3 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 FEBRUARY 2025**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 18 February 2025

The Draft Minutes were taken as read and were agreed as a true and accurate record.

PROPOSED, Mr B O'Neill

SECONDED, Dr S Fisher

Report 1 Matters Arising – Finance

There were no finance matters arising from the meeting held on 18 February 2025.

27.4 FINANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT - Mr P McKeown, Finance Director**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1	Tenders Issued
Report 2	Estates Update
Report 3	Business Support Centre Update
Report 4	Management Accounts for 9 Months to 30 April 2025
Report 5	Budget Update 2025/26

Report 6	Draft OBC Proposed Foodovation and Skills Centre, Causeway Growth Deal
Report 7	Prompt Payment – verbal report

Report 1 Tenders Issued Report

The Finance Director updated the Committee on recent movements within the Tenders Report.

Report 2 Estates Update

In relation to the Estates Update Report the Finance Director stated that due to the current budget situation there are no minor works projects planned.

Progress was noted on the New Frameworks (Design Team & Contractor). Arrangements are now in place to ensure continuity of services post July 2025 until the new service providers are secured.

In response to Mr B O'Neill's question the Finance Director reported he would enquire if sustainability and carbon footprint matters are considered in relation to the procurement of frameworks.

City Deals - Derry City & Strabane - The Finance Director reported on a CPD resource issue leading to a delay with CPD working on the PQQ documents relating to the appointment of the Integrated Consultant Team (ICT).

The WHSCT who are moving into the Strabane Campus site have expressed a wish to potentially seek early access to a substantial part of the site to commence their new build project. The original plan was that the College would vacate the site first. It is expected that completion of the new Campus in the Canal Basin build to be late 2029. This has the potential to cause financial pressures for WHSCT. Options are currently being considered.

It was agreed for the Finance Director to arrange a briefing meeting with relevant College staff and Governor, Dr K Kennedy.

Report 3 Business Support Centre Update

All targets for the year to March 2025 have been achieved. Some DfE funding has been reduced for 2025/26 however further bids have been placed with the Department (DfE). The College has been successful as a partner in two PeacePlus projects; PRISM, (led by South West College) and NW CAM2 (led by Catalyst).

The Business Support Centre is in discussion with three potential foreign direct investors regarding Assured Skills Academies.

Report 4 Management Accounts for 9 Months to 30 April 2025

The Finance Director reported on the movements within the Management Accounts since last reported to the Committee in February 2025. Key items included an overspend in teaching staff costs mainly relating to the higher than budgeted pay rise. An underspend in non-teaching staff costs which mainly relates to the lower than budgeted pay rise.

Expenditure was over budget mainly due to investment in computer, equipment and estates.

In conclusion the Finance Director indicated he had no major concerns with the end of year July 2025 accounts.

The Finance Director referred to the PFI handover that is due to take place in January 2026. The College has discussed the accounting treatment with the Audit Office. The College has consistently applied the PFI accounting model. This matter was also discussed through the Audit & Risk, May 2025 Committee meeting.

Updated figures were provided on the Aged Debtors Report issued at 1 May 2025. These figures were significantly reduced on the previous figures.

Report 5 Budget Update 2025/26

Following the last Committee meeting the College received a revised 2025/26 Draft Budget position on 28 April 2025 with an improved allocation. The Draft Budget now provides £16.7m to FE Colleges towards staff pay pressures including Employers' National Insurance.

The College bid for non-staff financial pressures (£907k) has not been funded. This included the purchasing of AI licences. It is hoped to secure this through the monitoring rounds.

A discussion took place on the provision of data licences for students and staff. The Finance Director agreed to gather some further information on this.

The College has bid for a MaSN of 498 for 2025/26, an increase of 90 from the 2024/25 targets. The funding for the 2025/26 year has been reduced by 3.1% across the sector of which the College reduction is £9k.

The Step-Up Project is budgeted at £350k for 2025/26, a reduction from £937k in 2024/25. No formal communication has been received to date from the Department (DfE).

The Finance Director provided explanation to the increase of 13.6% in relation to Teaching & Training Staff costs on 2024/25 forecasted spend.

Premises costs were showing an increase of 51.4%. The main reason of this increase is the additional cost associated with the transfer of TUPE staff from the PFI contractor, which will take effect from February 2026.

Approval was received from the Department of Finance (DoF) and DfE for a new insurance provider. This will result in efficiency savings for the Sector of approximately £250k. UMAL will provide these insurance services.

The NDPB to 31 March 2026 stated the College is forecasting a pressure position of £617k. The Department have indicated that the £907k pressure previously noted be included within the NDPB return. This will increase the forecasted pressure to approximately £1.5m.

Members were content to recommend approval of the Draft Budget 2025/26 to the Governing Body.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Dr S Fisher

Report 6 Draft OBC Proposed Foodovation and Skills Centre Causeway Growth Deal

The Finance Director referred to the correspondence (27.5) on the revised timelines of the delivery of the OBC. The previous target for completion of OBCs for projects funded under the Causeway Coast and Glens Growth Deal have been revised from June to September 2025, however it has been agreed that given the progress to date the OBC for the Foodovation and Skills Centre will be submitted to Council for review by the Leisure and Development Committee on 5 August 2025.

The Finance Director replied to queries from the Committee.

The Committee were content to recommend approval in principle of the Draft OBC to the Governing Body.

PROPOSED, Mr B O'Neill

SECONDED, Mrs D Creevy

Report 7 Prompt Payment – verbal report

The Prompt payment figure for the 30 days for April 2025 was 94% and the year to date was 96%.

27.5 CORRESPONDENCE – Finance

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 27.5 Growth Deal Communication – May 2025

This correspondence was referred to earlier in the meeting (27.4, Report 6).

Other correspondence to note was received from the Director of FE to Chairs of Governing Bodies in relation to the charitable status of FE Colleges. The key message is that the Department for Communities (DfC) are not currently in a position to address the issue as it requires legislative process. The timeframe will now be in the 2027-2032 Assembly mandate. The status quo regarding the position of FE Colleges will remain. The impact of not retaining charitable status was discussed in Committee.

The Principal & CE left the meeting for a few minutes during this item.

27.6 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS - Finance**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS****Report 1 Review of Committee's Terms of Reference**

The Committee were content to recommend approval to the Governing Body. No amendments were made.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Dr S Fisher

Report 2 Committee Membership

The Committee Chair notified members that unfortunately she will be stepping out of the role as Chair and membership of the Committee. An expression of interest will be issued to Board Members.

The Principal and Committee members took the opportunity to thank Mrs Creevy for undertaking the role as Chair and in bringing her expertise and experience to that role.

The Director of Finance acknowledged staff member Mrs Carole McLaughlin, Finance Business Partner who had recently resigned from the College. The Finance Director commended her dedication and commitment throughout her long service with the College and noted she will be missed from the team.

27.7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no any other business.

The Committee Chair thanked Mr McKeown for his report.

Mr McKeown left the meeting at 13:13 and Ms Kelly joined the meeting at this juncture.

STAFFING MATTERS**27.8 Matters Arising – Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 18 February 2025 – verbal report**

There were no matters arising.

The Committee Chair invited Ms Kelly to present her Management Report.

27.9 HR SERVICES MANAGEMENT REPORT – Ms S Kelly, Head of HR**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS****HR Services Management Report**

Report 1 Recruitment Update

Report 2 Staff Development Update

Report 3 Staff Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2025/28

Report 4 Human Resources Business Plan 2024/25

Report 5 Equality, Data Monitoring Review 2024/25

Report 6 Fair Employment Monitoring Review 2024/25

HR Services Management Report

The Head of HR reported that a total of 23 recruitment exercises were completed from 10/02/2025 to 20/05/2025 (Report 1). The majority of posts recruited since September 2024 were support posts 47% and 62% of these posts were either Band 3 or 4.

The Committee were apprised of the 'hard to fill' posts. The College had applied to DfE under the 'Application to Recruit Full-time FE Lecturers Outside the Requirements of FE Circular 01/12' mechanism with positive outcomes. The Department (DfE) have also approved for the College to extend the Essential Skills criteria to assist with recruiting.

The sickness levels through 2024/25 have reduced overall. The sickness absence for the whole College at April 2025 was 5.29% compared to April 2024 at 6.05%.

In terms of health and wellbeing, the month of June will focus on 'Men's Health'. During February and March 2025 over 160 staff members participated in various workshops.

Completion rates for the mandatory training modules (excluding the Cyber Security module) were showing 91% and above as at May 2025. The target rate is 90%.

Cyber security training must be completed annually rather than every three years for the remaining five modules.

From September 2024, 323 Staff Development applications have been received by the HR Team to date.

The Principal & CE left the meeting during this item.

Report 2 Staff Development Update

From 1 September 2024 to 13 May 2025, 683 staff members availed of staff development. The staff recognition awards take place on 20 June 2025 with ten individual categories. A course is currently being developed for Curriculum Managers. The College Training Needs Analysis (TNA) process is under review for the 2025/26 academic year. This will inform the training needs for 2025/26.

Report 3 Staff Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2024/27

The Committee noted the report.

Report 4 Human Resources Business Plan 2024/25

The June 2025 updates within the Report were noted.

Report 5 Equality Data Monitoring Review 2024/25

The Head of HR shared key highlights from the Equality, Data Monitoring Review 2024/25. This exercise reviews the College employment practices and responsibilities under Section 75 categories. Despite ongoing affirmative actions year on year there is little movement in relation to a balance of the community background of staff.

The Head of HR agreed that the data in relation to ROI staff be removed from the analysis and shared at the next Committee meeting.

The use of various social media platforms may have contributed to the increase in applications received (567) compared to the previous year (488).

Report 6 Fair Employment Monitoring Review 2024/25

The Committee noted the Review Report.

27.10 CORRESPONDENCE – STAFFING

There was no correspondence received.

27.11 COMMITTEE CHAIR’S BUSINESS – STAFFING

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Internal Audit Review – HR Pre Employment Process

Report 1.1 Summary Tracking Report – IA Review, HR Pre Employment Process

Report 2 Internal Audit Review – Additional Support Funding and Funding Allocation Processes for Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

The Committee noted the reports with the positive outcomes.

27.12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – STAFFING

There was no any other business to discuss.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Kelly.

27.13 CLIENT SERVICES REPORTS

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Equality Report

Report 2 Data Protection/Compliance Update

The Reports were taken as read and there were no queries.

27.14 SCHEDULE OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2025/26

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

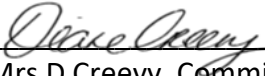
Schedule of Committee Meetings 2025/26

The Schedule was noted by the Committee.

27.15 RESERVED BUSINESS

Taken separately. This part of the meeting ended at 13:53.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 11 September 2025

Signed 
Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair

Date 11 September 2025

APPROVED