
**MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON
1 FEBRUARY 2021 VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE, COMMENCING 1200**

PRESENT

Mrs R Dougherty (Committee Chair)
Mr L Murphy (Principal & Chief Executive)
Mr S McGregor
Mr B Quinn

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P McKeown, Director of Finance & Economic Engagement (until 1325)
Ms S Kelly, HR Manager (from 1330)
Mr G Bradley, Estates Manager (for presentation item 7.0 only)
Mrs É Doherty, Governance Secretary

Due to restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic all members and attendees were joining the meeting via video conference.

7.0 PRESENTATION

The Committee Chair welcomed Mr Gary Bradley, Estates Manager to the meeting. Mr Bradley brought members through the Estates Update Report (Paper RC 7.4, Report 2) highlighting key items, including the current position on the Springtown Redevelopment Project. A dispute still exists between the ICT and the Contractor OHMG on the final account. OHMG are currently undertaking a review of the project in conjunction with an external Quantity Surveyor. The most recent figure presented by the ICT to OHMG is 3% greater than the original tender amount.

In relation to the 2 no Compensation Events outstanding (CE07, CE09) submitted by the ICT there has been no further correspondence from RPP in relation to these matters.

A robust discussion took place and members were in agreement with the Project Board's management of these issues. In response to a member's question the Director of Finance & Economic Engagement reported that should there be a significant overspend based on the OHMG figure for the Project over and above that approved by DfE, the College do not have the funds to cover this. Discussions will have to take place with the Department (DfE).

The Estates Manager referred to the Minor Work Projects planned for all Campuses with anticipation completion dates by May 2021. The refurbishment works in Main Street, Limavady assembly hall and the Foodovation Unit are now complete bar minor snagging. The Estates Team continues to work with other Departments and Graham FM to manage the impact of COVID on College operations.

In concluding his Report, the Estates Manager reported on the City Deal for Derry & Strabane area and the proposed Food Village within the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area.

The Director of Finance & Economic Engagement added that the College has been asked to progress an Outline Business Case for the Strabane Project and this will be brought to the Committee in due course. On the Causeway Deal, the College in November 2020 made a presentation on the Food Village to local Councillors and Council staff. Mr S McGregor stated he would welcome the opportunity to meet the Limavady Councillors on this proposal. The Director of Finance and Economic Engagement replied he would be happy to facilitate this.

Following on, the Estates Manager referred to the Estate Strategy Briefing Paper, a framework for accommodation planning at the College. The College is required to have in place an Estates Strategy (DfE Circular FE 01/18). The Estates Manager identified the proposed capital projects (over £1m) across the campuses.

A member requested that in the final draft report it would be beneficial for a clear link to be shown between College objectives and the identified projects. He also stated it would be useful to have a College copy of the plan which shows proposed works less than £1m.

The final draft of the Estates Strategy will be complete by 31 March 2021 and will progress through the Committee and the Governing Body. Thereafter the Strategy will be reviewed annually.

The Committee Chair thanked Mr Bradley for his time. The members found the presentation both informative and interesting.

Mr Bradley left the meeting at this juncture.

7.1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Progressing to the main Committee business the Committee Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Dr N Hand.

7.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no conflict of interest declarations. There were no any other business matters received.

7.3 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 NOVEMBER 2020

➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 2 November 2020

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

PROPOSED; Mrs R Dougherty

SECONDED; Mr S McGregor

7.3.1 Matters Arising – Finance - November 2020

6.4 Draft Estates Strategy to come to the next Committee meeting.
Estates Manager invited to the February 2021 meeting (7.0)

- To recommend approval to the Governing Body of the Annual Report & Financial Statements Year End 31 July 2020, subject to the Audit & Risk Committee approving these at their meeting on 3 November 2020. The Financial Statements were approved at the Audit & Risk Committee. At the Governing Body meeting the Board were not in a position to certify the Financial Statements as there were a few outstanding matters following the External Audit. When the outstanding matters were finalised a Special Governing Body meeting was called on 16 December 2020. At this meeting the Annual Report and Financial Statements Year End 31 July 2020 were approved.
- To recommend approval of the Budget 2020/21 - Approval received at the Governing Body meeting held on 11 November 2020.
- To recommend approval for bad debt write-off totalling £4K to the Governing Body - Approval received at the Governing Body meeting held on 11 November 2020.

The Committee Chair then invited Mr McKeown, Director of Finance & Economic Engagement to present his report to the Committee.

7.4 FINANCE – Mr P McKeown, Director of Finance & Economic Engagement

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1	Tenders Issued Report
Report 2	Estates Update Report
Report 3	Business Support Centre Report
Report 4	Management Accounts for 5 Months to 31 December 2020
Report 5	NDPB Return December 2020
Report 6	Budget Update 2020/21
Report 7	Fees & Charges Policy 2021/22
Report 8	Prompt Payment – verbal report

The Director of Finance & Economic Engagement reported there were no issues to highlight within the Tenders Issued Report. The Business Support Centre Report was an additional Report to the Committee. It will also progress through the Education Committee. The Director of Finance & Economic Engagement stated he felt confident the targets would be met to 31 March 2021. Enrolments for Skills Focus had increased, possibly due to remote learning being able to facilitate more students. The College successfully bid for funding from the Department (DfE) to support people affected by the COVID situation. A variety of programmes have been delivered and planned. DfE Assured Skills Academies continue with online delivery. It

is hoped a Welding Academy will commence onsite in March 2021, providing COVID restrictions allow.

The Principal reported that the Department (DfE) have funded the College and SERC to help local businesses who are dealing with international markets navigate BREXIT. Forty candidates over the two Colleges will undertake an online programme from the Institute of Export and International Trade.

Referring to the Management Accounts for the five months to 31 December 2020 the Director of Finance & Economic Engagement stated that in regards to income, DfE Grant, the drawdown of recurrent grant has been higher than budgeted which has resulted in a positive variance of £532K. Skills Focus and HLA income were under budget however the budget figures are still expected to be met. VEP Link Course Fees were showing an adverse variance of £243K, however this was a timing matter relating to the issuing of invoices. It is expected to come close to budget. HE Income was showing a positive variance of £125K. Part-Time, FE Fees are £157K down on budget due to the COVID situation. This loss of income has been compensated with £147K funds received under the DfE Skills Intervention Funding. European Grant as expected was down on budget, some online projects are being delivered online however all mobilities of staff and students to mainland Europe have ceased.

In relation to Expenditure, Staffing Costs were showing a favourable variance of £586K. Sickness levels and COVID absences have not been as high as budgeted to date. Underspends are likely to be offset by additional expenditure in IT and Estates. Discussion took place on the collection of student debt which is proving challenging in the current climate and it is expected that this income may reduce in the coming months. Consideration of rebates for HE Fees is the Department's (DfE) decision. The NDPB Return for December 2020 showed two additional allocation of funds bringing the revised allocation to £28.5m. The funding for the STS Project that the College manages on behalf of the Sector brings the total Delegated Expenditure Limit (DEL) to £29.4m. The College is estimating that its full allocation of £28.5m will be spent or committed by 31 March 2021.

The Director of Finance & Economic Engagement brought members through the main proposed changes to the Fees & Charges Policy 2021/22. These included the amended definition of an 'international student'. This is pending the Department (DfE) issuing a revised Circular FE 14/12, 'Further Education Residency and Funding Requirements'. The College will continue to charge the ROI students in line with NI student fees. ESOL courses (Section 6) will be removed from the current Policy as this is already included in the Policy (Section 8).

Members were content to approve the amended Fees & Charges Policy 2021/22 pending receipt of the Departments revised Circular FE14/12.

PROPOSED; Mrs R Dougherty

SECONDED; Mr S McGregor

In concluding his report the Director of Finance & Economic Engagement reported that the prompt payment figures for the 30 days to January 2021 was 93% and for the year to date was 94%.

7.5 CORRESPONDENCE – FINANCE

There was no correspondence received.

7.6 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS – FINANCE

The Committee Chair had no further business to discuss.

7.7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FINANCE

There was no any other business to discuss.

The Committee Chair thanked Mr McKeown for his report.

Mr McKeown, Director of Finance & Economic Engagement left the room at this juncture and Ms S Kelly, HR Manager joined the meeting.

The Committee Chair reported that she recently met with some of the Safeguarding Team to discuss the work they were undertaking towards achieving a Quality Standard in Carer Support Accreditation (QSCS). This will provide opportunities for the College to review and improve best practice, provide greater consistency for young adult carers across the College and develop a sustainable approach to carer support. Members welcomed and supported this important piece of work. The Committee Chair added that the College has adopted Elemental's Digital Social Prescribing Platform which will enhance student wellbeing and promote new ways of working using social prescribing.

The Committee Chair then invited Ms Kelly, HR Manager to report to the Committee.

7.8 STAFFING MATTERS – Ms S Kelly, HR Manager**7.8.1 Matters Arising – Resources Committee Draft Minutes Nov 2020 - Staffing Matters**

- The HR Manager to provide information on accessing the Inspire Workplace Hub to the Committee - Members received this information on 2 December 2020

➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

Report 1	Management Report
Report 2	Recruitment Update Report
Report 3	Appointment & Leavers Report
Report 4	Staff Development Programme – Teaching Staff, Feb – June 2021
Report 4.1	Staff Development Activities – Teaching – Semester 2, 2021

The HR Manager reported that since the last Committee meeting in November 2020, 34 recruitment exercises have been carried out with no difficult to recruit posts. Twelve posts are currently going through the recruitment process. There have been 19 permanent, 15 temporary and 7 leavers within this period.

To date for this academic year (2020-2021) the College have processed 129 staff applications through AccessNI. In terms of teaching staff, absences have reduced showing 2.89% for December 2020 against 5.59% for December 2019. Support staff absences have also reduced showing 2.29% for December 2020 against 4.59% for December 2019. COVID has impacted these figures however HR staff continue to work in partnership with the Occupational Health and Inspire to reduce these figures.

A Staff Wellbeing Programme for Semester 2 has been drafted and will be issued to members of the Committee. A comprehensive programme of staff development activities took place during the Inter-semester week. The attendance at some of these events was very positive with 151 attendees at the Learning and Teaching Conference, which was held online. A total of 612 staff members attended the various events with a total of 1090 training hours. Going forward HR will focus on a piece of work to promote the staff development opportunities available to support staff. The HR Manager stated that a Staff Wellbeing Strategy is currently being drafted based on the Business in the Community Working Well Model. A copy will be forwarded to members.

7.9 OTHER REPORTS

➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

Report 1	Safeguarding Report
Report 1.1	Draft FE Sector Safeguarding, Care & Welfare Policy COVID-19 Addendum
Report 2	Internal Audit – GDPR Review – Update on Recommendations
Report 3	Equality Report

Members noted and approved the Addendum to the FE Sector, Safeguarding, Care & Welfare Policy to reflect the advice from the Public Health Agency (PHA) and other relevant authorities in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The document sets out additional information to the current Policy.

PROPOSED; Mrs R Dougherty

SECONDED; Mr B Quinn

The Committee Chair noted that the GDPR Review recommendations were now complete. The Equality Report highlighted a number of activities and promotions that have taken place since the last update to the committee in October 2020.

7.10 CORRESPONDENCE – STAFFING

There was no correspondence to note.

7.11 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS – STAFFING

The Committee Chair had no further business to discuss.

7.12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no any other business to discuss.

7.13 RESERVED BUSINESS

Taken separately.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9 June 2021

The Committee Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and brought the meeting to a close at 1410. Reserved Business items followed.

Signed; _____ Committee Chair
Mrs R Dougherty

Date; 9 June 2021

APPROVED