

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

Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair
Dr S Fisher
Mr P Thompson

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P McKeown Finance Director
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

APOLOGIES

Mr L Murphy, Mr B O'Neill, Dr K Kennedy

24.1 WELCOME

The Committee Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Due to quoracy issues that would come into effect later in the meeting it was agreed only the Finance matters would be taken at this meeting. The Committee will reconvene on 8 November 2024 at 9:00 to take the remaining agenda items.

24.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

24.3 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2024**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 11 September 2024

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

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Dr S Fisher

Report 1 Matters Arising – Finance

23.00 The Foodovation presentation slides from the September 2024 meeting were including with the Governing Body meeting papers for 25 September 2024.

23.7/Report 2 Following an expression of interest sent out to relevant members of the Committee, Dr S Fisher has agreed to take on the role as Vice Chair to the Committee.

The Committee Chair invited Mr P McKeown to present his management report.

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

Report 1	Tenders Issued
Report 2	Estates Update
Report 2.1	Draft Business Case - Strand Road Sports Assembly Hall Refurbishment
Report 2.2	Annex A Condition Report
Report 2.3	Estates Strategy – verbal update
Report 3	Business Support Centre Update
Report 3.1	College Innovation Network – Final Report October 2024
Report 4	Annual Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2024
Report 5	Management Accounts for 2 Months to 30 September 2024
Report 6	Budget Update 2024/25
Report 7	Draft Student Council Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2024
Report 8	Prompt Payment – verbal report
Report 9	Bad-Debt Write-Off Report
Report 10	Fees & Charges Policy 2025/26

Report 1 Tenders Issued Report

Members noted the report. The Finance Director reported he had no concerns.

Report 2 Estates Update**Report 2.1 Draft Business Case - Strand Road Sports Assembly Hall Refurbishment****Report 2.2 Annex A Condition Report****Report 2.3 Estates Strategy – verbal update**

The Finance Director referred to the Estates Strategy Update Report that was submitted to the Department (DfE) in August 2021. This Strategy included capital projects all of which had a value of +£1m which included the following;

- New Build Virtual Augmented Reality (VAR) Centre
- Refurbishment of Science Rooms
- Refurbishment of Library
- Refurbishment of Sports Hall & External Cladding
- New Build Strabane Campus (funded via City Deal and with a separate business case process).

The Foodovation project with the Causeway Growth Deal may be added to the Estates Strategy in due course.

Referring to the project listed above, the Refurbishment of the Sports Hall & External Cladding and the attached Draft Business Case for this Project (Report 2.1), the Finance Director reported on the key items within the Business Case. As part of the

proposed scheme the College is also planning to refurbish the existing fitness suite. Subject to internal review and sign off the intention is to submit the OBC formally to DfE in December 2024.

Members were content to recommend in principle approval of the Draft Business Case to request £2,536,173 of funding from the Department (DfE) to refurbish the existing Sports Assembly Hall.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Dr S Fisher

The Finance Director was pleased to report the welcome news in the Budget announcement in which the Chancellor confirmed that the paused funding for the Growth Deals in both Causeway Coast & Glens & Mid-South West has been lifted.

The Estates team continue to work closely with Northwin/Grahams in anticipation of the handover of the PFI Northland Building in January 2026.

The Sustainability Committee has been re-established. The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards and the Finance Director will co-chair this Committee.

Report 3 Business Support Centre Update

Report 3.1 College Innovation Network – Final Report October 2024

The Finance Director noted the engagements with Edinburgh College. The Finance Director and Mr F Tuffy, Business Support Centre Manager attended and presented at Edinburgh College's Innovation Conference in October 2024. The attached Report 3.1 was presented which included NWRC's Business Support model as a case study.

Report 4 Annual Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2024

The Finance Director reported the External Audit was almost complete. The Draft Report To Those Charged With Governance (DRTTCWG) is due to be issued to the College on 8 November 2024.

The Committee were content to recommend approval to the Governing Body for the Annual Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2024 subject to the receipt of the Draft Report To Those Charged With Governance reporting no major issues and also the Financial Statements progressing through the Audit & Risk Committee meeting on 12 November 2024.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr P Thompson

Report 5 Management Accounts for 2 Months to 30 September 2024

Members noted the Accounts. The Finance Director reported he had no concerns.

Report 6 Budget Update 2024/25

The Department (DfE) advised the College of an updated DEL Resources Budget of £33.035m in October 2024. Main changes to the Budget 2024/25, DfE Grants, Skill UP funding an increase of £540k together with additional funding for other projects. Recent funding not included in the Budget Update includes North West Digital Pathways and Green Accelerated Skills Programmes that have been awarded.

Welcome news was that the Skill Focus funding, which is currently 75%, DfE funded with a 25% contribution from employers has been reduced to a 10% employer contribution.

There has been agreement from Trade Unions on the Support staff pay rise from April 2024. A £1,290 increase or 2.5% will be awarded whichever is higher. There are still no developments for the academic staff for September 2024.

Staff costs have increased (£468k) these are mainly related to additional funding received.

The Committee agreed to recommend approval of the Budget 2024/25 to the Governing Body.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr P Thompson

Report 7 Draft Student Council Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2024

An independent auditor prepared the Accounts.

The Committee agreed to recommend approval to the Governing Body for the Draft Student Council Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2024.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr P Thompson

Report 8 Prompt Payment – verbal report

The Prompt payment figure for the 30 days for October was 93% and the year to date was 95%.

Report 9 Bad-Debt Write-Off Report

The Finance Director provided detail on the Bad-Debt Write-Off Report.

It was agreed to recommend approval to the Governing Body for the bad debt write-off for £7,124.50. This represents 32 individual debts.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr P Thompson

Report 10 Fees & Charges Policy 2025/26

The Finance Director reported that he was not recommending any changes to the fees charged in respect to full-time, Higher Education or part-time courses for 2025/26.

The Committee agreed to recommend approval to the Governing Body.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr P Thompson

24.5 CORRESPONDENCE – Finance

There was no correspondence to note.

24.6 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS - Finance

It was noted that Mr B O'Neill will represent the Board on the new Strabane Campus Project Board.

24.7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee Chair thanked Mr McKeown for his report. A Committee member had to leave the meeting at this juncture. This left the meeting inquorate. The Committee Chair ended the meeting at 13:52. The Committee agreed to re-convene on 8 November 2024.

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE RE-CONVENED MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 09:00

PRESENT

Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair

Dr S Fisher

Mr P Thompson

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms S Kelly, HR Manager

Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services

Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

APOLOGIES

Mr L Murphy, Principal & CE, Mr B O'Neill, Dr K Kennedy

The Committee Chair thanked everyone for attending the reconvened meeting. An update was provided to Governors on the position following the Resources Committee, Finance meeting on 5 November. Approval was received at this meeting for the Annual Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2024 subject to the receipt of the Draft Report To Those Charged With Governance reporting no major issues and also the Financial Statements progressing through the Audit & Risk Committee meeting on 12 November 2024.

Since that meeting on 5 November 2024, the NIAO have identified issues in the valuation of the pension asset. This issue impacts all colleges. Update valuations will now be requested and the Accounts amended accordingly. Approval will then be sought from the Audit & Risk, Resources Committees and the Board for the amended Annual Report & Financial Statements.

STAFFING MATTERS

24.8 Matters Arising – Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 11 September 2024 – verbal report

23.13 Report 1 The Governing Body approved the Equality & Good Relations Progress Report April 2023 – March 2024 at the Governing Body meeting held on 25 September 2024.

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

24.9 HR SERVICES MANAGEMENT REPORT – Ms S Kelly, HR Manager

➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

- Report 24.9 HR Services Management Report
- Report 1 HR Services Annual Report – September 2023 – August 2024
- Report 2 Health & Wellbeing Brochure, Semester 1, 2024/25
- Report 3 Learning & Development Programme – Semester 1, 2024-25
- Report 3.1 Learning & Development Plan 2024-25

Report 24.9 HR Services Management Report

The HR Manager reported that from 21/08/2024 to 22/10/2024 a total of 41 recruitment exercises were completed. Since 1 September 2024 the College has advertised a total of 35 posts. The majority of these were support posts (27). Within the Curriculum Resourcing Plan 2024, 31 posts were approved, 77% of the posts have been filled and work continues to fill the additional posts. There continues to be 'difficult to recruit' posts in certain areas. The Department (DfE) have had conversations with the College to review criteria relating to the Trainer Assessor post in Magilligan which has been particularly difficult to fill.

In relation to the sickness absence review, days lost per employee in the Sector is currently 10.68. The College is second lowest with 9.40 days lost per employee. The % Lost Time Rate for Academic staff has reduced from 2.92% in September 2023 to 2.21% in September 2024 and has increased for Support staff from 4.11% in September 2023 to 4.56% in September 2024. The most common reasons for absence within the College from 1 August – 17 October 2024 has been hospital/post operative and personal stress.

The Sector benchmarking figures relating to staff turnover rates for 2023/24 was showing 9.15% for the College against the Sector average at 13.52%.

The HR Manager provided details on learning and development, including mandatory training, the staff development applications. The Staff Development Brochure was issued recently which includes the upcoming training sessions for this academic year. The Annual Conference took place on 28 October 2024, 'Empowering Improvement'.

Report 1 HR Services Annual Report – September 2023 – August 2024

The HR Manager outlined some key areas of working during this period. This included the summary of outcomes and results for 2023/24 in numerous areas. It was a challenging year and the HR Manager noted the industrial action and the Voluntary Severance Scheme followed by the commencement of a restructuring exercise of the Directorate. Support programmes are being developed to support senior leaders deliver their leadership and management responsibilities. The Committee Chair thanked the HR Manager and her team on the extensive work as detailed within the Report.

Report 2 Health & Wellbeing Brochure, Semester 1, 2024/25

The Brochure was noted, for the month of November the theme will be 'Inspiring Men'.

Report 3 Learning & Development Programme – Semester 1, 2024-25

Report 3.1 Learning & Development Plan 2024-25

Members noted the reports.

24.10 CORRESPONDENCE – STAFFING

There was no correspondence received.

24.11 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS – STAFFING

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Internal Audit Review – Learning & Development Update on Progress of Actions

All audit recommendations have now been implemented.

24.12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – STAFFING

There was no any other business to discuss.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Kelly and invited Ms Moss to present the next reports.

24.13 CLIENT SERVICES REPORTS – Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Equality Report

Report 2 Data Protection/Compliance Update

Report 1 Equality Report

The Head of Client Services noted the recent and forthcoming awareness days. The Equality Working Group continue to meet with various agenda items. There is focus on the White Ribbon NI Pledge Working Group. This aligns to the Programme for Government's Strategy in relation to ending violence against women and girls. Good Relations Week included meeting with REACH and TRIAX Neighbourhood Partnership. New links have been established with the Koram Centre in Strabane. The process to renew the College's charities for the next two academic years is progressing. In concluding her report the Head of Client Services highlighted the Section 75 categories.

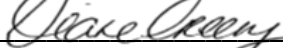
Report 2 Data Protection/Compliance Update

The Head of Client Services provided detail on the updated request for information for this academic year. Work has taken place on student communications to raise awareness of protecting data online and smishing/phishing threats.

24.14 RESERVED BUSINESS

Taken separately. This part of the meeting ended at 09:53

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 18 February 2025

Signed; 
Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair

Date: 18 February 2025