

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

Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair
Dr S Fisher
Mr B O'Neill
Mr P Thompson

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P McKeown Finance Director (until agenda item 26.9)
Mr S Kelly, Head of HR (from agenda item 26.9)
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

APOLOGIES

Mr L Murphy, Principal & CE
Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services

26.1 WELCOME

The Committee Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

26.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

26.3 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 NOVEMBER 2024**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 5 November 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

24.4 R2.3 Management Report - Estates Strategy - to recommend in principle approval of the Draft Business Case to request £2.5m of funding from the DfE to refurbish the existing Sports Assembly Hall - approved at the Governing Body meeting held on 20 November 2024.

R4 Annual Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31/07/24 - The Committee were content to recommend approval to the Governing Body, 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 - following the Resources Committee meeting an issue was raised by the External Auditor which impacted all Colleges in

relation to the NILGOSC Pension Scheme. A further Committee meeting was subsequently arranged for December 2024 to manage this issue. (Ref 26.4)

The following were recommended by the Committee and approved at the Governing Body meeting held on 20 November 2024.

- R6** Budget 2024/25
- R7** Student Council Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31/07/24
- R9** Bad Debt Write-Off - for £7,124.50. This represents 32 individual debts.
- R10** Fees & Charges Policy 2025/26

26.4 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2024

➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 9 December 2024

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

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr B O'Neill

Report 1 Matters Arising – Finance

25.3 Annual Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31/07/24 - The Committee were content to recommend approval to the Governing Body. Approved at the Special Governing Body meeting held on 9 December 2024.

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

26.5 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 5 Months to 31 December 2024
- Report 4.1 Management Accounts for 6 Months to 31 January 2025
- Report 5 Budget Update 2025/26
- Report 5.1 DfE Correspondence February 2025 – Resource DEL Draft Budget 2025/26
- Report 6 Prompt Payment – verbal report

Report 1 Tenders Issued Report

The Finance Director reported he had no major concerns with the Tenders Report. The College has awarded a tender for the provision of Debt Management services. This will be to manage older debts, on a commission basis on the debts recovered.

Report 2 Estates Update

Minor works were noted subject to budget cover post March 2025.

The current Framework for a Design Team ends in March 2025 and the Contractors Framework ends in July 2025. Progress regarding the procurement of new service providers is not scheduled to conclude until early 2026, therefore there is an operational requirement for the continuation of the existing Frameworks.

Representatives of the Estates Managers Group are currently liaising with Legal Advisors and CPD to establish how best to progress this issue. The Finance Director indicated there may be a potential risk related to the timeline in the appointment of a new contractor. This risk relates to the College not being able to meet its statutory obligations.

The Finance Director indicated this potential risk will be reported to the February Audit & Risk Committee meeting.

Following on from matters arising (Ref 24.4, Report 2.3) in relation to the refurbishment of the Strand Road Sports Hall, a letter of support has been received from North West Cricket Union. The final draft of the OBC will be submitted to the Department (DfE) by the month end.

Welcome news was noted in relation to the approval of the new Strabane Campus as part of the Canal Basin City Deal Project. The timeline for completion is estimated for the academic year commencing September 2029.

In relation to the Causeway Coast & Glens, Growth Deal, Grant Thornton are preparing the OBC. Workshops are ongoing. It is hoped to have a final draft by April 2025.

Report 3 Business Support Centre Update

Targets have been achieved or on track to achieve for 31 March 2025.

Report 4 Management Accounts for 5 Months to 31 December 2024**Report 4.1 Management Accounts for 6 Months to 31 January 2025**

Members noted the Accounts. The Finance Director reported he had no concerns to the Accounts for 31 March 2025 which will report a breakeven position. Forecasting information was not included within the Accounts for the period 1 April – 31 July 2025 due to the recent correspondence on the draft budget for 2025/26, (Ref Report 5.1). The Finance Director reported that the outstanding matters with the previous catering contractor (OCS) have now been resolved. The Director highlighted other movements within the Accounts.

Report 5 Budget Update 2025/26**Report 5.1 DfE Correspondence February 2025 – Resource DEL Draft Budget 2025/26**

The Finance Director shared with the Committee a breakdown of the proposed draft budget 2025/26. The financial outlook for 2025/26 appears to be challenging as indicated in the DfE Correspondence (Report 5.1). The FE Sector reduction in budget is £18.02m for 2025/26.

The Finance Director provided the Committee with various scenarios on how the sector cut will be divided amongst colleges, with explanations that are currently under consideration. All the scenarios will have a profound impact on the College. The potential reductions are estimated to fall within the £2.2m – £2.9m range. The Finance Director provided data for teaching costs per student full-time equivalent (FTE), (Ref Report 26.5, Report 4). Teaching costs (FTE) have increased by 20% in 2024 against 2023. This mainly relates to the staff pay rise and the drop in student numbers. The Finance Director highlighted a couple of examples where student FTEs within a vocational area had dropped but costs had continued to increase. It will be challenging to increase enrolments within the proposed financial climate.

Members got the opportunity to ask the Finance Director questions and comment on the options provided. The Department (DfE) has advised that the sector will determine how the reduction will be distributed among the colleges. Sector Principals and Finance Directors continue to meet.

Report 6 Prompt Payment – verbal report

The Prompt payment figure for the 30 days for January 2025 was 94% and the year to date was 95%.

26.6 CORRESPONDENCE – Finance

There was no correspondence to note.

26.7 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS - Finance

The Committee Chair had no further business to discuss.

26.8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no any other business.

The Committee Chair thanked Mr McKeown for his report.

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

STAFFING MATTERS

26.9 Matters Arising – Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 5 November 2024 – verbal report

There were no matters arising.

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

26.10 HR SERVICES MANAGEMENT REPORT – Ms S Kelly, Head of HR**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS****Report 26.10 HR Services Management Report**

The Head of HR provided an update on the advertised posts and recruitment exercises since the last Committee meeting. There is a Sector secondment opportunity in progress for an FE Traineeship Development Lead.

A recent internal audit on the Pre-employment Process took place. A satisfactory assurance rating was achieved with one low priority action. An internal audit review on Safeguarding also took place receiving a satisfactory assurance rating with no actions.

In reporting of sickness data, the Lost Time Rate overall for 2024/25 was showing 4.91%, (Academic staff 3.87%, Support staff 4.52%). The main reasons for absence were hospital/post operative (14%), musculoskeletal (12.4%) and grief reaction (12%). The overall days lost due to absence from August to December 2024 was 2955 days.

Report 1 Staff Development Programme Semester 2, 2024/25

From September 2024, 210 Staff development applications have been received to date. The Head of HR provided some examples of the training sessions included within the Programme.

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

The Head of HR provided information on the calendar of events focusing on staff health and wellbeing.

A question and answer session followed.

26.11 CORRESPONDENCE – STAFFING

There was no correspondence received.

26.12 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS – STAFFING

There was no any other Chair's business.

26.13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – STAFFING

There was no any other business to discuss.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Kelly.

26.14 CLIENT SERVICES REPORTS – Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Equality Report

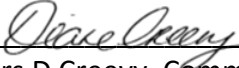
Report 2 Data Protection/Compliance Update

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

26.15 RESERVED BUSINESS

Taken separately. This part of the meeting ended at 12:44.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 3 June 2025

Signed 
Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair

Date 3 June 2025

APPROVED