
MINUTES OF THE NINETEENTH MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2023, VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE, COMMENCING 1200

PRESENT

Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair
Mrs S Fisher
Mr K Kennedy (from 1209)
Mr B O'Neill

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P McKeown, Finance Director (until item 19.8)
Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services (from item 19.9)
Ms S Kelly, HR Manager (from item 19.7)
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

19.1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Committee Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Mr L Murphy and Mr P Thompson.

19.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

19.3 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2023**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 13 June 2023

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

The meeting was adjourned for a few minutes at this juncture. Mrs S Fisher lost internet connection which left the meeting inquorate.

19.3.1 Matters Arising – Finance

18.4, Report 5 - At the June 2023 meeting it was reported that due to the identified pressure forecasted to 31 March 2024 of £484K it was agreed that Governors give approval of the Budget in principle. This was based on the assumption that more funds may be received and an update will be provided at the September 2023 Committee meeting and final approval of the budget will be sought.

Since the Resources Committee meeting held in June 2023 at the Governing Body Meeting held on 27 June 2023 the Finance Director reported that on 13 June 2023 the College received £696K for Traineeship and Advanced Technical Award funding

for 2023/24. This resulted in an updated Draft Budget Allocation from DfE confirming a DEL Resources of £30.4m. Board Members were content to approve the Budget 2023/24 subject to the assumptions for lecturers pay rises for September 2021, 2022 and 2023.

In Committee, the Finance Director reported he would speak further on this matter under item 19.4, Report 5 to follow.

18.4, Report 6 – Approval was received at the Governing Body meeting held on 27 June 2023 for the Procurement Contract items suggested spend items of £100k and over.

18.6, Report 1 - The Terms of Reference were approved at the Governing Body meeting held on 27 June 2023.

18.6, Report 4 - Approval was received at the Governing Body meeting held on 27 June 2023 for new members to join the Committee. Mr P Thompson has since joined the Committee.

It was agreed at the June 2023 Committee meeting to bring to the full Board a request to seek expressions of interest for the Board representative on the Project Board for Springtown. This request was subsequently brought to the Board and Mr B O'Neill had accepted the role.

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

19.4 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 Statement of Comprehensive Income & Expenditure for the Year Ended 31 July 2023**
- Report 5 Budget Update 2023/2024 – verbal update**
- Report 6 Prompt Payment – verbal report**
- Report 7 Fees & Charges Policy 2023-24 - amendment**

Report 1 Tenders Issued Report

The Finance Director reported that several tenders included in the report relate to the catering function which was transferred on 1 September 2023 from OCS to in-house. The College is still awaiting a response from queries on the May 2023 invoice received from OCS. Invoices have since been received from OCS for the months of June, July and August 2023. The amounts within each invoice are significant and are in most cases much higher than the same periods in 2022. The College are querying these.

Two Direct Award Contracts were awarded. These related to the Springtown Redevelopment Project adjudication process.

Report 2 Estates Update Report

Following on with the Springtown Redevelopment Project matter, an adjudication took place. The Adjudicator ruled that the contractor OHMG had not provided sufficient evidence to support their claim. Disappointingly the Adjudicator's fee was split 50/50 between both parties. A Notice of Dissatisfaction was subsequently received by the College whereby OHMG enquired if the College wished to engage in dialogue, stating that if they did not receive a positive response within 7 days they would serve the Notice of Arbitration upon the College. The College is currently taking legal advice on this matter.

Mr B O'Neill, Governor representative on the Springtown Project Board thanked Mr McKeown and the Estates Team for the work in this matter.

The Food Project proposal as part of the Causeway Coast and Glens Growth Deal has been split in two. The Foodovation Centre proposal will involve a refurbishment project at the Limavady Main Street Campus. This is now progressing to OBC stage. The second element, the food grade incubation facility will now be merged with the Business Innovation and Incubation Hub project.

The Finance Director highlighted a recent matter that may present a risk to the College going forward relating to the Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) building material concerns. The Department (DfE) have requested feedback from the Sector on the College buildings that may have been constructed using RAAC. Work will commence on this request.

Report 3 Business Support Centre Update Report

Additional funding has been received under InnovateUs (£14K), Skills Focus (DfE) (£130K), Skill-Up (£70K) in June 2023, (£150K) in August 2023.

Report 4 Statement of Comprehensive Income & Expenditure for the Year Ended 31 July 2023

Annually at this meeting the draft Annual Report & Financial Statements for Year ended 31 July are normally presented to the Committee. The Annual Report & Financial Statements are very much draft therefore the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure for the Year Ended 31 July 2023 has been provided. To give comfort to the Committee the Finance Director reported that the Annual Report & Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Accounts Direction and relevant accounting standards. The figures are much in line with the projections reported at the Resources Committee and Board meetings throughout the year. The Draft Annual Report & Financial Statements are due to be submitted to the Department (DfE) by 29 September 2023. The College intend to submit these on 22 September 2023. The final Annual Report and Financial Statements will be brought to the Committee at the November 2023 meeting.

Referring to the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure for the Year Ended 31 July 2023 (Report 4) Staff Costs - this figure has been impacted by the actuarial assumptions used in the valuation of the NILGOSC FRS pension adjustments for support staff. £727k was charged to Staff Costs in 2022/23 whereas £2.88m was charged in 2021/22. The NILGOSC Pension scheme is showing a surplus of £3.4m as at 31 July 2023.

The Statement of Financial Position for the Year Ended 31 July 2023 was showing, an estimated Holiday Pay Provision of £988K. This relates to backdated holiday pay (pre 2020) on overtime payments. The Sector and their legal advisors continue to monitor the PSNI v Agnew case. The Department (DfE) has approved the Business Case to pay 2020/21. The Business Case for 2021/22 and 2022/23 has to be submitted to the Department (DfE).

Report 5 Budget Update 2023/24

Continuing the Budget discussion from item 18.4 Report 5, the Finance Director stated that the College is reporting a pressure of £990K to DfE, however when budget allocations for Traineeships, Advanced Technicals, Skills Focus and InnovateUs are taken into account the pressure reduces to £150K – this relates to the 2023 estimated pay rises for lecturers. No further correspondence has been received from the Department to confirm the figures back in June 2023. A 2.4% pay rise for lecturers for 2023 has been budgeted for. The Budget will be updated based on actual enrolments for September and presented to the Committee in November 2023.

Report 6 College Insurance Cover 2023/24

The premium has decreased for 2023/24 to £215k from £225K in 2022. Property premium has increased. Liability premiums have decreased. The Sector premium for years 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 is £4.4m which is over £1m higher than that within the Business Case. An addendum or a new Business Case may be required to be prepared in advance of the 5 year period to seek approval for the likely additional cost of insurance. DfE are reviewing options for insurance cover for the Sector.

The Committee Chair referred to the discussion on RAAC (Report 2) and queried if the current College Insurance covers this defect if it is identified. The Finance Director agreed to check this.

Report 7 Prompt Payment – verbal report

The Prompt payment figure for the 30 days to 31 August 2023 to was 95% and for the year to date was 95%. The target is 95%.

Report 8 Fees & Charges Policy 2023-24 - amendment

Proposed amendment to fees in relation to EU national students who have lived in the ROI for at least three calendar years and have not applied for ROI citizenship, in these cases home fees may be applied.

Members were content to approve the amendment.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mrs S Fisher

Ms S Kelly joined the meeting at this juncture.

19.5 CORRESPONDENCE – Finance

There was no correspondence to note.

19.6 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS - Finance

The Committee Chair had no business to discuss.

19.7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Finance

The Finance Director referred to correspondence received from the Department of Finance regarding conflict of interests relating to employment related legal cases. The HR Manager reported she had raised this issue with the Sector HR Working Group. It will be challenging to implement this and the Sector will make a decision on this. If a change is required to our Conflict of Interest Policy this Committee will be notified and the amendment to the Policy will be brought through the Audit & Risk Committee for approval.

The Committee Chair thanked Mr McKeown for his report.

Mr P McKeown left the meeting at this juncture.

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

19.8 HR SERVICES MANAGEMENT REPORT – Ms S Kelly, HR Manager**Report 19.8.1 Matters Arising – Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 13 June 2023 – verbal report**

18.8 Following discussions with IIP a Strategic Review of our IIP accreditation will be carried out by IIP. Dates to be confirmed.

- The HR Manager will provide a verbal report on the supports already in place to support staff who are absent as a result of personal stress during the Management report (19.8) under the absence item.

18.11 As agreed the Committee Chair corresponded with Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services and her team for the work undertaken with the new Step Up Project.

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

- Report 19.8 HR Services Management Report**
Report 1 Recruitment Update
Report 2 Staff Development Plan 2023-2024
Report 2.1 Staff Development Programme Semester 1, 2023-2024
Report 3 HR Business Plan Update 2023-2024

Report 19.8 HR Services Management Report

Report 1 Recruitment Update

The HR Manager reported that from 27/05/2023 to 07/09/2023 a total of 7 recruitment exercises were carried through to appointment. Currently there are 32 'live' posts going through the recruitment and selection process. Recruitment challenges continue in specific areas.

Work continues with the HR digital transformation project to create efficiencies and remove the need for duplicated manual processes. The next stage of the project is in relation to recruitment and selection. This will enable the Get Got system to generate interview invite letters and generate interview times for candidates.

In this academic year 2023/24 to date the College have processed 19 staff Access NI applications. These mainly relate to the TUPE transfer of staff from OCS to in-house.

Lost time rate due to sickness absence were showing 2.51% for August 2023 for teaching staff. 4.65% was showing for support staff for August 2023. Referring to item 18.8 the HR Manager stated that personal stress was the main reason for absence which was 18% from September 2022 to August 2023. The HR Manager provided the Committee with information on the various supports available in supporting staff in this particular area.

To date, 380 Appraisals have been completed (78%), 39 are due for completion (8%) and 75 (15%) are outstanding. Workflow reminders ceased over the summer months due to staff holidays. HR will support managers who have outstanding appraisals to complete these over the next few months.

- Report 2 Staff Development Plan 2023-2024**
Report 2.1 Staff Development Programme Semester 1 2023-2024

During the 2022/23 academic year, 709 staff members (88.9%) attended at least one staff development activity throughout the academic year. Of the 709 staff members, 55% were academic staff and 45% were support staff.

October 2023 is Cyber Security Awareness month; the Staff Development and IT teams will promote the Cyber Security module to raise the awareness and highlight importance of completing the module among staff.

Since June 2023, 49 Staff Development applications have been received, (35% of these applications were received from August 2023 to date). The Staff Development team will continue to monitor the SD2 applications (cost of £500+) that are received.

The preparation of the Staff Development Programme Brochure is a collaborative piece of work between HR Services, TELS and the Learning and Teaching Team. The brochure includes training events for both support and academic staff in the College.

Report 3 HR Business Plan Update 2023-2024

The Human Resources Business Plan 2023-2024 has been developed to support the objectives and work priorities set out within the College Development Plan, the SER process, and the Quality Improvement Plan. This Plan will ensure that key strategic and operational priorities will be achieved as set out within the People Strategic Framework and the Staff Health and Wellbeing Strategy. For the academic year 2023/24 HR will focus on the areas of Health and Wellbeing, Employee Engagement, and Digital Transformation.

Ms G Moss joined the meeting during this item.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Kelly for her report and invited Ms G Moss to present her report to the Committee.

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

➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

Report 1 Equality & Good Relations Progress Report (Section 75) April 2022 – March 2023

Report 2 Equality Report

Report 3 Data Protection/Compliance Update

Report 1 Equality & Good Relations Progress Report (Section 75) April 2022 – March 2023

The Head of Client Services reported on the Equality & Good Relations Progress Report (Section 75) from April 2022 – March 2023 (Report 1). The Report has also progressed to the Equality Commission. The report outlines the valuable work of staff on the College's commitment to its equality scheme and to the promotion of equality.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr B O'Neill

Report 2 Equality Report

The Head of Client Services highlighted the proposed Schedule of Awareness days for 2023/24 which included the World Suicide Prevention Day held on 10 September 2023. Having undertaken EFDNI's Disability Positive Accreditation, which focuses on employment-related disability good practice, the College was successful in obtaining their AAA accreditation. The College initiated links with the Strabane Ethnic Community Association who is the College's charity for the Strabane area. SECA agreed to support the College's Fresher week in September. Work has commenced on extending further awareness throughout the College.

Report 3 Data Protection/Compliance Update

The Client Services Manager reported that the new Data Protection and Information Compliance Officer is now in post. For the period of academic year 2022-23, there were a total of 19 information rights requests made under UK GDPR and Freedom of Information Act 2000. This is a decrease of 11 for the same period 2021/22. A summary of the FOI requests received and responded to in 2022/23 was noted.

From 1 September 2022 to end August 2023 there were no personal data related incidents reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). There have been a total of 16 potential data incidents recorded on the Data Incident Register. This is a decrease of 6 from 22 incidents during the same period during 2021/22.

The Head of Client Services reported on the recent high profile data breaches. Key areas of action to ensure compliance with legislation are planned for 2023/24 to raise staff awareness and monitor safe working practice.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Moss for her report.
Ms Moss left the meeting at this juncture.

19.10 CORRESPONDENCE – STAFFING

There was no correspondence received.

19.11 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS – STAFFING

The Committee Chair had no staffing matters to discuss.

19.12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – STAFFING

There was no any other business to discuss.

19.13 RESERVED BUSINESS

Taken separately. This part of the meeting ended at 1332.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 6 November 2023

Signed: 
Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair

Date: 6 November 2023