

Northern Regional College

Governing Body – Unreserved Business

Minutes of the Unreserved Meeting of the Governing Body held on Wednesday 3 October 2018 at Farm Lodge campus, commencing at 5.30 pm.

Present: Mrs I Allison, Mr K Chambers, Mr H Crossey (Chair), Mrs A Dynes, Mrs J Eve, Mr W Hutchinson, Mr R Jay, Mr D Lennox, Ms Y Mallon, Dr K McCambridge, Mr W McCluggage (via Skype) and Mrs G McConnell.

In Attendance: Dr S Brankin, Mr D Hewitt, Mr M Higgins, Mr K Mooney (item 84.3) and Mr V Taggart.

Mrs K Wallace, Secretary.

Representatives from McAdam Design: Mr N Barton, Project Architect Coleraine; Mr M Haire, Managing Director; and Ms F Patterson, Project Architect Ballymena (item 84.3)

84.1 Apologies

Mr Murphy and Prof Scott.

In his absence, the Chair reported that Mr Murphy had now been officially co-opted onto the Governing Body.

84.2 Declarations of Interest

None.

84.3 Presentation by McAdam Design

The Chair welcomed Mr Kieran Mooney, who presented an overview of the options, progress and timelines of the new build project, advising the Governing Body that all key milestone dates have been achieved and the project remains on track for completion in 2022.

Mr Barton, Mr Haire and Ms Patterson joined the meeting at 5.40pm. Members welcomed the representatives.

Mr Haire reported positive, collaborative relationships with the College and with the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) as a quality review of the design. The representatives presented the designs for the Ballymena and Coleraine new builds to the Governing Body and answered various members' queries on the site, design and layout of the buildings. Members noted that progress to date was on schedule and within budget. The Governing Body sought assurances on deliverability within the envelope of funding and Mr Haire advised that budget restrictions have been incorporated within the designs and the market will be tested accordingly.

Plans for public consultation were discussed and Mr Higgins outlined engagement which had taken place to date with local Councils, Chambers of Commerce and political representatives.

The Chair thanked the representatives from McAdam Design for a very impressive presentation and they left the meeting at 6.40pm.

84.4 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2018 were approved.

Proposed: Mrs Mallon

Seconded: Mrs McConnell

84.5 Matters Arising

Mr Higgins referred to the media story published in the Belfast Telegraph in relation to the staff survey; details of which had previously been circulated to the Governing Body. He advised that the recent potential data breach referred to had been investigated. The Information Commissioner had been informed and it was concluded that the issue was low risk, with no breach having occurred and the matter had, therefore, been closed.

During a period of discussion, Mr Higgins noted members' opinion that issues of potential breach of data security should be reported to the Audit & Risk Committee.

Mr Hewitt advised actions were being discussed to re-engage staff in time for the next staff survey.

ACTION: Mr Higgins would add the potential data breach to the Register.

84.6 Chair's Communication

The Chair advised members that Prof Scott was currently on sick leave due to a family medical matter. Members extended their support and best wishes to Prof Scott during this time.

Mr Higgins reported a suggestion by the Department that as good practice, given the scale of the NRC new build project, consideration be given to appointing a governor with significant financial experience to the New Build Project Board (NBPB).

On the proposal of the Chair, members agreed to offer this appointment to Mr Ian Murphy. Members noted that they all have responsibility for the governance and oversight of the New Build Project.

ACTION: The Chair would approach Mr Murphy with the offer of appointment to the NBPB.

The Chair advised that he would be meeting with the Department during the first week in November.

84.7 Principal's Report

Mr Higgins spoke to the Principal's Report and advised that Prof Scott, whilst on sick leave, was contactable during the production of the Principal's Report and that the report reflected the Principal's views.

Mr Higgins advised on the proposed reporting arrangements for Outcome Based Accountability and the links to risk management reporting.

Mr Higgins provided an update on the budget situation and the Chair advised that the Department had undertaken to review the situation at the end of the year.

The report was taken as read and the Memorandum of Agreement and Service Level Agreement were noted.

Ms Dynes left the meeting at 6.55pm.

84.8 Correspondence

Five items of correspondence had been received and were noted by the Governing Body.

Having previously approved the changes to the Articles and Instrument, members agreed to note and move forward with the Articles and Instrument Update.

84.9 KPI Report

Mr Higgins spoke to the KPI Report, which had been updated to 31 July 2018 in line with accounts and noted members' comments on weighting for specific metrics. Members noted that the meeting with the Permanent Secretary had been deferred until October and would cover KPIs.

During discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the £1.4m previously surrendered to the Department, should be reinstated to the NRC baseline budget.

84.10 Enrolment Numbers

Mr Taggart provided an update on the interim figures for performance, retention and success of 2017/18 enrolments and measures put in place to increase future success rates.

Having attended the recent Tribal Update meeting hosted by the Department, a number of members expressed concern around consistency of interpretation across Colleges and the impact on the presentation of College results.

ACTION: Communicate to the Department on the comparative analysis of data across Colleges.

ACTION: A separate agenda item for next Governing Body to discuss achievement and success levels within the College.

84.11 Audit & Risk

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2018 were noted.

Mr McCluggage summarised the key papers considered at the Audit & Risk meeting held on 26 September 2018 and highlighted Committee's concerns around the issues raised by the Sector Wide Review of Property Division. He drew attention to the volume of papers and advised that Internal Audit are to schedule timely reports during the year.

The Governing Body agreed that the independent evidence contained in the property review should be used to support a sector wide business case.

84.12 Education Committee

The draft minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 2 May 2018 were noted, a verbal update having previously been provided.

Mr Lennox provided a verbal update on the meeting held on 3 October 2018, prior to the Governing Body meeting. He was content with assurances on enrolment figures and ownership of responsibility by Department teams.

Mr Lennox highlighted that the SER/QIP needed to be signed off by the Governing Body for submission by 3 December 2018 and that an Education Committee would be scheduled to consider the SER/QIP.

84.13 Resources Committee

The draft minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 18 June 2018 were noted, a verbal update having previously been provided.

Having acted as Chair to the meeting on 14 August 2018, Mrs McConnell summarised the key issues in relation to the budget for 2018/19 that were considered at the meeting.

84.14 Management Accounts year-end 31 July 2018

Mr Higgins outlined the reporting format for the management accounts to the end of the financial year 31 July 2018 and explained the key pressures in relation to salary, reduction within income, and measures taken to reduce non-pay costs. He re-emphasised the pressure from the reduced opening budget position and steps to be taken with DfE to secure reinstatement of the budget.

The Governing Body noted that the figures were subject to audit verification before coming back to the Governing Body for final approval as part of the Annual Report and Accounts.

84.15 Committee Meeting Dates 2018/19

Members considered the draft schedule of meetings and agreed the dates for the Governing Body meetings. Members noted that Committee meeting dates were yet to be finalised and would be confirmed at the next meeting of the Committees.

84.16 Any Other Business

The Governing Body agreed the appointment of Ms Alana Duff as Student Governor; a volunteer governor to act as mentor for Ms Duff would be sought through the Secretary.

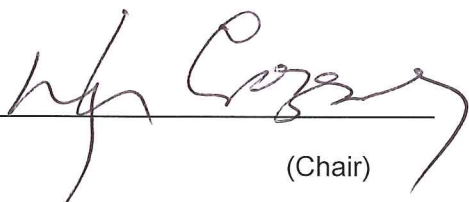
It was noted that the staff recognition event was due to take place later in November, date to be advised.

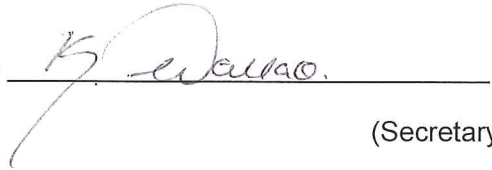
ACTION: The Secretary will seek a mentor for Ms Duff.

84.17 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Governing Body would be held on 14 November 2018, commencing at 5.15pm.

The meeting ended at 7.40pm.

Mr H Crossey  (Chair) Date 14/11/18.
14 November 2018

Mrs K Wallace  (Secretary)