

# Northern Regional College

## Governing Body – Unreserved Business

Minutes of the Unreserved Meeting of the Governing Body held on Wednesday 7 March 2018 at Coleraine campus, commencing at 5.50 pm.

**Present:** Mrs A Allison, Mr H Crossey (Chair), Mrs A Dynes, Mrs J Eve, Mr W Hutchinson, Mr R Jay, Dr D Lennox, Ms K Linden, Ms Y Mallon, Mr W McCluggage, Mrs G McConnell, Mr K Nelson, and Prof T Scott (Principal)

**In Attendance:** Dr S Brankin, Mr D Hewitt, Mr M Higgins and Mr V Taggart  
Mrs K Wallace, Secretary

### 81.1 Apologies

Mr Chambers and Dr McCambridge.

### 81.2 Declarations of Interest

None.

### 81.3 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2018 were approved.

Proposed: Mr McCluggage

Seconded: Mrs McConnell

### 81.4 Matters Arising

Survey of governors: the Chair summarised the results from this survey and steps taken to address matters raised. He proposed that a time slot would be scheduled for discussion without management present. Members noted that training on formal governance responsibilities are to be submitted to the Secretary.

**ACTION:** Members to notify the Secretary of any requests for training responsibilities.

KPI report: Prof Scott reported that a minor presentational error had been made in the report presented at the last Governing Body meeting. The relevant adjustment would result in an upgraded and improved status of green for the student numbers classification. The cause of the error had been addressed and the report would be corrected for the Education Committee on 14 March 2018.

### 81.5 Chair's Communication

The Chair reported on the recent meeting of the Colleges NI Board. The Director of Further Education had joined the meeting and advised that the classification of Colleges NI was to be changed to an Arm's Length Body of DfE and was not designated as a NDPB. The Colleges NI Board would now meet to consider implications and respond accordingly.

The Chair noted that the College had now completed all actions required by the Department to move out of the improvement process. It was hoped to arrange the end-of-year accountability meeting with the Permanent Secretary in April to get sign-off and move to the same reporting arrangements as the other colleges. The Sub-Committee would meet to sign off on the report during the second week of April and the report would then go before the Resources and Education Committees.

### 81.6 Principal's Report

Prof Scott spoke to her report and drew attention to the high levels of support from staff which had enabled the achievement of students during the year. Congratulations were noted by the

Governing Body for students who had won awards.

Mr McCluggage sought clarification on the sector wide VFM survey. Prof Scott advised that the assignment had only commenced and initial information requested from the College has been shared with Tribal. This would be followed by a visit to the College on 14 March 2018 and the Governing Body would be kept updated.

Members noted the changes made to the MinutePad document library.

**ACTION:** The Secretary would ensure all Committee ToRs are added to the library.

Mr Higgins clarified the position with the management accounts and confirmed that the College was within the end of year tolerance limit set by the Department. He highlighted that the College had aided with pressures in the sector for 2017/18. Mr Jay reported that development of the submission for the HE Quality Review visit was ahead of schedule for the end of April deadline.

### **81.7 Correspondence**

Two items of correspondence were noted:

- DfE Communication protocol - detailing key processes and procedures to ensure efficient communication between FE Division, DfE and FE Sector.
- VfM Benchmarking Review: Tribal Engagement – DfE letter outlining background, context and key dates for initiation visits to each college.

### **81.8 College Development Plan**

Prof Scott and Mr Hewitt took members through the minutes of the sub-group meetings of 8 and 26 February 2018, highlighting the transition process from KPIs to Report Cards and the introduction of the sector corporate plan with specific emphasis on the data required to populate the new Report Cards. They outlined the proposed programme of activity to the end of May 2018 and requested governors' feedback.

The Governing Body approved the proposed activity programme to end May 2018 and provided feedback on the metrics as presented.

### **81.9 Audit & Risk Committee**

Dr Lennox gave a verbal update on the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 28 February 2018. He noted that issues with CPD and Properties Division had been raised at the highest levels in the Department and that an independent review conducted by internal audit will take place due to the escalation of risk for the College.

### **81.10 Education Committee**

The draft minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 17 January 2018 were noted.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that no communication had been received from the Department in response to NRC's submission for learning hub status.

### **81.11 Monthly Management Accounts**

Mr Higgins summarised the management accounts to end January 2018 and highlighted key pressures around staff salaries and an inability to take forward estates expenditure due to issues with property division. The overall position to end July was in line with budget and targets and further efficiencies.

The Governing Body noted the NDPB Monthly Return for January 2018 and Summary Management Accounts.

### 81.12 Risk Register

Mr Higgins spoke to this report and clarified the main changes which had been made following the Risk Management Workshop on 17 November 2017. The report had previously been reviewed and approved at the Audit & Risk Committee on 28 February 2018. In particular, the red risks related to property division and financial sustainability were discussed along with mitigating steps in place.

Prof Scott reported on the outcome of a recent meeting with the Department in February and that an update on the 2018/19 budget will be apparent shortly; in the meantime due to the level of uncertainty, the financial risk has been escalated to red.

Members expressed concern around the timing and impact of any budget cut.

### 8.13 Any Other Business

No other business.

### 81.14 Committee Meeting Dates 2017/18

Noted that the next meeting of the Governing Body would be held on 9 May 2018 in Magherafelt campus, commencing at 5.30pm.

The meeting ended at 7.40pm.

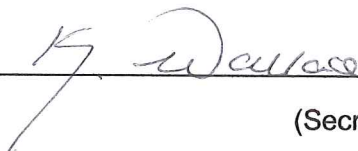
Mr H Crossey

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Chair)

Date

9/5/2018  
9 May 2018

Mrs K Wallace

  
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(Secretary)

