

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held at 5.30 pm on 26 June 2013 at Ballymena Campus, Farm Lodge.

Present Mr G Gilpin (Chairperson), Mr T Neilands (Principal), Mrs I Allison, Mr S Davidson, Mr I Goldsworthy, Mr R Jay, Dr D Lennox, Alderman PJ McAvoy, Mr S McCartney, Mr M Murray, Mrs A Rankin

In Attendance Mrs B Crotty, Mrs C Moore, Dr C O'Mullan, Ms T Brannigan

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

46.1 Membership and Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs K Collins, Mr J Hunter, Mr K Nelson, Mr J Clyde, Alderman J Brown, Mrs G McConnell, Mr A Kennedy and Mrs J Eve.

46.2 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interests. It was noted that the Secretary had asked all Governors to update or confirm the accuracy of their current declarations; some returns are still awaited. Members who have not updated their register of interests are asked to do so as soon as possible.

46.3 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting of the Governing Body held on 1 May 2013 were approved.

46.4 Matters Arising

46.4.1 College Inspection (minute 45.4.2)

The Director of Curriculum reported on the ETI Monitoring visit which took place 8-10 May. At the feedback session, the ETI had given a Satisfactory progress. Mr Jay, Chair of the Education Committee was also in attendance at the feedback. A Confidence Limit was also given in relation to SERs and QI Plans. The next follow-up review will take place in November/December 2013.

The Chair made reference to the SER in relation to streamlining meetings. He said that the issue of streamlining Governing Body meetings would be an issue to be discussed at a future date with Chairs of Committees.

46.4.2 Any Other Matters

There were no other matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

46.5 Chair's Communications

The Chair indicated that he had attended several significant meetings and events since the last meeting. He mentioned in particular his attendance at the Joint Meeting of F & G P C and Staffing Committees; Future Search Ambassadors' Group; Student Awards Ceremony and the CNI Board. The Chair had also met with the Kansas State University visitors on 3-4 occasions. He complimented the Principal and Dr Catherine O'Mullan on the excellent programme they had organised for the visit. He made reference to his attendance at the

College ACUMEN conference and said it was an excellent event which projected a good image of the College.

46.6 Principal's Report

The Principal highlighted a number of topics in his Report:

a) Partnership with Kansas State University and Johnston Community College. A four-person delegation from Kansas State University and Johnson Community College spent a week at NRC from 22-29 May. The visit has cemented the relationships upon which further collaboration can be developed. The highlight of the visit was the Gala Dinner held at the Ballymoney Campus attended by the US Consul General and representatives from industry. The Principal highlighted correspondence from the Mayor of Ballymoney in which she praised the College for the excellent standard of hospitality. The visitors had written to express their great appreciation of the hospitality shown them throughout their visit and they had also referred to the excellent visit with Alderman PJ McAvoy at the Mayor's parlour.

b) Colleges NI. The Colleges NI Board, at its recent meeting on 18 June, agreed to conduct two important reviews in relation to its activities. The first of these is a general review of the role and cost of CNI as it currently operates. The second review will look at industrial relations in the sector following the McConnell report, which was produced after an investigation at North West Regional College.

c) New Permanent Secretary at DEL. Alan Shannon, who had been the Permanent Secretary at DEL, retired at the end of May. His replacement is Derek Baker.

d) World Skills. The Mechatronics team representing the UK at World Skills in Leipzig in July 2013 will be made up of two NRC students David Cargill and James Overend. The team will be managed once again by David Russell from NRC; the assistant manager is another member of the NRC Engineering staff, Mark Maginty. The Principal highlighted that NRC was the lead College in the UK in terms of Mechatronics. The Governing Body recorded their best wishes to the students and requested that a note would be sent to the students wishing them well at the competition.

e) Business in the Community Awards. NRC together with the IT company, Equiniti ICS Ltd, won the Education Partnership Award at the Business in the Community Awards for their internship programme. The programme provided five students from NRC (three Computing and two Business students) with a placement whilst studying full-time at the College. This placement has successfully resulted in employment for all five students. Tony Madden, the Head of School of Business and Computing, is to be congratulated for developing this initiative, which it is hoped to expand during the next academic year.

f) Student Successes. For the first time the College organised a Student Awards Ceremony in the Tullyglass Hotel on 31 May to give collective recognition of a variety of notable student successes during the past year and to replace the previous practice of inviting students and their parents to Governing Body meetings. The Governing Body is requested to give consideration as to whether this is the preferred method of celebrating students achievements.

The College achieved further student success at the: Northern Ireland Regional Skillweld competition at Newtownabbey on 19 June 2013; the Fitzwilliam Hotel's Afternoon Tea Competition; CCEA Celebrating Achievement Awards; and The Honourable the Irish Society Certificates of Merit.

The College hosted the Skillweld NI semi-final competition at Newtownabbey Campus. Chris Campbell who is currently serving an apprenticeship at Harland & Wolf and training for his welding qualifications at NRC won first place in the competition and will go forward to the final in Birmingham later in the year.

g) Eight students along with Dr Catherine O'Mullan and Mr Adrian McNeice, Head of School attended President Obama's speech at the Waterfront Hall during the G8 conference.

i) The Principal circulated a publication from the Association of Colleges which highlighted the 2012 Olympic winners who had attended UK Colleges. The Chambers brothers who won medals for rowing are former students of Coleraine campus and were featured in the publication.

h) The Principal announced that NRC has been successful in gaining approval to run a Manchester Utd Sports Academy. This is a major boost for the College's Sports Studies students. Mr Adrian McNeice, Head of School, is to be congratulated in negotiating the contract.

g) Other Significant Meetings and Events. The Principal listed several meetings and events, which he had attended, addressed or chaired since the last meeting of the Governing Body.

46.7 Balanced Scorecard

The Governing Body received a copy of the updated Balanced Scorecard as at 26 June 2013 with projections to 31 July 2013. The Governing Body noted the status of the following domains:

a) Student Experience. The College has achieved its targets in respect of Student Satisfaction. Retention at 19 June 2013 for Whole College = 90.87%. Projected retention to 31 July 2013 for Whole College = 90%. Achievement and Success rates for 2012/13 will not be available until after 31 July 2013.

b) Relationships. The College has made satisfactory progress in relation to establishing a partner voice baseline (colour coded green) and generating income and achieving funded projects (colour coded amber).

c) Staffing. The College has currently achieved its staff:income ratio of 70% but by the year-end it is projected to be 73%.

d) College Operations. Satisfactory progress has been made in relation to the completion of the Outline Business Case and the achievement of minimum 'satisfactory' grades in all Internal Audit Reviews. It is projected that all targets will be achieved by the year-end.

e) Finance. The College is expected to achieve its historic cost target by the year-end but projects an overspend on redundancy costs. It is colour coded red as at 26 June 2013 and 31 July 2013. Mrs Moore drew attention to the Management Accounts paper and indicated that the accounts were showing a shortfall. All non-essential items and the Support Staff Review have been suspended in the meantime.

Discussion took place in relation to income generation. Dr O'Mullan outlined examples of financial achievement. She stressed the importance of income generation and grant funding as part of the College ethos for participation in teaching and skills, community development and industrial links. She referred to DSD funding which is being used for a student mentoring project and the Connected Fund to be used for international exchange. Mr Jay said that the Economic Engagement Strategy document defines what the College is doing and that work is ongoing in terms of setting targets for financial achievement.

The Chair referred to the use of the Balanced Scorecard. It was noted that the Balanced Scorecard was used at each of the senior staff meetings ie EMT, SMT, Directorate. The Principal stated that the Balanced Scorecard Domains provided the basis for every agenda at EMT. Mrs Moore felt that it provided focus on key risk areas brought the Student Experience to the fore.

The Principal drew attention to recent DEL correspondence and highlighted the capital funding available and that this was good news in terms of the relation to the OBC.

46.8 Correspondence

There was no correspondence to report.

46.9 College Development Plan

The Governing Body received a copy of the draft College Development Plan (CDP) 2013/2014 to 2015/2016. The Principal informed members that it was necessary to produce the large document but that it would be refined and that an Executive Summary would be produced over the Summer. The Principal and Directors talked through a presentation. Dr O'Mullan highlighted the key issues under Student Experience and outlined the FE new curriculum developments; the 3 year HE MaSN plan and the new pilot Higher Apprenticeship programme. NRC is the only College participating in the Higher Apprenticeship Engineering programme. She highlighted that the Department has increased the NRC MaSN by 13 to 282 places. The Retention, Achievement and Success targets were set in line with the rest of the sector.

In terms of Relationships, the Principal outlined the Key Developments and Objectives for 2013/14. He referred to the College's active participation in Local Councils regarding Community Planning particularly in the Ballymena and Coleraine areas and his involvement with the Coleraine Future Search. It was noted that with the forthcoming merger of the Councils the College would need to keep up the political lobbying on behalf of NRC.

Mrs Moore talked through the Staffing Key Developments and Objectives for 2013/14. The detail of the budget still has to be finalised.

The Governing Body agreed that following amendments to the CDP the formal submission of the FLU plan would be submitted to DEL by 5 July.

Mr Jay asked for Income Generation Targets to be included in both the long and short lists of KPIs to be included.

46.10 Draft Budget 2013/2014

The detail of the budget has still to be finalised. The Principal requested that a further meeting be arranged to receive formal Governing Body approval for the budget and also to approve the final OBC. This was agreed.

46.11 Outline Business Case (OBC)

The Governing Body received a draft copy of the sections of the OBC completed by Deloitte. The document will require Governing Body approval before submission to DEL. Mrs Crotty talked through the presentation which highlighted the OBC current status, way forward and timescales. She referred to the accommodation requirement and indicative costs within the Schedule of Accommodation. She indicated that DEL had been satisfied with the floor area identified in the Schedule. The OBC has identified that there will be a greater floor area needed for Teaching and Learning and less associated services than indicated in the Strategic Outline Case. She pointed out that what had been identified was the best fit that the College could make given curriculum plans for the future.

She referred to the DEL Correspondence and the funding which has been made available. The new build Coleraine/Ballymoney was likely to be conventional build. There will be the need to explore different financial models for Ballymena.

It was noted that the Minister would make an announcement in relation to NRC/SRC new build. A member pointed out that the new local councils would be taking all planning applications from 2015.

It was agreed that the prepared sections of the OBC should be forwarded to DEL and the final OBC to be agreed at the next Governing Body meeting.

46.12 Audit Committee

The Governing Body received the minutes of the meetings of the Audit Committee held on 7 May and 18 June 2013. Mrs Rankin, the Chair of the Audit Committee, stated that the Governing Body had no action to take in relation to the minutes but drew the Governing Body's attention to Items 30.8 c, 30.10 and 30.13.

46.13 Education Committee

The Governing Body received the minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee held on 14 May 2013. Mr Jay, the Chair of the Education Committee, stated that the Governing Body had no action to take in relation to the minutes but drew the Governing Body's attention to the Acumen Conference, the Learning & Teaching Committee and QAA.

46.14 Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Governing Body received the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 3 June 2013. Dr Lennox (Vice Chair of the Committee) stated that the Governing Body had no action to take in relation to the minutes but drew the Governing Body's attention to the minute regarding the Annual Report, disposal of Antrim and Portrush sites, disposal of land at Newtownabbey and Corporate KPIs.

46.15 Staffing Committee

The Governing Body received the minutes of the meetings of the Staffing Committee held on 3 June 2013. Mr Davidson (Chair of the Committee) stated that the Governing Body had no action to take in relation to the minutes but drew the Governing Body's attention to Annual Report and the minute regarding the Balanced Scorecard and Staffing KPIs for 2013/2014.

46.16 Joint Meeting Finance & General Purposes Committee and Staffing Committee

The Governing Body received the minutes of the joint meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Staffing Committee held on 8 May 2013. Mr Davidson, who chaired the meeting, drew the Governing Body's attention to the Monthly Management Accounts up to 31 March 2013.

46.17 Any Other Notified Business

46.17.1 Monthly Management Accounts

The Governing Body noted the Monthly Management Accounts for the period up to 31 May 2013. The Accounts indicate that the College has an historic cost surplus of £55k which is £516k behind budget. The bank balance as at 31 May 2013 was £3.1 million.

There was no other notified business.

46.18 Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Governing Body is scheduled for 5.30 pm Wednesday 16 October 2013 at the Farm Lodge, Ballymena Campus.