

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 16 January 2008 at the Radisson Hotel, Limavady.

Present Professor W Clarke (Chairperson), Mr T Neilands (Director),
Mrs A M Campbell, Mrs K Collins, Mr S Davidson, Ms J Fullerton,
Alderman P J McAvoy, Mr P McCudden, Ms A Rankin, Mrs L Wallis

In Attendance Mrs B Crotty, Mr I Houston, Mrs C Moore, Dr C O'Mullan,
Mr J A Hunter

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

6.1 Apologies

There were no apologies.

6.2 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

6.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting of the Governing Body held on 28 November 2007 were approved

6.4 Matters Arising

6.4.1 E-Governance Pilot Project (minute 5.1)

It was noted that Mr Kilpatrick had already held a number of meetings in connection with the project.

6.4.2 Industrial Action (minute 5.5.1)

The Director informed the Governing Body that the Lecturers' Union had balloted its members on 15 January 2008 as to whether or not they should accept the Pilling package. It was noted that the package on offer was self-financing and based on efficiency savings over a three-year period. The Director advised the Governing Body that, as soon as the result of the ballot is known, he would circulate the Union's decision to Members.

6.4.3 Staff Membership of Governing Body Elections (minute 5.5.2)

The Governing Body noted that the names of the two members of the teaching and non-teaching staff and of the student representative had been forwarded to the Department for approval.

6.5 Chairperson's Communications

The Chairperson congratulated members of the Senior Management Team on their recent appointments and welcomed them to the meeting.

6.6 Director's Report

The Director thanked Members of the Governing Body and the Senior Management Team for their attendance at the Strategic Planning Conference, which had preceded the meeting of the Governing Body.

6.7 Correspondence

The Governing Body noted the following correspondence:

a) DEL News Release dated 8 January 2008 indicating that Professor Clarke had been appointed Chairman of the Governing Body for the period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2011. The Governing Body congratulated Professor Clarke on his appointment.

The Governing Body agreed that the Department should be requested to provide a replacement for Professor Clarke in the business, industry and professional category. The Department should be requested to provide a Governor from the private sector, preferably with a manufacturing background.

b) DEL Circular FE14/07 dated 27 December 2007, which requests changes to be made to the College's Instrument of Government regarding the duration of tenure of the student representative and Governors appointed to fill vacancies. The Department has recommended two amendments to the Instrument of Government.

The Governing Body approved the recommendations and agreed that the Instrument of Government be revised and forwarded to the Department by 1 February 2008.

6.8 Finance & General Purposes Committee

The Governing Body received the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 13 December 2007.

The Governing Body noted that:

a) The Committee had agreed its Terms of Reference;

b) The Department had requested a meeting to discuss financial projections and actions to be taken to improve the College's financial performance in light of the budget deficits forecast for 2007/2008, 2008/2009 and 2009/2010. The Committee agreed that the Director and the Chairpersons of the Governing Body and the Finance and General Purposes Committee should arrange to meet with Departmental representatives to discuss the College's financial position;

c) The Committee had considered a Departmental document, which detailed Performance Indicators for the seven-year period up to 2005/2006. The Committee concluded that some of the suggested ranges for Indicators were unrealistic. It was agreed that the Chairperson and the Deputy Director of Finance should bring additional Key Performance Indicators to a future meeting, which would help to benchmark performance on an on-going as opposed to an annual basis;

d) PricewaterhouseCoopers had been appointed Internal Auditors to the College;

e) The Northern Ireland Draft Budget 2008/2009 had indicated a tight budgetary position for the duration of the period 2008/2009 to 2010/2011. Colleges would be expected to achieve the same with fewer resources and show evidence of efficiencies. It was noted that an Innovation Fund would be available to support the skills agenda.

6.9 Staffing Committee

The Governing Body received the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 13 December 2007.

The Governing Body noted that:

- a) The Committee had agreed its Terms of Reference;
- b) The Committee had approved the Redundancy Policy for Support Staff and agreed that it be forwarded to the Governing Body for endorsement. **The Governing Body agreed that the Redundancy Policy for Support Staff be approved;**
- c) The Committee had approved the revised Statutory Retirement Procedure. **The Governing Body endorsed the Statutory Retirement Procedure.**

6.10 Monthly Management Accounts

The Governing Body noted the satisfactory situation in relation to the Monthly Management Accounts for the year up to 30 November 2007. The Accounts show a surplus of £308k on continuing operations, an historic surplus of £757k (£19k ahead of budget) and £8,200k Cash at Bank.

6.11 Strategic Planning Seminar

The Director summarised proceedings of the Strategic Planning Seminar, which had preceded the meeting of the Governing Body. He referred to:

- a) The presentation, "Strategic Challenges for the FE Sector", by Catherine Bell, Deputy Permanent Secretary, DEL, which had been followed by a discussion session;
- b) The presentation, "Managing Risks in the FE Sector" by Martin Pitt, PricewaterhouseCoopers (the NRC Internal Auditors), which had also been followed by a discussion session.

The Director reminded Members, that following these presentations, the Governing Body and the Senior Management Team had identified the key strategic priorities for the College for 2008/2009.

The Governing Body agreed that the Senior Management Team should give further and detailed consideration to these strategic priorities and forward a draft paper to the next meeting of the Governing Body for approval.

6.12 Proposed Management Structure

The Director referred to the presentations received earlier in the day from members of the Senior Management Team regarding the proposed management structure of the College.

The Governing Body approved the proposed Management Structure for the College.

The Director advised Members that the Governing Body and the Staffing Committee would receive regular reports on its implementation.

6.13 Any Other Business

6.13.1 Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Governing Body is scheduled for Wednesday 5 March 2008 at 6.30 pm at the Antrim Campus.