

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 4 April 2022 on Microsoft Teams, commencing at 5.02pm.

Present: Mr M Higgins, Ms Y Mallon, Ms D McIlwaine, Mr R McKernan, Mr I Murphy (Chair)

In Attendance: Mrs C Brown, Ms K Craig, Mr S Lavery, Ms C Murdoch (29.1-29.6), Ms J Small
Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

29.1 Apologies/Welcome

Apologies were noted for Mr McSorley.

The Chair welcomed recently appointed members to their first meeting of the Committee.

29.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

29.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2022 were approved.

Proposed: Ms Mallon Seconded: Mr Higgins

29.4 Matters Arising

New Committee members introduced themselves and gave a brief synopsis of their experience.

Mrs Brown provided a summary of the work of the HE Task & Finish Group. She reported that development of courses to take advantage of a transition period had been included in the Terms of Reference and would also be addressed within the Business Engagement programme. In response to members' questions, it was noted that the effects of grade inflation during the pandemic were expected to impact on the June series of examinations and the August results.

Ms Small gave an overview of the Talent Strategy, developed in consultation with Mr Donal Lavery, Baker Tilly Mooney Moore, for the benefit of new members. Ms Murdoch reported on key aspects of current work with Mr D Lavery on attraction and recruitment of candidates, and leading into performance management.

Ms Small advised that leadership and management programme modules were being designed taking staff feedback into account. Ms Mallon noted the importance of Senior Managers completing the programme before being rolled out to other staff, in order to achieve maximum impact.

The Principal commended Mr D Lavery's work on the talent strategy, learning from which would be applied to development of future programmes.

Ms Murdoch advised on the process for performance appraisals and mid-year review for lecturing staff, along with the impact of long term sickness on completions. The Chair highlighted the improvement in appraisal completion figures this year and was keen that this should continue.

Ms Small advised that use of development planning , in line with best practice, was currently being looked at by the College.

29.5 Chair's Communication/ Correspondence

- The updated Resources Committee Terms of Reference was noted and would be presented at the GB meeting on 27 April for approval.
- Members agreed to revise the start time and mode of delivery for Committee meetings, from the beginning of the new academic year. Mr McKernan's preference for meetings starting at 4pm to be held virtually, was noted.

Action: Resource Committee meetings to commence at 4.00pm from September 2022, with 1 face-to-face meeting to be held annually, subject to review.

- A budget letter dated 16 February 2022 from the Director of FE was noted. Ms Small advised that the proposed template for the CDP 2022-23 referred to in the letter had just been received, with commentary required by 29 April. The formal commissioning date would be 16 May, with a potential submission date of 10 June. Members would be kept updated on any further amendments.

The Principal explained that the CDP would be determined by the budget for the coming year once that had been confirmed. Projected student numbers and budget required for 2022-23 would be outlined at the next meeting of the Education Committee. This would then be included in the CDP, which would be brought to the June meeting of Resources before being presented to GB for approval.

Updated information on budget allocation included under item 29.8 below.

29.6 HR Update

Ms Murdoch spoke to the HR Report and highlighted a number of key themes including: recruitment, organisation development, learning and development and absence management.

Members were updated on ongoing and recently commenced recruitment exercises which had been previously agreed. Attention was drawn to a proposal for a number of posts, along with details of the relevant income stream from which they would be funded.

Members considered and debated the report and Ms Murdoch clarified a number of issues on recruitment, CDP training, and short and long term absence management. Mr Lavery confirmed that the costings for job positions detailed in the report showed the total financial package on offer, including pension costs. Mr Higgins outlined the basis for covering the posts from existing budget allocations along with the rationale for roles.

Mr Lavery noted Mrs McIlwaine's comments in relation to competency based interviews, criteria within application process and that feedback from members will be incorporated in future recruitment competitions.

Action: Members unanimously approved the proposal for posts outlined

6.04pm Ms Murdoch left the meeting.

29.7 STS Update

The STS Update was taken as read. Ms Small further advised that the STS Project Board had now closed across the sector and movement to a Change Management Board had begun. Mr Leo Murphy would Chair this Board from April onwards. She also reported that handover to business as usual in the College, had now been implemented and updated on ongoing work. Members noted that the LMS sector wide audit had begun and an LMS Manager had been appointed.

The Principal referred to the extended timeframe for this sector wide project, important lessons from which would be identified during the post project evaluation and final gateway review and used in future projects.

In response to a member's question, Ms Small advised on future upgrades and options for extensions to the Project contract, the first period of which ends in October 2022. It was hoped that a more agile approach would be adopted going forward.

The Chair congratulated all involved in the LMS project for achieving an excellent result.

29.8 CONFIDENTIAL: Budget Letter and Scenarios

Consideration was given to a number of budget scenarios for 2022-2025, prepared for planning purposes, along with a letter from the Director of FE providing the latest update on the resource budget position for 2022-23.

The Chair noted that no confirmation of funding would be available until June and commended the Principal, Mr Laverty and the finance team for their work on planning. Chair reiterated the requirement to continually review and update scenarios to reflect the changing budget position and identify most likely scenarios for the June resource meeting.

Mr Laverty advised that the sector were also putting forward bids to address rising energy and other cost of living increases.

29.9 Finance Update

Ms Craig presented the NDPB Return for February 2022 and advised that the College was operating to budget for March 2021/22 year-end.

Members noted the management accounts for February 2022 and were advised that the variance to budget was mainly due to a timing issue.

The Chair thanked Ms Craig and was content with the College's financial position.

29.10 Any Other Business

In response to a member's question, Ms Small confirmed that the new induction programme outlined in the HR report was on track for recommendations to be brought to SLT by the end of April. She also confirmed a high degree of consultation with staff across the College, feedback from which was reflected in the programme.

29.11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on 6 June 2022.

The meeting concluded at 6.25pm.

Mr I Murphy Ian Kershley

Date 6 June 2022

(Chair)

Mrs K Wallace K. Wallace

(Secretary)