

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee (unreserved business) held on 15 January 2018 at the Newtownabbey campus commencing at 5.05pm.

Present: Mr K Chambers (Chair), Mrs G McConnell, Ms Y Mallon and Prof T Scott

In Attendance: Dr S Brankin, Mr D Hewitt, Mr S Lavery, Mr V Taggart and Mr S Watt

Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

Mr I Murphy

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mr Stewart Watt who had taken up the position of Head of Human Resources and CPD.

Condolences were extended to Mr M Higgins on the loss of a family member.

10.1 Apology

Mr Higgins.

10.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

10.3 Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2017 were approved.

10.4 Matters Arising

Mr Murphy confirmed that he had received a substantive response to his query from Dr Brankin and it was noted that all matters arising had been completed.

10.5 Chair's Communication

Committee noted that, due to enhanced data protection rules which would be introduced in April/May 2018, all email communication would be provided through the College email system from that date.

Action: Dr Brankin would arrange for everyone attending governance meetings on a regular basis to be provided with a College email address.

The Chair referred to the Governors' Conference organised by the Department in January and advised that presentations from the events would be circulated to all members. Prof Scott outlined the proposed timescales for submission of information and referred to the template from the Department which is yet to be provided. The schedule of Governing Body meetings requires consideration to ensure sufficient time for approval by GB. This item would be included in the agenda for the Governing Body meeting on 24 January 2018.

10.6 Correspondence

Four items of correspondence were noted:

- i. College Development Plan Process –letter to Principals and Chairs outlining the timeline for the new College Development Plan cycle.
- ii. Rural Proofing – good practice guidance for FE Colleges.
- iii. Buy Social in Services Contracts – requirement to incorporate for service contracts above £500,000.
- iv. NIAO Managing the risk of bribery and corruption guide.

10.7 Monthly Management Accounts

i) NDPB Monthly Return November 2017

Mr Lavery summarised the NDPB return and explained the variance in figures related to indicative budgets, pressures on impairment and depreciation costs and reallocation of spend agreed by the Department. Committee noted that figures were on budget for staying within 2% tolerances.

ii) Summary Management Accounts

Committee considered the summary accounts to November 2017 as presented and noted the forecast underspend of £421,000 against budget for the year to date and the intention to open a separate interest earning bank account for the College.

Committee noted that enrolments were stable overall and that the reduction in Funded Learning Units (FLUs) was offset by Work Based Learning (WBL) and Training for Success (TfS) numbers, which were well in excess of target. Work on student engagement was in process ahead of retention targets.

During a discussion on the CPD process, issues were noted with duplication, inefficiency, delays and added costs. Members were advised that work was ongoing to negotiate a move direct to market for procurement up to £30,000. Committee would be kept informed of progress. The Department had raised matters directly with CPD and will continue to do so.

10.8 2017/18 Budget

Committee considered the following correspondence in relation to the budget:

- i. Capital Allocation 2017/18 – referring to the movement of budget from major to minor works following agreement to extend the design phase of the major capital project. The Department were being kept fully apprised and approval to go ahead was awaited.
- ii. Sector Budget Update – there is uncertainty in relation to the budget for the coming year and scenario planning is currently being undertaken.
- iii. HLA Funding Letter 2017/18 – noted.

10.9 KPI Reporting Schedule

Dr Brankin took members through the report on KPI 3 - Accelerating Business and Community Engagement, which was broadly on target. Committee noted the adjusted position on Department supported programmes, which had been impacted by staff sickness. The NRC approach of additionality in delivery of programmes was also noted along with the success of student placement outcomes to date with Bloc Blinds.

Prof Scott summarised key information relating to KP1 4 - Accelerating Creativity and Innovation, which was on target, highlighting significant growth in the Digital Learning Environment (DLE). Members noted that improvement in outcomes for students was also being monitored via student feedback.

Prof Scott reported on KPI 5 – Achieving Financial Health, which was broadly on target. Members noted information on new initiatives in relation to health and wellbeing.

The Chair was content that all KPIs were on target.

10.10 Shared Services

Committee noted the LMS Implementation Project update report, which was broadly on target. Key issues were highlighted including the appointment of a Project Manager and the completion of a gateway review, formal report of which was still to be issued.

10.11 New Build/Estates

Prof Scott introduced the presentation on new build which had been provided to the Capital Steering Group in October 2017 along with the resultant report on allocation of resources to the project. Members noted that Mrs McConnell was the NRC representative on the Capital Steering Group (CSG), which met twice annually; while Mr McCluggage was the governors' representative on the Project Board.

Prof Scott updated Committee on the process noting the likelihood that the projected timeframe could be achieved. She outlined decant options being considered and advised that the Department had been kept fully apprised of any changes to risk and project costs.

This item would be on the agenda for the next meeting of Committee, when a report on the remit of the Capital Steering Group, to be drawn up in conjunction with the views of Governors and Mrs McConnell as CSG representative, would be provided. Detailed updates would be provided to Committee as information became available.

10.12 Staffing Paper

i. Staffing update – January 2018

Mr Hewitt spoke to the report highlighting key points in relation to recruitment and staff awards.

ii. Sickness absence Q1 2017/18

Mr Hewitt outlined the position with sickness absence within the College which, while similar in trend to the previous year, had shifted between departments.

Committee noted the report.

10.13 Committee Meeting Dates 2017/18

The Chair reported that, following discussion with the SLT, he did not consider that an additional Resources Committee meeting would be beneficial. The possibility of a training session would be looked at, however, when the position on the appointment of a Governing Body Chair and new governors became clearer.

It was noted that meetings would continue to be held on a Monday and would commence at 5pm, as previously agreed.

10.14 Any Other Business

i) GDPR

Mr Murphy drew members' attention to the requirements of the legislation which would come into effect on 18 May 2018. Committee noted that Ms Julie Kerr, Head of MIS, is the College representative on a GDPR Group, which has been charged with ensuring a sector-wide response to the legislation.

Mr Hewitt advised that a staff briefing would be carried out shortly and that training for all staff would be provided.

ii) Appointment of Resources Committee Vice-Chair

The Chair reported that, following discussion with Committee members, Mrs McConnell had agreed to act as Resources Committee Vice-Chair. Members thanked Mrs McConnell and congratulated her on her appointment.

10.15 Date of Next Meeting

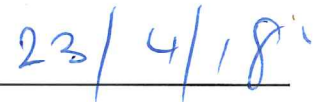
The next meeting was confirmed as 23 April 2018 in Farm Lodge, Ballymena campus at 5.00pm.

The meeting concluded at 6.15pm.

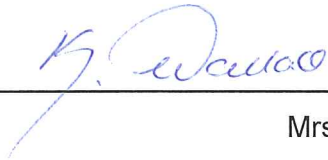


Mr K Chambers (Chair)

Date



23 April 2018



Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)