

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee (unreserved business) held on 15 October 2018 at the Farm Lodge campus, commencing at 5.10 pm.

Present: Ms Y Mallon, Mr K Chambers (Chair), Mrs G McConnell and Mr I Murphy

In Attendance: Dr S Brankin, Mr D Hewitt, Mr M Higgins, Mr S Lavery, Mr V Taggart and Mr S Watt (14.12)

Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

14.1 Apologies

Prof T Scott.

14.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

14.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 August 2018 were approved subject to Mrs McConnell's name being inserted as Chair.

Proposed: Mrs Mallon

Seconded: Mr Murphy

14.4 Matters Arising

Consideration was given to the draft report, 'Sector wide review on the use of Property Division', produced by Grant Thornton. Mr Higgins summarised the key points in the report, which would be used as independent evidence to support a sector wide business case. Members noted that the report had previously been presented to the Audit & Risk Committee and would be reviewed by the Governing Body before being presented to the Permanent Secretary.

In response to members' questions, Mr Higgins confirmed that all high priority health and safety issues had been dealt with.

14.5 Chair's Communication

The Chair welcomed Mr I Murphy in his new capacity as Governing Body member.

The Chair advised the Committee that he had discussed a proposal with GB Chair, Mr Crosse, to produce an annual summary report on key actions and outcomes resulting from Committee business and discussions. Mr Higgins agreed to produce a draft report for the next meeting, with assistance from the Secretary.

ACTION: Mr Higgins to produce draft annual report on Committee business.

14.6 Correspondence

Two items of correspondence had been received and were considered by Committee:

DfE Update on June 2018 Budgetary Monitoring. Mr Higgins took Committee through the letter summarising the key issues of the budgetary monitoring round, which had also been discussed with the Department at the meeting on 23 August. Mr Higgins confirmed that all required supporting evidence had been supplied to the Department but noted that clarification was required on the use of funding being provided for repairs.

ACTION: Mr Higgins would refer back to the Department on the purpose of the funding.

Committee noted the correspondence and reiterated the need for the College baseline funding to be re-established.

Mr Hewitt outlined the background to the Outcomes Delivery Plan 2018/19 and the College's input into the associated Report Cards. Committee noted that relevant reports would be brought to the Governing Body once reporting templates had been drawn up by the Department. Key issues and benchmarking information would, in the meantime, continue to be provided to Committee.

14.7 Annual Accounts

Mr Lavery spoke to the report, which was presented to the Resource Committee for information and clarification. He indicated that, having previously been to the Audit & Risk Committee, the draft accounts were currently with the Audit Office for external verification and would be presented again to Audit & Risk in November.

Mr Lavery highlighted key sections of the financial statements and Mr Higgins noted comparison of College Income and Expenditure Accounts and explained distortions in same. Members noted the positive position with pensions but expressed concern at the level of deficit the College was facing, while appreciating that NRC was in the second best deficit position.

Committee confirmed their assurance that everything possible was being done by officers to work within budget and were, therefore, content with the accounts as presented.

14.8 Monthly Management Accounts

Mr Lavery summarised the NDPB return and members noted an overview of current pressures contributing to the overall deficit forecast, including pensions, incremental pay awards and reduction in income.

Committee considered the summary accounts presented. Mr Higgins explained the variance to indicative budget and confirmed that the deficit position had been reported in the monthly Department Returns, College Assurance Statement and the Risk Register.

Members noted that the Improvement Meeting scheduled for October had been deferred.

14.9 2018/19 Budget

Mr Higgins outlined a Capital (Minor Works) Allocation by the Department of £368,000.

Committee noted the correspondence between the Governing Body Chair and the Permanent Secretary.

14.10 Shared Services

Dr Brankin took Committee through the highlight report on Sector Wide LMS Implementation, outlining difficulties resulting in the postponement of User Acceptance Testing and the resulting impact on the January Admissions launch. He advised that this issue had now been escalated to the Director of FE, who was in direct communication with IT Assist. Dr Brankin further reported that recent issues with the project had highlighted further connectivity problems, which would be discussed at the next meeting of the Project Board on 26 October 2018.

Committee noted the Memorandum of Agreement and collaborative Service Level Agreement which had been signed by Principals, with NWRC leading on the project on behalf of the sector. Dr Brankin is the College representative on the joint Project Board.

14.11 New Build/Estates

The minutes of the New Buildings Project Board meeting of 30 August, previously presented to the Governing Body, were noted. The Department had been advised that Mr Murphy would be joining the Project Board to provide financial advice and were content with this approach.

In response to members' queries, Mr Higgins confirmed that McAdam Design would be taking forward a fire strategy for the new buildings, supported by Mr Kyle Lecky, Health & Safety Coordinator, for the College.

Mr Higgins reported that providing visibility of the Project on the College website was currently in progress, with public consultation scheduled in November.

Committee noted the progress of the project with interest.

14.12 Staffing Paper

Members noted the update on staffing, presented by Mr Watt.

Mr Hewitt spoke to the report on absence, noting that the College had the lowest absence across the sector.

ACTION: Definition of absence for short/medium/long term to be included in future reports.

14.13 Any Other Business

None.

14.10 Date of Next Meeting

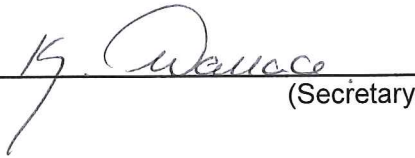
Committee confirmed dates for future meetings, with the next meeting on 14 January 2019 in Farm Lodge.

Members agreed that a further meeting would be convened to consider shared services issues, if necessary.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 6.40pm.

Mr K Chambers 
(Chair)

Date 14/01/2019
14 January 2019

Mrs K Wallace 
(Secretary)