

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee (unreserved business) held on 23 April 2018 at the Farm Lodge, Ballymena campus commencing at 5.00pm.

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

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

Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

Mr I Murphy

The Chair welcomed the Chair of the Governing Body to the meeting.

11.1 Apologies

None.

11.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

11.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2018 were approved.

Proposed: Mrs McConnell

Seconded: Prof Scott

11.4 Matters Arising

(10.7) Summary Management Accounts: Mr Higgins confirmed that procurement of Goods and Services contracts with a limit greater than £30,000 had to be carried out by CPD.

(10.11) New Build/Estates: Mrs McConnell advised Committee that the meeting with the Department had been deferred until 11 May. Committee noted that future meetings would be chaired by the Senior Sponsor.

Mr Higgins referred to the copy letter from the Director of Further Education to Properties Division (item 11.6(iii)). He advised that the difficulties with the current system will remain until a new solution is approved and in place within 18-24 months. Issues in relation to value-for-money were referred to and that a solution is required immediately. It has been agreed that College internal audit will complete an independent verification on the matters raised with Property Division across the sector to support a business case on new solutions.

Committee also voiced strong concern about statutory requirements, including health and safety issues, not being adequately addressed by Properties Division. Mr Higgins outlined the maintenance process to date and advised on the interim solution in place with the estates function.

ACTION: Mr Higgins will liaise with the Head of Estates to ensure all health and safety issues are ranked and addressed.

(10.14) GDPR: Committee noted that a full action plan was in place in preparation for the updated legislation, with records retention and internal GDPR audit already practised by the College. Any issues in relation to College emails should be addressed to Dr Brankin.

11.5 Chair's Communication

None.

11.6 Correspondence

Three items of correspondence were noted:

- i. FE Sector Resource Budget 2018/19 – letter requesting proposals re absorbing pay pressures and VES business cases. The pressure to address outstanding pay settlements for lecturers was highlighted. Colleges were lobbying the Department for cash to pay increases and a business case would be drawn up.
- ii. Sector Budget Update – letter confirming resource budget allocation for the sector will remain at the same level as 2017/18 for 2018/19.
- iii. Properties Division Contract Issues – copy letter to Properties Division outlining sector concerns and proposals and requesting a meeting to discuss same. Committee welcomed this letter although the timescale involved was seen as unsatisfactory. It was noted that the 6 Colleges would discuss a common procurement policy.

Mrs Mallon entered the meeting at 5.25pm.

11.7 Monthly Management Accounts

i) DfE Return to March 2018

Mr Lavery summarised the NDPB return. He explained the variance in figures related to indicative budgets and highlighted the positive position with minor works. He confirmed that at 31st March 2018, the College is in line with budget forecasts and within DfE tolerance levels.

ii) Summary Management Accounts

Committee considered the summary accounts to February 2018 as presented. Members noted that provision to offset the overall deficit should allow the College to adhere to internal tolerances at July 2018.

Mr Higgins outlined a number of procurement specifications which had been drawn up but clarified that current budgets would not allow for these investment works. Pressures arising from long term staff sickness and necessary training for new lecturing staff were noted. Committee understood that the Department was comfortable with the financial position to 31 March 2018.

ACTION: A report listing issues impacting on income would be compiled for consideration at the Governing Body meeting on 9 May 2018.

11.8 2017/18 Budget

Committee considered the following correspondence in relation to the budget:

- i. The draft budget proposed by Department was noted. Committee noted from the indicative budget that it was unlikely the Department would reinstate the £1.3million handed back during 2017/18. Members noted their disappointment and raised concerns about the impact of the budget reductions on the College Development Plan, in particular in relation to dilapidation and health and safety across College sites.
- ii. Capital Allocation 2018/19. Committee noted the allocation for the new build and expressed concern that there was no allocation for minor works across an ageing College estate.

ACTION: A letter will be sent from the Chair of the GB to the Department expressing Committee's concerns.

Prof Scott updated Committee on the recent bi-lateral meeting with the Department and advised that the meeting to review the College's position in respect of the improvement process was expected to take place in May.

11.9 KPI Reporting Schedule

Prof Scott referred Committee to an original and updated version of the KPI Report and highlighted the changes in the revised RAG status for amber and the inclusion of an overall status for each KPI, to reflect the end of year position. Prof Scott summarised key information on KPI 3 and it was noted that the narrative for the Skills Focus and InnovateUs should be updated.

Dr Brankin took members through the report on KPI 4 which was on target.

Mr Higgins and Mr Hewitt summarised information on KPI 5, which was on target.

Committee reviewed and agreed the revised RAG amber narrative to "Metric broadly on target and within tolerance."

Committee was content with the progress being made and acknowledged the work put into the report.

ACTION: Mr Higgins will amend the narrative and amber status. The final version of the KPI Report will be submitted to the Department on 24 April.

11.10 Shared Services

- i. Committee noted the NIFON update presentation on shared services.
- ii. PSSSP - the Department's letter and attached high level reports resulting from the data gathering exercise were noted. Key issues were highlighted including potential collaboration.
- iii. Dr Brankin updated the committee on the Learner Management System and revised timeframes. A further update would be brought to Committee in May.

11.11 New Build/Estates

Committee noted the minutes of the Project Board meeting held on 25 January 2018 and the information presentation which was delivered to staff by the SLT at campus roadshows.

Members were informed that the College had achieved agreement-in-principle to progress with St Joseph's College at Beresford Avenue in Coleraine for the decant exercise and that McAdam Design would present the preferred design option to the Governing Body meeting in May.

The Chair referred to the Project Board minutes and the listing of those 'in attendance'.

ACTION: The layout of future Project Board minutes would be revised to show members attending the meeting and officers/others in attendance at the meeting.

11.12 Staffing Update

Mr Hewitt spoke to the report highlighting key points in relation to health and wellbeing initiatives and the staff survey. Committee noted the report.

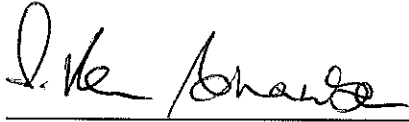
11.13 Any Other Business

No other business.

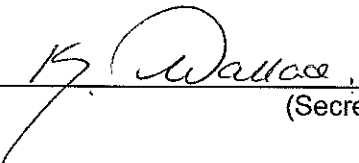
11.14 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was confirmed as 18 June 2018 in Newtownabbey campus, to commence at 5.00pm.

The meeting concluded at 7.00pm.

Mr K Chambers 
(Chair)

Date 18/6/2018
18 June 2018

Mrs K Wallace 
(Secretary)

Summary of Actions:

Item no	Action	Owner	Progress/ Date Due
11.4	Head of Estates to ensure all health and safety issues are ranked and addressed.	Mr Higgins/ Head of Estates	Completed – 2/5/18
11.7(ii)	A report listing issues impacting on income would be compiled for consideration at the Governing Body meeting.	Mr Lavery	Completed - 9.5.18
11.8(ii)	Letter will be sent to the Department expressing Committee's concerns.		Following GB 9/5/18
11.11	The layout of future Project Board minutes to be revised to show members attending the meeting and officers/others in attendance at the meeting.	Mr Higgins	Amended for New Build Project meeting that took place on 26 Apr'18

