

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee (unreserved business) held on 29 April 2019 at the Newtownabbey campus, commencing at 5.55 pm.

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

In Attendance: Dr S Brankin, Mr M Higgins, Mr S Lavery, Prof T Scott, Mr V Taggart and Mr S Watt (16.13)

Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

16.1 Apologies

None.

16.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

16.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2019 were approved.

Proposed: Mrs McConnell

Seconded: Mr Chambers

16.4 Matters Arising

Noted that all actions arising from the previous meeting had been completed or were included as agenda items.

16.5 Chair's Communication

The Chair thanked Mr Chambers for chairing the previous meeting on his behalf.

16.6 Correspondence

Committee noted that 5 items of correspondence had been received:

- The revised and fully signed NRC Articles & Instrument of Governance had been implemented and uploaded to the College website.
- The CDP 2019/20 commissioning letter had been complied with.
- Notification of bil-lateral meeting was noted, for discussion later in the meeting.
- Notification of the opening indicative resource allocation for 2019/20 was considered. Members noted that the budget had not been reinstated to the baseline position.

ACTION: Committee would make a strong recommendation to the Governing Body expressing their severe dissatisfaction with this position.

- Notification of capital allocation funding for 2019/20 was considered. Members noted that the allocation of £100k to all Colleges for minor works fell short of what was needed to carry forward normal baseline requirements. It was also noted that NIFON would be communicating with the Department on pressures arising from the move to a March year-end for Colleges.

Committee agreed to take item 16.13 at this point in the meeting to facilitate staff attendance.

16.13 Staffing Update

Mr Watt updated Committee on the staffing position including training, recruitment, health and wellbeing and equality matters. Members noted the report on absence and Mr Watt advised that trend analysis would be carried out for future reports.

A number of observations and queries were raised by governors:

- (i) Confirmation of how the CPD activity was aligned to business needs and the individual's annual performance review.
- (ii) The process for reporting and monitoring sickness
- (iii) The importance of conducting exit interviews for all staff leaving and ensuring appropriate follow up.

ACTION: A report on interventions in place to encourage disabled accessibility in the workplace would be brought to the next meeting.

ACTION: Conclusions and follow up section to be included in future Absence reports and feedback from governors to be incorporated into relevant reports

Mr Watt left the meeting at 6.24pm.

16.7 Monthly Management Accounts

Mr Laverty summarised the NDPB return to the end of March 2019. Members noted that the College was on target to spend £23.6m of resource and had received approval from the Department for overspend up to £143k. The capital new build allocation of £1.485m had been fully spent with the minor works allocation of £1.27m almost fully committed.

Mr Laverty presented the summary College accounts to July 2019 and it was noted that, whilst accounts to the end of March were within budget, figures at July end would show a deficit and pressure due to non-reinstatement of the opening balance.

16.8 College Development Plan (CDP)

Mr Higgins presented the summary report to the end of March 2019 and members noted the College's performance against the 2018/2019 CDP, outcomes of which had been factored into the 2019/20 CDP. Mt. Taggart outlined the achievement of targets within score card 1, Qualifications and the deviations from the targets.

16.9 2019/20 College Development Plan (CDP)

Consideration was given to the draft CDP for 2019/20 which had been submitted and discussed with DfE as part of the bilateral process. Members noted the funding allocation was insufficient to deliver against targets and a presentation on scenario planning was considered.

During a period of discussion, members considered the reduction in funding provision and the potential scenarios to address the College position, as outlined.

ACTION: Committee agreed that the CDP with all scenarios be submitted to the Department and Governing Body.

16.10 Shared Services

Dr Brankin presented the LMS highlight report and summarised the current situation with the project, which was now expected to go live in September 2020. He outlined the revised timeframe and key milestones and drew attention to the vacancies at both project director and project manager level. Dr Brankin confirmed that the College is resourced to take forward the implementation of the LMS.

Members highlighted their concerns regarding the delays encountered to-date. The general consensus was that this was still a high-risk project and should be flagged as red on the risk register.

It was noted that both the software provider and IT Assist had failed to meet their delivery targets. While members appreciated that actions to rectify these issues had been taken, they were nevertheless concerned regarding potential continued failure to deliver, especially by IT Assist, as there is no contractual method of remedy if this turns out to be the case.

Members were advised that NIFON would be requesting that an external Project Manager be appointed to oversee the development of a specification for the finance system..

16.11 New Build/Estates

Mr Higgins reported that the College was on track with this project, with Stage 3 design due to be presented to the Project Board in the coming week.

16.12 Sector Wide Property Division Business (PSD)

Consideration was given to the letter received from the Director of FE on the request to engage with the Director of Property Division within CPD. Members were advised of NIFON's position and noted that the Principals' group would also be responding to this letter.

ACTION: Committee recommended that a response be made by the Governing Body in due course, in favour of the business case being progressed as previously planned.


16.14 Any Other Business

It was agreed that this item be taken under reserved business.

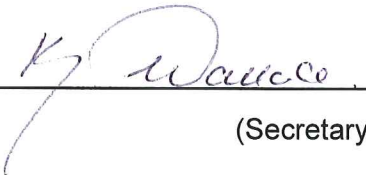
16.15 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 17 June 2019 in Farm Lodge, Ballymena.

The meeting concluded at 7.25pm.

Mr H Crossey 
(Chair)

Date 11/6/2019
11 June 2019

Mrs K Wallace 
(Secretary)