

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 10 October 2022 on MS Teams.

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 C Fairless (32.3), Mr S Lavery, Ms C Murdoch
(32.7), Ms J Small

Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

32.1 Apologies

Mr D MacAuley. Committee heard that Mr MacAuley, who previously sat on the Education Committee, had now been appointed to Resources Committee but was currently ill.

32.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

32.3 Business Engagement – Funding Overview

Mr Fairless addressed his report and detailed individual funding programmes on offer, noting that these were additional to those already in operation in the College.

The Principal reported the need to align delivery to the Minister's objectives and priorities and highlighted the Department's emphasis on collaboration and working together. Members noted the necessity to provide the best possible deal for residents with no duplication of provision.

Mr Fairless summarised the position with delivery deadlines, available College resources and collaborative work taking place on propositions.

The Chair referred to a difficult year ahead economically and thanked Mr Fairless for the work being undertaken on funding opportunities.

4.25pm Mr Fairless left the meeting.

32.4 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meetings on 6 June 2022 and 22 August 2022 were approved.

Proposed: Mr McKernan Seconded: Ms McIlwaine

32.5 Matters Arising

All matters arising had been completed or were included in agenda reports.

32.6 Chair's Communications/Correspondence

Reference was made to the government budget announcement due at the end of October and an expectation of funding reductions in the coming year noted due to budget pressures.

The Chair highlighted the prudence of drawing up a number of financial scenarios in preparation.

ACTION: Scenarios to be worked up to address further budget efficiencies.

32.7 HR Update

Ms Murdoch provided an update to 28 September and detailed issues relating to strategic priorities including staff changes, recruitment, uptake on mandatory training, health and wellbeing, absence and performance management.

Committee discussed key issues around compliance rates for mandatory training and noted the proposed steps to improve uptake. Members noted the recruitment position, and recorded delight in appointing staff within difficult to fill areas. The Committee referred to job applicant numbers and the age profile of existing staff. Members heard that future recruitment competitions would include detail on the total benefits package and noted progress on delivery of leadership/management courses and roll-out of the competency framework.

Members thanked Ms Murdoch for work to date and for a comprehensive report.

ACTION:

- An update on safeguarding training progress would be provided to the November meeting of GB.
- Analysis of recruitment, including age profile of applicants and appointees, would be brought to the next meeting of Committee.
- The sector-agreed framework on hybrid working will be made available to members.

5.15pm Ms Murdoch left the meeting.

32.8 Draft Annual Report & Accounts

Ms Craig presented the draft Annual Report and accompanying summary of key points. Ms Craig clarified the position on the year-end deficit as a non-cash item shown in the year-end accounts of all FE Colleges. Committee heard that the College currently had the lowest deficit balance across the sector; also the revaluation of property was explained and impact on the financial statements.

Members were also reminded that, as an NDPB, the Department was responsible for covering college expenditure. Mr Lavery paid thanks to Ms Craig and the Finance team for the production of the Annual Accounts and this was echoed by the Chair.

32.9 Finance Update

Committee considered information on the financial budget for 2022/23 and resource pressure due to rising energy costs, a new facilities contract and pay pressures. Reference was also made to challenges to future years as the additional in-year funding has not been baselined in the College budget for 2022/23. Mr Lavery advised on significant financial implications for 2023/24 due to in-year funding not baselined.

Members heard that areas of savings would be identified over the coming months and noted the current status of pay negotiations for 2021/22.

Mr Lavery reported on collaboration taking place with other colleges to reduce energy costs and referred to the additional functional flexibility which would be provided by the new builds.

32.10 Any Other Business

None.

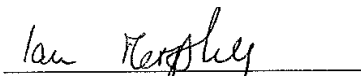
32.11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Resources Committee will be held on 23 January 2023, on Microsoft Teams.

Members noted that the March meeting would take place in-person with location to be agreed.

ACTION: A poll on location preference would be circulated to members.

The meeting concluded at 5.40pm.

Mr I Murphy 

Date 23 January 2023

(Chair)

Mrs K Wallace 

(Secretary)