

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee (unreserved business) held on 15 June 2020 via Skype, commencing at 4.00pm.

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

In Attendance: Dr H Dixon (22.8), Mrs M Donnelly, Mr M Higgins, Mr S Laverty, Mr P O'Neill, Ms J Small and Mr S Watt (22.9)

Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

22.1 Apologies

None.

22.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

22.9 HR Update

The HR Update was taken as read. Members noted that auditors had awarded a satisfactory assurance rating with no recommendations and that both long term and short term absence had fallen during the third quarter of the year.

Mr Chambers asked if work on appraisals was continuing during the lockdown period. Mrs Donnelly responded that the focus at this time was on objective setting and that all appraisals would be carried out in October. This timeline would bring staff and academic appraisals, which are carried out biennially, into line.

4.10pm Mr Watt left the meeting.

22.8 Shared Services

The LMS Project Update was taken as read. Dr Dixon highlighted key points including analysis of new business systems, transfer of apprenticeships to new traineeships, the Task and Finish Group and training for LMS.

In response to a question from Mrs McConnell, Dr Dixon advised that the only change to the project timeline was timetabling, which would now commence in June. She noted that traineeships were still on track for August 2020.

4.16pm Dr Dixon left the meeting.

22.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2020 were approved.

Proposed: Mr Chambers

Seconded: Ms Mallon

22.4 Matters Arising

None.

22.5 Chair's Communication

The Chair noted his attendance at meetings of the New Build Project Board (NBPB) including a session to update Mrs McConnell, minutes of which are included in the agenda.

22.6 Correspondence

The FE Returns Timetable, advising revised timeframe for annual accounts of 30 November 2020, was noted.

22.7 New Build Update

Covid-19

Mr Higgins took members through the Project Steering Group Briefing Report for meeting held on 22 May 2020, which had been issued to the Department. Members noted a number of key updates including outcome of meeting with McAdam Design, the addition of a clause for , status of the removal of the NIE substation, and review of the M.E.A.T by CPD, who had indicated it represented Value for Money. Mr Higgins signified that necessary assurances are being progressed to allow the project to move forward.

Mr Wilkinson queried the potential for risk arising from future resource implications of the new capital build. Mr Higgins outlined savings and efficiencies which would be realised as a result of the move from a 6-campus model, to a more modern and efficient 4-campus model. Members were also informed that the innovative use of space in the schedule of accommodation would allow for flexible sharing of facilities.

Reference was made to College plans for the delivery of courses going forward. Prof Scott advised on requirements for attendance on campus for compliance purposes and noted that the College would also continue to look at increasing the use of technology to provide enhanced blended and online learning. Ms Small reported on work being carried out by the sector Enhanced Learning and Technology Group on which Dr Dixon represented the College. She noted that further information would be brought to members in coming months.

A full response to a number of issues relating to the capital project, including benefits realisation, slippage and compensation events, was provided to members' queries. The Chair and members congratulated the Project team on achieving amber/green risk status on the Gateway Report and commended the Project Director, Mr Mooney on an outstanding job.

22.10 Monthly Management Accounts

Mr Lavery presented accounts to April 2020 and explained variance to budget due to increased staff and operating costs, due to reduced budget funding by DfE.

Members' attention was drawn to information received for 2020/21 on budget allocation, capital allocation and June monitoring. Mr Lavery advised that capital minor works would be

taken forward and referred to the list of key projects provided. He also emphasised the requirement for works to be completed by March 2021 and would welcome any additional capital funding from DfE.

Members noted that the outcome of the June monitoring round should be available before the end of the month.

Committee was aware of the difficulty in forecasting the overall budget position taking into account the implications of Covid-19 and noted that a contingency plan would be considered under reserved business.

22.11 College Development Plan (CDP)

Ms Small advised that the Department had just issued a template format for the CDP, for consultation. Feedback is to be provided for 17 June and a commissioning letter would then follow. Members noted that the indicative date for submission has been extended to 31 August.

Prof Scott advised that the Policy and Planning Group would initially respond to the Principals' consultation and a sector response would be issued to DfE. She noted a high level of sharing across colleges on this issue.

ACTION: Ms Small would clarify details on the submission process and advise if Governing Body approval is required.

22.12 Any Other Business

None.

22.13 Date of Next Meeting

A draft meetings scheduled would be presented to the Governing Body on 30 June.

The meeting concluded at 5.05pm.

Mr I Murphy 
(Chair)

Date 12.10.20

Mrs K Wallace 
(Secretary)