
MINUTES OF THE TWENTY THIRD MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE, COMMENCING 12:00

PRESENT

Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair
Dr S Fisher (from 12:21)
Mr B O'Neill

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P McKeown Finance Director (until item 23.7)
Mr L Murphy, Principal & CE (until item 23.7)
Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services (from 12:05)
Ms S Kelly, HR Manager (from item 23.7)
Ms S Graham, Foodovation Centre Manager (for presentation item 23.0 only)
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

APOLOGIES

Mr P Thompson (post meeting)

23.0 PRESENTATION – Ms S Graham, Foodovation Centre Manager

The Committee Chair welcomed Ms S Graham, Foodovation Centre Manager to the Committee and invited her to share her presentation.

Ms Graham brought members through a PowerPoint presentation on the work of the Foodovation Centre which is part of the Business Support Centre. With an ever increasing team the Foodovation Centre meets the demands to support small/medium sized food businesses to develop excellence in food innovation, science and technology.

Ms Graham provided detail to the vision for the 'Foodovation Academy' a project as part of the Causeway Growth Deal to be located in Limavady, Main Street Campus. The Business Case is currently being drawn up and will be brought through the Committee.

The Principal indicated that the College is listed as one of the five Education and Research entities within the Department's Agri-Tech Sectoral Action Plan for 2024-27.

It was agreed for the presentation slides to be shared with the remaining Governors.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Graham for an informative presentation and acknowledged the great work of the team.

Dr S Fisher joined the meeting during this item.

Ms Graham left the meeting at this juncture.

23.1 WELCOME

The Committee Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Dr S Fisher gave prior notice she would be joining the meeting later. Mr L Murphy gave advance notice he had to leave the meeting early due to another College commitment.

23.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr B O'Neill declared that Enterprise North West was included within the Tenders Issued Report (RC 23.4, Report 1).

There were no declarations of any other business.

23.3 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 JUNE 2024**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 10 June 2024

The Draft Minutes were taken as read and were agreed as a true and accurate record.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr B O'Neill

Report 23.3.1 Matters Arising – Finance

22.5 Financial Year End – update the 31 March is the preferred option. The earliest this will be implemented is likely to be March 2026. College Finance Directors have met NIAO to discuss the implication of a move to a March year end.

22.4, Report 5 The Governing Body approved the Draft Budget 2024/25 at the meeting held on 19 June 2024.

The Committee Chair invited Mr P McKeown to present his management report.

23.4 FINANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT - Mr P McKeown, Finance Director**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Tenders Issued

Report 2 Estates Update

Report 3 Business Support Centre Update

Report 4 Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure for the Year Ended 31 July 2024

Report 5 College Insurance Cover 2024/25

Report 6 Prompt Payment – verbal report

Report 1 Tenders Issued Report

The Finance Director highlighted that due to no bids received the College had to tender again for the development for an Outline Business Case in respect for the Foodovation Centre Project within the Causeway Coast and Glens Growth Deal. The Tender was awarded to the only bid received meeting specifications.

Report 2 Estates Update Report

In respect to the Springtown Redevelopment Project, no further correspondence has been received from OHMG in relation to the additional costs incurred by OHMG in the early stages of the arbitration process that is no longer required.

Estates have completed several minor projects in recent months. In terms of capital projects an Outline Business Case (OBC) is being developed regarding the refurbishment/ upgrade of the existing assembly hall in the Strand Building.

The Department (DfE) confirmed on 22 August 2024 that the OBC for the Strabane Town Centre Regeneration Project (Strabane new Campus) had been approved by Casework and the Permanent Secretary and is now with DoF Supply. A number of items are to be addressed at FBC stage as a condition of Casework's approval. The Financial Deal will be signed on 18 September 2024.

The next key stage for the College is the procurement of the Integrated Consultant Team (ICT) to lead on the design of the project. This will be led by Construction Procurement Delivery (CPD). A Project Board will be set up with a Governor Representative and a SRO.

Report 3 Business Support Centre Update

The positive report from the Business Support Centre was noted.

Report 4 Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure for the Year Ended 31 July 2024

The Finance Director reported the Annual Report and Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Accounts Direction and relevant accounting standards. The College intend to submit the Annual Report and Financial Statements to the Department (DfE) on 20 September 2024. In terms of the March year end, audit work is in progress and the audit for the 31 July 2024 will commence on 23 September 2024.

Some variances highlighted included the Department (DfE) Grants showed a positive variance. This mainly related to the Voluntary Service Scheme and the Step-Up Programme funding. Pension figures within the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure and the Statement of Financial Position relate to the NILGOSC Scheme. This is currently showing as a pension asset.

The Holiday Pay Provision estimate for the back dated payments has increased slightly to (£1.08m). The in-year Business Case has been submitted for holiday pay.

Report 5 College Insurance Cover 2024/25

The addendum to the 2021 approved Business Case was approved by DfE in July 2024. This gave approval and additional budget cover to purchase full insurance for 2024/25. The Sector premium for 2024/25 totals £1,662k, up £73k (4.6%) on the 2023/24 premium of £1,589k.

The development of the Business Case for the 5-year period from 2025/26 is continuing. Meetings have been held with the NI Housing Executive regarding their management of self-insurance. The sector is seeking meetings with the Department of Health, the Education Authority and the NI Courts Service. The College has appointed ABL Insurance to prepare a report on the possible options available, including reviewing claims history and potential risks going forward.

Report 6 Prompt Payment – verbal report

The prompt payment figure for the 30 days to 31 August 2024 was 95%.

23.5 CORRESPONDENCE – Finance

There was no further correspondence to report.

23.6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Finance

There was no other business to discuss.

The Committee Chair thanked Mr McKeown for his report.

Mr P McKeown and Mr L Murphy left the meeting at this juncture.

23.7 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS - Finance

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Internal Audit Review – Part-time Lecturer Payments - May 2024

Report 1.1 Internal Audit Review - Part-time Lecturer Payments – Tracking Report

Report 2 Vice Chair to the Committee

Report 1 Internal Audit Review – Part-time Lecturer Payments - May 2024

Members noted the positive report that received a satisfactory assurance with one low priority action.

Report 1.1 Internal Audit Review - Part-time Lecturer Payments – Tracking Report

The one low priority action has been implemented.

Report 2 Vice Chair to the Committee

The Committee Chair reported that the position of Vice Chair to the Committee remains vacant. **An Expression of Interest will be issued to relevant Committee members.**

Ms S Kelly joined the meeting during this item.

STAFFING MATTERS

23.8 Matters Arising – Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 10 June 2024 – verbal report

22.8, Report 21.1 Following the suggestion to look at the recruitment process

for lower band posts a report is included within the Management Report (RC 23.9/1.3). The HR Manager will report later in the meeting on this item.

22.11 The Governing Body approved the Code of Conduct for Governing Body members at the meeting held on 19 June 2024.

23.9 HR SERVICES MANAGEMENT REPORT – Ms S Kelly, HR Manager

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 23.9 HR Services Management Report

Since 1 September 2023 the College has advertised a total of 126 posts. 76 of these were support posts. An update was provided on the Curriculum Resourcing Plan for 2024/25.

Reporting on the agreed Actions from the June 2024 meeting (22.8, Report 21.1) the HR Manager stated that a review of the recruitment process for Band 3 and 4 posts was undertaken by the Recruitment Team. A survey was issued to those employees who were appointed by the College within the last 12 months to identify if there are any other steps HR could take to attract additional applicants and make the process as clear as possible.

Following feedback, the HR team will implement changes to try and increase applications to the College. It was suggested that it might be useful to issue the survey to individuals who applied for posts but who were not successful. The HR Manager welcomed this suggestion.

Sickness absence rates show an increase in sickness within the College in the last academic year 2023/24 from 2022/23. The application of the Voluntary Severance Scheme had an impact on levels of absence during 2023/24. The largest cause of absence within the College was personal stress and surgery.

The Health & Wellbeing Programme for Semester 1, 2024/25 is currently being developed and will be available to staff in the coming weeks.

During 2023/24, 604 staff members attended at least one staff development activity throughout the academic year.

The update on completion rates at August 2024 on the mandatory training modules show slight decreases in completion over the summer period due to staff holidays and technical difficulties with the Canvas system. Going forward Cyber Security training will now be undertaken annually following a recent IT audit recommendation.

From September 2023 to August 2024, 439 Staff Development applications have been received and processed by the HR Team. The Staff Learning & Development Policy is currently being reviewed.

The HR Team will be working on developing a new online appraisal form which will be easier to access and will be more user friendly. A CPD report will also be available for managers to allow them to monitor and track CPD hours for their staff.

23.10 CORRESPONDENCE – STAFFING

There was no correspondence received.

23.11 COMMITTEE CHAIR’S BUSINESS – STAFFING

The Committee Chair had no other business to discuss.

23.12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – STAFFING

There was no any other business to discuss.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Kelly and invited Ms Moss to present the next reports.

23.13 CLIENT SERVICES REPORTS – Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services

➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

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| Report 1 | Equality & Good Relations Progress Report (Section 75 (April 2023 – March 2024 |
| Report 2 | Equality Report |
| Report 3 | Data Protection/Compliance Update |

Report 1 Equality & Good Relations Progress Report (Section 75) April 2023 – March 2024

The Head of Client Services reported on the Equality & Good Relations Progress Report (Section 75) from April 2023 – March 2024). The Report has been sent to the Equality Commission and captures the extensive work of the staff on the College’s commitment to its equality scheme and to the promotion of equality.

Members were content to recommend approval of the report to the Governing Body.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Dr S Fisher

Report 2 Equality Report

The Head of Client Services highlighted key work and events that have taken place to raise equality awareness. The calendar of events for 2024/25 has been drafted. The College had representation at the Foyle Pride event on 24 August 2024. The agenda items were noted for work going forward for the Equality Working Group. The Report included activities tracked against Section 75 Categories during 2023/24.

Report 3 Data Protection/Compliance Update

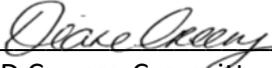
Requests for 2023/24 increased by 36% from the previous academic year. The main increase was in relation to Freedom of Information Requests. There were a total of 14 data incidents reported to the Data Protection & Information Compliance

Officer. This was a slight decrease (7%) on previous year's figures. From August 2024 the management of compliments and complaints has been transferred to the Data Protection & Information Compliance Officer.

23.14 RESERVED BUSINESS

Taken separately. This part of the meeting ended at 13:36.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 5 November 2024

Signed: 
Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair

Date: 8 November 2024

Approved