
**MINUTES OF THE TWENTIETH MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON
6 NOVEMBER 2023, VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE, COMMENCING 12:00**

PRESENT

Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair
Mrs S Fisher
Mr L Murphy, Principal & CE
Mr B O'Neill
Mr P Thompson

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P McKeown Finance Director (until item 20.9)
Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services
Ms S Kelly, HR Manager (from item 20.9)
Mr G Bradley, Estates Manager (for presentation item 20.0 only)
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

20.0 PRESENTATION – Mr G Bradley, Estates Manager

The Estates Manager provided the Committee with a presentation on, 'Climate Change Reporting'. He provided the Committee with background to the new regulations on climate change reporting duties for specified public bodies (Section 42 Climate Change Act). This will be governed by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

The College will need to establish its carbon baseline and intend to appoint an external advisor in this capacity. DAERA have indicated that support/engagement will be available to public bodies to deliver on the new reporting duties.

The Estates Manager apprised the Committee on the current measures to improve/maintain energy efficiency. Through these measures a positive impact has been seen on the energy consumption compared to the same months of the previous year. £580K funding has been received from the Department (DfE) from the Invest to Save Scheme for the installation of solar panels to the Springtown Campus. The Finance Director added that funding will be required to progress work in this developing area.

A question and answer session followed.

The Committee Chair thanked Mr Bradley for his presentation.
Mr Bradley left the meeting at this juncture.

20.1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Committee Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. An apology was received from Mr S Gillespie.

20.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no conflict of interest declarations. There were no declarations of any other business.

20.3 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2023**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 18 September 2023

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

20.4 Matters Arising – Finance

19.4, Report 6 The Finance Director had sought information from Marsh Ltd (Insurance Broker) in relation to RAAC. The Broker stated that there is no cover under the current College property Insurance. The Policy excludes, *“Its own faulty or defective design or materials”, “Damage to a building caused by its own collapse or cracking”*.

The Finance Director added that the College is currently appointing someone to carry out a survey of the College estate to check for RAAC issues. It is expected to have feedback early in the new year.

The Finance Director reported that a new Sector Business Case for insurance is required to be submitted to the Department (DfE). The current Business Case is in the third year of a five year term. Due to the level of premiums to date the current Business Case will not cover the remaining two years. The Department (DfE) may consider other options available for insurance cover. The Business Case needs to be completed no later than March 2024 for insurance cover required for 1 August 2024.

Report 8 Fees & Charges Policy 2023-2024

The amendment to the Fees and Charges Policy was accepted by the Governing Body at the meeting held on 26 September 2023.

The Committee Chair invited Mr P McKeown to present his Management Report.

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

Report 1	Tenders Issued
Report 2	Estates Update
Report 2.1	Correspondence – Mr R Baker, Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council re Growth Deal
Report 3	Business Support Centre Update
Report 4	Annual Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2023
Report 5	Management Accounts for 2 Months to 20 September 2023
Report 6	Budget Update 2023/24
Report 7	Draft Student Council Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2023
Report 8	Prompt Payment – verbal report
Report 9	Bad Debt Write-Off
Report 10	Fees & Charges Policy 2024/25
Report 11	Management Statement/Financial Memorandum 2018

Report 1 Tenders Issued Report

The Finance Director provided updates to the Committee since the report was issued.

Report 2 Estates Update Report**Report 2.1 Correspondence – Mr R Baker, Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council re Growth Deal**

The Finance Director reported that the College has to date not received any further correspondence on behalf of or from OHMG.

The updated Curriculum Plan together with the Schedule of Accommodation as part of the Outline Business Case for the Strabane Town Centre Regeneration Project has been submitted to DfE.

In relation to the Causeway Growth Deal, members noted the correspondence from Mr R Baker, Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council noting the progress with the Growth Deal projects.

Referring to the Northland Building (PFI) handover in January 2026, the College have appointed Tugan Solicitors to carry out an initial review and provide a subsequent report relating to the contract with Northwin.

Report 3 Business Support Centre Update

Members noted the actuals v targets with several targets achieved to date. Additional funding has been received from the Department (DfE) for Skill Up and Skills Focus programmes.

Good news was noted with Vertiv, a local manufacturing facility making an significant investment in Campsie, creating approximately 200 skilled jobs. The College will provide training through the Assured Skills Academies. On the recommendation of Innovate UK, the College welcomed representatives from Scottish Colleges and the Gatsby Foundation who visited the College Business Support Centre and some of the Innovation Centres.

Report 4 Annual Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2023

The Finance Director reported that there has been no change to the Statement of Comprehensive Income & Expenditure or Statement of Financial Position since the data was last presented to the Committee in September 2023. The 'Pension Asset' item has moved position within the Statement of Financial Position.

The Finance Director stated the External Audit was almost complete. The Draft Report To Those Charged With Governance (DRTTCWG) has not been issued by the External Auditor. This is disappointing. This report is also required for the Audit & Risk Committee meeting next week.

The Committee were content to recommend approval to the Governing Body for the Annual Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2023, subject to the receipt of the Draft Report To Those Charged With Governance reporting no major issues and also the Financial Statements progressing through the Audit & Risk Committee meeting on 14 November 2023.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mrs S Fisher

Report 5 Management Accounts for 2 Months to 20 September 2023

Members noted the report and further discussion will take place on the Accounts within the Budget Update Report 6.

Report 6 Budget Update 2023/24

Main changes to the Budget 2023/24, DfE Grants, Step Up funding of (£850K). There have been positive enrolments in Traineeships which has led to an increase in funding. As previously noted in Report 3, additional funding for Skill Up (£200k) and Skill Focus (£170k) has been awarded.

Other Grant Income was showing a decrease of £310k, reflected mainly in lower planned International Projects and a reduction in Prince's Trust income.

Other Operating Income, showing an increase of £546k, mainly driven by income related to the new Food Hubs and vending services that had previously been operated by OCS.

As a result of the current strike action by UCU academic staff, savings have been made in relation to staff costs. It was suggested these funds could help towards supporting students with lost learning at a later date.

It was noted that there has been agreement from Trade Unions on the Support staff pay rise from April 2023. There is still no pay rise settlement agreed for academic staff for September 2023.

Premises and IT were showing an increase of £904k, mainly reflecting an increase in computer equipment (£662k) to bring forward the Summer 2024, PC refresh.

The NDPB format for the 12 Months to 31 March 2024 is showing a break-even position.

The Committee agreed to recommend approval of the Budget 2023/24 to the Governing Body.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr B O'Neill

Following on the Budget discussion the Finance Director reported that the budget for 2024/25 was showing a budget gap estimated at £5.0m. This mostly relates to pay pressures and inflationary pressures.

Report 7 To recommend approval to the Governing Body for the Draft Student Council Report & Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2023.

An Independent auditor prepared the Accounts.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr B O'Neill

Report 8 Prompt Payment – verbal report

The Prompt payment figure for the 30 days to October 2023 was 91% and for the year to date was 93%. The target is 95%. A staff member from the Finance Team has been absent which has impacted on these results.

Report 9 Bad Debt Write-Off

It was agreed to recommend approval to the Governing Body for the Bad Debt Write-off for £6,871.43. This figure includes 22 individual student debts.

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr B O'Neill

Report 10 Fees & Charges Policy 2024/25

The Finance Director reported that he was not recommending any changes to the fees charged in respect to full-time, Higher Education or part-time courses for 2024/25. Amendments include that the minimum deposit of 25% will be required for all fees other than full-time HE & International.

To recommend approval to the Governing Body for the Fees & Charges Policy 2024/25

PROPOSED, Mrs D Creevy

SECONDED, Mr P Thompson

Report 11 Management Statement/Financial Memorandum 2018

The Governing Body Secretary reported that the Management Statement/Financial Memorandum is provided annually to the Board. It is a Sector/DfE document. It sets out the guidelines, directions issued by the Department in respect of the exercise of any individual functions, powers and duties of the College. The Department (DfE) has confirmed there has been no changes to the document in the last year. Work continues with the Partnership Agreement which will replace the Management Statement/Financial Memorandum.

20.6 CORRESPONDENCE – Finance

There was no correspondence to note.

20.7 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS - Finance

The Committee Chair had no business to discuss.

20.8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Finance

There was no other business to discuss.

The Committee Chair thanked Mr McKeown for his report.
Mr P McKeown left the meeting at this juncture.

The Committee Chair then invited Ms S Kelly, HR Manager to report to the Committee.

STAFFING MATTERS**20.9 Matters Arising – Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 18 September 2023 – verbal report**

The Governing Body Secretary reported on the following:

19.7 The HR Manager confirmed that the Sector has not yet made a decision in relation to the Conflict of Interest Policy.

19.9, Report 1 Equality & Good Relations Progress Report (Section 75) April 2022-March 2023 – this was accepted by the Governing Body at the meeting held on 26 September 2023

20.10 HR SERVICES MANAGEMENT REPORT – Ms S Kelly, HR Manager**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1	Recruitment Update
Report 2	HR Services Annual Report September 2022 – August 2023
Report 3	Health & Wellbeing Brochure, Semester 1 2023/24

Report 20.10 HR Services Management Report**Report 1 Recruitment Update**

From 5 September 2023 to 19 October 2023, a total of seven recruitment exercises were carried through to outcome. There are currently 51 'live' posts going through the recruitment and selection process. Thirty-seven staff applications have been processed through Access NI.

In relation to sickness Absence, Lost Time Rate, Teaching Staff absence had increased to 2.64% for September 2023 against 2.34% for September 2022. In relation to Support Staff there was also an increase showing 4.37% for September 2023 against 3.49% for September 2022. Surgery was the main reason for absence for September 2023, (16.6%) followed by musculoskeletal (12.3%).

During 2022/23 academic year, 709 staff members (88.9%) attended at least one staff development activity throughout the academic year. 55% were academic and 45% were support staff.

October 2023 was Cyber Security Awareness month and measures have been put in place to encourage and assist staff to complete the Cyber Security mandatory training model which was showing 75% completion rates at October 2023.

Report 2 HR Services Annual Report September 2022 – August 2023

The HR Manager highlighted key items within the above Report. During 2022/23 there were 160 posts advertised within the College with 58 permanent appointments and 33 temporary appointments. 88.75% of posts were recruited within 5 weeks and 98.13% of applicants received their interview outcome within one week of interview. Attendance – 3.3 days were lost across College, a slight increase compared to the previous year which was 2.8 days. Staff Development – 472 Staff Development applications were submitted, actioned and funded where applicable. Eighteen employees successfully completed their Certificate in Teaching qualification.

Report 3 Health & Wellbeing Brochure, Semester 1 2023/24

Members noted the Health & Wellbeing Brochure with a range of activities and workshops to promote physical and physiological health.

20.11 CORRESPONDENCE – STAFFING

There was no correspondence received.

20.12 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS – STAFFING

The Committee Chair had no staffing matters to discuss.

20.13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – STAFFING

There was no any other business to discuss.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Kelly for her report and invited Ms G Moss to present her report to the Committee.

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

➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

Report 1 Equality

Report 2 Data Protection/Compliance Update

Report 1 Equality Report

Ms Moss reported that feedback was formally received from the Equality Commission following the submission of the Annual Progress Report in August 2023. This included the progression of work to obtain the RNIB Visibility Better Employer Standard and the signing up to the Race at Work Charter. The first meeting of the Sector Equality Group took place on 19 October 2023. The College Equality Administrator is chairing the group again this academic year. The College received Disability Positive AAA Accreditation Certificate from Disability NI.

Ms Moss apprised the Committee that the North West Migrants Forum won Charity Partner of the Year in the 'Good for Me Good for FE' Charity Partner awards. This category recognises a charity partner of a college who has demonstrated a significant and positive impact on the community or cause.

The College has introduced ten Asylum Seeker Scholarships which supports the studies of asylum seekers through the North West Migrants Forum. Work continues with becoming a College of Sanctuary which will also support the work with migrants.

A new Mental Health Committee has been established with representative across the College to support staff and students.

Report 2 Data Protection/Compliance Update

From the period of 31 August 2023 to 6 November 2023, there was a total of six information rights requests made under the UK GDPR and Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Since 31 August 2023 there were no personal data related incidents reported to the Information Commissioner's Office. There was one potential data incident recorded on the Data Incident Register.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Moss for her report.

Ms Moss left the meeting at this juncture.

20.15 RESERVED BUSINESS

Taken separately. This part of the meeting ended at 1346.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 13 February 2024

Signed: 
Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair

Date: 13 February 2024

APPROVED