

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE
HELD ON TUESDAY 02 SEPTEMBER 2025 IN BOARDROOM NEWRY WEST CAMPUS.**

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| <p>PRESENT: Dr Thomas Moore (Chair) Mrs Lee Campbell (Principal / CEO) Mrs Hilary Singleton Mr Stuart Harper Mr Sean Fitzsimons Mrs Monica Kelly Dr Laura Milner (TEAMs) Mrs Angela Whiteside Mr Andrew Sloan Dr Liz Finnigan Mrs Sharon O'Hare Mrs Geraldine Campbell Mr Nick Harkness Mrs Patricia McCaffrey</p> | <p>IN ATTENDANCE: Ms Libby Shackels, Director of Curriculum Ms Joanne McGuigan, Interim Director of Finance & Planning Mrs Emma Foster Acting Secretary to the Governing Body Mr Raymond Sloan, Director of Client Services</p> <p>APOLOGIES: Mr James Hutchinson (Student Governor) Mr Gary McMurray Mrs Tracy Strachan</p> |
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The meeting convened at 17.30

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| <p>A01. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies were received from Mr Hutchinson, Mrs Strachan and Mr McMurray.</p> <p>A02. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</p> <p>The Chair reminded those present to declare at the commencement of the meeting any conflict of interest held in matters to be discussed. No interests were disclosed.</p> <p>A03. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governing Body minutes 17 June 2025 <p>The minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 17 June 2025 were reviewed for accuracy and unanimously approved as an accurate record on proposal from Mrs Singleton and seconded by Mrs Kelly.</p> <p>Mr Harkness joined the meeting at 17.33</p> <p>A04. MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>Nothing to note.</p> <p>A05. CHAIR'S BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing The Skills for Northern Ireland's Future (NI Assembly PAC 22 May 2025) <p>The Chair informed members that this document has been uploaded to the SharePoint folder for them to read in detail at their own convenience. Members noted the document.</p> | |
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Dr Moore recently met with the FE Director on 13th and 22nd August as part of her individual meetings with college Chairs. Discussions included the development of the College Development Plan; and Enrolment numbers for the year ahead. The College Development Plan is currently with DfE in draft form and will come to the next Board meeting for adoption providing no amendments are required.

He also met with the Economy Minister on 02 September 2025 (as part of the arrangements within the Partnership Agreement), and gave members a brief overview / feedback of what was discussed. The agenda for this meeting has been added to the SharePoint folder for members to view.

Mrs Foster

Dr Moore thanked all members who were able to attend the recent Higher Education Graduation Ceremony held in the Armagh City Hotel. Members all agreed it was a very enjoyable and well-planned day. An email of thanks on behalf of the Governing Body has been sent to the Marketing Team in the College. He also placed on record his thanks to all the staff involved in the organising of this event for all their hard work.

Mrs Foster

Finally, Dr Moore thanked members for completing their annual Reviews / Appraisals during the summer months. These have all now been sent to the Department by Mrs Foster on 19th August, ahead of the October deadline.

- **Committee Chairs' Terms of Office**

Dr Moore informed members that Dr Milner has decided not to renew her Governing Body Membership for a second term when her current term ends in January 2026. She has advised DfE to this effect. Dr Moore informed that we will provide a fuller 'thank you' to Dr Milner, at a later date.

The current arrangement for Terms of Office for Committee Chairs was agreed by members to continue until confirmation has been sought from the Department regarding affirmation that they are being offered a second term as a College Governor. This is expected in the near term.

A06. PRINCIPAL AND CEO'S BUSINESS

- **CEF Circular: CEF 2024/03 Lecturers' Pay**

Mrs Campbell drew members attention to the Circular having taken it as read. She informed the members that the agreed backdated pay award was paid in August salary and the new uplift for 25/26 will be paid from September's salary onwards.

Dr Finnigan said that staff feel valued that this pay award was able to be implemented so quickly and welcomed the increase.

A07. BUSINESS CASE

- **Microsoft Campus and Security Platform**

Ms McGuigan presented the detailed business case to members. She outlined the salient points including costings and the benefits to the day to day running of the College. Ms McGuigan answered any questions the members had.

The Governing Body Members **Approved** the business case.

A08. COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR ADOPTION

- **Finance and General Purposes Committee 29 April 2025**

The minutes were reviewed for accuracy and unanimously approved as an accurate record on proposal by Mr Harkness and seconded by Mrs Kelly.

A09. COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR REVIEW

The following draft committee minutes were presented to members for information:

- **Education Committee 03 June 2025**
- **Finance and General Purposes Committee 10 June 2025**

Both sets of minutes were noted by members and nothing further was added.

Mrs McCaffrey joined the meeting at 18.27.

A10. PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT REVIEW

Dr Moore drew members attention to the document enclosed, and highlighted specific areas which formed the basis of recent DfE communications. Members were given the opportunity to comment. Given that the DfE are noted to undertake a review at a later date (details in Partnership Agreement document), it was agreed that a more comprehensive review / analysis may be undertaken by a GB Task Group. This may coincide with an invitation for a DfE Official to attend a future GB meeting.

A11. ICS SRC BOARD EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW-FINAL REPORT

The Chair noted that this report had been circulated to all GB Members in mid June; and asked members for feedback. All members were content with the contents in the report. Dr Moore thanked all Governors for their engagement with the Review and commented upon the positive outcomes in the final report. Mrs Foster will send this Report to the Department in the coming days, as per the arrangements stated in the Partnership Agreement.

Mrs Foster

A12. DfE ARAC PARTNER ORGANISATION GOVERNANCE AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE QUARTER 1

Members noted the document.

A13. ENROLMENT AND ADMISSIONS UPDATE 25/26

Ms Shackels provided a verbal update on the Enrolment and Admissions position within the College. She addressed all recruitment categories and shared the work being undertaken to maximise student recruitment.

She also provided an overview / headlines on recent student results for 24/25. A full report will be provided at a later date.

Dr Moore thanked Ms Shackels and all the staff for all their hard work during this enrolment period.

A14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **Skills Competitions Funding letter**

Dr Moore drew members attention to the letter received concerning the funding of Skills Competitions. This was discussed at some length, and concern was expressed at this DfE decision. Members agreed that a letter of disappointment be sent from the College to the Permanent Secretary regarding the funding cuts to Skills Competitions.

Mrs G Campbell left the meeting at 19.15pm.

A15. REVIEW OF MEETING

Nothing to note.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Governing Body meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 25 November 2025 at 17.30 in Boardroom, Armagh Campus.

The meeting concluded at 19.20

Mrs O'Hare and Dr Finnigan left the meeting at 19.20.



CHAIR

25/11/25
DATE