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curriculum delivery and size, so this needs to be looked at in this context. Newry has the highest complaints because they house the higher amount of student body. In some cases, a number of students in the same class complained of the same issue e.g. heating or course being cancelled.

Mr Boden continued that there were 30 compliments received.
Mrs Strachan thanked Mr Boden for his presentation and very robust process.

Mr Harkness queried the process in terms of compliments, asking if the College provide fair and equal opportunity to make compliments, making the opportunity to compliment as openly available as complaints. Mr Boden responded that compliments generally come to staff members, and they forward them on to himself. There is also feedback tile to leave a compliment.

Dr Moore thanked Mr Boden for the report and noted that 89 complaints from a compliment of 21k students is excellent. Dr Moore commended Mr Boden and his team.

Mr Boden left at 18.04.

Items 7 and 8 were brought forward to take place prior to the main agenda items.

A07. HEALTH AND SAFETY (18.04pm)

Mr R Sloan stated that there are 18 current controls, which support the Health and Safety risk to remain within risk appetite.

a) Annual Health and Safety Report (Presented by Mr Donaghy)

Mr Donaghy advised Members that the Health and Safety Committee met four times over the course of the year. He informed Members of the College's statutory requirements and advised that the Health and Safety Management Profile (HASMAPP) standards compliance remains at 100%.

Internal Audits are carried out routinely and actions raised tend to be mostly operational in nature, high level risks tend to be fire risks, and all are robustly monitored throughout the year by Mr Donaghy and Senior Managers.

Mr Donaghy informed on fire activations taking place across campuses over the period and provided a summary of accident and incidents logged across faculties, noting that these are significantly reduced for the period.

Mr Donaghy advised that there has been a significant risk reduction with the installation of a fence now around the vast majority of the College's roofs, this gives a good robust safe edge protection.

Mr McMurray thanks Mr Donaghy for a good concise presentation.

Mr Fitzsimons queried statutory compliance and Mr Donaghy responded that when the Inspector flags something this is given to a Manager and monitored to ensure it is acted upon. Dr Moore thanked Mr Donaghy for his presentation and passed his thanks on to the team.

• Health and Safety Policy

Members noted minor changes to policy. The policy was approved following proposal from Mr McMurray and Mr Fitzsimons.

- **Health and Safety Statement**

Members approved the Health and Safety Statement.

Mr Donaghy left the meeting.

A08. ESTATES MAINTENANCE PLANS (Presented by Mr R Sloan and Mr Young)

Mr R Sloan confirmed the period of the Estates Maintenance Plan.

Mr R Sloan gave an update on the major capital projects advising that work is continuing to establish suitability and viability of options for Craigavon.

The Newry Innovation Centre has made noteworthy progress in the 2023-24 year with planning approval confirmed in April 2024. The Permanent Secretary signed the Addendum to the Outline Business Case in July 2024 and issued to the Department of Finance (DoF) with their approval received on 30 July 2024. Approval for additional funding requested in the Addendum was received on 10 September 2024. Mr R Sloan advised that the next step is to proceed with the second stage of the procurement process and advised that the anticipated completion date is March 2027. Mr R Sloan presented a Business Information Modelling (BIM) video showing Members how the new building will look when completed.

Mr Young provided an overview on the Estates works for 2023-24.

Mr Young discussed the planned maintenance 3-year plan and advised that he is working with colleagues in Finance to ensure delivery as funding becomes available. He is reviewing plans for the Lurgan and Portadown campuses to ensure the campuses represent a fit-for-purpose environment and support our obligations for carbon reduction. Mr Young gave an overview of planned projects for 2024-25 and 2025-26 years.

Mr Harkness queried if there is a minimum payback period for the Invest to Save programme and Mr Young advised that carbonisation of heat is becoming a priority for DfE. Mr Young advised the move away from fossil fuels in both the Newry Innovation Centre and in any future Craigavon Campus, will significantly support the Decarbonisation Priority.

Mrs Strachan thanked Mr Young and Mr R Sloan for their presentations.

Mr Young left the meeting at 18.40pm and Mr R Sloan left the meeting at 18.42pm.

A04. MINUTES OF THE MEETING 03 JUNE 2024

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of 03 June 2024 were reviewed for accuracy, and unanimously approved on proposal from Mrs Kelly and seconded by Mr Harkness.

A05. MATTERS ARISING

Members noted that matters listed as outstanding on the action sheet will be addressed through the course of the meeting.

A06. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Mrs Strachan advised that the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) is nearing completion of their Audit of the 2023-24 Annual Report and Financial Statements.

A07 and **A08** discussed earlier in the meeting.

A09. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Members reviewed the Finance and General Purposes Committee Annual Report 2023-24. The report was unanimously approved as a true reflection of the past year following proposal by Mr McMurray and seconded by Mrs Kelly.

A10. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members reviewed the Terms of Reference and approved on proposal by Mr McMurray and Mrs Kelly.

A11. POLICY APPROVAL

- **Fees Schedule 2025-26**
- **Telephone Policy**
- **Communications Policy**
- **CCTV Policy**
- **Car Parking Policy**

Members noted the policy updates and were content to approve the five policy documents on proposal from Mr Harkness and Mr McMurray.

A12. SRC ANNUAL REPORT

- **Annual Report Financial Analysis**

Ms McGuigan referred Members to the Annual Report Financial Analysis document. A comparison against 2022-23 has been provided.

Ms McGuigan referred Members to a number of specific items, namely: the Step-Up Programme, Employ Me Programme, Education Contracts, Apprenticeship interest receivable staff costs including pension pay award and VES. Ms McGuigan provided Members with detailed information in relation to each of these items.

- **Draft Annual Report and Financial Accounts**

Ms McGuigan confirmed these were provided to NIAO on 27 September 2024 as required and any editing requested by the Auditors will be actioned. Ms McGuigan confirmed the NIAO audit is ongoing and confirmed no issues have been raised to date. Mrs Strachan noted there is no further Finance and General Purposes Committee until January and requested that Ms McGuigan keeps her informed.

A13. INDICATIVE BUDGET

Mrs Khan presented the indicative budget for the period August 2024 to July 2025.

A14. SRC MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

Mrs Khan presented the SRC Management Accounts for the period August 2023 to July 2024.

Mrs Khan advised that Mrs L Campbell introduced face to face budget performance review management meetings with the 'big 6' budget holders from September 2023. These have ensured better communication collaboration across the College and have resulted in a more efficient, effective and timely budget management process. Ms McGuigan has led on the implementation of these meetings since March 2024.

Mrs Khan confirmed a member of the finance team has been tasked with managing and engaging with the Education Authority.

Mrs Khan reported that the Budget performance review meetings for 2024-25 will commence on 20 October and will include planning ahead.

A15. GOVERNING BODY BUDGET REPORT

Mrs Khan presented the Governing Body Budget Report indicating that there was an overspend of £7k equating to 7%.

A16. DfE FORECAST RETURNS

Mrs Khan presented the DfE forecast returns to forecast the position for year ending March 2025 and advised on the breakdown of expenditure to date relating to income, ACVED Funding, teachers' pension and Skills Focus.

Mr McMurray left the meeting 19.30.

Mrs Khan discussed resource and capital spend including the percentage budget comparison.

Mrs Strachan thanked Mrs Khan for her presentation.

Mr Harkness referred to some items where the College is waiting on DfE and noted that it must be very frustrating trying to forecast in uncertainty. Mrs Khan advised that the College's allocation for this year was received in June rather than April.

A17. BANK MANDATE

The bank mandate is refreshed at intervals to reflect changes in staff. Mrs Khan presented the changes and Members were asked to approve:

- Amendment to the signatories for the banking Contract
- Amendment to the e-Banking Mandate
- Issue of new Corporate Credit Card

Members approved the recommended changes to the bank mandate.

A18. DIRECT AWARD CONTRACT (DAC) ANNUAL REPORT

Ms McGuigan advised Members that there was 1 DAC, as detailed in the report.

A19. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

The Register of Interests will be recirculated to Members to reconsider and will be brought to a Governing Body meeting. Members were content with this approach.

A20. CIRCULARS

Ms McGuigan presented Members with the 4 enclosed circulars and provided Members with detail on each circular, advising on key points.

- **FE 05/24 FE Grants 2024-25**
- **FE 06/24 Hardship Fund 2024-25**
- **FE01/24 Addendum Skills Focus 2024-25**
- **NILGOSC 08/24 Triennial Employers Covenant Assessment 2024**

Members noted the circulars, and the details provided.

A15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Insurance Report.
Ms McGuigan updated Members on the requirements within the Partnership Agreement and the options for the Colleges.

Ms McGuigan confirmed an insurance expert was commissioned by the 6 Colleges to advise on our insurance options and provide a report including a risk assessment of options. The Insurance Advisor said there was an option for a University Mutual (NUMAL) for insurance. NUMAL are currently being used by universities in Great Britain and 2 universities in Northern Ireland.

Ms McGuigan advised NIFON is seeking a legal opinion on the risks of using a Mutual and the wording that would need changed in the Partnership Agreement. DFE are speaking to the Department Solicitors Office (DSO) to seek their views on whether we would be permitted to join a Mutual. Mrs Strachan advised Members that she is familiar with this mechanism for insurance, further discussion followed.

Ms McGuigan advised Members of potential next steps including business case and approvals.

A17. REVIEW OF MEETING

Mr Harkness queried if some routine items could be batched together. Mrs L Campbell advised that the Committee Terms of Reference (TOR) are clear on the main business of the committee and that papers are issued in advance. A suggestion may be to confirm with Members that papers will be 'taken as read' so as not to delay the meeting. Dr Moore advised that this would have to be agreed across all committees. Dr Moore advised that there are standards that must be adhered to and suggested that any items requiring approval could be moved to the top of agenda.

A16. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee is on 21 January 2025.

The meeting concluded at 20.01



CHAIR

4th Feb 2025

DATE



