

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY HELD ON TUESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2018 AT 18.30 IN THE BOARDROOM, NEWRY WEST CAMPUS.

PRESENT:

Mr Andrew Saunders (Chair)
Mr Scott Alexander
Mrs Teresa Campbell
Mr Arder Carson
Mr Gordon Gough
Mr Aidan McCormick
Mr John Nugent
Prof Gregory O'Hare
Mr Tom Redmond
Dr Eileen Stewart
Mr Kieran Swail
Mrs Judith Thompson
Miss Tanya Troughton
Mr Matthew Turner

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Terry McGonigal, Director of Finance and Planning
Mr Raymond Sloan, Director of Client Services
Mr Hugh Stewart, SRC Acting Head of Estates
Mrs Tina Digney, SRC Health and Safety Manager
Dr Gary Husband, ESRC Project
Dr Helen Young, ESRC Project
Mrs Carla Shields, Boardroom Apprentice
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 18.34.

Mr Saunders welcomed all parties to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Brian Doran, Mr Keith Kilpatrick and Mrs Nicola Wilson.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded those present to declare at the commencement of the meeting any conflict of interests held in matters to be discussed. Mr McCormick declared an interest as employee of the Education Authority The interest was noted and Mr McCormick gave an undertaking to exclude himself from any business involving decisions that could potentially cause conflict.

3. HASMAP UPDATE – HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Sloan reminded Members that SRC has undertaken a commitment to review health and safety practices to ensure that the College environment is safe and secure for students, staff and all visitors. He stated that the College has put in place structures, policies and procedures aimed at ensuring a safe working environment is maintained. Mr Sloan informed that the Staffing Committee has reviewed staff training requirements across the six campuses.

Prof O'Hare arrived at the meeting at 18.37.

Mr Stewart presented the 2018 Health and Safety Review update report and advised Members of the compliance assessment and tracking scheme in place to evidence basic, substantial and high adherence to safety controls. Mr Stewart presented a report detailing the College's health and safety assessed performance in 2016 and improvements made. He informed that a basic compliance rating in 2016 of 77% has improved to 89%, a substantial compliance indicator of 54% has increased to 80% and a rating of 39% in the high compliance areas has increased to 66% over the two year period.

Mr Stewart set out a summary of further key action recommendations for fully achieving basic, substantial and high compliance, setting out practical actions to enable the College to implement and embed best practice health and safety management.

**ACTION
by whom**

The Governing Body noted the report.

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT AND POLICY STATEMENT

Mr Stewart presented the Annual Report on Health and Safety 2017-18 and advised on activities performed throughout the year. He informed on a HASMAP health and safety audit review, the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue fire safety audit and Grant Thornton's internal health and safety audit resulting in the highest assurance rating and providing three recommendations to strengthen the control environment and further improve processes in place.

Mr Stewart advised of various health and safety inspections conducted across the campuses and training completed by staff throughout the year. He provided details of accidents and incidents reported and Mrs Digney advised of further steps being taken to categorise reporting procedures.

Mr McGonigal left the meeting at 18.51 and returned at 18.53.

Members reviewed the staff training report with Mr Saunders encouraging Members to complete the online training. Mr Nugent provided an oversight on discussions that had taken place at the recent Staffing Committee regarding staff training and obtaining IOSH qualification. Mr Carson recommended that completion targets be set within the staff training report.

Members thanked the Health and Safety Team for their continued efforts to mitigate risks and recommended that any injury claims made to the College be reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Mr Sloan agreed to provide an in-depth review of health and safety practices to the Governing Body on a two year basis.

Details on discussions taking place between 19.03 and 19.40 are reserved within the confidential minutes.

5. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD 4 SEPTEMBER 2018

The minutes of the meeting of 4 September were reviewed for accuracy and unanimously approved on the proposal of Mr Turner and seconded by Mr Gough.

6. MATTERS ARISING

Members noted that no declarations of gifts or hospitality have been referred to the Secretary.

Mr Sloan confirmed that he has met with Mr Nugent and Mr Redmond regarding proposals to the Estates Strategy and is working through recommendations.

7. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Governing Body expressed their deepest sympathy to Mr Doran on the recent death of his mother. Members asked that their heartfelt condolences be conveyed to Mr Doran and his family at this difficult time.

8. COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

- **Audit Committee 11 September**

Mr Nugent presented the Audit Committee minutes of 11 September and advised the Governing Body on a change of membership.

Governors

Mr Sloan

Mr Sloan

Mr Sloan

He confirmed that the Committee reviewed the Internal Audit Follow Up report and recommended reference on advice to management.

Mr Nugent stated that Members had reviewed the Internal Audit Annual Assurance Report, the Internal Audit Strategy and Plan and advised on the management of audit processes. He informed that the Audit Committee reviewed the Corporate Risk Register and discussed risk management and mitigating factors.

Mr Nugent informed that the Committee reviewed the Risk Management Annual Report, Accounts Direction, Direct Award Contracts, the National Fraud Initiative and approved two policies relating to Anti-Fraud and the Fraud Response plan.

- **Education Committee 2 October**

Mr Gough provided Members with a summary of discussions undertaken at the Education Committee meeting of 2 October. He advised that Members had welcomed Mrs Shields, Miss Troughton and Mrs Wilson to their first meeting of the Education Committee.

Mr Gough confirmed that Members reviewed the Care to Learn and Additional Support Fund circulars, reviewed the Education Committee Annual Report and concluded that the Terms of Reference are valid.

Mr Gough confirmed that Members were provided with an good overview on the enrolment position. He stated that the Committee reviewed KPI data and were advised of the self-evaluation school process and the identification of areas of support as part of the Performance Enhancement Programme.

Mr Gough confirmed that the Committee had approved a number of policies including the Student ID policy, Anti-Bullying policy, Learning Support and Hardship Fund. Mr Gough confirmed Mr Redmond sits as the Governor representative on the Hardship Committee.

Members recommended consideration of curriculum planning and blended training at the Strategy Day in December.

Mr Kilpatrick

- **Staffing Committee 3 October**

Mr Carson advised on detailed deliberations at the Staffing Committee on 3 October and confirmed that Members had conducted a review of Health & Safety practices.

He stated that the Committee reviewed and approved its Annual Report and agreed to keep an extra meeting date in reserve should the requirement arise. Mr Carson informed that Members made recommendations to amend the Terms of Reference and approval was deferred to allow further comment.

Mr Carson advised that Members reviewed the Annual Report on KPIs, approved a career break application, been notified of the College's Silver Award accreditation for Investors In People and reviewed the Annual Progress Report detailing the College's statutory equality and good relation duties through examples of programmed work.

Mr Carson stated that Members reviewed the Employee Development Plan and were advised on details regarding the Voluntary Exit Scheme. He confirmed that Members approved the Alcohol, Drug and Substance Abuse policy, Eyesight policy and Flexi Scheme for support staff.

- **Finance & General Purposes Committee 9 October**

Mrs Campbell informed Members of discussion taking place at the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 9 October and confirmed that the minutes will be presented for Governing Body adoption at the next meeting.

Mrs Campbell confirmed that Members had assessed and approved the Committee Annual Report and Self and Assessment and agreed appropriate Terms of Reference. She stated that the Committee considered the draft Annual Report and Statutory Accounts for the period ended 31 July 2018.

Mrs Campbell informed that the Committee had reviewed year-end financial reports, conducted an annual evaluation of the Complaint and Compliments report and approved several policies.

Members unanimously adopted the minutes.

Mr Saunders welcomed Miss Troughton to her first meeting of SRC's Governing Body and introductions were made.

9. COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORTS

- **Education Committee**
- **Staffing Committee**
- **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Mr Saunders directed Members to the Committee Annual Reports provided.

10. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT AND STATUTORY ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 JULY 2018

Mr McGonigal presented the draft Annual Report and Financial Statements and informed Members of an overall increase in College enrolments most notably relating to part-time enrolments. He also noted the trend in the decline in recreational studies, due to changes in funding and the increase accredited provision, which is reflective of the College's prioritisation of resources to support economically relevant courses.

Members discussed school partnership and community engagement programmes and a commitment to the delivery of the Entitlement Framework.

Mr McGonigal directed Members to key sections within the report including: financial objectives and summary financial position; Remuneration Report; prompt payment statistics and the Corporate Governance Statement, and Treasury Management policy. Members discussed managing investments and consideration of the Estates Capital Project.

Mr McGonigal referred Members to the sections on student retention and achievement rates and curriculum developments. He informed Governors on future developments impacted by uncertainties including the recurrent grant, Brexit and the lack of an Executive.

Members reviewed the Strategic Report, Governing Body Remuneration Report and Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Controls. Mr McGonigal informed the Governing Body of an additional allegation of whistleblowing reported during the year. He stated that the Investigating Officer found no evidence of wrongdoing as defined by the Legislation. Mr McGonigal also noted that as a result of this investigation, any lessons learned will be considered by the Executive Team.

Mrs Campbell confirmed that the financial statements and balance sheet have been assessed by Finance & General Purposes Committee Members. She commented on well managed resources and a prudent approach to dealing with VAT issues under significant financial pressure. Mr McGonigal stated he will be meeting with the External Auditors next week for the closeout meeting. The only issue he was aware of was in respect of the sectors' approach to the Lecturers pay accrual.

Members noted the report. Prof O'Hare recommended attributing authorship within the report.

Mr McGonigal

11. FINANCIAL UPDATE ON 2018-19

Mr McGonigal provided an update on the financial position, advising of an overall potential financial pressure of £2m consisting mostly of IT costs, outstanding pay pressures and Estates works expenditure.

Mr McGonigal informed of a potential Departmental bid in the December monitoring round to manage pressures. Members noted the report.

Mr Gough left the meeting 20.30 and returned at 20.34.

12. ETI SAFEGUARDING PRO FORMA

Mr Sloan presented the ETI Safeguarding Pro Forma and advised Members of a planned WBL inspection scheduled for the week commencing 19 November.

Mr Sloan advised Members that DE circulars supplying good governance on child protection and safeguarding responsibilities apply directly to schools, and also provide advice on good practice relevant to the College. He confirmed that the baseline information contained within the document is evidenced and underpinned by supporting safeguarding documentation reviewed by the Education Committee.

Governors reviewed and approved the report subject to phrasing recommendations.

Mr Sloan

13. SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY SERVICE PROJECT SLA College Memorandum of Agreement

Mr Saunders directed Members to the Service Level Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding presenting the six colleges' commitment to working collaboratively to deliver sector efficiency and demonstrate best practice.

14. NORTH EAST ALLIANCE FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION MOU

Mr Saunders referred Members to the Memorandum of Agreement between Cavan Institute, Drogheda Institute of Further Education, Dunboyne College of Further Education, Dundalk Institute of Technology, Monaghan Institute of Further Education and Training, O Fiaich Institute of Further Education and Southern Regional College. Members noted the Memorandum aims to promote access, transfer and progression between further and higher education in the North East Region.

Mr Swail, Mr Redmond and Mr McCormick confirmed they attended a working group with the Irish Minister for Higher Education on 8 October, focusing on cross border opportunities.

15. EDUCATIONAL CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT – CHINA

Mr Saunders directed Members to the cooperation agreement between Changchun Vocational Institute of Technology of China and Southern Regional College. Mr Saunders informed Members that the Director of Curriculum, Mr Kilpatrick, is currently representing the College in Changchun. Members noted that the visit is being supported by Invest NI.

16. SECTOR COLLABORATION PLAN 2018-19

Mr Saunders referred Members to the Principals' Group Collaboration Strategy and Action Plan 2018-19.

17. COMMITTEE PAPERS

- Risk Management Annual Report
- Corporate Risk Register
- Audit Plan 2018-19
- SRC Equality Progress Report

Mr Saunders referred Members to the documents recently reviewed by the Audit and Staffing Committee.

18. POLICY REVIEW

- Communications policy

Governors agreed to defer approval of the Communications policy to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

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19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr McCormick informed Members of innovative work undertaken to address the 14-19 education and training provision.

20. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Governing Body meeting is scheduled to take place on **Tuesday 20 November 2018 at 18.30 in the Boardroom, Newry West Campus.**

The meeting concluded at 20.59.

A.P. S1
CHAIR

20/11/18
DATE