

A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

None.

A06. COMMITTEE MINUTES

- **Audit Committee 10 November**

Mr Nugent presented the Audit Committee minutes of 10 November and provided a verbal update on matters discussed at the Audit Committee on 9 February.

He advised that Members welcomed Mrs Heenan to her first meeting of SRC's Audit Committee in November 2020. Mr Nugent informed that Members had reviewed the RTTCWG and agreed to defer consideration of the report due to there being three substantial areas of audit outstanding.

Mr Nugent advised that Mr O'Neill, NI Audit Office advised Members of the progress in addressing the three areas at their meeting on 9 February, and informed that it is anticipated that the Comptroller and Auditor General will certify the 2019-20 financial statements with an unqualified audit opinion, without modification.

Mr Nugent advised that the Annual Report and Statutory Accounts for the period ended 31 July 2020 was reviewed and Members recommended that the document is presented to the full Governing Body for approval.

Mr Nugent spoke to a frustratingly long process. He thanked Mr McGonigal and his team for their hard work and acknowledged that the desired destination has been reached.

Mr Nugent provided Members with a comprehensive account of reviews taken at both meetings with regard to Internal Audit reports, the Corporate Risk Register, Direct Award Contracts and approval of the Risk Management policy.

Mr Carson extended his thanks to Mr McGonigal and members of the Finance team.

- **Education Committee 1 December**

Mr Gough referred Members to the minutes of the meetings of the Education Committee held on 1 December.

He informed that the Heads of Faculty attended and provided a comprehensive report in regard to adaptive working strategies as a result of Covid.

Mr Gough confirmed that Members had reviewed the HE Strategy, consolidated enrolments and approved the Educational Visits policy.

- **Education Committee 2 February**

Mr Gough referred Members to the draft minutes of 2 February and advised that the Committee found the Head of Faculty reports to be insightful and applauded the staff team for providing examples of good practice.

He confirmed that Members had reviewed and approved the College Self Evaluation and Quality Improvement Plan, were provided with an update on qualifications as a result of Covid-19 and assessed the plans for the new traineeships. Mr Gough advised that Members were informed on an initiative to provide additional support of £1.7m to support students with broadband costs, and had approved six policies.

- **Finance & General Purposes Committee 19 January**

Mrs Campbell referred Members to the draft minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee convened on 19 January and confirmed that Members reviewed the SRC Management Accounts. She informed Governors of a comprehensive report, remarking on a transparent account detailing a strong analysis of income and expenditure.

Mrs Campbell informed Members of an underspend in relation to salary costs and advised on an analysis being undertaken to attract and retain staff. She informed on 47% expenditure against the DEL resource grant and advised that Finance will be looking to realign budgets to fully utilise the available funding.

Mrs Campbell confirmed that the Committee reviewed the Direct Award Contracts and the Complaints and Compliments report noting a slight increase in complaints in August and September and informing on near misses. She advised that Members approved the e-banking mandate and noted a change in the payroll provider.

Mr Saunders thanked the Chairs for their reports and expressed comfort that the Committee are being run smoothly.

The Committee minutes were unanimously adopted by the Governing Body.

A07. DRAFT REPORT TO THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE

Mr Doran referred to Mr Nugent's earlier account regarding the previous week's Audit Committee and advised that the draft Report to Those Charged With Governance proposes that the Comptroller and Auditor General will certify the 2019-2020 financial statements with an unqualified audit opinion, without modification.

He advised that the three outstanding issues have been addressed and commented on the usually long external audit process this year.

Mrs Campbell commented that the challenges this year have been outside of the College's control and remarked favourably on the findings and a limited number of recommendations.

Mr McGonigal informed that the NIFON Group will reflect on the process this year and formulate a plan to highlight the importance of timetabling future accounts.

A08. ANNUAL REPORT AND STATUTORY ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 JULY 2020

Mr Doran presented the Annual Report and Statutory Accounts and advised on the audit process. He confirmed that the Accounts are being presented for final approval.

Following discussion, all Members indicated their approval and instructed the Chair and Accounting Officer to sign off the Accounts as an accurate record.

A09. COVID UPDATE

- **Resumption**
- **Student support**

Mr Doran reminded Members of the Minister's announcement prior to the Christmas break restricting onsite activity and suspending skills based curriculum. He informed on an increase in remote delivery and advised that only work deemed as essential has been delivered onsite.

Mr Doran reminded Members of the new PLA advice on the mandatory wearing of face coverings and the provision of exemption badges.

Mr Carson welcomed the update and enquired about feedback from the Trade Unions and any impact on insurance. Mr Doran informed that the Department leads on the development of the framework, and advised on engagement with the Trade Unions through the Joint Consultative Committee and the Health and Safety Committee. He informed that very few staff and students are on campus at present and advised on an enhancement in the communication strategy.

Mr McGonigal reported on an increase in indemnity in relation to exam marking. He advised that there has been no claims to date.

Mr Sloan confirmed that the College has once again achieved the Matrix Quality Standard for information, advice and guidance provided to students. He informed that the assessor noted an 'extremely smooth online assessment' and he was 'blown away' with the level of support given to students.

Mr Redmond and Mr Carson applauded the remarkable achievement.

Mr McCormick advised that he was comforted to see the Ministerial statement regarding the additional financial support for HE students.

Mr Doran confirmed that he welcomed the Ministerial decision to cancel examinations however advised that there has been no guidance issued with regard to alternative assessment arrangements for the majority of vocational qualifications. He reminded Members that GCSE and A level results are likely to be released early in July and informed on the impact on the admissions and enrolment process.

Mr Doran informed that management are balancing risks and considering plans for a limited phased return to campus. He advised that the hair and beauty programmes have been severely impacted by the sector closures and alternative support arrangements are likely.

Members were informed that Mr McGonigal is drafting a business case to set out the protocol for administering the financial support grants to students.

A10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Saunders thanked Mr Carson, Mrs Campbell, Mr Gough and Mrs Wilson for agreeing to extensions to their tenure as Governing Body Members.

He informed on a productive meeting of the Chairs Group with the Permanent Secretary and advised on a good working relationship.

Mr Doran informed on the development of a sector communication strategy and the procurement of an external media company.

Mr McCormick informed on an impressive three day ICAS virtual conference in Arts and Humanities and remarked on excellent presentation from staff and students.

Mr Doran relayed the participants' thanks to Mr McCormick for his continued support and encouragement, advising that they were extremely appreciative of his time and engagement.

A11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the full Governing Body is scheduled for 17.30 on Tuesday 23 March 2021.

The meeting concluded at 18.51.

CHAIR

DATE