

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 JANUARY 2018 AT 18.30 IN THE BOARDROOM, NEWRY.

PRESENT:

Mrs Teresa Campbell (Chair)
Mr Brian Doran
Mr Tom Redmond
Mr Kieran Swail
Mrs Judith Thompson

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Raymond Sloan, Director of Client Services
Mrs Jenny Wilson, Assistant Director of Finance
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 18.31.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Andrew Saunders.

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded those present to declare at the commencement of the meeting any conflict of interests held in any matter to be discussed. No conflicts were declared.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING 14 NOVEMBER 2017

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the committee meeting held on 14 November 2017. These were checked for accuracy and unanimously approved on the proposal of Mr Swail and seconded by Mr Redmond.

4. MATTERS ARISING

None.

5. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

None.

6. DfE RECLASSIFICATION RETURNS

**Summary of Movements Report
October 2017 (September Actual)
November 2017 (October Actual)
December 2017 (November Actual)**

Mrs Wilson presented the Reclassification Returns for October 2017 to December 2017, together with an analysis of movement in expenditure forecast from September 2017 to December 2017.

Members noted little overall change and an increase to minor works allocation. Mrs Wilson informed that she will bring a schedule of works to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting.

ACTION BY WHOM
Mrs Wilson

7. CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS REPORTS – OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2017

Mrs Wilson presented the credit card expenditure reports for October to December 2017. The Committee noted the reports and expressed no concerns.

8. AGED DEBTORS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

Mrs Wilson presented the Aged Debtors report for the period ended 31 December 2017. The Committee noted that the profile slightly lower than the previous year. Mrs Wilson advised that a decline in FT is offset by an increase in PT numbers which may result in a delay of student loan payments if the learner leaves their course of study. Mrs Wilson advised of a student loan payment due in February.

The Committee noted the report.

9. AGED CREDITORS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

Mrs Wilson presented the Aged Creditors report for the period ended 31 December 2017 and advised of an outstanding payment to Properties Division due to a delay in obtaining completion certificates. Members discussed the importance of swift delivery and value for money from service providers.

Members noted the report.

Mrs Thompson arrived at the meeting at 18.37.

10. PROMPT PAYMENT REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

The Committee reviewed the prompt payment report and noted a similar profile to previous years. Mrs Wilson advised of a proactive approach of requesting invoice submissions to accommodate the Christmas closure period.

11. GOVERNING BODY BUDGET REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

Mrs Wilson presented the Governing Body Budget report for the period ended 31 December 2017. The Committee expressed no concerns.

12. POLICY REVIEW

Annual Schedule of Fees and Charges

Mr Doran presented the Annual Schedule of Fees and Charges and referred Members to minor increases. Mrs Wilson informed that the price list in regard to catering facilities in the Graduate Restaurant has not altered and will be kept under review. Mr Doran stated that any changes to costings will be brought to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration.

Fees: Policy and Procedures

Mr Doran referred Members to minor changes in the document and an inclusion to read 'any student who completes a course of study and who has fees outstanding will not be eligible to graduate until and unless any outstanding fees are paid.'

Mr Doran advised Members that Essential Skills is a free course utilised by TfS, FE FT and Adult Community groups. He informed that the Executive Team is to consider proposals to introduce an examination re-sit charge to all FE funded learners. Mr Doran informed of financial support available to students under the hardship fund policy and advised that the

College would be seeking Committee Members approval before implementation of charges. Mr Doran agreed to provide a further update at the next meeting.

Mr Doran

Fees Refund policy

Members noted minor revisions to the policy.

Complaints and Compliments policy

The Committee noted an early review of the policy in line with sector agreed policy.

The four policies were approved subject to the proposed changes on the proposal of Mr Swail and seconded by Mr Redmond.

13. DIRECT AWARD CONTRACTS SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2017

Mr Doran informed Members of no revisions to the previously reported Direct Award Contracts, for the period ended December 2017.

14. INVESTMENT SUMMARY FOR THE PERIOD ENDED DECEMBER 2017

Committee Members reviewed the Investment Summary for the period ended December 2017 and noted no real changes from the previous reporting period. Mrs Wilson confirmed that the College are seeking rates at present, and reported on variations to projections due to the delay in the Banbridge Estates project. Members pronounced their agreement on keeping the deposits under review.

15. ESTATE PROJECT BANK ACCOUNT

Mrs Wilson informed the Committee that the Armagh Estates Project bank account has been set up with Felix O'Hare and SRC as joint trustees. She advised of an approved payment schedule in place.

Members noted the information.

16. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

Mr Sloan presented the Complaints and Compliments update report and advised of 1 formal complaint, 3 informal complaints and 4 comments received since the last reporting period. He informed that all 8 cases have been investigated and completed, with one pending the agreement and implementation of the recommendations identified during the course of the investigation. Mr Sloan stated that the formal complaint relates to facilities in Portadown.

Mr Sloan advised that 9 compliments have been received since the last Committee meeting on 14 November.

Members remarked on the positive nature of the findings and Mrs Campbell confirmed her satisfaction with the level of detail being provided to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

16. FD DoF 12/16 PAY REMIT APPROVAL PROCESS AND GUIDANCE

Mr Doran presented the DoF 12/16 Pay Remit and Approval Process and Guidance and informed Members that as there is no Minister in place, the pay guidance for 16/17 has been carried over to 17/18.

Mr Doran informed Members of CEF circular 2018/01 advising of Non-Teaching Staff Pay Rates agreed with the Non-Teaching Staff Negotiating Committee.

Members noted the report.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Doran referred Members to the DoF Budgetary Outlook Paper and proposals to remove all entry level and level 1 provision from Further Education Colleges therefore directly affecting approximately 20,000 annual enrolments across the sector.

Members expressed concern that removal of the provision, along with removal or reduction of EMA and changes to the Home to School Transport policy could potentially target areas of disadvantage.

The Committee discussed a perceived lack of media coverage on the proposals.

Mr Doran agreed to circulate College NI response to the proposals to the Governing Body.

Secretary

18. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Finance and General Purposes meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 6 March 2018 at 18.30 in the Boardroom, Newry Campus.

The meeting concluded at 19.33.

Terence Cahill
CHAIR

6/3/18.
DATE