

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON TUESDAY 26 MAY 2020 AT 17.30 VIA TELECONFERENCE.

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Andrew Saunders, Governing Body Chair
Mr Terry McGonigal, Director of Finance and Planning
Ms Joanne McGuigan, Assistant Director of Finance
Mrs Kimberley Neill McCready, Boardroom Apprentice
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 17.43.

A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

A02. 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. Mrs Neill McCready declared an interest as employee of Steer Training Academy. The interest was noted.

A03. MINUTES OF MEETING 3 MARCH 2020

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the committee meeting held on 3 March 2020. These were checked for accuracy and unanimously approved on the proposal of Mr Swail and seconded by Mr Doran.

A04. MATTERS ARISING

Members noted that matters arising will be addressed later in the agenda and at the October meeting.

A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Mrs Campbell noted that Mr Saunders's father-in-law had passed away since the last meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and expressed her sincere condolences to him and his family.

Mrs Campbell acknowledged the College's good response in adapting to Covid-19 restrictions and commended the efforts of staff in producing PPE equipment.

A06. SRC MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS (inc WORKING CAPITAL REPORT)

Ms McGuigan presented the Management Accounts for the period ending April 2020 detailing the College's financial position, provided detail on the main grant and advised that it is expected to come in on target by the end of the financial year. She advised on the variance of earmarked funds, and informed that this is ahead of budget primarily because of Higher Level Apprenticeships.

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Ms McGuigan advised on variances on jobskills/educational contracts, HE fees and other operating income.

Ms McGuigan informed that expenditure on direct pay for teaching and support staff is favourable and explained that this is largely due to vacant posts. She provided a summary of non-pay expenditure across budget lines and directed Members to the analysis of working capital.

Members reviewed the analysis of aged debtors, aged creditors and credit card reports and were advised on issues identified within the prompt payment report relating to problems getting approval on goods received.

Ms McGuigan referred the Committee to the faculty report on budget analysis of part time lecturers.

Members noted the information.

A07. GOVERNING BODY BUDGET in year report

Members noted an overall underspend in the Governing Body budget and sundry income relating to a reimbursement of expenditure incurred on the ESRC Project.

A08. DfE FINANCIAL RETURNS

Mr McGonigal referred Members to the Financial Returns detailing DEL resource and capital spend and detailing the authorised overspend incurred in the implementation of the STS project.

The Committee noted the report.

Mrs Thompson arrived at the meeting at 18.32.

A09. INDICATIVE BUDGET

Mr McGonigal referred Members to the opening indicative resource allocation for 2020/21 and informed the Committee of additional pressures not baselined and uncertainties relating to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr Doran informed the Committee that submission of the College Development Plan may be delayed further as considerations are ongoing regarding the impact on Covid-19 on enrolment targets and delivery next year.

The Committee noted the information.

A10. DIRECT AWARD CONTRACTS

Mr McGonigal referred Members to the two Direct Award Contracts for the provision of access able guides and Jane payroll module. He advised that the College will be using BMC to process their payroll service in future as part of the shared services plans.

A11. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS REPORT

Mr McGonigal presented the Complaint and Compliments report as at 30 April detailing that the College has received 40 complaints / comments since 1 September 2019. Members were informed on the distinction between formal and informal complaints.

Mr McGonigal provided an update on subject access requests, freedom of information requests, advised there have been no new disclosures of whistleblowing and informed on good mandatory training completion rates.

Mr Doran advised that the Chair will be calling a meeting of the full Governing Body to address the business readiness approach and informed Committee Members of training to be given to staff prior to return to work.

Members noted the detailed report providing further comprehensive information.

A12. POLICY REVIEW

- **Disposal of Negligible Assets**

Mr McGonigal presented the Disposal of Negligible or Low Value Assets and Inventory policy developed to address the opening of the new builds and decanting from existing buildings. Members noted the disposal strategy and options for the sale, transfer or discarding of items.

Discussion took place regarding due diligence and controls and safeguards in place. The policy was approved on the proposal by Mr Doran and seconded by Mrs Thompson.

A13. VESTING CERTIFICATES / COVID 19 PROCUREMENT GUIDANCE (PGN 01/20)

Mr McGonigal informed on arrangements in place to pay suppliers under vesting agreements in accordance with legal advice, CPD guidance and in order to protect continuation of service.

Members discussed the importance of protecting the supply chain and the responsibilities of public bodies.

A14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

A15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 20 October 2020 at 17.30 via teleconference.

The meeting concluded at 19.01.

CHAIR

DATE