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**MINUTES OF THE TWENTY SECOND MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE, COMMENCING 12:00**

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**PRESENT**

Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair  
Dr S Fisher  
Mr B O'Neill  
Mr P Thompson (joined 12:04)

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr P McKeown Finance Director (until item 22.8)  
Ms S Kelly, HR Manager (from item 22.8)  
Mrs C O'Reilly, Boardroom Apprentice (until item 22.15)  
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

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**22.1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES**

The Committee Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Mr L Murphy, Principal & CE and Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services.

**22.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no conflict of interest declarations. There were no declarations of any other business.

**22.3 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 FEBRUARY 2024****➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 13 February 2024

The Draft Minutes were taken as read and were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**PROPOSED**, Mr B O'Neill

**SECONDED**, Mr P Thompson

**Report 1 Matters Arising – Finance**

There were no finance matters arising from the February 2024 meeting.

The Committee Chair invited Mr P McKeown to present his management report.

**22.4 FINANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT - Mr P McKeown, Finance Director****➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Tenders Issued

Report 2 Estates Update

Report 3 Business Support Centre Update

Report 4 Management Accounts for 9 Months to 30 April 2024

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Report 5	Budget Update 2024/25
Report 6	Prompt Payment – verbal report

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**Report 1 Tenders Issued Report**

The Finance Director reported on the Tenders Report and provided further detail to individual tenders and Frameworks.

**Report 2 Estates Update Report**

In relation to the Strabane Town Centre Regeneration Project/Strabane Campus, the Finance Director and the Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards attended a Case Work meeting on the OBC on 6 June 2024 with senior Civil Servants. Departmental (DfE), FE representatives also attended the meeting.

In relation to the Causeway Coast & Glens, Growth Deal Food Project tender, a request went out for a consultant. No replies were received. The tender has been re-issued. SIB will also provide a quote for consultancy.

Reporting on the Northland Building (PFI) the Finance Director noted that in advance of the handover of the building in January 2026 condition surveys have been completed. Issues were noted and these have been raised with Grahams. It is the College's expectation that Grahams will address these before the handover.

The Finance Director stated that at the recent Audit & Risk Committee meeting it was reported that a new risk was added to the Corporate Risk Register titled, 'Lack of resources and funding to progress the Sustainably/ESG agenda'. Discussions are also taking place at Sector/Department (DfE) level on the way forward.

**Report 3 Business Support Centre Update**

The Actual vs Targets for 2023/24 were noted with several targets achieved at 29 March 2024. It was noted that some targets for 2024/25 have been reduced in line with the reduced funding.

**Report 4 Management Accounts for 9 Months to 30 April 2024**

The Finance Director reported he had no major concerns with the Accounts provided. Due to several staff absences within the Finance Team the Finance Director wished to acknowledge and thank those staff that have stepped up to ensure the Department continued to run effectively.

**Report 5 Budget Update 2024/25**

The Draft Budget settlement for 2024/25 was welcomed. The Budget relates to the period to 31 March 2025. The allocation is £32.89m. This represents an increase of £1.098m on the College DEL Resources for 2023/24 excluding STS and RTS funding.

Historic pay agreements, inflationary pressures have been baselined. The Finance Director briefed members on the different elements of funding received, including the additional resource to pay for the 4% increase in the employer's contribution rate with the NI Teachers Pension Scheme.

In terms of income, overall Recurrent allocations has increased. The Step-Up Project is in its second year and due to end in March 2025. The Skills Intervention/Skill Up funding ended in March 2024. HLA income has increased driven by a budgeted increase in HLA student numbers. Other funding has decreased by £2.8m which mainly relates to the funds received in 2023/24 for the Voluntary Severance Scheme. Operating Income – catering revenues are expected to increase by £40k compared to 2023/24. A Statement has been received from OCS in relation to the outstanding invoices from 2023. The College will correspond with OCS again regarding queries on these figures.

In referring to Expenditure the Finance Director reported on the increase of £1,210k excluding the 2023/24 VSS in Staff Costs. Savings from the recent VSS have been included within the budget, however the Finance Director provide a breakdown of the number of items increasing Staff Costs.

The NBDPB format is forecasting a breakeven position to 31 March 2025.

**The Committee were content to recommend approval of the Draft Budget 2024/25 to the Governing Body.**

**PROPOSED**, Mrs D Creevy

**SECONDED**, Dr S Fisher

#### **Report 6 Prompt Payment – verbal report**

The Prompt payment figure for the 30 days to 31 May 2024 was 86% and for the year to date was 95%. The target is 95%.

## **22.5 CORRESPONDENCE – Finance**

### **➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

DfE Correspondence to NIFON Reps – 15 May 2024

The Finance Director provided background to this matter. He went through the response from the Department (DfE) to the considerations for the financial year end date. Two options are now to be considered by the Sector and a recommendation to be made to the Department by the Principals' Group.

Correspondence was also noted received from the Department (DfE) on 4 June 2024 regarding the approval of the pay settlement for lecturers from September 2023.

**22.6 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS - Finance**

The Committee Chair had no other business to discuss.

**22.7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Finance**

There was no other business to discuss.

The Committee Chair thanked Mr McKeown for his report.

*Mr P McKeown left the meeting and Ms S Kelly joined the meeting.*

**STAFFING MATTERS****22.8 Matters Arising – Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 13 February 2024 – verbal report**

**21.1** Ms Kelly responded to Mr O'Neill's request from the February 2024 meeting In respect to the simplifying of the application process for lower band posts. Ms Kelly provided data on applicant numbers for these bands from January 2024. The numbers were low. Meetings will continue with staff to review the criteria and competencies to try and increase the numbers of applications received and to assist applicants with the process. Mr O'Neill offered his assistance with this matter. The HR Manager welcomed this.

**22.9 HR SERVICES MANAGEMENT REPORT – Ms S Kelly, HR Manager****➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 22.9	HR Services Management Report
Report 1	Recruitment Update
Report 2	Staff Development
Report 3	Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2021-24 and Action Plan Review Year 3, 2023/24
Report 4	Human Resource Business Plan Update, 2023/24
Report 5	Equality, Data Monitoring Review, 2023/24
Report 5.1	Fair Employment Monitoring Return as at 01/01/24

**Report 22.9 HR Services Management Report**

In the academic year 2023/24 to date the College has processed 98 staff AccessNI applications. In relation to sickness absence there has been a rise in levels of absence this year in comparison with last year. For April 2024, Overall Lost Time Rate was 5.17% against 3.45% for 2022/23. The main reason for sickness absence from September 2023 to May 2024 was personal stress (16.19%) and surgery (13.08%). The HR Manager highlighted some of the Health & Wellbeing events that took place in the College.

The HR Manager noted the recent staff development during Semester 2, highlighting the Inter-semester weeks in January and March 2024. During the March 2024 events there were 145 attendances participating. Since August 2023, 383 Staff Development Applications have been received by HR. There are approximately 40 applications still pending Line Manager approval. HR continues to progress this work. The Staff Development Plan will be drafted for the next academic year 2024/25, taking into consideration any skill set/training requirements that may become evident following the restructuring process.

Completion rates in respect to the mandatory training modules as at May 2024 were all showing 95% and above. The target completion rate is 90%.

At May 2024, 618 (77%) appraisals have been completed with 66 due for completion (8%) and 119 (15%) are outstanding. It was highlighted that the HR system includes those part-time lecturers who do not have current contracts in the outstanding category data, however no appraisals are due.

#### **Report 1 Recruitment Update**

From 01/02/2024 to 15/05/2024 a total of 23 recruitment exercises were completed. Since 01/09/2023 the College advertised a total of 83 posts. The majority of these were support posts (54). During the Voluntary Severance process the majority of posts were advertised on a temporary basis (67%).

#### **Report 2 Staff Development Programme**

Governors noted the report and the great work carried out in the Project Based Learning Awards. Staff Awards will be presented on 12 June 2024. Six staff members were awarded HE Fellowship this year.

#### **Report 3 Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2021-24 and Action Plan Review Year 3, 2023/24**

The College is progressing through the Strategy. It is hoped that the health and wellbeing initiatives will deliver a range of positive outcomes. The Action Plan showed the key areas of work implemented during 2023/24.

#### **Report 4 Human Resource Business Plan Update 2023/24**

The Business Plan for 2023/24 did not include the work that is taking place this year with the introduction of the Voluntary Severance Scheme and the restructuring process. The HR Manager briefed Governors on the plan.

#### **Report 5 Equality, Data Monitoring Review 2023/24**

##### **Report 5.1 Fair Employment Monitoring Return as at 01/01/24**

The HR Manager reported that the headline figures were consistent on previous years. On 1 January 2024 there were a total of 838 employees at the College. 21% of staff from the Protestant Community and 76 from the Roman Catholic Community, 3% were non-determined. There continues to be an under representation of employees from the Protestant Community. Other findings included that the majority of staff in the College were female (61%) with the majority of staff work full time (70%).

In regard to applicants, the College received a total of 488 applications during the year. This was a decrease 287 applicants from the previous year. This related to the reduction in recruitment exercises completed due to the Voluntary Severance process. The majority of applicants were from the Roman Catholic Community (74%).

The College also monitor other categories which include age, dependants, marital status, disability, race, political opinion and sexual orientation.

Affirmative Action programmes continue to help address the imbalance in the applicant makeup and workforce. The College works Closely with the Equality Commission and regularly reviews the Affirmative Action Plan.

#### 22.10 CORRESPONDENCE – STAFFING

There was no correspondence received.

#### 22.11 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS – STAFFING

##### ➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

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|-------------------|--|
| Report 1          | Code of Conduct  |
| Report 1.1        | DoF Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies (NI)<br>Guidance (FD DFP) 04/14         |
| Report 1.2        | Amendments to the Code of Conduct  |
| Report 2          | Internal Audit Review – Summary of Recommendations – Learning &<br>Development – February 2023 |
| Report 3          | Internal Audit Review – Part- time Lecturer Payments   |
| <b>Report 1</b>   | <b>Code of Conduct</b>   |
| <b>Report 1.1</b> | <b>DoF Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies (NI)<br/>Guidance (FD DFP) 04/14</b> |
| <b>Report 1.2</b> | <b>Amendments to the Code of Conduct</b>   |

The Governing Body Secretary advised Governors that following the implementation of the Partnership Agreement there is a specific requirement that the Governing Body must have in place a Code of Conduct. The current Code of Conduct has now been amended and has encompassed aspects of the DoF Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies (Report 1.1).

**Members were content to recommend approval to the Board.**

**PROPOSED,** Mrs D Creevy

**SECONDED,** Dr S Fisher

#### **Report 2 Internal Audit Review – Summary of Recommendations – Learning & Development – February 2023**

Governors noted the progress of the actions.

**Report 3 Internal Audit Review – Part- time Lecturer Payments**

The Internal Audit Review received a satisfactory assurance rating with one low priority finding.

**22.12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – STAFFING**

There was no any other business to discuss.

**22.13 CLIENT SERVICES REPORTS – Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services****➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Equality Update

Report 2 Data Protection/Compliance Update

Ms G Moss had sent her apologies for this meeting. The Committee Chair was content with the reports and no issues were raised by members of the Committee.

**22.14 SCHEDULE OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2024/25****➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 22.14 Schedule of Committee Meetings 2024/25

Governors noted the Committee dates for the next academic year.

*Mrs C O'Reilly left the meeting at this juncture.*

**22.15 RESERVED BUSINESS**

Taken separately. This part of the meeting ended at 13:43.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 11 September 2024**

Signed:   
Mrs D Creevy, Committee Chair

Date: 11 September 2024