



## SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Financial and General Purposes Committee of the Governing Body (the “Committee”)

held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 17:30, in Meeting Room D Floor, Lisburn Campus

### 1. Chairs Business

#### a) Attendance and apologies

Present: Mr Alan McCrum, Mr Derek Wilson, Mrs Deborah O’Hare, Mr Ken Webb (Principal & Chief Executive), Ms. Majella Corrigan Items, Mr. John Nugent (Chair of the Governing Body), Mr Steve Lee

In attendance: Mr Paul Smyth (Chief Human Resources Officer) ‘CHRO’, Mr Tommy Martin (Deputy Chief Executive) ‘DCEO’, Mr Gary Ritchie (Deputy Principal Curriculum) ‘DPC’, Mrs Heather McKee (Deputy Principal Student Support Services) ‘DPSSS’, Mrs Emma Carson (Head of HR) ‘HoHR’, Mrs Claire Williamson (Secretary to the Governing Body)

Apologies: Dr Danny McConnell

In the Chair: Mr McCrum

#### b) Declarations of Conflict of Interests

The following conflict were declared:

- Ms Corrigan declared she is employed by CCMS whose sponsor department is DENI. She is a current member of the Governing Body of Stranmillis College.
- Mrs O’Hare advised she is employed by The Board of Governors of the Wallace High School (a NDPB) as Principal. The sponsor department for funding and development work and other applications is DENI supported by or delegated to the EA as appropriate. Is also current

member of the College Advisory Group (Education) CAFRE DAERA CAFRE offers level 2 to level 6 + qualifications.

- Mr Lee declared that his wife is employed as a lecturer at the College.
- The Deputy Chief Executive declared his daughter is employed as a lecturer at the College.
- The Deputy Principal Curriculum declared his wife and sister are employees at the College.

No action was taken in relation to any of the declared conflicts.

#### c) Minutes of the F&GP meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024

*Previously issued to all Members.*

**Agreed:** The minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April were reviewed, members agreed they were a true and accurate reflection of the meeting. The minutes were adopted on the proposal of Derek Wilson and seconded by Majella Corrigan.

#### d) F&GP Action Points from meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

Members noted the actions from the previous meeting inviting the DfE Minister to attend the Newcastle Creche had not been completed, as the pre-election purdah period was now in force and politically sensitive announcements and events are prohibited during this time.

#### e) Annual Review of the Committee Terms of Reference

*Previously issued to all Members.*

The Terms of reference were reviewed and the committee agreed no changes were required. This was approved on the proposal of Deborah O'Hare and seconded by Majella Corrigan.

#### f) Annual Review of Committee Cycle of Business

The Chair advised that in consultation with the Secretary this item would be reviewed again with the Head of HR and re-presented to the committee for approval in September. Members agreed this was a sensible approach given the significant staffing changes this year.

**Action:** Annual review of Committee cycle of business will be presented for review in September.

## 2) Correspondence:

*Previously issued to all Members.*

### Lecturer Pay remit approval

The CHRO asked members to note the enclosed correspondence confirming the approval of the pay remit, he advised that this will be paid into staff's June salaries. The Chair of the governing body thanked everyone involved for getting to this point and welcomed the timely payment to staff.

### Draft Budget Allocation 24/25

The DCEO highlighted the main points within the letter to the committee and advised that it was quite positive as many items that had not been previously baselined now had been. He pointed out that this is unlikely to be the final budget for the College as the Department has asked for submissions for business engagement to be made and this outcome will not be known until the autumn.

### Capital Allocation Letter 24/25

The DCEO highlighted the correspondence confirms the £1m capital allocation to the College for 2024/25.

## 3) Financial Items for approval

### Baseline Resource Budget 24/25

The DCEO presented the budget and highlighted to members that the resource allocation is 46.5 million the resource requirement is 46.8 million and therefore there is currently a pressure of £300k which is directly related to the RtS and costs related to restructuring the College staff.

The DCEO talked through some of the changes and members noted that there has been a reduction in income of 870k, most of this can be attributed to the reduction in income for business engagement year on year. The DCEO set out the changes to staff costs and the implications for the College of the Reform to Save scheme.

**Agreed:** Member agreed the Baseline Resource Budget 24/25 on the proposal of Majella Corrigan and seconded by Derek Wilson.

## 4) Financial Items for Information

*Papers previously issued to all Members.*

### a) Management Accounts

The DCEO advised that the full year result of 46.7 million resource allocation is what was secured and so the College landed on the financial target that has been set. He highlighted that this was a very good performance and reminded the committee this was due to a lot of managed cost control.

The Chair acknowledged the amount of work gone in to ensuring the financial target was met, and on behalf of the committee commended the finance team and members of CMT for making this possible.

#### b) NDPB Budgeting and Forecasting Submission

Members noted the recent submission in paper 003B, the CFO highlighted this reflects the management accounts.

#### c) Finance Operational Report

The CFO asked members to note the written report at 003C and highlighted that debt and supplier payment days were both on positive trends.

#### d) Estates & Capital Expenditure Report

The DCEO talked to the written report at 004D and highlighted there will be a change how reporting on utilities consumption is presented within this report to the committee. A yearly comparison will be given and this will now be a standing item in the report.

### 5) HR Items for approval

#### a) HR Strategic Priorities 24/25

The CHRO presented the planned priorities for 24/25, he directed members to the paper setting out the 7 priorities, two of which are carried over from 2023/24 academic year, i.e., Objectives 4 and 5 respectively.

The committee briefly discussed the priorities and agreed that they were strategic and relevant to the College.

**Agreed:** The HR Strategic Priorities were agreed on the proposal of Deborah O'Hare and seconded by Derek Wilson.

## 6) Staffing Items for Information:

*Papers previously issued to all Members.*

### a) HR Priorities 2023/2024 plan and status updates/HR Key Metrics Report

The CHRO talked to the written report in 006A and advised that there had not been any significant changes to the priorities since the committee last reviewed them.

A brief discussion took place on staff sickness and the Chair commented he was content with the steps taken to mitigate absence. Members agreed that the low short-term sick figures underpin the welfare work carried out by the HR team.

### b) Employee Relations Update

The CHRO asked members to note the written report in 006B, he gave a brief overview of the number of live cases, how they are progressing and confirmed that there are no specific trends across the complaints to cause him any concern.

### c) Annual Monitoring Report

The CHRO presented the report at 006C and advised the committee that it is a statutory report for the Equality Commission to meet Section 75 obligations, he added that the Commission will provide feedback to the College in due course.

## 7) Applications and Enrolments

*Paper previously issued to all Members.*

The committee noted the written report in 007, which provided an update on the College applications and enrolment figures, the Deputy Principal Curriculum highlighted there has been a 10% increase in overall enrolment numbers and there is a significant increase in applications compared with the same time last year. The committee had a robust discussion on how resource and additional cohorts with increased student numbers would be managed going forward.

**Action:** The committee asked for an update on enrolment figures for September, and specifically on how it will impact resource and financial implications for the College.

## 8) Policies for review

*Papers previously issued to all Members.*

- a) HR Policy Review
- b) Review of Financial Policies
- c) IT policy Review
- d) H&S policy Review

The DCEO advised the committee the policies were reviewed due to the significant structural changes within the College, and job titles and responsibilities have been amended. He highlighted that the financial governance policy was significantly amended because of the introduction of the Partnership Agreement (which replaced the Management Statement of Financial Memorandum).

Agreed: The Financial Governance Policy was approved and recommended for adoption by the Governing Body on the proposal of Majella Corrigan and seconded by Steven Lee.

### 7) Any other Business

The Chair acknowledged it was the last meeting for the Principal and CHRO, on behalf of the committee he thanked them both for their contributions to the committee and wished them well in the future.

### 8) Confidential

A separate note was taken for this item.

With no other business being discussed the meeting concluded at 7.30pm