

Minutes Governing Body Meeting Monday 27th November 2017, 5.18pm, Conference Room, Lisburn Campus

Agenda Item 1: Chair's Business	<p>Present Mr Deep Sagar (Chair) , Mr Ken Webb (CEO/Principal), Mrs Heather Reid</p>
a) Attendance and Apologies	<p>Mr Neil Bodger , Mrs Kim Scott (from Item 1e) , Mrs Karen Fraser, Mr Andrew Corbett, Mr Gareth Hetherington, Mr Steve Pollard, Mrs Shirleen Corbett, Mr John Mackell (from Items1E) ,Mr Ed Jackson, Ms Christine Goodwin, Professor Alan Woodside (Items 1-4b only), Mrs Barbara Larkin, Mrs Carolyn King, Miss Rachael Heaney</p> <p>Apologies None</p> <p>In attendance Mrs Claire Williamson (Secretary to the Governing Body) Mr Tommy Martin (Chief Finance Officer) Mrs Heather McKee (Director of Strategic Planning, Quality and Support) (Items 1-3D only) Ms Heather Miller (Head of Quality Excellence and Development) (Items 1-3d only) Ms Claire Henderson (Head of Quality Excellence and Development) (Items 1-3d only) Mrs Annie Hamilton (Boardroom Apprentice) (Items 1-4H only)</p>
b) Declarations of conflicts of interest	<p>The Chair invited members to declare any known or perceived conflicts of interest. The chair noted interests of three members related to the paper he had tabled entitled 'Recommendations on committees and lead member roles'; each would not participate in discussions of those items.</p>
c) CEO Report on Pastoral Care	<p>The Principal provided Governors with a brief update on the recent death of one of SERC's students, Jonathan Ramsey from the Downpatrick campus. The Principal advised that the College have engaged the charities PIPS and Inspire to provide support to Jonny's friends and classmates.</p>
d) Chair's Report	<p>The Chair referred members to the written report he had provided. The Chair invited comments.</p> <p>Ms Goodwin enquired more about the meeting with Bangor Academy. The Principal highlighted that the relationship with this particular school is excellent but that schools were competing to keep sixth forms open.</p> <p>The Chair tabled a paper and asked Governors to consider the recommendations for committee membership, the lead Higher Education (HE) and inspections Governor, Education committee Chair and to consider lead Governors for the seven campuses. Governors agreed with the recommendations by the Chair and seconded as follows.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Action Point: The Chair asked Governors other than committee chairs to express by email their interest in becoming a lead Governor for one of the seven campuses before the next meeting in January.</p> <p>Decisions: The Governing Body agreed with the Chair's proposals for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chair of education committee: Barbara Larkin will become the chair of this committee. (Seconder: Christine Goodwin) 2. Rachael Heaney: Rachael Heaney will become member of the education and audit committees. (Seconder: Gareth Hetherington) 3. Lead governor for Higher Education and inspections in 2018: Kim Scott will take on this role, in association with chair of the education committee. (Seconder: Ed Jackson). </div>
e) Policy Forum NI report	<p>Governors noted the written report provided by Professor Woodside and Ms Corbett on the recent Policy Forum NI event. Professor Woodside informed Governors he believed the event was not value for money, Ms Corbett echoed these comments and advised it had however been a good networking opportunity to expose Governors to contacts across the sector they would not normally meet.</p> <p>The chair invited Ms Goodwin (who had attended for the chair) and Mr Webb to report on the Colleges NI (CNI) board and other meetings that day. They reported that the new board with all</p>

	<p>chairs and principals had been constituted. It was agreed that CNI should focus on an advocacy role for the sector which had previously been agreed in the 2014-17 Strategy. Ms Goodwin reported that more work was necessary on concrete collaboration. The Principal reported that he was now Vice Chair of CNI and Chair of the CNI Finance and Audit committee.</p> <p>Action Point: A written report on the recent developments in Colleges NI will be presented at the next meeting in January.</p>
f) Minutes of the Governing Body (GB)	<p>The Chair invited members to review the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2017. The Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Proposer: Heather Reid Seconder: Karen Fraser</p> <p>The Chair invited members to review the minutes of the special meeting held on 23rd November 2017. The Chair thanked all those who attended or who had offered to join by conference call. The Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Proposer: Rachael Heaney Seconder: Shirleen Corbett</p>
g) Action Points/Matters Arising from previous meetings	<p>Members reviewed the action points from the previous meetings. The Chair highlighted that all actions were complete including by committees or addressed on the agenda.</p> <p>Action Point: The Chair asked Governors to inform the Secretary if they require access to the Learning Engine in order to access the learning modules on General Data Protection Regulations.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 2: CEO's Business</p> <p>a) CEO's report including Balanced Scorecard</p>	<p>The CEO asked members to note the written report provided and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Principal highlighted there are a number of areas of curriculum reform including 14-19-year-old, Apprenticeship and Youth Training, FE Means Success and HLAs. He advised that Principals have been working together and have written formally in 2016 and 2017 to DfE requesting a further update on the progress made. • Mr Pollard enquired if there was any progress that FE would be a qualification awarding body in its own right, the Principal advised that there is no progress to report on this matter, but it is coming back onto the agenda. • Mr Jackson enquired if there was any financial implication to producing single qualifications for each framework and which would be owned by the sector. The Principal advised that there may be a cost to alternatives but currently costs are incurred when the College receives short notice to confirm a course isn't running and a different awarding body has to be sought. He further advised Governors that a single technical and awarding body will remove the risks of producing quality assurance processes for individual awarding bodies of which the College currently has over 50 all with different processes. • Mr Hetherington noted that Curriculum Reform should be escalated to the Strategic Risk Register to provide regular updates to the Audit committee. The Chair suggested that he and the CEO should discuss that with the audit committee. • The chair noted good progress as per the Balanced Scorecard. <p>Action Point: (i) The CEO will report to the GB once a year on all partnerships. (ii) The Principal and Chair of the Audit committee agreed to discuss with the audit committee if Curriculum Reform and Qualifications and frameworks piece should be in the Strategic Risk Register.</p>
b) Marketing, Advertising and Applications Annual Report	<p>The Director of Strategic Planning, Quality and Support directed Governors to the annual report and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of SPQ&S provided a high-level summary of the report and advised that an action plan has been in put in place to address low enrolment figures including earlier open days, more interviews and a stronger social media presence. • Ms Goodwin enquired if any analysis had been done on how user friendly the website is with the increase in online enrolment this year. The Director confirmed that Google analytics is

	<p>used, and they do look at how easy it is to click through the site and have also introduced course wizards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to a question from The Chair on what else can be done to boost enrolments the Director advised that there is a focus this year to convey SERC as a quality choice. The Principal informed Governors that there is recognition that careers advice needs to be more resourced and this is being actioned.
<p>Agenda Item 3: Items for Approval</p> <p>a) Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Quality Improvement Plan 2016/17 and Quality Improvement Plans 2017-18 for Further Education and Work Based Learning</p>	<p>The Head of Quality Excellence and Development (QE&D) presented the report on Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Quality Improvement Plan 2016/17 and Quality Improvement Plans 2017-18 for Further Education and Work Based Learning, she directed Governors to the executive summary of the report.</p> <p>The Head of QE&D responded to Governors' questions on the statistics provided in the reports and advised that low retention rates set out in level one programmes is around students in this group often facing considerable social, learning and physical needs, a team is currently looking at how to improve this and it will be a long-term challenge for the College. Mrs Reid advised that these students have had 12 years of not achieving success before they come to the College.</p> <p>The Chair advised Governors the Education Committee had reviewed these reports and had discussed the tone and were content that they have been written in compliance with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) guidelines/expectation and had recommended them for approval. It was agreed that Ms Fraser would engage with executives on pedagogy.</p> <p>Key Decision: The Governing Body approved Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Quality Improvement Plan 2016/17 and Quality Improvement Plans 2017-18 for Further Education and Work Based Learning for submission.</p> <p>Proposer: Karen Fraser</p> <p>Seconder: Andrew Corbett</p> <p>Action Point: Governors requested a list of the definitions (eg, retention, achievement) contained within the reports by email.</p>
<p>b) Higher Education Annual Quality Assessment Review</p>	<p>The Head of QE&D asked Governors to review and approve the Annual Quality Assessment Review. She highlighted the key areas in HE that are being worked on as areas for development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the retention and success rate on full-time HE programmes as very good or better and on part-time programmes to maintain one-year programmes as very good and raise multiple year programmes to very good. To review current Quality Assurance (QA) structures and processes to ensure they remain robust and appropriate and reflect the DfE HE Quality Assurance Model. To extend and embed student engagement to fully engage students within review processes. <p>The chair informed governors that the Education Committee had scrutinised this and recommended the report for approval.</p> <p>Key Decision: The Governing Body approved the Higher Education Self-Evaluation Review 2016-17 and Areas for Development 2017-18 for submission.</p> <p>Proposer: Kim Scott</p> <p>Seconder: Ed Jackson</p>
<p>c) Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting on 14 September 2017</p>	<p>The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the minutes from the meeting held on 14th September 2017 for approval, members confirmed they were content to accept.</p> <p>Proposer: Gareth Hetherington</p> <p>Seconder: John Mackell</p>
<p>d) Minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee on</p>	<p>The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee presented the minutes from the meeting held on 13th September 2017 for approval, members confirmed they were content to accept.</p> <p>Proposer: Andrew Corbett</p> <p>Seconder: Kim Scott</p>

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e) Education Committee Minutes 20th September 2017	The Chair presented the minutes from the Education Committee meeting held on 20 th September 2017 for approval, members confirmed they were content to accept. Proposer: Kim Scott Seconder: Steve Pollard
f) Staffing Committee Minutes 12 th June 2017	The Chair of the Staffing Committee presented the minutes from the meeting held on 12th June 2017 for approval, members confirmed they were content to accept. Proposer: John Mackell Seconder: Heather Reid
g) Audit Committee Annual Report 2016/17 for submission to DfE	The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the Audit Committee Annual Report for consideration, he advised that the committee are required to produce this report by DfE and it covers a specific set of areas, the Audit committee have reviewed the report and are content to recommend it to the Governing Body for approval and submission to DfE. Member noted the report and confirmed they were content to approve it. The chair reminded them that annexes had not been included and members concerned should ask the Secretary for them. Proposer: John Mackell Seconder: Carolyn King
Agenda Item 4: Items for Information a) Annual Cycle of Governing Body Business	Members noted the document and were content with the cycle.
b) Financial Results to date	The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) presented the Resource Budget report to Governors; he advised that this report would replace the Management Accounts format. The College is proposing three annual returns which will be presented to the Governing Body and form the basis of our financial reporting. The CFO highlighted that the main changes are the shift of focus to DfE's financial year-end in April; and a focus on SERC's "resource requirements" instead of a "break-even" target. The CFO advised Governors that he anticipates the target will be missed by around £200k due to lower than expected tuition fees of £239k and lower income from HLA pilots of £158k. The Principal advised Governors as the Accounting Officer he had no concerns at present over this deficit. The CFO advised he will continue with monthly monitoring and acknowledged that whilst there is volatility around some of the funding streams like Training for Success he will continue to try and mitigate these risks. The GB noted the report.
c) Student Governor's Report	The Student Governor directed members to the written report provided detailing the recent activity with the Students Union. Members appreciated the report and commended the focus on diversity in the report.
d) Staff Governors' Reports	The Staff Governors provided written reports to members, the following points were noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs King highlighted the corporate staff training days that are on offer during December with particular focus on staff health and wellbeing. • Mr Corbett advised that he had attended a recent training day on suicide awareness and acknowledged that the College has a good focus on mental health for both staff and students, he suggested something specific could be looked at for suicide. • The Principal advised the College is always looking to be more effective in this area but that any programmes need to be mindful of the approach especially with regard to young vulnerable students. • Mr Hetherington suggested there is a wider piece of work in preparing young people for the rest of their lives and it would be useful to broaden out resilience training. <p>Action Point: The Chair requested a report on resilience programmes for students and staff.</p>

e) Audit Committee briefing on meeting held 23 rd November 2017	The Chair of the Audit Committee, Gareth Hetherington, referred members to the written report he provided on the recent meeting. The Chair highlighted some of the main points. There were no comments by members.
f) Education Committee briefing held on 15 th /27 th November 2017	The Chair advised that on 15 November previous minutes were agreed and on 27 November the main business was the HE, FE and Work based learning submissions discussed earlier. The Chair advised the draft minutes of the 27 November meeting will be sent to all Governors when they are available.
g) Finance and General Purposes Committee briefing on meeting held 22 nd November 2017	The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee, Ed Jackson, referred members to the written report he provided on the recent meeting. The Chair of F&GP highlighted the committee had agreed he should write to DfE to voice the committee's concerns over the mandatory use of Properties Division. He acknowledged the Chair of the Audit committee had previously written to enquire if the use of PD was mandatory and he would therefore highlight the value for money issues around its continued use. The GB noted the briefing.
h) Staffing Committee briefing on meeting held on 12 th October 2017	<p>The Chair of the Staffing Committee, Christine Goodwin, referred members to the written report she provided on the recent meeting. The Chair highlighted some of the main points. In response to the update on staff absence Mrs Scott enquired if there has been any impact on students specifically if they have arrived for class and no lecturer has been present. The Principal advised that last minute absences are managed by arranging cover and if that is not possible classes are merged. The briefing was noted.</p> <p>Action Point: The Chair asked the Staffing and Education committee to consider if between them a sense of the volume of classes over about a year could be got that were not catered for because of last-minute staff absence.</p>
Agenda Item 5. Discussion Time:	<p>The Chair invited members to discuss the results from the Governing Body survey conducted by DfE as presented in the paper; he invited members to contact him if they wanted to discuss other issues in the survey results. A brief discussion took place and it was noted that the results were skewed by one or two members expressing these points, rather than these being widely-felt needs, and by the wording of the questions. After discussion, the GB agreed the following actions.</p> <p>Action Point: To cover the legal developments point, the Articles and Instruments of Government, the FE Governors' Guide and the FE Audit Code would be summarised in user-friendly summaries and sent along with that to all.</p> <p>Action Point: To cover the point about the length of documents, each GB and committee paper would have an executive summary at the top.</p> <p>Action Point: To cover the point about abbreviations, each GB and committee paper would have all abbreviations used explained in full form at the start or end.</p> <p>Action Point: To cover the point about discussion without management, the Governing Body will additionally so meet in October (to the scheduled April session on CEO's appraisal). Any additional such needs to be brought up to the chair separately.</p> <p>Action Point: To cover the point about access to executives and providing specialist skills, the chair asked governors to go to any committee meeting with the consent of its chair, join the induction sessions for new governors or to contact him or the Secretary to arrange visits or engagement.</p>
Agenda Item 6: Any other business	The Chair informed members he had met with Beverley Harrison, Director of FE, DfE, and discussed governor vacancies and extensions of governor appointments. She advised that in the absence of a Minister they are hopeful the Permanent Secretary can do more; DfE are ready with an advertising campaign for the sector and they don't believe there many barriers with regard to filling vacancies or gaining extensions.

	The CEO gave a presentation on the new prospectus. The Chair asked if there was any other business; there was none. He reminded governors that they could contact him to offer ideas for future agendas or improving GB meetings.
Date of the next meeting	The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 15 th January 2018, 5pm, Lisburn Campus. The GB Workshop will be held on Monday 11 th December at 09.30am in the Newtownards Campus

The meeting concluded at 8.16pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Deep Sagar, Chair of Governing Body

Abbreviations used:

- SERC: South Eastern Regional College
- CEO: Chief Executive
- HE: Higher Education
- NI: Northern Ireland
- CNI: Colleges Northern Ireland
- GB: Governing Body
- FE: Further Education
- HLA: Higher Level Apprenticeships
- DfE: Department for the Economy
- SPQ&S: Strategic Planning, Quality and Support
- QE&D: Quality Excellence and Development
- ETI: Education and Training Inspectorate
- QA: Quality Assurance
- CFO: Chief Finance Officer
- k: 000
- F&GP: Finance and General Purposes