

**Minutes Governing Body Meeting Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018, 5.00pm, Conference Room,  
Lisburn Campus**

<b>Agenda Item 1: Chair's Business</b>	<b>Present</b> Mr Deep Sagar (Chair) , Mr Ken Webb (CEO/Principal), Ms Heather Reid Mr Neil Bodger , Mrs Karen Fraser, Mr Andrew Corbett						
a) Attendance and Apologies	Mr Gareth Hetherington, Mr Steve Pollard, Ms Shirleen Corbett, Mr John Mackell ( <b>Items 1E-6 Only</b> ), Mr Ed Jackson ,Ms Christine Goodwin, Professor Alan Woodside ( <b>Items 1c-6</b> ), Mrs Barbara Larkin, Mrs Carolyn King, Miss Rachael Heaney  <b>Apologies</b> Ms Kim Scott <b>In attendance</b> Mrs Claire Williamson (Secretary to the Governing Body) Mr Tommy Martin (Chief Finance Officer) Mr Paul Smyth (Chief Human Resources Officer) Mrs Paula Philpott (Head of Learning Academy) <b>Items 1-2e only</b> Ms Winne Li (Exchange Student) <b>Items 1-2e only</b> Mrs Annie Hamilton (Boardroom Apprentice) Dr Michael Malone (Director of Curriculum & Information Services)						
b) Declarations of conflicts of interest	The Chair invited members to declare any known or perceived conflicts of interest. No member declared a conflict of interest regarding the presented agenda items. Three governors had interest in the annex to the chair's report and would not participate in its discussion at agenda item 1C.						
c) Chair's Report	The Chair referred members to the written report he had provided. The Chair thanked the Governors who had put themselves forward to act as Lead Governors for the campuses and asked that Governors including committee chairs who are interested in the remaining campuses to contact him before the next meeting to express their interest, if they had not already done so. He highlighted the job requirement noted in his report.  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>Decision: The GB agreed the chair's proposals for lead governors as follows:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Downpatrick: Alan Woodside</td> <td style="width: 50%;"><b>Seconder: Gareth Hetherington</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newcastle: Shirleen Corbett</td> <td><b>Seconder: Andrew Corbett</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newtownards: Karen Fraser</td> <td><b>Seconder: Ed Jackson</b></td> </tr> </table> </div>	Downpatrick: Alan Woodside	<b>Seconder: Gareth Hetherington</b>	Newcastle: Shirleen Corbett	<b>Seconder: Andrew Corbett</b>	Newtownards: Karen Fraser	<b>Seconder: Ed Jackson</b>
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d) Minutes of the Governing Body (GB)	The Chair invited members to review the minutes of the meeting held on 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2017. The Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting. <b>Proposer: Heather Reid</b> <b>Seconder: Shirleen Corbett</b>						
e) Action Points/Matters Arising from previous meetings	Members reviewed the action points from the previous meetings. The Chair highlighted that all actions were complete or addressed on the agenda or with committees Secretary will check if definitions in the Quality Improvement Plan had been emailed separately. The Chair advised that summaries have been provided on the Articles and Instrument of Government and DfE's Guide for Governors as discussed at the last meeting. Members appreciated these.						
<b>Agenda Item 2: CEO's Business</b> a) CEO's report including Balanced Scorecard	The CEO asked members to note the written report provided and highlighted the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CEO highlighted the recent press coverage the College received on equality monitoring forms. Members were advised the College uses a Sector wide monitoring form that was developed with the Equality Commission, and part of the process is to ask a question around political opinion. The CEO contacted the Equality Commission for further clarification on the matter and they have confirmed they have no issue with a direct question being asked on political opinion as part of the College's monitoring process. The Chair noted concerns from members on this issue and acknowledged that this is a difficult and sensitive subject matter. He advised members that the College is taking part in</li> </ul>						

	<p>the Sector wide scheme voluntarily, the decision lies with the GB and it would be beneficial to get feedback from the other Colleges and DfE about their current view if this information is to be so collected. The GB agreed this and to delay its conclusion to later.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CEO highlighted the proposed Budget Cuts set out in the briefing paper ‘Northern Ireland Budgetary Outlook 2018-20’ issued by The Department of Finance could potentially affect 1400 students, particularly in regard to cuts to EMA and Level 1 funding. Members queried how these proposals would tie in with the overall aims of the Programme for Government and noted the cuts seem to target the most vulnerable in society and emphasis should be put on misspending in other areas. The GB agreed that SERC would participate in the Colleges NI response and that it would issue its own response to the consultation and delegated the responsibility to the chair and CEO.</li> <li>• Ms Goodwin enquired if the CEO had given any thought to what funding will look like for work on social inclusion. The CEO confirmed that the critical element of this work will be to focus on careers advice and it is planned to put 4 new members of staff in place to improve this service for both existing and new students. The Chair suggested that the next College Development Plan and Budget should outline specific outcomes the College will aim for in terms of Social Inclusion, staffing and budgets</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Point:</b> The CEO agreed to speak to the other Colleges and DfE to determine their current view on collecting political opinion in forms.</p> <p><b>Action Point:</b> The CEO was asked to consider including a measure in the Balanced Scorecard to reflect Social Inclusion in exchange for removing another.</p>
b) Staffing Annual Report	<p>The Chief Human Resources Officer presented the Staffing Annual Report to members and highlighted the key issues in the report, he advised that non-work related mental health is a key issue the HR department are working on in terms of both staff absences and support in the work place. In response to a question on staff Continuous Professional Development the CHRO confirmed that staff training, and development is made up of core training and staff requests, the Head of the Learning Academy confirmed no staff requests have been turned down this year. The Chair commended the CHRO on the report and the progress made on employee relations cases and filling vacancies</p>
c) PPP Annual Report	<p>The Chief Finance Officer presented the Annual PPP Report to members and highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contract allows for the completion of a benchmarking exercise on a five-yearly basis throughout the life of the contract. The first of these was completed in Spring 2016. It resulted in a reduction of £100k in the annual contractual payments.</li> <li>• A reconciliation outlining the financial implications of all contractual variations to date was completed in November 2016. The result was relatively cost-neutral, with a minor saving of £5.7k per annum.</li> <li>• The contract management process is subject to periodic review by Internal Audit. The most recent reviews were completed in 2014 and March 2017. No issues were brought forward to the 2017 review and made no recommendations for improvement.</li> <li>• It was confirmed that the college had no dependence on Carillion and the F&amp;GP committee annually considers PPP in detail.</li> </ul>
d) Student Destinations Annual Report	<p>The Director of Curriculum &amp; Information Services presented the Student Destinations Annual Report to members, a brief discussion took place and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Director of C&amp;IS noted the better progression being reported. Non-socio-economic benefits reported included an improved quality of life and a positive impact on students’ lives.</li> <li>• In response to a query about breaking this data down further the Director of C&amp;IS advised that this is difficult as the return rate is low, and the questionnaire is conducted by DfE. He advised that the statistics that are provided however are positive and members can view the statistics in the full FELS report (Further Education Leavers Survey).</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Point:</b> The GB Secretary will circulate the FELS report to members for information</p>

<p>e) Presentation of Project Based Learning and Pedagogy</p>	<p>The Head of the Learning Academy presented a detailed presentation on Project Based Learning (PBL) and Pedagogy. Members were given an opportunity for a question and answer session after the presentation and noted the aim of these projects is to ensure students are getting The Edge and positioning students in the world of work. Members commended the work that has been carried out.</p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 3: Items for Approval</b></p> <p>a) Fees Policy as approved by F&amp;GP Committee</p>	<p>The CFO asked members to review and approve the Fees Policy which had been recommended and approved by the Finance and General Purposes committee. He advised that the fees have remained static and discounts are being offered this year. Members briefly discussed the concessions offered and agreed that the current document is not easy to understand and requested a flow diagram, simplicity, clarity and consideration of why students from rest of UK are charged more than EU could be included in next year's document.</p> <div data-bbox="245 602 1466 779" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Key Decision:</b> The Governing Body approved the Fees Policy 2018-19  <b>Proposer:</b> Ed Jackson  <b>Secunder:</b> Karen Fraser</p> </div>
<p>b) Education Committee Minutes 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017</p>	<p>The Chair of Education Committee presented the minutes from the Education Committee meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017 for approval, members confirmed they were content to accept.  <b>Proposer: Kim Scott</b>  <b>Secunder: Steve Pollard</b></p>
<p>c) Staffing Committee Minutes 12<sup>th</sup> October 2017</p>	<p>The Chair of the Staffing Committee presented the minutes from the meeting held on 12th October 2017 for approval, members confirmed they were content to accept.  <b>Proposer: John Mackell</b>  <b>Secunder: Heather Reid</b></p>
<p>d) Remuneration of Governors SOP (revised)</p>	<p>The CFO advised members DfE had reviewed and revised the circular in relation to Governor's remuneration and the SOP presented has been updated to reflect the changes. The Chair highlighted that a key change that has been made is that Governors can exceed the remuneration limit of £3500 per annum so long as the GB's overall budget allowing £3,500 per member was not exceeded. Some members advised that they had not had sight of the revised circular and asked if it could be circulated again before they approved the SOP.</p> <div data-bbox="245 1249 1466 1357" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Action Point:</b> Members were asked to email the Secretary to confirm they were content with the SOP or to suggest any changes by Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January after the DfE September 2017 circular and the proposed SOP were circulated by email.</p> </div>
<p>e) Terms of reference of audit, F&amp;GP and staffing committees</p>	<p>The Chair of the Audit Committee, Gareth Hetherington, presented the revised Audit Committee Terms of Reference.</p> <div data-bbox="245 1435 1466 1543" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Key Decision:</b> The Governing Body approved the Audit Committee Terms of Reference.  <b>Proposer:</b> Gareth Hetherington  <b>Secunder:</b> Neil Bodger</p> </div> <p>The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes committee, Ed Jackson, asked members to review and approve the Finance and General Purposes Committee Terms of Reference.</p> <div data-bbox="245 1653 1466 1794" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Key Decision:</b> The Governing Body approved the Finance and General Purposes Committee Terms of Reference subject to the need for quorum being mentioned examined against the Articles.  <b>Proposer:</b> Andrew Corbett  <b>Secunder:</b> Barbara Larkin</p> </div> <p>The Chair of the Staffing Committee, Christine Goodwin, presented the revised committee Terms of Reference for approval and advised minor changes have been made to better reflect the committee's role.</p> <div data-bbox="245 1906 1466 2009" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Key Decision:</b> The Governing Body approved the Staffing Committee Terms of Reference subject to the need for quorum being mentioned examined against the Articles.  <b>Proposer:</b> John Mackell</p> </div>

	<b>Seconded:</b> Ed Jackson
<b>Agenda Item 4: Items for Information</b>	Members noted the document and were content with the cycle, the Chair highlighted it has been revised after the meeting in November.
a) Annual Cycle of Governing Body Business	
b) Financial Results to date	<p>The CFO presented the latest financial update to members and highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CFO highlighted the reasons for the £150k shortfall to members</li> <li>• In response to a question if this figure will show as a deficit on the accounts or breakeven, the CFO advised it will show as neither and going forward with the new model the target to hit the resource requirement was important</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Point:</b> The Chair requested that the CFO also provides the Governing Body with the management accounts for one unit/division at each GB meeting to ensure Governors have a broader understanding of what is happening across the business</p>
c) Student Governor's Report	The Student Governor directed members to the written report provided detailing the recent activity with the Students Union. The Chair enquired how the Student Governor and Students Union could use the material and knowledge the Student Governor obtained from the recent conference Tackling Sexual Violence & Harassment in Education she had attended. The Student Governor advised that she was currently working with the Women's Officer in the Bangor campus to roll out a programme on this material in the coming months.
d) Staff Governors' Reports	<p>The Staff Governors provided written reports to members, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Academic Staff Governor, Andrew Corbett, highlighted that after the Christmas period student retention rates can start to fall and SERC Extra staff are focusing on attendance. The Chair enquired if there was an easier way for students to register their attendance or why they are not in College, Mr Corbett confirmed that it is sometimes difficult to get hold of students and texting would be preferred option.</li> <li>• The CEO advised that staff are very persistent in trying to contact absent students and will sometimes go through parents to establish if there is an issue. He noted that the student handbook is bulky, and some students may not know how to apply for extenuating circumstances and suggested that an app that covers useful information for students may be beneficial.</li> </ul>
e) Staffing Committee briefing on meeting held on 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2017	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.
<b>Agenda Item 5. Discussion Time:</b>	<p>In a change to the presented agenda item (Students leaving school and attracting them) since Kim Scott's contribution would be beneficial, the Chair suggested, and governors agreed it would be useful to use this discussion time to reflect on and discuss the main issues from the recent DfE Governors Conference:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One Corporate Plan for the Sector</li> <li>2. New College Development Plan</li> <li>3. Resource Requirement (new funding model)</li> </ol> <p>The Chair asked members to consider as a Governing Body what they would like to do for each of these issues and how the one plan should be approached in terms of practicality. A robust discussion took place and the following outcomes were agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Chair and CEO will lead on the One Corporate Plan on behalf of the Governing Body and keep members informed, members were asked to feedback when they can</li> <li>2. The Governing Body should be able to influence the CDP template especially through the Education committee and agreed to be ambitious for students and businesses in the CDP and resource requirement.</li> </ol>

	3. The Governing Body workshop planned for 14 <sup>th</sup> May will be brought forward to March 2018 to coincide with the deadlines set by DfE for the CDP and One Corporate Plan
	<b>Action Point:</b> GB Secretary will poll members for dates to establish a date for a workshop in March
<b>Agenda Item 6: Any other business</b>	The Principal informed members the College had participated in the BT Young Scientists Competition, three teams took part with one being awarded runner up and another highly commended. The students were interviewed by local media on the projects they had presented. The Principal confirmed he had written to both staff and students to congratulate them on the competition. Members acknowledged this was a fantastic achievement for the students as the competition was highly competitive. There was no other business raised by any member.
<b>Date of the next meeting</b>	The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> March, 5pm, Lisburn Campus.

**The meeting concluded at 20.08pm**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Deep Sagar, Chair of Governing Body**

**Abbreviations used:**

SERC: South Eastern Regional College

CEO: Chief Executive

CDP: College Development Plan

FELS: Further Education Leavers Survey

EMA: Education Maintenance Allowance

NI: Northern Ireland

GB: Governing Body

FE: Further Education

DfE: Department for the Economy

CFO: Chief Finance Officer

CHRO: Chief Human Resources Officer

HoLA: Head of Learning Academy

DC&IS: Director of Curriculum & Information Services

F&GP: Finance and General Purposes

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

PBL: Project Based Learning

PPP: Public Private Partnership

k: thousand