



Minutes of a Meeting of the Governing Body (the “GB”)

held on Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 17:30, Lisburn Campus

Agenda Item 1: Chair’s Business:

a) Attendance and Apologies for Absences:

Present:

Mr John Nugent (Chair of the Governing Body), Mr Ken Webb (CEO/Principal), Mr Alan McCrum, Mr Darren Stewart, Ms Majella Corrigan, Mr Samuel Hagen, Mr Mark Huddleston, Mr Derek Wilson, Mrs Deborah O’Hare, Mrs Carolyn King, Mr Michael McQuillan, Dr Danny McConnell, Ms Vikki Pinkerton

In Attendance:

Mrs Claire Williamson (Secretary to the Governing Body), Mr Tommy Martin (Chief Finance Officer (CFO)), Mr Paul Smyth (Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO)), Mrs Heather McKee (Director of Strategic Planning, Quality and Support)

Apologies: None

In the Chair: Mr Nugent

b) Declarations of Conflicts of Interest:

The Chair invited members to declare any known or perceived conflicts of interests.

- 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.
- 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.
- Mr McQuillan declared he is Chief Executive of Enterprise NI and a board member of Invest NI.
- The CFO declared his daughter is employed as a lecturer at the College.

- The Principal declared that he is the FE representee on the OCN NI Board

No action was taken in relation to the declared conflicts.

- c) Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body held on 13th February 2024:

Minutes previously issued to all members.

The Governing Body reviewed the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th February 2024 and agreed they were accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were adopted on the proposal of Deboarh O'Hare and seconded by Carolyn King.

- d) Matters Arising/Action Points from previous Meetings:

The Chair confirmed there were no outstanding actions from the previous meetings.

- e) Chair of the Governing Body update

The Chair highlighted that the Governor role is also a representative role and he advised that he was keen for members to participate in events more frequently and encouraged everyone to actively participate in one event per year.

- f) Governing Body member recruitment update

The Chair advised that the recruitment process was complete and now the Minister will be presented with the candidates deemed suitable for appointment. It is anticipated that the members will be in place by the beginning of the new academic year.

- g) Governance Framework

The Chair reminded members this is a standard item on the Governing Body agenda to allow members the opportunity to advise if they wish to review the governance framework, suggest alterations or improvements. No suggestions were made at this time.

- h) Withdrawal of FE Code

Members confirmed that they were content with the withdrawal of the Code and noted that other documents had superseded the Code.

Agenda Item 2: Secretary's Business

a) Effectiveness review 2023

Members noted the action plan was progressing and that a number of items were complete.

b) Partnership Agreement reporting framework update

The Secretary advised that this will become a standing item to ensure that the Governing Body fulfill their oversight and monitoring role of the Partnership Agreement.

c) Leadership and Governance Conference

The Secretary directed members to the written report on the conference and advised that it had been a very worthwhile event to attend. Members were advised that the theme of the conference was fitting for SERC as the focus was on working together and more efficiently with government departments, and to stop the duplication of work that the Governing Body had recently highlighted to the FE Director.

d) Activity and Engagement Schedule 23/24

Members noted the enclosed schedule.

e) Standing Orders/Code of Conduct update

The Secretary advised that the review was progressing, and final documents would be presented at the meeting in June for review and approval.

f) Meeting Schedule 24/25

The Secretary presented the schedule for 24/25 and advised that the campus will still operate evening hours on Tuesday and Thursday and the schedule has been drafted to reflect this.

Agreed: The Governing Body meeting schedule for 2024/25 was agreed on the proposal of Alan McCrum and seconded by Deborah O'Hare.

g) Training requirements

The Secretary directed members to the training records and asked members to advise if they have identified any other training requirements outside of this at any time to either the Secretary or the Chair.

h) Outcome of Lecturing Staff Governor election

The Secretary advised that Steven Lee had been elected as the new teaching staff governor representative and would join the Governing Body as soon as the minute of appointment was approved by the Department.

Agenda Item 3: Correspondence:

- a) GB Correspondence Log

Log provided to members in advance.

Members noted the log, and the Chair referenced the letter from David Conliffe at the Department where he had advised there was a requirement for the Sector to complete external Governing Body effectiveness reviews by December as part of the Partnership Agreement. The Chair advised that this has not progressed and there is no clarity over who will take ownership of the project including the procurement. Members commented that the timeline for completion was unrealistic and discussed ways in which the reviews could be expedited.

Action: The CFO will enquire if internal audit can complete the effectiveness reviews at the next NIFON

Agenda Item 4: Principal and Chief Executive's report:

Paper provided to members in advance.

The Principal talked to the written report provided and highlighted the recent student and staff successes set out.

Agenda Item 5: Items for Approval

Papers provided to members in advance.

- a) Audit Committee minutes from meeting held on 1st February 2024 and briefing from meeting on 25th April 2024

Mr Hagen, Chair of the Audit Committee, presented the minutes for adoption. He asked members to note the written briefing he had provided on the meeting from 25th April 2024

Agreed: The minutes were adopted on the proposal of Carolyn King and seconded by Deborah O'Hare

- a) Education Committee minutes from meeting held on 6th February 2024 and briefing from meeting on 30th April 2024 including risk update on awarding bodies.

Mrs O'Hare, Chair of the Education Committee, presented the minutes for adoption and asked members to note the written briefing from the recent meeting on 30th April.

Members were asked to note the red risk presented on Maintaining Qualifications, the Chair of the Education advised that this was robustly discussed at Education Committee and Audit committee will continue to monitor the risk.

Agreed: The minutes were adopted on the proposal of Majella Corrigan and seconded by Carolyn King.

e) Finance and General Purposes minutes from meeting held on 30th January 2024 and briefing from meeting on 23rd April 2024

Mr McCrum, Chair of the FGP Committee, presented the minutes for adoption. He advised a written briefing had been provided on the meeting held on 23rd April.

Agreed: The minutes were adopted on the proposal of Majella Deborah O'Hare and seconded by Derek Wilson.

Agenda Item 6: Policies for approval

Policies provided to members in advance.

a) Work placement policy

The policy changes were reviewed and approved on the proposal of Michael McQuillan and seconded by Derek Wilson.

b) Records Management Policy

Members noted the policy had been reviewed and no changes were required.

Agenda Item 7: Items for Information

Papers provided to members in advance.

a) Management Accounts (note-this replaced the previous Financial Governance Report)

The CFO addressed the meeting and referenced the paper in 007A.1, he highlighted that the resource requirement was £46.7m and the target was met. Mrs O'Hare noted that this was successful despite the previous pressures and acknowledged how well managed the financial budgets had been.

b) Staff Governor Reports

Members were asked to note the written reports provided by the staff governor at 007B.1 and the Staff Governor provided a brief overview of the main points within her report. She highlighted that communication with staff could have been better during the restructuring exercise and that some

staff had felt anxious hearing information second hand. The Director of SPQS advised that CMT had been having informal conversations with staff that were not directly impacted by the change in order to reassure those staff.

c) Student Governor Report.

The Student Governor referenced the paper at 007C and began by advising that she had been unsuccessful in her bid to be elected as NUS USI President. She highlighted the involvement of the SERC students at the recent NUS national conference and advised that they had taken the lead and lead conversations.

The Chair thanked the Student Governor for her report and her active participation in the recent conference.

Agenda Item 8: Any Other Business:

At this juncture the Chair acknowledged the retirement of the Principal and CEO which is planned for 31st July. On behalf of the members, he gave an interim thank you for his dedication and service to the College and said that he will be missed by both students and staff.

Agenda Item 9: Confidential Business

A separate note was taken for this item.

Date of next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Governing Body is scheduled for Tuesday 25th June 2024 17.30, Lisburn Campus, Meeting room D floor.

The GB Strategy Day will take place on 09.30am, Monday 15th April 2024, Mourne Suite, Downpatrick Campus.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 6.20pm

Signed: 

Date: 25.06.24

John Nugent

Chair of the Governing Body