

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a Meeting of the **South West College Governing Body**
held on Wednesday 30 June 2010 at 6.15 pm in the Boardroom,
Omagh Campus, 2 Mountjoy Road, Omagh

PRESENT:

- Mr Joseph Martin (Chairman)
- Mr Malachy McAleer (Director)
- Mrs Kate Courtenay
- Dr Mark Kelly
- Mr Gerry Kingston
- Mr Adrian McCreesh
- Mr Gerard McDermott
- Mr Joseph McFall
- Councillor Thomas O'Reilly
- Dr Nicholas O'Shiel
- Mrs Diane Stevenson

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Elizabeth McSorley, Secretary to the Governing Body

Item 2 Only:

Mr Rodney McMaster, Education and Training Inspectorate
Mr John Kennedy, Education and Training Inspectorate

APOLOGIES :

- Mr Brendan Corr
- Mr Wilson Matthews
- Ms Gwen Stevenson

1.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded by the Secretary to the Governing Body on behalf of those governors listed above.

2.0 EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE (ETI) PRESENTATION

The Chairman welcomed Mr Rodney McMaster and Mr John Kennedy, Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), to the meeting.

Mr McMaster thanked the Governing Body for the presentation opportunity and went on to explain the structure of ETI inspections with particular reference to the role of the inspectors; the performance levels, grades and descriptors aligned to inspection activity; and the types of activity (inspection, survey/evaluation, and scrutiny) undertaken by the Inspectorate. He then provided members with a summary of inspection activity and performance grades for the South West

College over the 2009/10 academic year (four areas graded good, two graded very good, and one rated as good progress) and said that the picture overall was one of improvement. With reference to the summary of main findings, he highlighted the fact that the quality of leadership and management within the College across a range of areas inspected had been found to be very good and made particular reference to the progress that was being made from an innovation perspective.

Mr Kennedy, with reference to outcomes and achievements and the quality of provision, commended the College on the positive findings including its excellent progression routes. In relation to the few areas identified for improvement, he highlighted the fact that the quality of teaching and learning had, in a significant minority of lessons, been found to be satisfactory or inadequate.

Mr McMaster and Mr Kennedy, in responding to members' questions and comments, outlined ETI's approach to the measurement of leadership and management; said that in benchmarking terms the College was sectorally well placed based on recent inspection activity; commented on the Steps to Work progression rates in particular; and confirmed that students were actively involved in the inspection process.

The Chairman thanked the two ETI representatives for their very comprehensive and informative presentation and welcomed their encouraging and positive feedback. The Director echoed the Chairman's sentiments and, in relation to deficiencies identified in some areas of teaching and learning, said that plans were in hand to address these in the coming year. He acknowledged the professionalism of Mr McMaster and Mr Kennedy and asked that his appreciation be also passed on to their inspection team.

Mr McMaster and Mr Kennedy again thanked the Governing Body for the presentation opportunity and welcomed the level of engagement that had taken place.

Mr McMaster and Mr Kennedy left the meeting at this juncture (6.55 pm). Their departure was followed by a five minute recess and the meeting reconvened at 7.00 pm.

3.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

There were no conflict of interest declarations.

4.0 MINUTES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26 MAY 2010

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body held on Wednesday 26 May 2010.

It was noted that the confidential section of the above minutes (Pages 8-10) had not been circulated to the staff or student members and would be dealt with under the confidential section of the Governing Body meeting.

AGREED: on the proposal of Councillor O'Reilly, seconded by Mrs Stevenson, that the public section of the above minutes (Pages 1-7) be accepted as a true and accurate record. This section of the minutes was then signed by the Chairman.

5.0 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising,

6.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION, QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 3 JUNE 2010

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report of a meeting of the Education, Quality and Performance Committee held on Thursday 3 June 2010 together with copies of the following papers:

- (a) Higher Education Marketing Plan
- (b) Strategic Projects "Traffic Light Report", May 2010

It was noted that the confidential section of the Education, Quality and Performance Committee report (Page 7) had not been circulated to staff or student members and would be dealt with under the confidential section of the Governing Body meeting.

The Committee Chairman, Dr Kelly, in presenting the public section of the report, highlighted some key facts from the Head of Technology Department's presentation including the launch of five new foundation degrees; highlighted the College's success in securing an additional 102 MaSN places bringing its total allocation to 324 full time places for the incoming academic year; and, with reference to the challenge of filling these places, drew attention to the Higher Education marketing plan which had been prepared in association with Creative Media and said that this had been circulated with the papers for the meeting at the Committee's request.

Lengthy discussion ensued in relation to the proposed marketing activity and timeline during which members stressed the importance of the College delivering an effective targeted marketing campaign over the summer months in relation to its HE offering. Additional marketing suggestions included advertising in cinemas, possibly to coincide with a new film release; and having, for example, young people talk on social networking sites about their HE experiences and successes at the South West College. It was noted, as regards marketing activity generally, that the Education Committee would be closely monitoring the development of an overall marketing strategy for the College in the coming year.

In completing his presentation of the Education, Quality and Performance Committee report, Dr Kelly specifically drew the Governing Body's attention to the Committee's recommendations under Item 4.6 in relation to the DELTA project.

Matters relating to the accuracy of the Committee report were raised as follows:

- (1) Mr Kingston pointed out that he had not been present at the meeting and should have been shown an apology;
- (2) Item 2.0 of Dr O'Shiel asked that his declaration of interest in relation to the DELTA project show that the Committee had agreed that this did not represent a conflict of interest and that there was therefore no necessity for him to withdraw from the meeting.

AGREED: on the proposal of Dr Kelly, seconded by Mr McCreesh, adoption of Pages 1-6 of the Education, Quality and Performance Committee Report subject to the foregoing amendments.

7.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 JUNE 2010

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: to all members, Report of a meeting of the Audit Committee held on Wednesday 9 June 2010 together with copies of the following papers:

- (a) Corporate Risk Register
- (b) Audit Committee Draft Terms of Reference

The Report of the Audit Committee was presented by Mr McDermott who had chaired the meeting in the absence of the Committee Chair, Mrs Diane Stevenson.

Mr McDermott, in presenting the Committee report, highlighted the positive outcomes from the four internal audit reviews which, it was noted, had all achieved *substantial* rating; referred to the External Auditor's presentation of the internal audit strategy for 2009/10; and drew attention to the recommendations for adoption of the Corporate Risk Register and the Audit Committee Draft Terms of Reference.

The Secretary to the Governing Body, with reference to Item 6.2 of the Committee report, advised that the updated Fraud and Corruption Policy and Fraud and Corruption Response Plan which it had been hoped would have been finalised for submission to the June meeting, would not now be available until September.

AGREED: on the proposal of Mr McDermott, seconded by Mr Kingston, adoption of the Report of the Audit Committee including the Corporate Risk Register and Audit Committee Draft Terms of Reference.

8.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 JUNE 2010

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report of a meeting of the Staffing Committee held on Wednesday 9 June 2010.

It was noted that the confidential section of the Staffing Committee report (Pages 7-8) had not been circulated to staff or student members and would be dealt with under the confidential section of the Governing Body meeting.

The Committee Chairman, Mr McDermott, in presenting the public section of the report, commented on the update given to the Committee on implementation of the College's Affirmative Action Plan; and highlighted the Committee's recommendations in relation to appointments, new posts/ongoing recruitment, market testing at the Enniskillen Campus, consolidation of existing Associate Lecturer hours to current teaching loads, and the granting of delegated authority to the Director in relation to staff appointments over the summer period. He further highlighted the stance taken by the Committee with regard to management's response to a collective grievance on the payment of travel expenses to support staff which was being taken by some NIPSA members, and also the College's year to date sickness absence performance which, it was noted, stood very favourably at 3.24% at the end of May 2010.

The Director, by way of update on some of the issues referred to in the Staffing Committee report and the Committee Chairman's overview, said that on the basis of the tender assessment, cleaning services at the Enniskillen Campus would remain in house; and, in relation to the travel expenses dispute, said that a proposal had been put to NIPSA which, if accepted, should hopefully resolve matters.

AGREED: on the proposal of Mr McDermott, seconded by Mrs Courtenay, adoption of Pages 1-6 of the Staffing Committee Report.

9.0 REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2010

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: to all members, Report of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 23 June 2010 together with copies of the following papers:

- (a) Financial Projections 2010-13
- (b) Investment Plan 2009/10, Updated 16 June 2010
- (c) Financial Highlights Report, May 2010

The report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was presented by Dr O'Shiel in the absence of the Committee Chair, Ms Gwen Stevenson.

Dr O'Shiel, in presenting the Committee report, referred to the fact that Mr Matthews, the newly appointed governor, had attended his first Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting; referred to the update on the Investment Plan and the fact that primarily due to timing and procurement constraints, it

may not be possible to achieve all the expenditure proposals in the current financial year; highlighted the College's financial performance as at May 2010, the proposal to write off £22.5k of bad debt, and the referral of aged student debt to the College's debt collection agency; also highlighted the request for Governing Body approval to an overspend in student support funds and the representations which were to be made to DEL in this regard; commented on an amended proposal for the charging of student fees; and commented, in particular, on the tremendous work which had gone into producing a slightly better than breakeven budget for 2010/11 and breakeven financial forecasts for 2011/12 and 2012/13 which were recommended to the Governing Body for approval.

The Chairman, in adding to Dr O'Shiel's latter comment at a later stage in the meeting, paid tribute to the Director and his staff for their sterling work in relation to the financial projections.

The ensuing discussion and updates focused on the following matters in particular.

9.1 Student Support Fund ó Pages 4 and 5, Minute Ref 4.4.1

The Director advised that the issue of travel costs for students living in the geographically dispersed south west region had been raised with the DEL Assembly Committee during a recent meeting held in the Technology and Skills Centre, Enniskillen, and that the Committee had asked the College to submit an impact paper for its consideration.

It was suggested that in addition to issues of affordability, the paper make reference to issues associated with the lack of public transport experienced by many young people living in the region which was denying them access to courses.

Councillor O'Reilly asked to be provided with a copy of the paper, when completed, which was being prepared for submission to the Assembly Committee.

9.2 Report on Tenders and Quotations 2009/10 ó Page 5, Minute Ref 4.4.4

The Director, with reference to the discussion that had taken place at the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting relating to single tender actions, commented on the rigor that was being brought to the whole area of procurement.

9.3 Estates Matters ó Enniskillen Campus ó Pages 5 and 6, Minute Ref 4.5.1

Councillor O'Reilly reported on the key outcomes from a meeting of the Enniskillen Development Working Group held earlier in the afternoon, as follows:

- (1) **Consideration of Draft Economic Appraisal** ó the recommendation of the Working Group was that Option 7 (shared services new build on the Erne Hospital site) be accepted as the preferred option for submission to

DEL for funding consideration purposes, with Option 5 (demolition and rebuild/refurbishment on existing site) to be held as a reserve option.

- (2) **Minor Works** ó the recommendation was for appointment of Bell Contracts, Cookstown, in the sum of £312,578 + VAT to undertake the thirteen specified projects at the main Campus building over the summer period.

The Director reported that the College had not yet completed the specification for the works required to the Erne Restaurant and that this may add an additional sum of up to £20k to the contract price.

- (3) **Visit to Livingston** ó the Director and Mrs Diane Stevenson had reported on their visit with PSNI and Fermanagh District Council representatives to view a shared services facility in Livingston, Scotland. Based on their findings, both were strongly in favour of a shared services approach to the Enniskillen development.

AGREED: unanimously, following a short discussion, that the recommendations from the Working Group be accepted.

9.4 STEM Facility at Dungannon Campus ó Page 6, Minute Ref 4.5.2

The Director reported that the recommendation was for award of the contract for the STEM facility to O'Hare and McGovern in the sum of £588,209 + VAT with a further £31,954 + VAT for displacement works.

AGREED: that the above recommendation be accepted.

9.5 Adoption of Report

AGREED: on the proposal of Dr O'Shiel, seconded by Councillor O'Reilly, adoption of the Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee including the Financial Projections 2010-13 and subject to the foregoing.

9.6 Insurances ó Directors and Officers Policy

Members were reminded of their responsibility, under the terms of the above policy, to make a declaration of any circumstances that could give rise to litigation or a claim against the College.

The Secretary to the Governing Body undertook to issue an electronic reminder.

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chairman advised that he would be unavailable to attend meetings from September 2010 to the end of the year due to the fact he would be out of the country. He would however be exploring the possibility of joining some meetings by video conference and said that in the event DEL appointed him as Governing Body Chairman, the Vice Chair, Ms Gwen Stevenson, would be chairing meetings on his behalf during his absence.

11.0 DIRECTOR'S BUSINESS

The Director, with reference to the DEL Assembly Committee meeting held in the Technology and Skills Centre, Enniskillen, the previous week, said that the Committee had indicated that it would welcome a future invitation to the Cookstown and Dungannon Campuses so that members would have the opportunity to view the InnoTech Centre facilities and, when completed, the STEM Centre facilities.

The Director paid tribute to the performance of those College staff associated with the Enniskillen visit and acknowledged Mr McCreech's offer of local authority support in connection with the proposed visit to the InnoTech Centre.

12.0 REGISTER OF INTERESTS

There were no amendments to the Register of Interests.

13.0 DECLARATION OF ANY HOSPITALITY OR GIFTS RECEIVED OR OFFERED

No declarations were made.

14.0 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2010/11

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: to all members, proposed Programme of Governing Body Meetings for 2010/11.

AGREED: that this be approved.

15.0 CORRESPONDENCE

The Secretary to the Governing Body reported receipt of the following correspondence from DEL:

- (1) DEL Circular FE 08/10, dated 2 June 2010, re Funding for Students with a Disability/Additional Support Fund;
- (2) DEL Circular FE 09/10, dated 16 June 2010, re Care to Learn (NI) Scheme; and
- (3) Letter dated 21 June 2010 re Teachers' Premature Retirement Compensation Scheme which was accompanied by a copy of DENI Circular 2010/14.

It was noted that the Director had also received copies of the above correspondence.

16.0 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

16.1 Chairman's Thanks

The Chairman thanked the Director, his senior staff, and members of the Governing Body for their contribution during the year and wished all concerned an enjoyable summer break.

17.0 EVALUATION OF MEETING

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: to all members, copy of meeting evaluation form.

Completion of the form was conducted on a collective basis led by the Chairman with positive responses to all questions.

Mr Kingston and Mr McFall, staff members, left the meeting at this juncture (8.00 pm).

The meeting then went into private session and ended at 8.10 pm.

CHAIRMAN _____ DATE _____