

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON TUESDAY 31 MAY 2022 AT 17.30 VIA TELECONFERENCE.**

**PRESENT:**

Mrs Tracy Strachan (Chair)  
Mr Brian Doran (CEO)  
Mr Gary McMurray  
Mr Tom Redmond  
Mr Kieran Swail  
Mrs Judith Thompson

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Andrew Saunders, Governing Body Chair  
Mrs Lee Campbell, Director of Finance and Planning  
Ms Joanne McGuigan, Assistant Director of Finance  
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 17.32.

**A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**A02. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

The Chair reminded those present to declare at the commencement of the meeting any conflict of interests held in any matter to be discussed. No interests were declared.

**A03. MINUTES OF MEETING 8 MARCH 2022**

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 8 March 2022. These were checked for accuracy and unanimously approved on proposal from Mr Redmond and seconded by Mr McMurray subject to an amendment under A06 referencing prompt payments.

**A04. MATTERS ARISING**

None.

**A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

Mrs Strachan noted that it is Mr Saunders last attendance at the Finance and General Purposes Committee as his tenure is coming to a close. She thanked Mr Saunders for his leadership over the many years and commented that he will be sorely missed.

**A06. SRC MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS APRIL 2022 (inc Working Capital report)**

Ms McGuigan presented the Management Accounts for the period August 2021 to July 2022 outlining the position at 30 April 2022.

Ms McGuigan referred Members to the summary of financial position advising on the forecast of RAG status to July 2022. She advised that the forecast status under jobskills / education contracts requires amendment due to an early notification that TfS funding will not be achieved as a result of introduction of a new information system. She clarified that the transition to the new system has been delayed and therefore it will not be possible to

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drawdown funding until after August 2022. Ms McGuigan informed that it is a timing and sector issue.

Ms McGuigan advised Members on a technical accounting adjustment required due to a gain on revaluation of the new builds and an overall reduction in depreciation as a result of the revaluation.

She advised that management do not expect to achieve budget in relation to non pay direct support as student trips have been deferred to 2022-2023.

Mr Swail arrived at the meeting at 17.46.

Ms McGuigan referred Members to the summary of expenditure by budget holder and advised that the Finance team are chasing invoices relating to orders placed by IT and Estates teams. She informed on overspend on the Governing Body budget. Mrs Strachan advised that this is attributed to additional meetings convened over the year.

Ms McGuigan informed that some curriculum areas will not achieve budget as a result of increased need for part time lecturer providing class cover and advised on committed spend in relation to IT and Estates projects.

She informed that benchmarking data in relation to the analysis of aged debtors relates to the impact of pandemic on processing invoices in 20-21. Ms McGuigan advised that SLC monies were received in early May and prompt payments are performing well. In response to a query from Mr McMurray, Ms McGuigan clarified that an invoice from UU is yet to be approved as management need to confirm the reasoning for the price increase relating to a degree link course.

Members noted small transactions on the credit cards and were informed that projected use of part time lecturers will need to be reviewed going forward as more are now being deployed on higher level provision and consequently this is impacting on projected spend.

Members noted the report.

#### **A07. GOVERNING BODY BUDGET REPORT**

Ms McGuigan referred Members to the Governing Body Budget report for the period ended April 2022. Members noted an overspend attributed to additional meetings held in March and April.

#### **A08. DfE FORECAST RETURN MARCH 2022**

Members reviewed the DfE Forecast Return and noted that the College achieved budget for both resource and capital grant. Mrs Strachan remarked on a worthy success.

Ms McGuigan advised on variances in relation to the NILGOSC pension scheme and the impact of revaluation of the new builds on the previous impairment.

Members noted the report.

#### **A09. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS**

Ms McGuigan advised that the College banking contract is due for renewal and the new contract from August 2022 has been retained by Dankse Bank for an initial period of five years, with the option to extend for four further one year periods.

Members noted an amendment to the signatories for the banking contract, an amendment to the banking mandate, change in credit card supplier and approved the allocation of new credit cards.

#### **A10. DIRECT AWARD CONTRACTS**

None to report.

#### **A11. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS REPORT**

Mrs Campbell presented the Complaints and Compliments report as at 30 April 2022 and advised that 100% of complaint acknowledgements and final response deadlines have been met.

She advised that year to date, a total of 45 complaints have been received by the College and two are ongoing.

Mrs Campbell informed that 16 compliments have been received by the College to date and provided an update on data protection and information requests. She advised on 10 online information management and cyber security training sessions delivered to staff and provided a progress report on the maintenance of the Information Asset Register and Record of Processing Activities.

She confirmed that no whistleblowing disclosures have been received by the College.

Members noted the report.

#### **A12. POLICY APPROVAL**

- **Expenses**

Mr Doran referred to minor amendments to the policy to reference the new process for claiming expenses.

The policy was approved on proposal from Mr Swail and seconded by Mr McMurray.

- **Fees policy and procedure**

Mr Doran referred Members to recommended amendments to the Fees policy to clarify the fee commitments from PT HE students at the point of enrolment.

The policy was approved on proposal from Mr Swail and seconded by Mrs Thompson.

Mr Doran informed on concession fees and advised that the College are seeking government guidance on the fees policy for Ukrainian students.

- **Complaints and Compliments**

Mr Doran referred the Committee to updates to the Complaints and Compliments policy including additional policy exemption, definitions, roles and responsibilities and reference to amended Data Protection legislation.

The policy was approved on proposal of Mr McMurray and seconded by Mr Redmond.

- **Whistleblowing**

Mr Doran referred Members to minor amendments and the recommendation to change the title of the Whistleblowing policy to Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing).

The recommendations were approved on proposal of Mr Swail and seconded by Mrs Thompson.

**A13. CIRCULARS**

- FE 03-22 InnovateUS
- FE 02-22 Skills Focus

Mrs Campbell referred the Committee to the tabled circulars.

Mr Swail advised that the InnovateUS programme benefits local businesses to build relationships and upskill various organisations in a range of activities.

**A14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr Saunders thanked Committee Members and the Finance team for their sterling work over the years.

Mr Doran thanked Mr Saunders for his consistent guidance and support during the course of his tenure as Chair.

Mrs Campbell advised that the cleaning and catering contract with Mount Charles is due to expire in July and early engagement with CPD has resulted in a recommendation to extend the current contract for a period of 1 year. Committee Members endorsed this approach for approval at the next meeting of the full Governing Body.

Mr Swail reminded Members of the upcoming sponsored cycle event supporting Air Ambulance NI and encouraged the aid of the Governing Body.

**A15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 18 October 2022 at 17.30 via teleconference.

The meeting concluded at 18.52.

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**CHAIR**

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**DATE**

Certified as a true record of minutes approved by means of remote working by the Secretary, Miss Lindsay Armstrong.

**signature redacted**  
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**SECRETARY**

*19 October 2022*  
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**DATE**