

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY HELD ON TUESDAY 30 AUGUST 2022 AT 18.30 IN BOARDROOM, NEWRY WEST CAMPUS

PRESENT:

Dr Thomas Moore (Chair)
Mr Brian Doran (SRC CEO)
Mr Scott Alexander
Mr Aidan McCormick
Mr Gary McMurray
Dr Laura Milner
Mrs Hilary Singleton
Mrs Tracy Strachan
Mr Kieran Swail
Mrs Judith Thompson
Mr Matthew Turner

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms Libby Shackels, Director of Curriculum
Mr Raymond Sloan, Director of Client Services
Mrs Lee Campbell, Director of Finance and Planning
Miss Clodagh Palmer, Boardroom Apprentice
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 18.30.

A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Prof Gregory O'Hare, Mr Tom Redmond, Mrs Carla Shields and Dr Eileen Stewart.

A02. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded those present to declare at the commencement of the meeting any conflict of interest held in matters to be discussed.

Mrs Singleton informed that she is a Board Member of Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

A03. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING 21 JUNE 2022

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting of 21 June 2022 were reviewed for accuracy, and unanimously approved on proposal from Mr Turner and seconded by Mrs Strachan.

A04. MATTERS ARISING

Members were advised that any matters arising from the previous meeting and not yet resolved are contained within the action sheet.

A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Members were advised that Mrs Thompson has expressed an interest in the Vice Chair vacancy and Mrs Singleton has expressed an interest in the role of Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. Both were for thanked for offering their services and the appointments were ratified by the full Board in accordance with established governance procedures.

Dr Stewart was ratified in her appointment to the Estates Project Board.

Governors were advised that SRC's Governing Body is expected to receive two new Members to fill the vacancies created over the summer months.

Dr Moore welcomed Miss Palmer to her first meeting of Southern Regional College's Governing Body.

Mrs Campbell advised that a College Leadership Risk Appetite workshop has been scheduled for the afternoon of 29 September, to be facilitated by the Internal Auditor RSM and which will assist in setting the overarching risk appetite for the College for use on the

**ACTION
By whom**

4 Risk software. She informed that Members will be issued with a questionnaire prior to the meeting and an analysis of such will be provided to the Governing Body to inform the workshop.

Dr Moore requested Members views on convening physical or online meetings for the remainder of the academic year. Governors discussed the virtues of physical engagement, the flexibility and good attendance of joining meetings virtually and the sustainability strategy. It was agreed that Governing Body meetings would use a combination of face to face and online meetings for the year ahead. Committee meetings would remain online but convened in person if required. Members agreed that the position on meeting format be kept under review.

Dr Moore spoke to the format and structure of Board meetings going forward in response to concerns previously raised. He suggested that items requiring approval be brought to the top of the agenda, followed by papers for noting or discussion and informative documents. Dr Moore informed that the Secretary will advise Governors when any shared documentation is published in the dedicated governance SharePoint site. Members recommended that summary sheets accompany large papers summarising the ask of Governors and associated risks. Committee Chairs were requested to only highlight key risks when presenting minutes for adoption by the full Board.

Members recommended that staff presentations remain at the top of the agenda and be timebound. The proposed format was accepted by Members.

Dr Moore remarked on the success of the Corporate Wellbeing Day, stating it was good to see staff return and asked that his thanks be relayed to organisers.

Mr Doran provided an update on the fire at the Kitchen Hill, Lurgan campus on 26 August. He informed that the fire was contained within an outbuilding and that staff worked well with the Fire Service, PSNI and other attending parties. He advised that the Fire Service issued a public health notice to inform the general public of the danger of potential airborne asbestos.

Mr Doran advised that the incident has not impacted planned activity and is believed to have been an act of arson. Members were informed that contact has been made with the neighbouring high school and that the college contractor was immediately called to secure the site and carry out an environmental clean of the adjacent area.

Mr Sloan advised that the Estates Team are considering options regarding securing the building. Members were informed that all steps were taken to comply with health and safety requirements. Mr McCormick asked that his thanks be relayed to the Taylor Group and the Fire Service for their quick and efficient service.

Members were reminded that the HE Graduation is scheduled for 2 September at the Armagh City Hotel and were advised that the student Governor 2022-2023 has been elected and her tenure is due to start 1 October subject to probity checks by the Department.

Dr Moore advised that it is privilege to have been appointed Chair, following the open competition conducted by DfE and stated that he is delighted with the calibre of the Executive Team and Members of the Governing Body. He asked that his thanks be recorded for the excellent stewardship provided by the outgoing Chair, Mr Andrew Saunders.

A comfort break was called from 19.33 to 19.42.

A06. SRC CONTINGENCY PLANNING ALLOCATION 2022-2023

Mrs Campbell referred Members to the DfE letter dated 8 July advising of the indicative opening budget of £31,732k. She informed of a shortfall variance of approximately £4.7m and advised on income assumption based on DfE bids and revised allocation.

Mrs Campbell advised on resource pressure in terms of pension provisions, increased utility costs and informed on the deferment of planned IT refreshment and some estates maintenance as part of a package of measures to address the financial pressure. Members were advised on various funding streams and challenges relating to staff costs.

In response to a query from Mr Alexander, Mr Doran informed that the impact on curriculum is unknown at present. Mrs Campbell clarified that learning provision is not being reduced as a part of the plan for reallocation of funds.

A07. COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-22 close out

Mr Doran referred Members to the updated CDP plan advising on year end enrolment. He referred to items wherein performance is behind schedule and advised on items to be carried forward to 2023.

Members were advised that the student app has been deferred to align with the development of the new website, and that staff absence and mandatory training rates are slightly above target. Mr Doran informed on the appointment of a design team for the Newry Estate and advised that design work is progressing.

Mr Doran clarified that work is ongoing to prepare the College for cyber essential accreditation and in response to a query from Mr McMurray, advised that enrolments are under pressure in certain areas, however apprenticeship and TfS appear to be recruiting well.

Members noted the report.

A08. DfE CULTURE CHARTER

- **DfE ODT Programme update**

Members noted the DfE letter dated 7 July and infographic detailing the DfE Culture Charter.

A09. DfE FE DELIVERY MODEL update

Mr Doran advised that following a verbal update from the DfE FE Director, Tribal have concluded the first phase of testing and an interim report has been issued to the Department. He advised that data gathering, as previously advised by DfE representatives, has benchmarked the NI FE sector against a high performing college in England.

Members were informed that in comparison to 2016, initial indicators report a decline in NI enrolments of 28%, a 69% increase in overall teaching delivery costs per FTE and a non-teaching staff increase of 68%. Mr Doran informed that the Minister is to advise on progression to a second phase.

Dr Moore informed of a meeting with the FE Director and College Chairs on 8 September and advised that the agenda item for FE delivery was removed from the agenda and a separate meeting is in place in October to discuss FE delivery and the work being undertaken by Tribal. Dr Moore stated that the meeting will provide the opportunity to raise any concerns that he or others may have.

Dr Moore recommended inviting the FE Director to a future meeting of SRC's full Governing Body.

Miss Armstrong

A10. REGISTER OF INTEREST

Miss Armstrong referred Members to the Register of Interests of Members of the Governing Body and Senior Management Team 2022-2023.

Members noted the report and were requested to advise the Secretary of any required amendments or omissions.

A11. GIFTS, HOSPITALITY AND SPONSORSHIP REGISTER 2021-2022

Members noted the Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Register 2021-2022.

A12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

In response to a query from Mrs Singleton, Mr Doran advised that the internal technical issue regarding enrolments was resolved within 24 hours and further stated that load issues which were experienced last year has not reoccurred.

A13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the full Governing Body is scheduled for Tuesday 25 October at 18.30 in the Boardroom, Armagh campus.

The meeting concluded at 20.19.

signature redacted

CHAIR

DATE

25/10/22