

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY HELD ON MONDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2022 AT 12.30 IN BOARDROOM, BANBRIDGE CAMPUS

PRESENT:

Dr Thomas Moore (Chair)
Mr Brian Doran (SRC CEO)
Mr Scott Alexander
Mr Stuart Harper
Mr Aidan McCormick
Mr Gary McMurray
Dr Laura Milner
Prof Gregory O'Hare
Mr Tom Redmond
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
Ms Joanne McGuigan, Assistant Director of Finance (via TEAMS)
Miss Clodagh Palmer, Boardroom Apprentice
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 12.32.

A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Miss Daniela Sanches Egas, Mr Nick Harkness, Mrs Carla Shields, Dr Eileen Stewart and Mrs Lee Campbell.

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. No interests were disclosed.

A03. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING 25 OCTOBER 2022

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting of 25 October 2022 were reviewed for accuracy, and unanimously approved on proposal from Mr Turner and seconded by Mr McMurray.

A04. MATTERS ARISING

Dr Moore informed of the DfE Partnership Engagement event on 7 December at Crumlin Road Gaol.

Members noted the items contained within the Governing Body action sheet.

A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Dr Moore remarked on the truly exceptional success of SRC students at the WorldSkills competition being placed first in the UK.

He informed Members of Mark Carruthers' televised report on Sunday Politics Northern Ireland with Louise Warde Hunter, Principal of Belfast Met College who described the FE sector as the skills engine for the Northern Ireland economy.

Mr Doran informed that the College has historically participated in the WorldSkills event. He advised that 25 SRC students, the highest submission, had progressed to the national finals following success at local and regional events. Mr Doran informed that a key objective within the College Development Plan was for the College to achieve first place in the league table within five years. He confirmed that competitors convened at the Armagh campus on

**ACTION
By whom**

25 November to be informed by Steph McGovern at the WorldSkills UK Excellence at Work Finals Ceremony of the winners.

Mr Doran stated that students in a range of areas exceeded expectation and he is delighted to inform that Southern Regional College achieved top billing on the medal table with 3 Golds, 4 Silvers, 6 Bronze and 4 Highly Commended. He paid tribute to the staff who supported and mentored the competitors and congratulated all students who reached the national finals. Mr Doran stated that the College will organise an event to celebrate the remarkable achievement with the students and their parents.

Mr McCormick spoke to a proud moment and fantastic achievement to be named the top performing organisation in the WorldSkills UK national final and remarked on the reflection on the quality of teaching and learning at SRC.

Dr Moore relayed that the finance training has been scheduled for 2 March and confirmation on the rescheduled Annual Strategy will be announced in the coming days. He informed that announcement on the appointment of the DfE FE Director is forthcoming and thanked Mrs Donna Blaney for her stewardship over the years.

Dr Moore advised that he, Mr Doran and Mrs Thompson attended the Innovation Lab FE Review in Ballymena on 25 November consulting on the shared future for education in NI. Mrs Thompson advised on useful presentations.

- **Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference**

Mrs Singleton referred Governors to amendments approved by Members of the Audit and Risk Committee to their Terms of Reference. She advised that following the removal of the DfE Audit Code the duty to monitor and report annually on the performance of NIAO has been amended to provide feedback and constructive suggestions to the NIAO as appropriate. The amendments were formally adopted by the full Board on proposal from Mrs Thompson and seconded by Mr Redmond.

A06. COMMITTEE MINUTES

- **Audit & Risk Committee 15 November 2022**

Mrs Singleton referred Members to the Audit and Risk Committee draft minutes of 15 November and advised that Report to Those Charged With Governance was discussed with Members being advised that it is proposed that the Comptroller and Auditor General will certify the 2021-2022 financial statements with an unqualified audit opinion, without modification.

She informed that Members were advised on two material adjustments stating that one related to the Court of Appeal ruling and required a review of impairment of the Lurgan and Portadown campuses. Mrs Singleton advised on an adjustment to the release of the capital grant explaining that some disposals on the fixed asset register had not previously been picked up and informed on the requirement to segregate duties in the finance team.

Mrs Singleton advised that Audit Committee Members reviewed the Internal Audit report Maximising Your Impact and the findings of the Appeals and Complaints audit.

Mr Doran confirmed he alerted the Committee to an early warning signal regarding the roll out of the new TAMS system and advised on constructive meetings taking place with the sponsor department.

- **Education Committee 22 November 2022**

Mr McCormick provided an overview of discussions taking place at the Education Committee meeting on 22 November and confirmed that Members had approved their Annual Committee report and the Safeguarding policy.

Mr McCormick confirmed that Members had welcomed Miss Clodagh Palmer, Boardroom Apprentice and Miss Daniela Sanches Egas to their first meeting of SRC's Education Committee and advised that the new student governor had taken an active part in discussions.

He advised that Members had reviewed and approved the College Self-Evaluation and Quality Improvement Plan 2020-2024. He informed that Members had discussed the importance of carrying out a sector review to measure the economic impact of social value added and the contribution of further education.

Dr Moore commented that further education provides more than skills and contributes significantly to making better citizens and stronger communities.

Ms Shackels advised on a sector conference scheduled for 9 March which will address college specific roles.

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

Miss Armstrong

Prof O'Hare arrived at the meeting at 13.10 advising on delays travelling as a result of a road traffic collision. Ms McGuigan arrived at the meeting 13.12. Mrs Strachan left the meeting at 13.13.

Members adopted the Committee minutes as presented.

A comfort break was called from 13.14 to 13.20.

A07. DRAFT REPORT TO THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE

Mr Doran referred Members to the report and advised further on the two findings and the assessment of actuarial assumptions. He informed that NIAO is satisfied with SRC's treatment of irrecoverable VAT in revaluation of tangible fixed assets, advising it is the requirement of another college to make the adjustment.

Ms McGuigan advised that NIAO engaged a third party to test the NILGOSC actuarial pension assumptions and NIAO is satisfied with SRC's reporting. She relayed that application of VAT treatment had changed in another college due to a change in personnel.

Members noted the report.

Mrs Strachan returned to the meeting at 13.25.

A08. ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS ENDED 31 JULY 2022

Mr Doran presented the Annual Report and Financial Accounts for approval, advising that all issues have been addressed.

In response to a query from Mr McMurray, Ms McGuigan committed to agreeing a form of words with NIAO under current and future developments to reflect the commentary under events after the reporting period.

The Annual Report and Finance Accounts for the period ended 31 July 2022 was unanimously approved on proposal from Mr Turner and seconded by M Redmond.

Ms McGuigan left the meeting at 13.30.

A09. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Harper advised that he is pleased with the interactive nature, functionality and user friendliness of the new website commenting that it is normally a person's first introduction to an organisation. He asked that his thanks be relayed to all involved.

Members concurred, remarking on the importance of promoting the unique further education offering.

A0. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Annual Governance Strategy is to be convened January 2023 with the date to be confirmed.

The meeting concluded at 13.48.

CHAIR

DATE

Certified as a true copy of minutes approved by Members at their meeting of 9 January 2023 by the Secretary, Miss Lindsay Armstrong.

signature redacted

SECRETARY

¹⁶
DATE ✓

✓ 2023