

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON TUESDAY 18 JANUARY 2022 AT 17.30 VIA TELECONFERENCE.

PRESENT:

Mrs Tracy Strachan (Chair)
Mr Brian Doran
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 17.29.

A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Janet Toal, Boardroom Apprentice.

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 19 OCTOBER 2021

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 19 October 2021. These were checked for accuracy and unanimously approved on proposal from Mr Swail and seconded by Mr Redmond.

A04. MATTERS ARISING

None.

A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

None.

A06. SRC MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS (inc Working Capital report)

Mrs Strachan advised that she had met with the Director and Assistant Director of Finance to inspect the Committee papers and remarked that she is impressed with the presentation of financial recording practices.

Ms McGuigan referred Members to the summary financial position and advised that the table has been updated to include RAG status. She highlighted areas in which the forecast predicts a shortfall on target at academic year end, commenting that TfS and Skills Training income is likely to be under budget.

Ms McGuigan clarified that although there has been significant enrolments in new apprenticeships, receipt of income is now based on milestone achievements and outcomes.

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Ms McGuigan informed that HE has not recruited to target level and advised that the Finance team continue to work with Heads of Faculty to ensure accurate billing for outstanding fees.

She advised that there are significant vacancies across the College at present which impacts on an underspend in pay administration.

Members commented that they are favourable of the new reporting format. Ms McGuigan provided clarification in regard to the allocation of funds through the monitoring rounds and obligations in relation to declaring easements and surrendering of funding.

Members were referred to information detailing the summary of expenditure by budget holder and income and expenditure in each Faculty, Estates and ICT.

In response to a query from Mr Swail, Mr Doran advised that none of the six colleges have achieved their MaSN target. He informed that colleges are awaiting the outcome of the HE in FE and 14-19 reviews and advised that many factors are affecting student recruitment including school retention, an increase in universities MaSN funding and inflated A level grades.

Members were informed that further discussion on future delivery and curriculum plans will take place at the Annual Governance Strategy Day on 1 February.

Ms McGuigan referred Members to the Working Capital report, Aged Debtors, Aged Creditors, Prompt Payment and Credit Card reports.

Ms McGuigan presented the PTL tracker analysis and advised that the Finance team are working closely with HRD to monitor Covid absences which are impacting on sickness expenditure.

The Committee noted the report.

Mr Saunders arrived at the meeting at 18.10.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION 2021 2022

Ms McGuigan referred Members to the Departmental letter detailing the January monitoring internal allocations and advised on ERAP funding provision in respect of approval of additional budget for the Skills Focus Programme.

Ms McGuigan reported on a £231k easement in relation to student support payments. Members were advised on the various communications sent to students regarding additional Covid funding and remarked that it would be interesting to understand why learners had not availed of the support. The Committee recommended making enquiries via the student governor.

A08. GOVERNING BODY BUDGET REPORT

Ms McGuigan referred Members to the Governing Body Budget report for the period ended 30 November and advised that budgets for travel and hospitality have been reduced as Committee meetings continue to remain online.

The Committee noted the report.

Mrs Campbell

A09. DfE FINANCIAL RETURNS

Ms McGuigan presented the DfE Financial Returns report and provided a breakdown on the Resource budget position. In regard to income, she informed on items yet to be invoiced and reported that the profile of PTL spend causes distortion on staff costs figures.

She advised that non staff costs will be impacted by an increase in utility bills over the winter months and informed on orders placed for goods not yet received.

Ms McGuigan referred Members to the data on Capital expenditure and the spreadsheet detailing budget allocation, variance and reasoning.

She informed on building depreciation and advised that the disposal of Corey Square has been deferred.

Members noted the report.

A10. DIRECT AWARD CONTRACTS

None to report.

A11. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS REPORT

Mrs Campbell presented the Complaints and Compliments report as at 16 December 2021 and advised that 100% of complaint acknowledgements and final response deadlines have been met.

She advised on a total of 21 complaints received to date, compared to 35 this time last year and informed that the majority of these relate to admissions.

Mrs Campbell informed that a further 3 compliments have been received by the College bringing the yearly total to 12. She advised on data protection, subject access and FOI requests.

Mr Doran informed that the Corporate Compliance Manager and Data Protection Officer has undertaken an extensive review with information officers within the College to identify the types and volume of information held in each business area in order to update the Information Asset register and Record of Processing Activities report.

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

Members noted the report.

A12. POLICY APPROVAL

Data Retention and Records Management Social Media

Mr Doran confirmed that the two policies have been reviewed in line with their three year cycle and advised on minor recommended amendments.

Both policies were approved on proposal of Mr Redmond and seconded by Mr Swail.

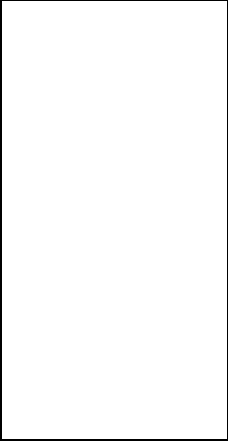
A13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

A14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 8 March 2022 at 17.30 via teleconference.

The meeting concluded at 18.52.



CHAIR

DATE