

## **NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE**

### **RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 7 April 2025 on Microsoft Teams commencing at 4.00pm.

Present: Mr I Murphy (Chair), Mr M Higgins, Mrs C McGovern, Mrs D McIlwaine, Mr R McKernan

In Attendance: Mr D Blair, Mrs C Brown, Mr S Laverty, Mr M Lennox (43.7), Mrs C Murdoch

Secretary: Mrs K Wallace

**43.1 Apologies** Ms Taggart.

**43.2 Declaration of Interests** None.

#### **43.3 Minutes of Last Meeting**

The draft minutes of the meeting on 27.01.25 were agreed.

Proposed: CMG      Seconded: DMI

#### **43.4 Matters Arising**

No outstanding issues.

Members noted that a risk workshop would be organised by A&R in late May, when DfE risk appetite would be reviewed alongside the College risk appetite. Report on this would be brought to GB on 25.06.25.

#### **43.5 Chair's Communications / Correspondence**

New Build Project Governance: IM welcomed the Satisfactory Assurance on this audit and extended Committee's congratulations to the team.

External GB Review: Members noted that following on from a review recommendation, the Committee TOR would be reviewed in October and annually thereafter.

#### **43.6 CDP Progress Report**

MH outlined the commissioning programme provided by DfE on 25.03.25 and the College response of 28.03.25. He clarified the College rationale was to create a baseline of a CDP, which would be amended once budget details were provided. Members noted the intention to link the CDP into the QIP during this process to ensure consistency, with a workshop to take place on 17 April. Members recognised the challenge of planning ahead without knowing the budget.

Committee endorsed the CDP planning approach.

### **43.7 Estates**

SL briefly summarised the strategic aspect being taken to estates planning for Magherafelt, linking the 10-year Estates Strategy and Minister's Priorities with input from consultation with staff which would feed into a business case and proceed through the normal process.

ML took members through his presentation on the feasibility of developing a phased approach to improvements for Magherafelt Campus. He highlighted areas of the building which could be retained and those which would require refurbishment/replacement and emphasised that draft proposals were based purely on what was possible with the College's current holdings and subject to curriculum plans.

Members debated the approach being outlined and sought and received clarification on: rationale for proposing a phased approach versus other options; disruption to core teaching; current trend and potential uplift to student numbers; relevance to net zero targets and sustainable curriculum provision; possibility of expanding parking space; possible additional sources of funding.

MH noted existing curriculum provision in Magherafelt area delivered by post primary school and changes required to enable delivery of courses being sought by external stakeholders.

IM emphasised the importance of reviewing surrounding FE provision to ensure no duplication.

CB noted that development of a sustainable curriculum would require balancing requirements of a specialist facility tailored to meet the needs of specific vocational areas and generalist classrooms.

Committee heard that the May meeting of GB would be in Magherafelt when views would be sought on the proposals, with preparatory work to take forward evaluation of different options and scenarios to start once approval was received.

ML left the meeting at 4.52pm.

### **43.8 Financial Update**

DB summarised the current budget position and work ongoing with the audit team to finalise the July '24 accounts, with all financial protocols updated to the current version for review as part of the Key Financial Controls Internal Audit. Work on best practice was being carried out with other colleges. He referred to the finance paper and accompanying management accounts.

CMG was assured by DB and SL that no policy procedure failures resulting in fraudulent activity had occurred. Committee heard that a key financial controls audit had now started, Satisfactory Assurance having been achieved for the previous audit in January '23.

MH referred to discussion at the Accountability meeting when the Department had been made aware of the preparatory work being done by the College with resources and oversight in place to support the team in completing the Department's March '25 accounts to deadline. Indicators of how this will be taken forward would be shared with the Department.

DMI requested and received information on notice periods for key personnel.

#### **43.9 New Build Update**

The progress report was taken as read. SL advised that Ballymena build was on target to open in September 2025, with the Gateway Planning meeting to be held on 6 May and the Gateway Review on 19-21 May.

CMG noted the differential between the original spending estimate for the building and the current position, and extended congratulations to all involved in achieving a very successful project.

#### **43.10 HR Update**

CM presented her report and highlighted a number of key areas including continued reduction in sickness absence rates; work to finalise materials for roll out of ER training to managers; industrial relations; mandatory training and appraisal uptake. She noted that figures on ER training provision would be included in reports once the programme commenced.

In response to a question from DMI, CM advised current mandatory training modules.

IM encouraged speedy completion of appraisals.

CM outlined the successful Women in Business launch, with the College now a Corporate Member. She noted very positive feedback from attendees and appreciation of governor participation in the information panel. Further governor involvement was invited.

IM welcomed the exciting opportunity for College members and wider network.

**43.11 Any Other Business** none.

**43.12 Date of Next Meeting** 09.06.25

The meeting ended at 5.20pm.

Mr I Murphy, Chair



Date 09.06.25

Mrs K Wallace, Secretary

