

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY

HELD ON MONDAY 19TH OCTOBER 2015 @ 4 p.m.

IN THE BOARDROOM, DR. T.K. WHITAKER BUILDING

PRESENT

Mr. Andrew Griffith, Chairperson
Mr. Denis Cummins, President
Mr. Bill Sweeney
Mr. Fergal Smyth
Mr. Paddy Matthews
Cllr. Cathy Bennett
Mr. Paschal McGuire
Cllr. Clifford Kelly
Cllr. Oliver Tully
Mr. Brian Harten
Ms. Rebecca Somers
Ms. Margaret Swords
Mr. Aaron Lawless
Mr. Richard Crowley
Ms. Síle O'Connor

APOLOGIES

Cllr. Tomás Sharkey
Ms. Antoinette Rourke
Ms. Sadie Ward McDermott

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Gerald O'Driscoll, HR Manager

Ms Joan Martin, CEO Louth County Council joined the meeting and made a presentation on the current areas of co-operation between the Institute and the County Council and the county. At the outset, she thanked the Institute and its staff for the contribution it has made to the county. The current areas of co-operation are

- The Age Friendly agenda
- Economic Forum
- Enterprise Centre/Millmount Centre
- Thomas D’Arcy Magee Summer School
- 2016 Commemoration events

The Chairman thanked Ms Martin for the assistance of the County Council in a number of issues.

The issue of the lack of student accommodation was discussed and Ms Martin agreed that a joint meeting between the Institute and the Council could be held in the near future to discuss this matter further. Other areas discussed included the area of Art Collaboration on the Carroll Collection and Music Department Research.

Ms Martin recommended the setting up of a joint Working Group between the Council and the Institute to look at future areas of collaboration.

Declarations of Interest

Nil

Bereavements

The recent bereavements were noted and sympathised on.

G.222.1. M.221 Minutes of the Meeting of 14th September 2015

The minutes of the Governing Body of 14th September 2015 were approved, subject to the following amendments;

Cllr. Tomás Sharkey’s attendance was to be inserted

Proposed by: Cllr. Oliver Tully
Seconded by: Cllr. Clifford Kelly

Voted on and agreed.

G.222.2 Matters Arising

G.222.3 Correspondence

1. Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 – Client Briefing Note, from Beauchamps Solicitors, 5th October 2015.

2. Letter from Department of Education and Skills re appointment of Mr. Aaron Lawless and Ms. Rebecca Somers as ordinary members of the Governing Body.

G.222.4.1 Personnel Report

The recent appointments were noted.

G.222.4.2 President's Report:

1. Health & Safety Update

The ISMC (Institute Safety Monitoring Committee) is expected to hold its first meeting of this academic year at the end of October (provisionally Wednesday 28th). The meeting will consider reports from the FASCs (Functional Area Safety Committees) and will review and agree objectives for the coming year. One of the main functions of this meeting will be to review the 2015 H&S expenditure reports from the FASCs. Work is currently underway to gather this information and FASC Chairs have been notified. Any H&S funds not spent will be re-distributed at the discretion of the ISMC before the end of the year.

Interviews took place in August for a Health and Safety Coordinator. An appointment has been made and the successful candidate is expected to start in the post on October 5th.

2. Future Funding of Higher Education

A conference on Future Funding of Higher Education was held by the Royal Irish Academy on 23rd September 2015. The expert group on Future Funding Models in Higher Education is chaired by Mr. Peter Cassells and is expected to report to Government before the end of the year.

3. HEA Compact and MEND Cluster

Dundalk Institute of Technology attended the HEA Bilateral Meeting on 21st September 2015 to review the Institute's performance to the year-end 2014. Initial feedback on the 2014 Review was received in advance of meeting. Overall the feedback was positive with DkIT meeting its 2014 targets. Discussion at the

bilateral meeting centred on the Institute's core strategic focus, the processes for the new strategic plan, participation, access and lifelong learning, the student experience, internationalisation, research and enterprise engagement. The Institute advised the HEA of the real challenges in providing a quality student learning experience given the successive budget cuts and the lack of infrastructural investment.

DkIT hosted the MEND Cluster Board Meeting with the Presidents, Vice Presidents and Registrars from DCU, Maynooth University and Athlone IT on 18th September. The Cluster Board is scheduled to meet with the HEA in November to review the performance of the Cluster to the year-end 2014.

4. Regional Development Centre

SmartChick, an analytics support decision system in poultry farming, won a Software Special Merit Award at the 2015 National Ploughing Championships in Ratheniska on Tuesday 22nd September. DIT Hothouse, the DIT Agricultural Analytics Research Group (AARG) and industry partner PE Services, a local company based in the heart of the poultry Sector in Cavan and Monaghan, were presented with the Enterprise Ireland-Toplink.ie Innovation Arena Award by Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton TD.

Viska Automation who provides high-tech automation design services will take a unit in Millmount from 1st October 2015. The RDC has secured corporate sponsorship from AIB and PKF-FPM Accountants of €6k cash and €4k professional services to add to a competitive prize for the phase 3 New Frontiers participants that will be selected out of this year's phase two. The RDC will be exhibiting at the Food Innovation Event on 7th October with Meath County Council.

An application to Enterprise Ireland Technology Gateway programme was submitted in July and was approved to progress to Stage 2 application which was submitted on 11th Sept. A follow up "defence of the application" interview was held on 24th Sept. It is expected that a decision will be known by 22nd October. The Technology Gateway Proposal – Cleener – brings together the Energy related research aspects of Credit, Casala and Freshwater & Environmental studies Research Centres within DkIT. The goal is to provide an integrated offering to Industry covering Production (renewable), Analysis/Monitoring/Management and Waste-to-Energy. The Gateway programme would support Centre Staff to promote and manage the Industry interface. Such a centre would be offered nationally as part of the EI Technology Gateway network.

5. Lifelong Learning Centre – Springboard Programmes

Dundalk Institute of Technology had secured eleven Springboard programmes and has been engaged in a promotion and recruitment campaign over the last three months. To date 136 places have been offered and accepted places for the Autumn intake. A further promotion and recruitment campaign will continue over the coming months for courses commencing in January 2016.

Part-time Courses

The LLC hosted an Information Evening on Tuesday 8th September with hundreds of members of the public visiting Dundalk IT to make enquiries and applications about part-time courses for 2015/16. Fifty Dundalk IT academic and administrative staff were on hand to meet people and provide them with advice on part-time courses content, career development ideas and application procedures.

Important Developments

The BA (Hons) in Social Care is being offered in part-time mode for the first time and 25 students have been accepted on the course. Year 1 classes commence on Tuesday 29th September. Meanwhile 10 students have been enrolled on the new Level 8 add-on BSc in Civil Engineering. This course started on Friday 11th September. The BA in Applied Early Childhood Studies is running with both Years 2 and 3 and has 40 students enrolled. An add-on Level 8 year for this course is being planned for 2016. Finally the Cert in Lean Six Sigma continues to prove popular with regional industry with all places booking out. Companies such as Kingspan, Liberty Insurance, Norbrook Laboratories, BNY Mellon and Paypal have sent staff onto the course and can expect to reap significant business cost savings as a result of participating on this course.

All part-time courses are commencing over the 3-week period from 21st September to Thursday 8th October.

6. Media Reports

Following media reports on the financial situation at DkIT the President issued the following statement to staff.

The financial situation of Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), together with a number of other institutes was commented upon by Mr Tom Boland, CEO of the Higher Education Authority (HEA) at the recent Public Accounts Committee (PAC) meeting. DKIT has had a number of years of funding cuts which have put a strain on our finances. A plan to deal with this situation has been submitted to the HEA and I note that Mr Boland commented to the PAC, “In the case of Dundalk we are satisfied that the plan is strong”.

I wish to assure our students, staff and the wider community that DkIT will continue to provide a quality service in what is a very difficult funding environment. We have reached a point of financial stability and we will continue to be a key driver of economic, social and cultural endeavour in this region.

7. E-Payments Cluster

An E-Payments industry cluster is emerging in the North East region with companies such as PayPal, EBay, Vesta and Yapstone establishing operations here. DkIT and DCU are working with the IDA, EI and the Dept of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation to support and develop this cluster. A major conference organised by the Mill Enterprise Centre on the theme of “Payments – The

Opportunity for Collaboration and Scaling” will take place at City North Hotel on Friday October 9th at which both the President of DkIT Denis Cummins and the President of DCU Brian MacCraith will present.

8. Guth Gafa Film Festival in Meath

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) and NUI Maynooth (NUIM) have become educational partners with the 2015 Guth Gafa International Documentary Film Festival. The partnerships, which have been announced by festival producer, Sarah McCann, Head of Section of Creative Media at DkIT, will build on existing collaborative educational programmes with film and media students at both colleges.

The Guth Gafa International Documentary Film Festival, which focuses on documentaries that focus on human rights, social issues and the environment, takes place in Kells, County Meath between 2 and 4 October.

9. Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan 2016-2021

The Government has recently published its capital investment plan for the next five year period.

In the third level sector, there will be an extra €110 million for facilities in the Higher Education sector. This is in addition to the €40 million already committed to the Grangegorman DIT project. This will facilitate essential works. Under PPPs, there will be an extra €200 million invested in the third level sector. The Capital Plan will also fund Higher Education Research Activities.

The full report is available at <http://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2015-Press-Releases/PR15-09-29.html>

10. Sunday Times League Table 2015

The annual Sunday Times Higher Education rankings were published on October 4th 2015. The rankings are based on the following criteria: Leaving Cert points (250); Research (100); Employment (100); Firsts/2:1s awarded (100); Student-staff ratio (100); Progression rate (100); Facilities spend (100); Total (850).

In the case of DkIT our overall position has improved by one place since 2014. The overall table is given in Appendix 3.

The Institute has the fourth highest number of students achieving a 1st or 2:1, placing it ahead of institutions such as University College Cork and University College Dublin. Although the research income dropped slightly on the previous year, it is in the top three IoTs in terms of income available to each academic staff member. The Institute was acknowledged as a pioneer in harnessing relationships between academia and industry, citing the achievements of the Regional Development Centre over the past 25 years.

Student's viewed the Institute as welcoming with a very clean and eco-friendly campus.

11. Upcoming Events

Careers Fair

Careers Fair on Wednesday 14th October in the MPC, DkIT.

Open Day

Open Day will take place on Friday 16th and Saturday 17th October 2015.

Conferring

Conferring is scheduled for Thursday 29th and Friday 30th October.

G.222.5 Finance, Audit & Risk Minutes

M.F. 142 Minutes of meeting on 17th July 2015 were noted.

The Chair of the Committee gave a brief outline of the following reports which were discussed in detail at the most recent meeting of the Committee.

Internal Control Reports 2015:

- Review of Information Technology General Controls
- Review of Legislative Compliance
- Review of Internal Controls

HEA Draft Review of DKIT Financial Projections by Mazars

G.222.6 Academic Council Minutes

Minutes of Meeting No. 143, 19th June 2015 were noted.

G.222.7 Seal of the Institute

The Institute Seal was applied to Celtic Leasing Ltd.

G.221.8 AOB

Prior to the Presidents Report, the current President informed the Governing Body that he would be vacating the position in Mid-January 2016 in order to take up a position in the private sector. The Governing Body expressed its enormous gratitude to the President for his contribution to the Institute since his appointment and wished him great success in his future career.

Before the commencement of any AOB, the President was asked to excuse himself as the Governing Body wished to discuss the process of selecting his successor. The Human Resources Manager gave an outline of the process and

the following were nominated by the Governing Body to serve on the Sub-Committee overseeing the process.

Mr. Andrew Griffith, Chairperson
Cllr. Cathy Bennett
Mr. Paschal McGuire
Cllr. Clifford Kelly
Cllr. Oliver Tully

Next Meeting Monday 30th November 2015 @ 4pm

Chairperson: _____ **Date:** _____