

NOTRE DAME SIXTH FORM CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on Microsoft Teams on
Wednesday 25 June 2025 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT David Wright (Chair)
 Justine Barlow (Principal)
 Matthew DiClemente
 Richard Hall
 Christine Bosch

The quorum for a committee meeting is a minimum of two governors excluding the Principal.

IN ATTENDANCE: Denise Hark- Clerk to the Corporation
 Karen Petrillo – Director of Finance and Operations (DFO)

The meeting was opened with a prayer.

1.00	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERSHIP MATTERS	ACTION
1.01	Apologies for absence were received from Ann Marie Mealey.	
2.00	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
2.01	There were no declarations made relating to items on the agenda.	
3.00	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
3.01	Minutes from the Finance and Resources meeting held on 25 February 2025 had been included with the papers for the meeting. They were agreed as a correct record for signature by the Chair.	
4.00	REVIEW ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING	
4.01	There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.	
4.02	The DFO noted that a benchmarking report had been included with the papers for the meeting for information.	
5.00	FINANCE REPORT	
5.01	The DFO presented the key features from the management accounts and highlighted the following points:	
5.02	The surplus had increased slightly from the figures reported in the management accounts.	
5.03	The DFO recommended a virement from the surplus to increase the furniture budget.	

5.04	Funding for the staff pay award and increased National Insurance contributions was expected to be received in June or July. The funding for the National Insurance contributions would be £78k which would cover actual costs.	
5.05	CFFR Report The report included forecasts of income and expenditure until 2028.	
5.06	Q: Is it a conservative estimate to have costs increasing by £2.7m over the whole period? A: (DFO) It is a realistic estimate which includes pay awards of 4% for September 2025, 3% for 2026 and 3% for 2027. Costs are accurate for 2025, with costs based on 3% inflation for the following two years. Income had been left static for 2026/2027.	
5.07	Q: Does the forecast include the vision for planned growth? A: (DFO) The income for additional students is included but not the related capital spend.	
5.08	Q: Will we be close to moving from the Outstanding rating for financial health to Good in the next couple of years? A: (DFO) We are currently on the upper side of Outstanding. As the college starts to spend more money this may go down to Good. Spending money is in the interest of students.	
5.09	There had been an adjustment to the funding formula regarding the reduction of EBITDA. This may result in a financial advantage for the college.	
5.10	The Chair commented that the budget was in a healthy position and noted that borrowing costs would reduce over the next few years.	
5.11	Q: Why is there a difference between funding for student numbers and actual? A: (DFO) This is due to lagged funding. The college receives funding for students in the following year.	
5.12	Q: What are the percentage staff costs as a percentage of income? A: (DFO) The percentage will be over the 70% government benchmark. Only 43% of colleges nationally are operating at 70% or below. The benchmark for academies is 80%.	
5.13	The Chair noted that the FEC commissioner's office have recently completed a consultation on benchmarks across the sector.	
5.14	The DFO reported that there was uncertainty around whether funding for Advanced Maths may be removed. If so, this would reduce funding by £400k as maths is studied by a large percentage of students.	

5.15	The Chair reported that the college was not in a position to recruit International Students to the Lower 6 in September 2025 and asked whether they would be replaced by UK students. The DFO confirmed that the budget had been based on this assumption.	
5.16	Agreed: To recommend the management accounts and the budget for 2025/2026 for approval by Corporation.	
6.00	INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS – Confidential Item This item is confidential and minuted in the Confidential Part II minutes.	
7.00	ANNUAL REPORTS	DFO
7.01	HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT The annual Health and Safety report had been received with the papers for the meeting.	
7.02	Q: Does the Health & Safety Committee consider the venue in terms of risk re vehicle access at peak times? A: (DFO) This is considered, and a meeting had been arranged with the counter terrorism police to get advice. The road is unadopted and responsibility lies with the college and other businesses on the avenue.	
7.03	It was noted that vehicular access was more of a risk during open days when there are large numbers of people accessing the college.	
7.04	The DFO reported that St Anne's and the Music School would be involved in any discussions about this matter.	
7.05	Q: Have the insurers looked into this issue? A: (DFO) Yes and the college took out extra cover for terrorism because of the location in the city centre.	
7.06	Action: DFO to check whether the terrorism insurance provides cover if a car is used as a weapon.	
7.07	The Principal noted that reassurance had been provided by the counter terrorism police that the measures put in place by the college provide substantial mitigation.	
7.08	MARKETING ANNUAL REPORT The Head of Marketing reported that the written report identified progress made by the marketing team against the strategic aims.	

7.09	RH drew attention to the two national marketing awards that had been achieved by the marketing department.	
7.10	Userway had been upgraded to assist with website accessibility. The website is now achieving an accessibility score of 94%.	
7.11	Work is in progress to establish an applicant portal with the overall aim to provide clear communication to an applicant during the recruitment process.	
7.12	The Principal reported that the college had invested in marketing, and it was difficult to quantify the impact, however, the marketing department had played a significant part in the growth of student numbers and increasing income.	
7.13	Q: What are the benefits of the CRM platform Gecko? A: (RH) The college is in the first 12 months of a 3-year contract. The main benefit is the accuracy of communication, is removing a lot of sensitive issues. It is integrated with current students and parents and provides updates in real time. It has been used to get more information on open days. Last year there had been 2500 students on the waiting list for the open days. This information has been used to extend the open days this year by one hour.	
7.14	The Head of Marketing added that Gecko was a useful product, but it would be reviewed after 3 years as there are a lot of different products available with AI integration.	
7.15	Q: What is the cost of the program? A: (RH) It is around £20k per year.	
7.16	Q: What are the next steps for the marketing department? A: (RH) Digital marketing is key as contact time with Year 11 students is limited. The aim is to develop what is already in place and make it better.	
8.00	HR REPORT	
8.01	A written report had been included with the papers for the meeting.	
8.02	Q: Are the long-term absences amongst the cleaners due to the nature of their work? A: (DFO) They have all completed the required Health and Safety training.	
8.03	Q: What are the expectations and potential outcomes of the Workload review group? A: (JB) This is a college initiative to support the staff. The Workload Charter sets out the commitment on how this will be approached.	
9.00	POLICIES	

9.01	The following policies were presented for approval:	
9.02	Staff Development Policy There had been some minor amendments to the policy. Agreed: That the Staff Development Policy is approved.	
9.03	Health & Safety Policy Statement The DFO reported that following an internal audit on Health & Safety TIAA had recommended that there should be an overarching policy. The policy presented is based on an exemplar provided by TIAA. The policy is pending approval from TIAA. The DFO noted that the policy would be brought back to the committee for approval next term if there are any amendments made by TIAA. The Chair suggested that as this is a large policy there should be an executive summary to support it. Agreed: That the Health & Safety Policy Statement is approved, subject to approval by TIAA.	
9.04	Staff Attendance Policy There had been minor amendments to the policy to reflect current practice. Agreed: That the Staff Attendance Policy is approved.	
9.05	Financial Regulations The DFO reported that there had been amendments to the Financial Regulations in line with the updated DfE guidance on Managing Public Money and the Procurement Act.	
9.06	Q: What are the changes to the Procurement Act? A: (DFO) The changes are around thresholds and transparency. The college does go out to tender for services even if the value is below threshold.	
9.07	Q: How many contracts are being managed annually? A: (DFO) There are around 50 different suppliers used for the annual maintenance contracts.	
9.08	Agreed: That the Financial Regulations are approved.	
9.09	The DFO reported that a gift register for staff has been created as there has been a lot of staff receiving gifts from students. Staff are able to accept gifts below the value of £50.	
9.10	It was agreed that the Committee would have oversight of the process.	
10.00	PREMISES & ESTATES	

10.01	The DFO invited questions on the Premises and Estates report.	
10.02	Q: Has there been any progress on the St Anne's building following discussions at the Strategy Day? A: (DFO) They had been contacted to say that governors would like to engage in conversation with them. A response is still awaited.	
10.03	Q: Is there anything included in the budget re income for EV charging? A: (DFO) No as this is difficult to forecast. Use by members of the public is only just starting to pick up.	
10.04	Q: Is there any update with the Buildings Condition Report? A: (DFO) This had been a thorough process which involved 3 visits. The report has not yet been received.	
10.05	Q: Is the planned painting of the upper and lower areas still going ahead? A: (DFO) Yes. This will be done by internal Estates staff and is not part of the planned maintenance programme.	
10.06	A governor commented that it did not appear that the college would spend the planned maintenance allocation. The DFO explained that the estimates had been based on external contractors. £150k of the allocation will be spent if external contractors are available over the summer holidays.	
10.07	Q: Does the CCTV coverage on the avenue link to the internal campus cameras? A: (DFO) The 360-degree camera on a pole will cover the avenue. A meeting would take place with the Estates team to finalise the positioning of the cameras which are due to be fitted over the summer.	
10.08	Q: How will the CCTV be managed? A: (DFO) They will be monitored by the Estates team.	
11.00	RISK ASSESSMENT	
11.01	The Chair noted that risks pertaining to the following areas had been discussed during the meeting: International Students, Health and Safety, Staffing.	
12.00	ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS There were no items of Any Other Business raised.	
13.00	DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING	
13.01	Tuesday 23 September 2025 at 5.00pm.	

The meeting closed at 6.51pm.