**Finance Committee (FC) Meeting**

**Tuesday 11 February 2020 at 2:00pm**

**Final Minutes**

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| **Attendees Dundonald House****Attendees Ballykelly House** | **David Small****Roger Downey****Seamus McErlean****Sean McGrade****Lynda Lowe****Gerry McPeake****William Peel (Secretariat)****Brian Doherty (Chair)****Robert Huey****Paul Donnelly (Deputising for Fiona McCandless)****Briege Lafferty** |
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| **Apologies** | **Norman Fulton****Fiona McCandless** |
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| **Item** | **Description** | **Paper Reference / Action Owner** |
|  | **Welcome and****Minutes and Action Points from Previous Meeting**  | **FC 01/20****FC 02/20** |
|  | The Chair, Brian Doherty, welcomed members to the meeting.Apologies of members unable to attend were noted.The Chair advised that he had asked Gerry McPeake, Business Management Branch, to attend in relation to the Staffing Affordability Paper to be discussed at the meeting. The minutes for the 15 November 2019 meeting were agreed with no amendments.Action points of the 15 November 2019 meeting were discussed. Members noted that action points on TB and Workforce Planning would be addressed by papers being presented at this meeting. All other action points were agreed as complete. |  |
|  | **Staff Affordability** | **FC 03/20** |
|  | Lynda Lowe presented the paper, advising on the current staff costs, budget and Staff In Post (SIP) for non-Brexit and Brexit Staff in 2019/20 as well as the non-Brexit and Brexit staff cost affordability position for forward years. There was considerable discussion by Members who noted the contents of the paper and tables. This discussion focused on how best to address the current FTE headcount limits across the Department and how these could be best maximised while maintaining savings generated as a result of the Voluntary Exit Scheme (VES). Members agreed to increase the optimal affordable limit at Departmental level by 50 posts, split evenly across Groups, to 2,859 FTE for 2020/21. Members also agreed that Grade 3s would review their current SIP plus Vacancies figures and maintain this as an absolute ceiling as well as critically assess all vacancies going forward. **Action Point****Finance to issue confirmation to Group Heads of revised FTE Headcount Limits and guidance in relation to the process to be followed by Groups when creating vacancies.****All Grade 3s to carry out a critical assessment of all vacancies within their command.** | **Lynda Lowe****All Grade 3s** |
|  | **TB Budget Paper** | **FC 04/20** |
|  | Lynda Lowe presented the paper highlighting actual costs for 2018/19, final budget for 2019/20 and 2020/21 opening baseline by category of spend on the bTB programme expenditure and income (excluding bTB Research). There was considerable discussion by Members in relation to the issues raised in this paper and the recommendations suggested. Members agreed that as we have a new Minister and that a business case is being developed in relation to how to address bTB going forward, it would not be appropriate at this stage to implement recommendations to set a ring-fenced budget for bTB for 2020/21. Members agreed that the Finance Director should update the DAERA Permanent Secretary of this discussion and progress being made in relation to the business case. **Action Point****Finance Director to provide update to DAERA Permanent Secretary on the outcome of this paper and provide an update as to the progress being made in relation to the bTB business case.****Robert Huey to provide Roger Downey with an update in relation to progress being made in relation to the bTB business case.** | **Roger Downey****Robert Huey** |
| **4.** | **2019/20 Financial Position**  | **FC 05/20** |
|  | Lynda Lowe presented the paper highlighting the Department’s Resource and Capital proposals in this exercise and the financial implications of Brexit and Non-Brexit issues being faced by the Department. An update was also provided in relation to the ongoing Estimated Provisional Outturn exercises within the Department. Members discussed and noted the contents of the paper.  |  |
| **5.** | **Budget 2020/21** | **FC 06/20** |
|  | Roger Downey provided an update on the Budget 2020/21 process including how the New Decade, New Approach (NDNA) references for DAERA have been reflected in it.Members discussed and noted the contents of the paper.  |  |
| **6.** | **Finance Committee Terms of Reference** | **FC 07/20** |
|  | Lynda Lowe presented the paper highlighting a number of minor amendments required to the Finance Committee Terms of Reference (ToR) as part of its annual review. These amendments were agreed by members, including the Chair’s request that the ToR is updated to specific a frequency of meetings of a least three per annum.**Action Point****Terms of Reference to be updated to specify a frequency of meetings of at least three per annum.**  | **Lynda Lowe** |
| **7.** | **Papers to note** |  |
|  | Members noted the contents of the following papers:* AFBI Finance Paper
* Contract Compliance
* Aged Debt Analysis
 | **FC 08/20****FC 09/20****FC 10/20** |
| **8.** | **AOB** |  |
|  | None. |  |

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