

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON TUESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 17.30 VIA TELECONFERENCE.

Present:

Mr Gordon Gough (Chair)
Mr Brian Doran (CEO)
Miss Louisa Goss
Mr Aidan McCormick
Prof. Gregory O'Hare
Mrs Judith Thompson
Mr Matthew Turner
Mrs Nicola Wilson

In Attendance:

Mr Andrew Saunders, Governing Body Chair
Mr Keith Kilpatrick, Director of Curriculum
Mrs Carolyn Davison, Assistant Director HE & Quality Improvement
Mrs Fiona Bradley, Assistant Director FE & Training
Mrs Elaine Nesbitt, Head of Faculty PRSE
Mr Stephen Rogan, Head of Faculty CDAC
Mrs Carmel Murray, Head of Faculty HESC
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 17.30.

Mr Gough welcomed Miss Louisa Goss, Student Governor 2021-2022 to her first meeting of SRC's Education Committee.

A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

A06. FACULTY ACTION PLANS

Mr Kilpatrick informed that the Heads of Faculty have been invited to attend the Committee meeting to present their draft three year plans and advised that further detail will be provided at the Annual Governance Strategy Day.

- **Faculty of Professional Services**

Mrs Nesbitt referred Members to the Faculty presentation and advised on recent success at the UK WorldSkills Competition.

Mrs Thompson arrived at the meeting at 17.33. Prof O'Hare arrived at the meeting at 17.35.

Mrs Nesbitt informed on the in-year position and reported on concerns relating to difficulties in appointing staff and the impact of Covid-19 on retention.

Members discussed the challenges in recruiting to posts, the guidelines on appointing and corporate training provisions.

Mrs Nesbitt advised on the curriculum plans for development 2023 – 2025 including proposed new developments and left the meeting at 17.59.

Miss Goss left the meeting at 18.00 and returned at 18.05.

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- **Faculty of Computing, Design & Academic Studies**

Mr Rogan presented the Faculty in year report informing on the enrolment position, Panto success and engagement with local industry to deliver bespoke training in areas of computing and data analytics. He advised on the Faculty's three year plan for delivery of curriculum.

Mr Rogan informed on workshops convened to address the decline in fulltime enrolments and the significant weakness in retaining students in computing.

Members discussed the advantages of advertising posts with the inclusion of career progression options, the skills barometer and employers recognising the requirement to provide upskilling to staff with intermediary professional skillsets.

Mr Rogan left the meeting at 18.24.

- **Faculty of Health & Science**

Mrs Murray advised the Committee on the many areas of activity within the Faculty of Health and Science including successful partnerships and validations underway, support in delivering skill up programmes and positive feedback received from the recent ETI evaluation of the Life Science Curriculum HUB.

She informed on the focus to increase mindfulness to those with autism and awareness of the impact of adverse childhood experiences.

Mrs Murray left the meeting at 18.40.

- **Faculty of Building, Technology & Engineering**

Mrs Bradley referred Members to the BUTE Faculty presentation, providing succinct detail on enrolments and initiatives employed to address the impact of Covid-19 in order to allow learners to progress with their education and obtain qualification.

She informed on recent success at the UK WorldSkills competition and advised that a key focus of the Faculty post pandemic and Brexit is to provide a new curriculum offer including traineeships, advanced technical awards and degrees to enable the Faculty to develop a wider range of digital and transversal skills beyond that of traditional technical skills and allow focus on building resilience and adaptability to changing skills demands.

Mr Kilpatrick commented that recent feedback from the ETI evaluation offers assurance that the faculty is performing well.

The Committee noted the reports.

A02. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded those present to declare at the commencement of the meeting interests held in any matter to be discussed.

Mrs Wilson declared an interest as employee of Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council.

A03. MINUTES OF THE MEETING 28 SEPTEMBER 2021

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2021.

These were checked for accuracy and unanimously approved on proposal from Mr Turner and seconded by Prof O'Hare.

A04. MATTERS ARISING

Mr Kilpatrick advised that class sizes are being introduced into the Whole College Quality Improvement Plan.

A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Mr Gough offered his congratulations to the SRC participants, winners and mentors for their recent success at the UK WorldSkills competition.

He noted that SRC won 3 Golds, 1 Silver, 1 Bronze and a highly commended award at the competition culminating in the College being placed third in the UK performance table and retaining the top performing college title in Northern Ireland.

A07. ETI RECOVERY PLAN

Mr Kilpatrick advised on good engagement and an optimistic response following the recent ETI evaluation. Mrs Bradley was thanked for her leadership in this regard.

Mrs Bradley referred Members to the ETI Recovery Plan and advised that the plan has been extended by 18 months. She informed Members of a weekly schedule of meetings with curriculum managers and advised on improved retention rates.

A08. HE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mrs Davison presented the HE Development Plan advising Members on developments within the four Faculties, further paying tribute to the high performance of the Business Support and Innovation teams and praising the support received from local councils to build on progression pathways including higher level apprenticeships.

Mr Kilpatrick remarked on the high volume of work undertaken by Mrs Davison and her team in progressing demanding validation processes, informing Members of a rigorous approach and differing levels of flexibility.

He stated that the development of higher level curriculum is important for colleges to provide a broad programme of provision. Mr Doran spoke to the requirement to bring forward new developments to align with the 10x Skills Strategy.

The Committee noted the report.

A09. WCQIP ACTION PLAN

Mr Kilpatrick advised that submission of the SER and WCQIP has been extended to 2022, and informed on the addition of a further two returns required in year.

Mrs Davison referred Members to the recruitment, retention and achievement data contained within the report and informed that the capture of data pertains to part of the College's internal self-evaluation process.

A10. UPDATE OF DfE QUALITY RETURNS

Mr Kilpatrick provided additional detail on the three departmental submissions required from the Directorate of Curriculum.

A11. CURRICULUM DIRECTORS WORKING GROUP (CDWG)

- **Traineeship & Advanced Technical Awards**
- **Employer Brochure – Advanced Technical**
- **Ulster Bridging**

Mr Kilpatrick provided an update on discussions taking place at the CDWG, informing on a large piece of work being undertaken to establish traineeships and advanced technical awards and advising on funding challenges that have arisen. He stated that agreement needs to be reached with the Department to progress the awarding of UCAS points and informed on the group’s desire to develop apprenticeships in levels 4, 5 and 6.

Before Mr Saunders left the meeting at 19.42, he noted that Mr Gough and Mrs Wilson will come to the end of their tenure as SRC Governors on 31 December. He thanked both Members for their exceptional guidance and support over their many years on the Governing Body, and applauded their outstanding leadership in the roles of Vice Chair, Safeguarding lead and chairing Committees.

Mr Doran and Mr Kilpatrick echoed the sentiments, thanking both for their professionalism, support and effective engagement during their period as Governors.

A12. POLICY REVIEW

- **Alumni Relations**
- **Recognition of Prior Learning**

Members approved minimal amendments to the two policies on proposal from Mr Turner and seconded by Mr McCormick.

A13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Doran advised that the Independent Review of Education panel had invited Principals’ to present to them and that a sector presentation was being developed.

A14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Education Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 1 February 2022 at 17.30.

The meeting concluded at 19.46.

CHAIR

DATE

