

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON TUESDAY 24 MAY 2022 AT 17.30 VIA TELECONFERENCE.

Present:

Mr Aidan McCormick (Chair)
Mr Brian Doran (CEO)
Miss Laura Milner
Dr Thomas Moore
Prof. Gregory O'Hare
Mrs Hilary Singleton
Mrs Judith Thompson
Mr Matthew Turner

In Attendance:

Mr Andrew Saunders, Governing Body Chair
Mr Keith Kilpatrick, Director of Curriculum
Mrs Lorraine McKeown, Assistant Director Student Services & Marketing
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
Mr Gary Mackin, Head of Faculty BUTE
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 17.32.

A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Miss Louisa Goss and Mrs Carolyn Davison.

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.

For the purposes of transparency, Miss Milner advised that she works with a private digital safeguarding training organisation.

A03. MINUTES OF THE MEETING 22 FEBRUARY 2022

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2022. These were checked for accuracy and unanimously approved on proposal from Mr Turner and seconded by Mrs Singleton, subject to a change of title at the bottom of page 1.

A04. MATTERS ARISING

None.

A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Mr McCormick noted that it is Mr Kilpatrick's last attendance at the Education Committee prior to his retirement, and commented on a diligent staff member, well liked by all. Mr Kilpatrick thanked Committee Members and stated he has enjoyed his time working at SRC.

ACTION BY WHOM

Mr Doran reported that the recruitment panel have made a recommendation to appoint a new Director of Curriculum.

Prof O'Hare arrived at the meeting at 17.38.

Mr McCormick noted that it is Mr Saunders last meeting of the Education Committee as his tenure is shortly due to end. He paid tribute to Mr Saunders, commenting on a true gentleman and advising that a more kindly, supportive Chair would be hard to find. Mr Saunders stated it has been a real pleasure serving on the Board and he has witnessed a lot of changes over the many years. He commented that the Education Committee is well constituted with many talented Members.

Mr McCormick asked that his thanks be relayed to Miss Goss for her input at Committee meetings.

He further informed that he will be attending the Carnival event on Thursday marking the success of the ICAS events.

A06. STUDENT COUNCIL SUMMARY REPORT 2021-2022

Mrs McKeown presented the annual student feedback report and advised on a 53.7% increase in the number of issues raised at student council meetings when compared to the previous year. She caveated that the benchmarking figure compares to a significant period when learners were largely engaged in remote working.

Mrs McKeown advised that as with previous years, concerns mainly relate to food offerings and estates. She relayed that Mount Charles are proactively attending the student council meetings and taking on feedback.

Dr Moore remarked on a comprehensive report and commented that he is grateful to see that all issues are being responded to.

Mr Doran confirmed that the report is reviewed by the senior management team. He commented on the entry that A level students in Armagh have requested a designated space and advised that although CDAC will make enquiries, it was important to manage student expectations given the existing design of the building.

Members noted the report.

A12. POLICY REVIEW

- **Safeguarding policy**

Mrs McKeown presented the Safeguarding policy and advised that the sector policy has been updated in year in order to rearrange the appendices in line with the ETI proforma. She informed that the policy will be reviewed again at their meeting in August.

Mrs McKeown advised that Mrs Thompson has been confirmed as the nominated Safeguarding Governance Officer.

Mr Doran reminded Members that the policy was approved by the full Governing Body at their meeting in November 2021 to facilitate a response to DfE.

Mr Kilpatrick advised that the policy was further subjected to scrutiny as part of the ETI inspection and received clean bill of health.

Dr Moore reiterated his concern that Governing Body Members are not subject to Access NI checks. He noted that the action falls to the Department, however

commented on an area of risk and requested that Mrs McKeown relay his concern at the sectoral safeguarding group meeting.

In response to a query from Miss Milner regarding digital safety, Mrs McKeown confirmed that it has been referenced within the policy and advised that further amendments are required to reference new domestic abuse laws.

Mrs McKeown was thanked for her presentation and left the meeting at 18.09.

A07. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLANS

Mr Kilpatrick advised that Faculty Action Plans are almost at final version and will be signed off the following week. He stated that he has requested that the Heads of Faculty highlight faculty developments to the Committee.

- **Faculty of Professional Services**

Mrs Nesbitt advised on the in year position, a focus on part-time enrolments and traineeships and a new marketing plan. She confirmed that enrolments are low in some areas, with other areas performing well. Members were informed of new HE provision with OU in Sports and Exercise, that Fintech is progressing well with UU and work placements are good.

Mrs Nesbitt informed of curriculum workshops to develop Sports and Hospitality and explained the difficulties in recruiting to certain areas and trouble confirming the availability of part-time lecturers.

The Committee were advised that all Kilkeel courses have been relocated to community hubs and the College has secured lecturing placements in 5 star hotels across Ireland.

Mrs Nesbitt advised on the three year plan moving forward and student activities success.

Dr Moore enquired about adding a language module to existing courses, opportunities to engage with the planned science park and leisure village in Armagh and requirements for validation.

Mrs Thompson arrived at the meeting at 18.16.

Mr Doran provided detail on conditions for validation and need to demonstrate a local requirement for training and upskilling. Mrs Bradley advised that the external engagement team will liaise with ABC council for areas of collaboration.

Mrs Murray confirmed that HESC faculty delivers a Level 4 certificate with UU in Irish, ESOL entry to Level 2 and a BA Honours in English and History.

Mr Turner spoke to the desire to secure facilities in Lurgan for development of the football academy.

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

Mr Rogan confirmed that Faculty enrolments are still in decline, however advised that there has been a slight increase in part-time. He informed that PBL is fully embedded and advised on a range of successful projects being delivered.

Mrs Nesbitt left the meeting at 18.40.

Mr Rogan informed on successful OU validation and developments in cloud and data analytics curriculum. He advised on the successful launch of the NextGen coders programme with schools and confirmed that WBL is operating well.

Mr Rogan advised on the faculty three year plan and growth in accredited areas.

Prof O'Hare welcomed the good initiatives and the development of short courses. He further invited the HOFs to advise a future meeting of the Committee of curriculum provision being wound down.

Members remarked on the impressive music facilities at Armagh.

In response to a query from Dr Moore, management committed to considering the engagement of ambassadors to promote specific areas of the curriculum.

Mr Rogan was thanked for his presentation and he left the meeting at 18.56.

- **Faculty of Health & Science**

Mrs Murray advised the Committee on enrolments, new offerings in part-time provision, informed that science is performing well and the appointment of specialist lecturers.

She confirmed progress in becoming a trauma informed college, offering of Level 3 Forensics and Criminology, growth in biotechnology and advised on skills success.

Mrs Murray informed of successfully validated adult access provision, a planned trip to Granada and development of the ESOL provision in recognition of the Ukrainian in NI programme.

Mrs Thompson left the meeting at 19.03 and re-joined at 19.10.

Members were advised on the complexities in developing nursing provision and hopes for collaboration with the Department of Health.

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

Mr Mackin informed Members of the in year position and developments within traineeships and advanced technicals. He advised of a focus on part-time provision, new approved HE courses and curriculum workshops.

Mr Mackin informed Members that the ETI have conducted their interim visit and are returning on 6 June. He advised on significant success at the SkillsBuild competition and reminded Members that SRC Wall and Floor Tiling student, Aaron Gillespie has been selected to represent the UK at the WorldSkills final in Shanghai later this year.

Mrs Murray left the meeting at 19.20.

Mr Mackin presented the faculty's three year plan advising on planned developments on the Greenback campus in engineering and carpentry, advanced welding and engineering.

Mr McCormick relayed Governors' support for progression and planned works and commented on impressive automotive facilities at the Armagh campus. He thanked the four Heads of Faculty and remarked on lots of areas of student support witnessed by Education Committee Members.

A08. ETI INTERIM FOLLOW UP EVALUATION

Mr Kilpatrick reminded Members that the ETI WBL BUTE inspection in 2018 was delayed due to Covid-19. He advised that an interim visit was conducted in early May and informed that ETI recognised that progress has been made in all areas highlighted for improvement in the original inspection.

Mr Kilpatrick stated that reports are extremely encouraging, and improvements have been noted in quality and provision.

Mrs Thompson remarked on the good news and commented that it is important for the Governing Body to recognise the measures taken for improvement. Members were advised that a presentation of findings will be presented to the full Board at their June meeting.

The Committee noted the report, the enormity of work undertaken and relayed their thanks to Mr Kilpatrick and Mrs Bradley.

Mr Mackin left the meeting at 19.43.

A09. HE ASSURANCE STATEMENT

Mr Kilpatrick referred Members to the HE Assurance Statement and reminded the Committee that the document was presented for approval at the Governing Body meeting held in March 2022.

He advised on positive feedback received from the Department and an acknowledgement of a comprehensive overview of HE provision.

Members noted the report and asked that their congratulations be passed on to Mrs Davison.

A10. CURRICULUM DIRECTORS WORKING GROUP

Mr Kilpatrick provided an update on the implementation of the next phase of traineeships and developments within advanced technical.

Mr Doran advised on an important piece of work positioning the College's curriculum offer.

Members noted the report.

A11. CIRCULARS

- **FE 02/22 Skills Focus**

Members noted the SkillsFocus circular setting out the funding scheme and FE sector commitments.

A13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs Thompson apologised for missing the start of the meeting however confirmed that she is now the Safeguarding Governor and advised on positive engagement with Mrs McKeown.

She stated that she has reviewed the ETI submission proforma and is impressed and reassured with safeguarding activities within SRC

A14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Education Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 18 October 2022 at 17.30.

The meeting concluded at 19.52.

CHAIR

DATE

Certified as a true copy of minutes approved by the means of remote working by the Secretary, Miss Lindsay Armstrong.

signature redacted

SECRETARY

DATE

Lindsay Armstrong 20/10/22