

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting of the **Education, Quality & Performance Committee**
held on Wednesday 18 May 2022 at 5.00 pm
via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT: Ms Siobhan Breen
Mrs Deborah Brown
Ms Elaine Greer
Mrs Sandra Isherwood
Ms Anne McCleary
Miss Caitlyn McLoughlin
Mrs Joanne Moore (Committee Chair)
Mr Leo Murphy (Interim Chief Executive)
Dr Lynsey Quinn

IN ATTENDANCE: Dr Jill Cush, Deputy Chief Executive
Mrs Fiona McCauley, Secretary to the Governing Body
Mr Ciaran McManus, Assistant Chief Executive (Industry Partnerships & Centres for Excellence)
Dr Nicholas O'Shiel, Chair of the Governing Body
Mr Mark Sterrit, Boardroom Apprentice
Ms Carol Viney, Head of Professional & Social Sciences Faculty (*Item 6.0 only*)

APOLOGIES: Mr Michael McGuckin

1.0 PRELIMINARIES AND APOLOGIES

Mrs Moore welcomed all present to the meeting. She thanked Mr Murphy, Dr Cush and Mr McManus for their time in meeting with her to discuss improvements to the effectiveness of the meeting and welcomed contributions from members.

An apology was tendered on behalf of Mr McGuckin.

2.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

Ms McCleary drew attention to the reference in the Management Report to Labour Market Partnerships (LMPs), which are administered by the Department for Communities, and declared her employment with the Department for Communities noting that she does not work directly in the area of LMPs.

3.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 03 Minutes of the Education, Quality & Performance Committee meeting held on Wednesday 16 March 2022.

There were no matters arising.

4.0 KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 04.01 List of Key Strategic Issues
- Paper 04.02 Key Strategic Issues Management Update
- Paper 04.03 Five Year Performance Data Analysis and Trends.

Mrs Moore reflected on the suggestion made at the previous committee meeting regarding the need to review the Committee's Key Strategic Issues. Mr Murphy commented on the challenge in maintaining a balance between strategic and operational matters and went on to reference the management update on the Committee's key strategic issues provided in paper 04.02.

In response to questions and comments from members, Mr Murphy and Dr Cush spoke of the budget and policy challenges facing the sector as a whole; commented on the change in policy requiring employers to contribute to the skills development of their workforce; suggested that DfE is invited to present to the Committee on the priorities of the Skills for a 10X Economy Strategy given the changes to the funding environment; and explained the hybrid framework currently in place for on-site / home working for business support staff and noted that a further update on these arrangements will be provided to the Staffing Committee. Mrs Brown then spoke of the benefits to students of face-to-face contact with staff.

With reference to paper 04.03, Mr Murphy went on to provide an overview of the trends evidenced in the data and detailed the key challenges facing the College and the sector as a whole. He added that consolidation of the College's higher education provision may be prudent, that the funding model may move to a student, rather than an enrolment, metric in the future and advised the Committee to focus its priority on students and Further Education provision.

It was then agreed that the six key challenges identified in paper 04.03 will form the Committee's key strategic issues for the 2022/23 year, namely the Reduction in Full Time Further Education Student Numbers, Student Retention, Essential Skills, the Curriculum Delivery Model, Access to Higher Education and the Quality of Teaching & Learning.

AGREED: that the Committee's key strategic issues be changed to the Reduction in Full Time Further Education Student Numbers, Student Retention, Essential Skills, the Curriculum Delivery Model, Access to Higher Education and the Quality of Teaching & Learning.

5.0 MANAGEMENT REPORT

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 05 Management Report
- Paper 05.01 Review of Further Education & Learner Management Centre for Excellence Implementation Plan
- Paper 05.02 Review of Higher Education Centre for Excellence Implementation Plan
- Paper 05.03 Review of Work Based Learning Centre for Excellence Implementation Plan
- Paper 05.04 Review of Digital Learning Centre for Excellence Implementation Plan

- Paper 05.05 Review of Social Inclusion, Community Learning & Development Centre for Excellence Implementation Plan
- Paper 05.06 Safeguarding Report
- Paper 05.07 Report on Externally Funded Projects
- Paper 05.08 Annual Student Services Engagement and Student Services Report
- Paper 05.09 Quality Improvement Plan 2021-2022 Review
- Paper 05.10 Additional Support for Students - Application Enrolment
- Paper 05.11 Skills for a 10X Economy Skills Strategy
- Paper 05.12 College Development Plan Update
- Paper 05.13 Submission of Coursework Policy
- Paper 05.14 Higher Education Assessment Policy.

Mr McManus explained that the College Development Planning process has commenced which is underpinned by the Skills for a 10X Economy Strategy. He then listed the three core policy objectives within this strategy as ‘Addressing Skills Imbalances, Driving Economic Growth’, ‘Creating a Culture of Lifelong Learning’ and ‘Enhancing Digital Skills, Developing a Digital Spine’ and detailed the associated challenges and opportunities for the sector in each case. Mr McManus then referenced the Management Report provided along with the associated papers.

In response to questions and comments from members Mr McManus informed the meeting of the congruence of 2022/23 application figures with that of 2021/22, noting that the increase in applications to Work Based Learning programmes masks a decrease in applications to Further Education and Higher Education programmes which will necessitate an enhanced marketing focus; advised of a reduction in applications to the Erne Campus and of the additional marketing and open days put in place to mitigate; clarified that participants on Apprenticeship programmes are employed whereas participants on Advanced Technical programmes are unemployed; commented on the opportunity that would be afforded by the introduction of Public Sector Apprenticeships and All Age Apprenticeships; outlined the activity undertaken in the College’s Strabane office; explained that the return to the pre-pandemic requirement for 25% employer contribution to Skills Focus programmes is not expected to significantly impact uptake; confirmed that the work of the Quality Assurance and Assessment Working Group will be reported to the Change Management Committee; commented on the assessment challenges presented this year due to students’ lack of experience with examinations and paid tribute to the commitment of teaching staff in supporting students through these challenges; and explained that the projected increase in Further Education enrolments relates to both full-time and part-time modes and is due in part to a demographic uplift. In response to a question on the additional assessment scrutiny placed on staff as a result of the Quality Assurance Action Plan, Mr Murphy, supported by Ms Breen, reported that staff are not feeling any unnecessary pressure as a result of this. At the request of a member, Mr McManus also undertook to provide recent economic activity statistics for the region at the next meeting and to incorporate details of funders and project value in future Externally Funded Projects reports.

AGREED: that the Submission of Coursework Policy and Higher Education Assessment Policy be recommended to the Governing Body for approval.

6.0 REPORT ON THE PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIC PLANS OF THE PROFESSIONAL & SOCIAL SCIENCES FACULTY

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 06 Performance & Strategic Plans of the Professional & Social Sciences Faculty.

Ms Carol Viney, Head of Professional & Social Sciences Faculty, joined the meeting for this item.

With reference to paper 06, Ms Viney began her presentation on the performance and strategic plans of the Professional & Social Sciences Faculty by providing statistics on staff deployment, register marking, attendance and retention. She highlighted the legacy of lost learning due to the pandemic on attendance, retention and achievement, advised that the Retention and Achievement Working Group has been re-established and explained that a RAG system had been introduced to ensure that early interventions can be put in place for students at risk of withdrawal. At the request of a member, she undertook to provide comparative prior year KPI and retention statistics in future reports.

Ms Viney went on to report on enrolments within the faculty, noting the relatively low numbers of students undertaking work based learning programmes due to the nature of the faculty's curriculum, and list the industry and stakeholder engagement, project based learning and the student enterprise activity undertaken within the faculty. Ms Viney also congratulated Miss McLoughlin on her lead role in the cross sector FE for ME promotional video.

Mr Murphy congratulated Ms Viney on the impact of the activities undertaken within her faculty. He also commented on the importance of regular reports from the Student Services team on the issues encountered by students.

Ms Viney withdrew from the meeting at this juncture.

7.0 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE'S PERFORMANCE 2021/22

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 07 Partially Completed Review of Committee's Performance in 2021/22.

With reference to paper 07, it was noted that the review had been partially completed by the Secretary to the Governing Body where a factual response was available. The Committee Chair then sought members' views on the self-assessment with the resulting review attached as Appendix A. During the discussion, potential themes for a training / strategy workshop were explored, it was noted that the Committee's key strategic issues would be amended as agreed at an earlier point in the meeting and it was suggested that governors are invited to the Youthscape End of Project Celebration Event to provide an opportunity to engage with participants.

8.0 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2022/23

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 08 Schedule of Meetings 2022/23.

AGREED: acceptance of the proposed schedule of Education, Quality & Performance Committee meetings for 2022/23.

9.0 REVIEW OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 09 Outstanding Actions.

It was noted that all listed actions have been addressed. A revised list of actions is included in Appendix B.

10.0 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

No further business was raised.

11.0 REFLECTION ON EFFECTIVENESS OF MEETING

No comments were made on the effectiveness of the meeting.

The Committee Chair reflected on the challenging year for the Committee and commented on the work to be done in 2022/23. She thanked all members for their interest during the year and the Secretary to the Governing Body for her support to the Committee.

The meeting concluded at 7.05 pm.

CONFIRMED AND ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING BODY AT A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 JUNE 2022

CHAIRMAN



DATE 22/06/2022

APPENDIX B

**REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE OF EDUCATION, QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE
2021/22**

		Yes	No	Comments
Terms of Reference				
1	Does the Education, Quality and Performance Committee have written terms of reference?	✓		
2	Were the terms of reference reviewed by the Committee and approved by the Governing Body?	✓		Reviewed by the Committee in October 2021 and approved by the GB in November 2021.
3	Has the Committee complied with the provisions of its terms of reference in its proceedings throughout the year?	✓		
Programme of Business				
4	Did the Committee agree a programme of business for the academic year?	✓		Agreed by the Committee at its October 2021 meeting.
5	Did the Committee cover all business listed in the programme of business?		✓	Reviews of Higher Education Strategy and FE Personal Tutoring & Academic Support Policy deferred to October 2022.
6	Have all actions identified by the committee been satisfactorily delivered?	✓		
7	Is there any business that members feel do not need to be covered next year?		✓	
8	Is there any additional business that members feel should be included next year?	✓		Presentation from Student Services Team
Skills, Knowledge and Competences of Members				
9	Does the appropriate mix of skills, knowledge and competences exist within the Committee to perform most effectively?	✓		
Governing Body Key Performance Indicators				
10	Did attendance levels at Committee meetings average at least 65%?	✓		Average 91.6% year to date.
11	Did Committee meetings generally last no more than two hours?	✓		
Additional Comments				
12	Need for training workshop to be re-visited.			

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

#	Meeting Date	Minute Ref	Action
1	18/05/2022	5.0	Mr McManus to provide recent economic activity statistics for the region at the October 2022 meeting.
2	18/05/2022	5.0	Mr McManus to incorporate details of funders and project value in future Externally Funded Projects reports.