

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting of the **Education, Quality & Performance Committee**
held on Wednesday 23 November 2022 at 5.00 pm
via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT:

- Ms Siobhan Breen
- Mrs Deborah Brown
- Mrs Maureen Brunt
- Dr Frances Campbell
- Mr Jack Daly
- Mrs Sandra Isherwood
- Ms Celine McCartan, Chief Executive
- Ms Anne McCleary
- Mr Michael McGuckin
- Dr Lynsey Quinn, Committee Chair

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Dr Jill Cush, Deputy Chief Executive
- Mrs Fiona McCauley, Secretary to the Governing Body
- Mr Brian McIllduff, Quality Assurance Manager (*item 4.0 only*)
- Mr Pdraig McNamee, Assistant Chief Executive, Learner Experience

1.0 PRELIMINARIES AND APOLOGIES

Dr Quinn, Committee Chair, welcomed all present to the meeting. She extended a particular welcome to Mr Daly, Student Governor, Mrs Brunt, new committee member, and Mr McNamee, Assistant Chief Executive for Learner Experience, to their first committee meeting.

It was noted that all members were present.

2.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

No conflict of interest declarations were made.

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 19 October 2022.

There were no matters arising.

4.0 QUALITY UNIT REPORT

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 04.01 Presentation on SWC Whole College Self-Evaluation Report 2020-22 and Quality Improvement Plan 2022-24
- Paper 04.02 DfE Presentation on Arrangements for Quality Improvement Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
- Paper 04.03 ETI Arrangements for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Quality Improvement Planning in NI FE Colleges.

Mr McIllduff provided an update on the development of the Whole College Self-Evaluation Report 2020-2022 and Quality Improvement Plan 2022-2024 listing the areas to be reported upon and supporting evidence. He commented on the impact of industrial action on the development process, highlighted the collaborative approach taken in gathering the required information and outlined the timeline for submission of the reports to the Department for the Economy (DfE).

In response to questions from members, Mr McIllduff, supported by Dr Cush, explained the bottom up approach used in the self-evaluation process noting that internal self-evaluation is undertaken at course level and distilled into a Whole College Self-Evaluation Report out of which the Quality Improvement Plan is developed; advised that an analysis will be undertaken of the status of the 97 actions within the 2019-21 Quality Improvement Plan; and commented on the resource intense nature of the process required to extract required data for the reports and it was suggested that a sectoral system would reduce resource and risk in this area.

Ms McCartan commented on the balance to be achieved in reflecting the challenges faced by the College in the 2020 to 2022 period whilst also reflecting the quality of the College's teaching and learning. She provided assurance on the rigour of the self-evaluation process and advised that the Governing Body will have the opportunity to review the Whole College Self-Evaluation Report 2020-2022 and Quality Improvement Plan 2022-2024 prior to their submission to DfE.

Mr McIllduff withdrew from the meeting at this juncture.

5.0 KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 05.01 List of Key Strategic Issues
- Paper 05.02 Key Strategic Issues Management Update
- Paper 06.06 A Fit for Purpose and Relevant FE Curriculum Presentation
- Paper 06.07 DfE FE Strategic Context Presentation
- Paper 06.08 FE in SWC Discussion Paper.

5.1 Reduction in Full Time Further Education Student Numbers

With reference to paper 06.08, Mr McNamee detailed management recommendations in relation to strengthening full time further education (FE) provision in the areas of curriculum planning, improving success and improving recruitment.

A discussion then followed during which the College's strengths in the provision of wraparound pastoral support, industry experience and 21st century skills, also known as soft

skills, were raised as was the measures required to optimally market these strengths to potential students and parents as differentiators from school provision.

The meeting was also made aware of the impact of the pandemic on the academic abilities of affected students. In addition, the powerful impact of testimonials from ambassadors showcasing the positive effect of their college experience on their lives and careers was highlighted.

5.2 Curriculum Delivery Model

Mr McNamee then took the Committee through the slides in paper 06.06 on a Fit for Purpose and Relevant FE Curriculum, highlighting the proposed strategic changes required and the need to develop provision for areas of emerging regional demand, to support industries of high regional employment, to ensure that students are provided with employability skills alongside technical skills and to align workforce development priorities with curriculum plans.

Members welcomed the proposals presented as a foundation to develop a curriculum plan.

In response to a question on proposed solutions to the recruitment challenges faced by the College, Mr McNamee recommended that the option to offer salaries above the lowest point in the payscale, where appropriate, is facilitated, that an easily accessible overtime protocol is developed, and that applications to the Part Time Lecturing Panel are accepted on a rolling basis. In response to a query on the factors to be considered in the viability of courses, the meeting was made aware of the scrutiny placed on success rates and the quality of student experience in addition to the financial sustainability of courses. It was noted that sectoral collaboration may be encouraged in relation to specific courses.

5.3 Student Success, Essential Skills, Access to Higher Education and the Quality of Teaching and Learning

The updates provided in paper 05.02 on Student Success, Essential Skills, Access to Higher Education and the Quality of Teaching and Learning were referenced.

6.0 MANAGEMENT REPORT

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 06 Management Report
- Paper 06.01 Safeguarding Report
- Paper 06.02 Update on Marketing Strategy
- Paper 06.03 Report on Externally Funded Projects
- Paper 06.04 Response to Queries Raised in relation to Report on Externally Funded Projects
- Paper 06.04b Additional Information
- Paper 06.05 Report on Completion Rates of the GDPR Corporate Module
- Paper 06.06 A Fit for Purpose and Relevant FE Curriculum
- Paper 06.07 DfE FE Strategic Context Presentation
- Paper 06.08 FE in SWC Discussion Paper
- Paper 06.09 Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy FE and Work Based Learning
- Paper 06.09b Learning Teaching Assistants Activity Report
- Paper 06.10 Learning Resource Centre Policy

- Paper 06.11 Procedure for the Promotion of Positive Student Behaviours
- Paper 06.12 Student Attendance Policy.

6.1 Strategic Curriculum Review

Ref: Management Report Section 1.0

Mr McNamee referenced the declining enrolments as illustrated in Table 1 in paper 06 and highlighted the priorities listed to address this downward trajectory in FE, Higher Education (HE) and Work Based Learning (WBL). He also commented on the negative impact of cost of living increases on part-time enrolments and on the opportunities presented through the pending introduction of All Age Apprenticeships.

6.2 Further Education Leavers Survey 2021-22

Ref: Management Report Section 2.0

Referring to Table 3 in paper 06, Mr McNamee noted the overall reduction in success rates and explained that improvement actions to increase the success outcomes across schools will be detailed in the Whole College Quality Improvement Plan.

6.3 Update on Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Ref: Management Report Section 3.0

It was noted that teaching, learning and assessment had been covered during the Quality Unit Report.

6.4 Social Inclusion

Ref: Management Report Section 4.0

The meeting was informed of the establishment of a project team to manage the resourcing implications of the contraction of the College's social inclusion offer due to the discontinuation of access to European Social Fund (ESF) programmes.

6.5 Prioritising Business Need

Ref: Management Report Section 5.0

Mr McNamee explained that work is ongoing in relation to balancing resources in the Digital Learning, Data Services and Technical Services teams to ensure that an efficient and effective service is provided to students and staff.

6.6 Economic Development

Ref: Management Report Section 6.0

The Committee was apprised of the popularity of fully funded training programmes such as those funded through DfE's Flexible Skills Fund and of the opportunity to enhance part-time FE and HE enrolments through the promotion of this fund in January 2023.

6.7 Update on Implementation of 2022/23 Annual Development Plan / Report Cards

Ref: Management Report Section 7.0

Mr McNamee commented on the close monitoring of enrolments at monthly Data & Performance meetings and of the targets set at faculty and school level.

6.8 Safeguarding

Ref: Management Report Section 8.0 and Paper 06.01

Mr McNamee commented on the priority placed on safeguarding, particularly in light of the effect of the isolation encountered by young people during the pandemic. He also spoke of the need for an enhanced process to enable relevant safeguarding information to be shared between schools and colleges, subject to student consent.

Members spoke of the excellent pastoral care provided by the College and of the need to update internal marketing of available resources and support. The significant support offered to young people through the College's social inclusion provision was highlighted and assurance was provided on the College's commitment to these programmes and their participants until the funding expires.

6.9 Additional Items

Ref: Management Report Section 9.0 and Papers 06.02, 06.03, 06.04 & 06.05

The updates provided in paper 06 on the Marketing Strategy, the Sustainability Strategy and Externally Funded Projects were noted and the Committee was advised of the 63% rate of staff completion of the Data Protection (GDPR) corporate training module.

6.10 Policy Reviews

Ref: Management Report Section 10 and Papers 06.09, 06.09b, 06.10, 06.11 & 06.12

It was noted that the Policy and Procedure for the Promotion of Positive Student Behaviours had both been approved at the Governing Body at its 16 November 2022 meeting.

AGREED: that the following policies be recommended to the Governing Body for approval:

- **Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy**
- **Learning Resource Centre Policy**
- **Student Attendance Policy.**

A list of policies recommended to the Governing Body for approval is included in Appendix A.

7.0 REVIEW OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 07 Outstanding Actions.

Dr Quinn led a review of the outstanding actions listed in paper 07.

Mrs McCauley reported that a number of meetings had been held to review and amend the Committee's Terms of Reference and that a draft for consideration would be presented to the Committee at its January 2023 meeting.

A revised list of outstanding actions is included in Appendix B.

ACTION: Revised committee Terms of Reference to be presented to the January 2023 committee meeting.

8.0 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Mr Daly acknowledged the pastoral support available to students and suggested that awareness of this may be enhanced amongst students through classroom presentations from relevant staff members.

9.0 REFLECTION ON EFFECTIVENESS OF MEETING

Members commented on the value added by the discussions held on strategic and educational matters.

Mr McNamee suggested that queries arising out of members' advance review of papers are channelled to him prior to committee meetings to enable required clarifications to be prepared.

The Committee Chair welcomed the interest shown in the Committee by members evidenced through its large membership and asked that members considering their committee membership commitments liaise with the Secretary to the Governing Body in the first instance.

The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm.

CONFIRMED AND ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING BODY AT A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 JANUARY 2023

CHAIRMAN



DATE 11/01/2023

POLICIES RECOMMENDED TO THE GOVERNING BODY FOR APPROVAL

#	Policy
1	Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy
2	Learning Resource Centre Policy
3	Student Attendance Policy

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

#	Meeting Date	Minute Ref	Action
1	19/10/2022	4.0	Presentation on the priorities of the Skills for a 10X Economy Strategy to be provided to the Governing Body.
2	19/10/2022	9.0	The Education, Quality & Performance Committee Terms of Reference to be discussed further at the November 2022 committee meeting.
	23/11/2022	7.0	Revised committee Terms of Reference to be presented to the January 2023 committee meeting.
3	19/10/2022	11.0	Updated paper on the regional economic profile to be provided at the March 2023 committee meeting to incorporate additional data available at that time including the 2021 census statistics.