

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON TUESDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 17.30 VIA TELECONFERENCE.**

**Present:**

Mr Gordon Gough (Chair)  
Mr Brian Doran (CEO)  
Mr Aaron Foy  
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  
Mr Stephen Rogan, Head of Faculty CDAC  
Mrs Carmel Murray, Head of Faculty HESC  
Mrs Elaine Nesbitt, Head of Faculty PRSE  
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 17.34.

Mr Gough welcomed all parties to the meeting.

**FACULTY PRESENTATIONS**

- **Faculty of Professional Services PRSE**

Mrs Nesbitt presented the PRSE faculty action plan, advising on a shortfall in enrolment and informing that some students have dropped out of their courses in curriculum areas for hair, beauty and hospitality due to industry closures. Mrs Nesbitt informed on the late payment of enrolment fees.

Mrs Thompson arrived at the meeting at 17.36.

Mrs Nesbitt advised on the Covid impact within the faculty and informed that out of the 220 FT FE students affected by College closure, 207 returned in August 2020 to complete adaptive assessments.

Mrs Nesbitt advised on the introduction of new courses and informed on school partnerships. She stated that insufficient guidance and support from CCEA has been a major problem in delivering curriculum, and worsened by the closure of the hospitality and beauty industry.

Mrs Nesbitt provided an update on apprenticeships, budget planning and health and safety risk assessments and informed on practices in place to support staff.

Mrs Bradley arrived at the meeting at 17.44.

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

Mr Rogan presented the CDAC faculty action plan and informed on the introduction of four new HLAs and Covid-19 impact.

<b>ACTION BY WHOM</b>

Mr Rogan informed on the plans for the virtual opening day, the success of the recent pantomime and advised on the impact to social inclusion. He informed on progression targets, business engagement, the marketing strategy and advised on an increase of part time A level provision.

#### •Faculty of Health & Science HESC

Mrs Murray presented the HESC action plan, providing an update on enrolments and informing on an increase in FE FT.

Mrs Murray advised on the validation with OU and the Southern Trust to provide qualifications in Nursing and spoke of the various opportunities for progression. She informed on the revalidation with QUB for the foundation degree in Early Childhood Studies and progression on validation with OU for MSc English and History and BSc Hons in Applied Industrial Science.

Mrs Murray informed on provision for the virtual open day, a review of delivery options, staff support and upskilling.

Mr Doran informed that the Craigavon new build project would be uniquely purposed to deliver the high demand in Nursing qualifications.

Mr Gough thanked the Heads of Faculty for their comprehensive presentations.

Mr McCormick stated that he attended the three day ICAS virtual conference in Arts & Humanities and congratulated staff on a well-run and informative forum.

Prof O'Hare stated his pleasure with the increase in curriculum portfolio and engagement with stakeholders.

Mr Kilpatrick thanked the Faculty Heads for their presentations and advised that the BUTE presentation has been deferred. He informed Members that Mr Bronte's father has recently passed away. Members asked that their condolences are forwarded to Mr Bronte.

Mrs Nesbitt, Mr Rogan and Mrs Murray left the meeting at 18.22.

#### **A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from the Boardroom Apprentice, Mr McGuigan.

#### **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 1 DECEMBER 2020**

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2020.

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

#### **A04. MATTERS ARISING**

None.

#### **A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

None.

#### **A06. COLLEGE SELF EVALUATION AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Mr Kilpatrick referred Members to the College Self Evaluation and Quality Improvement Plan and spoke to an important document reflective of a difficult year. He advised that the paper will be reviewed by the district investigator prior to being submitted to the Department on 26 February.

Mrs Davison advised that the paper takes its structure from the ETI framework and aims to answer key questions, including safeguarding and measures addressing support in place for remote working.

Mrs Davison referred Members to the table detailing the summary of overall effectiveness and informed that outcomes for learners and quality of provision has scored very good, and leadership and management is recorded as outstanding.

Mrs Davison referred Members to the data on overall quality of programmes evaluated and the faculty review. She advised on the outcome of ETI evaluations conducted throughout the period and referred Members to the review of performance, key strengths and areas for improvement.

The Committee noted the College's response to the Covid-19 global pandemic, acknowledging that since March 2020 staff have had to overcome and embrace new ways of delivering education, training and assessment. Members reviewed the information regarding communication with stakeholders and reactivity to health, safety and wellbeing.

Mrs Davison referred the Committee to the outcome of the online student survey, noting good benchmarking data on achievement and standards, and provided information on faculty retention rates.

Mr Turner remarked on an informative and comprehensive report.

In response to a query from Mrs Thompson regarding areas for improvement in Training for Success, Mrs Bradley advised on the redevelopment of WBL recovery plans and advised on improvement in skills for work.

Mrs Davison referred Members to the data on tracked destination.

The paper was approved on proposal from Mr Turner and seconded by Mr McCormick.

#### **A07. COVID – QUALIFICATIONS UPDATE**

Mr Kilpatrick confirmed that exams have been cancelled for the 2020-2021 academic year and that staff are working with the regulator and awarding organisations to produce calculated grades and protect the integrity of the qualifications.

Mr Doran reminded Members that Minister Weir has released a statement pertaining to the cancelling of GCSE, A levels and certain occupational studies exams and advised that further guidance on vocational qualifications from DfE and other Awarding

Organisations is expected following the Ofqual consultation on alternative assessment. Mr Doran stated that the College had to work with numerous awarding organisations and the consistency and timeliness of information remains a concern.

#### **A08. TRAINEESHIPS**

- **Areas and qualifications**
- **Blueprint document**
- **Training Plan**
- **Prospectus information**

Mr Kilpatrick referred Members to the previously circulated documentation and advised on a lot of work undertaken to agree a list of qualifications and areas of curriculum. He informed that the blueprint document has been approved, and work is ongoing to agree the training plan and traineeship prospectus.

Mr Doran confirmed that an initiative to provide additional support of £1.7m has been announced to support students with broadband costs.

#### **A09. LEVEL 2 CURRICULUM ACTION PLAN**

Mr Kilpatrick referred Members to the information on enrolment and targets.

The Committee noted the report.

#### **A10. HIGHER LEVEL APPRENTICESHIP EVALUATION**

Mrs Bradley presented the paper on Higher Level Apprenticeship Evaluation and informed that the document aims to assess performance and quality indicators, and will be submitted to the Department.

She informed that the College's HLA curriculum portfolio is growing steadily with an increase in areas of Accountancy, Applied Industrial Science, Computing and Mechatronics. Mrs Bradley confirmed that SRC continues to liaise with industry to develop capacity to support economic priorities and informed on the provision of two HLA programmes developed in partnership with Open University in Digital Construction and Digital Marketing, Advertisement and Communication.

Mrs Bradley provided detail on the impact of Covid-19 on College services. She informed on the proportion of apprentices' furloughed during the pandemic, students working remotely and the bearing on learners being able to achieve all elements of their work based learning modules.

She advised on outstanding work carried out by the SRC Business Support team resulting in an excellent professional working relationship with local employers, and advised on the success of the Big Apprenticeship Event.

Members noted the report detailing the strengths of the HLA apprenticeship provision and areas for improvement, and remarked on good retention and achievement rates.

#### **A11. CURRICULUM DIRECTORS WORKING GROUP**

Mr Kilpatrick advised on work undertaken by the Curriculum Directors Working Group, a focus on traineeships to ensure a consistent approach across the sector and collaboration with the Task and Finish Group.

The Committee noted the report.

**A12. POLICY REVIEW;**

- **Learning Support policy**
- **Admissions policy**
- **Admissions Criteria**
- **Assessment Appeals policy**
- **HE Course Closure, Suspension & Change policy**
- **Careers policy**

Mr Doran advised on minor amendments to the Admissions policy, minor alteration to the Admissions Criteria to reflect entry requirements, and minimal changes to terminology within the HE Course Closure, Suspension and Change policy. He referred to recommended changes within the Assessment Appeals policy to allow for the invoking of the extraordinary Covid Appeals policy and presented a new Learning Support policy developed in line with the Department and FE Sector. Mr Doran referred Members to recommended changes to the Careers policy.

The six policies were approved on proposal from Mr Turner and seconded by Mr McCormick.

**A13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr Doran relayed his congratulations to SRC lecturer, Mrs Marilyn Warren for having been awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours for her services to education and children.

**A14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Education Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 25 May 2021 at 17.30.

The meeting concluded at 19.28.

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**CHAIR**

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**DATE**

