

Northern Regional College

Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee held on 17 January 2018 at the Newtownabbey campus, commencing at 5.05pm.

Present: Mrs J Eve, Mr R Jay (Chair), Ms K Linden, Mr K Nelson and Prof T Scott

In Attendance: Mr D Hewitt, Mr M Higgins, Dr L Firth and Mr V Taggart
Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

36.1 Apologies

Dr Brankin and Dr McCambridge.

36.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

36.3 Terms of Reference

Consideration was given to the draft Terms of Reference with the inclusion of the right to procure specialist ad-hoc advice.

The Terms of Reference were approved.

36.4 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2017 were approved.

Proposer: Mr Nelson Seconder: Mrs Eve

36.5 Matters Arising

Committee noted information on actions arising from the previous minutes which had been completed. One action was outstanding:

(Item 35.4) Student Framework Document – to be provided for the Governing Body (GB) meeting on 24 January 2018.

Action: To be uploaded to MinutePad documents in advance of the January GB meeting.

36.6 Chair's Communication

Congratulations were offered to Mr Nelson on his award of MBE in the New Year's Honours list.

The Chair advised that his term on the Governing Body had now been extended until the end of June 2018 by the Department.

Committee noted that enhanced data protection legislation would be introduced in April/May 2018, which would affect all aspects of College activity. In line with the new rules, all email communication would be provided through the College email system from that date. IT assistance would be available for any members experiencing difficulty with electronic devices as a result.

Action: Update on GDPR to be included in the agenda for the January meeting of the GB.

The Chair made reference to the Colleges Northern Ireland (CNI) statement 'Further Education delivering educational success for all', highlighting difficulties faced by the FE sector. He also drew attention to the launch of a 'Lets do Business' programme aiming to

get business more involved with innovation. Members noted that an upcoming conference on education policy, which would take place at the Radisson Hotel on 23 January 2018, would also be relevant to these issues.

Action: Conference details to be circulated to GB members.

36.7 Correspondence

One item of correspondence had been received:

- i) College Development Planning (CDP) Process – letter outlining timeframe, process and key activities.

Committee noted that further clarification on the new reporting framework was awaited and that CDP would be monitored on the Corporate Plan going forward.

Mr Higgins reported that a Value for Money (VFM) review of the sector was also being undertaken by the Department.

In response to a member's query, Prof Scott reported that an application had been submitted to the Department, for the award of 'Learning Hub' status for business and entrepreneurship. A response was awaited.

36.8 KPI Reporting Schedule

Mr Taggart took members through the report on KPI 1 – Meeting Enrolment Targets and Achievement of Qualifications, which was broadly on target, with the exception of 'average class size', where a red status applied. Committee noted information on the NRC approach of additionality in this area; the focus on retention was also noted.

Mr Taggart summarised key information relating to KP1 2 - Improving the Quality of Education, which was on target. He updated Committee on the outcome of the recent, unannounced ETI inspection, noting that the College was on track with action plans and that no written report was required.

36.9 Minutes from Teaching and Learning Committee

Committee noted the minutes of the first meeting of the Teaching and Learning Committee, held on 27 November 2017, which had been put in place as part of governance arrangements for quality provision. Three forums had been established along with Terms of Reference which would be reviewed biennially. Members were content to note the level of student engagement in forums. Mr Taggart highlighted the appointment of a Principal Lecturer with special responsibility for Work Based Learning (WBL), as part of the business development team.

Action: Mr Taggart would update Committee on employer engagement and curriculum development at the next meeting on 14 March 2018.

36.10 Feedback from Departmental Challenge Sessions

Mr Taggart presented his report on departmental challenge sessions and highlighted key points including enrolments, progression opportunities, retention, success, lecturer utilisation and staff sickness.

Committee noted that Mr Irvine Abraham, Internationalisation Manager, would be invited to give an update on the development of the internationalisation strategy at the March meeting of Committee.

36.11 Curriculum Strategy

Mr Taggart introduced this report highlighting its importance as a planning framework for new courses, a reference document for staff and a tool to monitor progression pathways. This internal document would be owned by the CMT, endorsed by the SLT and made available for reviews etc.

Committee welcomed the comprehensive strategy document.

36.12 Feedback on recent ETI inspection

Information had been supplied as part of the KPI Reporting Schedule update above.

36.13 QAA Review

Dr Laura Firth presented an update on the Annual Provider Review (APR) including the role of the GB and the action plan in preparation for the Quality Review Visit (QRV), which would commence on 1 May 2018. It was noted that the review body would want to meet with some GB members and required that one member be appointed as HE Governor. Further information would be provided closer to the time.

Mr Aaron Ballantine, Head of Department and Ms Tara Millar, Assistant Head of Department, Science and Services, were identified as having special responsibility for HE coordination. They would be invited to attend the Education Committee on 14 March 2018, when the submission would also be presented.

Committee agreed that the Chair be designated as HE Governor. Mr Jay confirmed that he would meet with the coordinator, Dr Firth and lead student, Jordan Shields, before the next meeting of the Education Committee.

Action: Dr Firth would request the most recent commentary from ETI.

36.14 Any Other Business

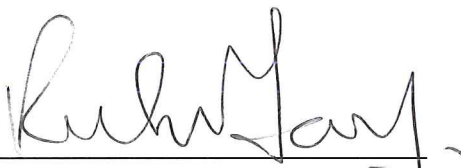
Committee were advised that the College Open Days would take place across all campuses on Saturday 3 February 2018, with evening events taking place week commencing Monday 5 February. All Governors were encouraged to publicise these events.

Action: Details on all Open Day events would be circulated to the GB.

36.15 Date of next meeting

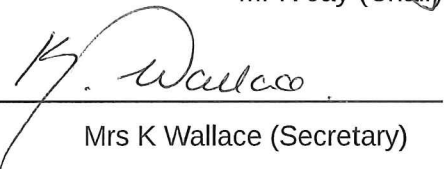
It was noted that the next meeting of the Education Committee would be held on Wednesday 14 March 2018 in Farm Lodge, Ballymena to commence at 4.00pm.

The meeting concluded at 7.10pm.



Mr R Jay (Chair)

Date 14/3/2018
14 March 2018



Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

