

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Improvement Committee held on Wednesday 27 January 2016 at the Farm Lodge Ballymena Campus **commencing at 4.00 pm.**

Present Mr A Kennedy (Chair), Professor Scott (Principal) and Mrs I Allison

In Attendance Dr S Brankin, Mr M Higgins and Mr J Hunter

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

3.1 Apologies

An apology was received from the chair Ms McKinney. In the absence of Ms McKinney, Mr Kennedy chaired the meeting.

3.2 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3.3 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2015 were approved.

3.4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

3.5 Monitoring Report – Implementation of Strategic Improvement Plan

The Committee monitored progress in relation to KPI 1 (Recruitment), KPI 5(Finance), KPI 7 (Staff), KPI 10 (Partnerships) and KPI 11 (Diversifying Income)

The Committee received an update from the Principal and reviewed the KPIs in turn:

KPI 1 (Recruitment) is amber as the College has met its full-time FE and HE targets but has still to reach part-time and ES targets. The Principal reported that projections have been calculated to the year-end, taking into account retention rates, which show a potential shortfall of 235 FLUs. The Curriculum Management Team has reviewed this position and has identified a number of actions to mitigate against these potential shortfall. TS said that in the circumstances it would be even more important to retain enrolments. She emphasised the importance of achieving accurate data. Dr Brankin added that there was a need to focus on technology to capture enrolments and generate and update attendance registers;

KPI 5 (Financial sustainability)is green; the staff costs/income ratio is lower than expected as a result of higher than anticipated recurrent grant income as well as lower than anticipated expenditure particularly on staff costs. It was noted that the College is projecting to make a loss of £346k at the end of the financial year. This is slightly less than the projected loss in the initial budget of £415k and results from lower than projected staff costs post VES Tranche 3. It was noted that there would be increased expenditure in the coming months on IT (£300k) and on repairs to the roofing at Newtownabbey.

KPI 7 (Engaging & Empowering staff) is amber; two of the five targets have been achieved, one is progressing well and action is being taken in relation to the remaining two relating to completion and self-assessment of CPD. It was noted that targets have been met with regard to leadership and management training; self assessment of CPD and industry placements; and a Head of HR (Mr D Hewitt) has also been appointed. It was further noted that three additional mandatory staff development days have been planned, two in February and one in August.

KPI 10 (Strategic Partnerships) is shown as green; the College has made good progress by entering in to 6 strategic partnerships in the year to date out of a target of 8.

KPI 11 (Diversifying income) is amber; the Governing Body noted that the College is projecting a 1% below target for income diversification and plans are being made to mitigate the erosion of the target. Dr Brankin stated that the diversification of income would come from generating a higher level of business activity with industry in the region. This involves the matching of capabilities of the College with the business needs of the area. He indicated that there were two primary threads of activity at present:

a) A portfolio of propositions is being developed detailing what the College can bring to the market and sell to businesses;

b) The College has been investigating the use of Customer Relationship Systems to manage customer contacts, customer needs and sale leads. It has been decided to opt for a SPICE platform currently in use at SERC.

The Committee noted the refreshing change of culture in the College. More open plan offices were planned in order to break down barriers and to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and competence among staff.

3.6 Any Other Business

As there was no further business the **meeting concluded at 5.05 pm**

3.7 Next Meeting

The Chair reminded the Committee that the next meeting was scheduled for 30 June 2016 at the Newtownabbey Campus

Mr A Kennedy, Chair

Date

Mr J A Hunter, Secretary