

Northern Regional College

Education Committee

Minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 03 October 2022 on Microsoft Teams.

Present: Mr K Chambers (Chair), Dr P Graham, Ms J Hemphill, Mr M Higgins, Mr G McAllister, Mr S Shevlin

In Attendance: Mr A Ballantyne, Mrs C Brown, Ms S Caddick (59.2), Ms H Hampsey, Mr S McCartney (59.2), Dr L Monteith, Mr M Murray, Mr P Wallace
Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

Condolences: The Chair noted sincere condolences to the Royal Family on the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

59.1 Apologies/Welcome

The Chair thanked everyone for agreeing to the new date for the meeting as a result of the postponement. He advised that Mr Donal MacAuley had now moved to Resources Committee and extended thanks to him for his time on the Education Committee.

The Chair welcomed Ms Julie Hemphill who would take up the position on the Education Committee.

Apologies were noted for Mr Laverty and Ms Small.

59.2 Northern Plus Team

The Chair welcomed Mr McCartney and Ms Caddick who were in attendance to update members on the work of the Northern Plus team.

Members heard that the focus of the programme was on student attendance, retention and overall achievement and noted verbal examples of these. Ms Caddick outlined the work of the programme's achievement coaches on social interaction, workshops, exit interviews and peer mentoring.

Mr Higgins thanked the team for their valuable contributions and the positive impact they had on retention.

Reporting a total cost to the College of around £100k, Mr McCartney highlighted the practical benefits of Northern Plus in coordinating the approach to helping students on their career path and pursuit of objectives.

Mr Ballantyne confirmed the appreciation of curriculum staff for the work of the team and highlighted significant benefits for the students.

Members considered that the service represented value for money and congratulated the team on the work being carried out.

59.3 Declaration of Interests

None.

59.4 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The draft minutes of the meetings held on 11 May 2022 were approved subject to a minor amendment.

Proposer: Dr Graham Seconder: Mr Higgins

59.5 Matters Arising

Members noted that matters arising would be covered in VP Summary Report and agenda. The Chair reported that no students had been disadvantaged as a result of the previously advised Translink strike which was due to take place on 17 May but subsequently cancelled.

59.6 Chair's Communications / Correspondence

The Chair highlighted that a number of updates had been added to agenda items as a result of the meeting having been postponed from 14 September.

59.7 Teaching & Learning Committee Minutes

The Teaching & Learning Committee minutes of 23 August 2022 were taken as read with key points included in the VP Report.

59.8 VP Teaching & Learning Report

Mrs Brown took Committee through her report and highlighted a number of significant issues including, in particular the new T&L Directorate structure and appointments. Members noted progression to the WorldSkills finals in Luxemburg by 2 students of the College; award of a J P McManus scholarship to a former student; and appointment of College lecturer, Ms Karla Kosch, as Deputy Chief Expert in Robotics for EuroSkills 2023. Recognition of Ms Kosch's expertise had been received from the Department.

Mrs Brown advised Committee that the elected Student President, Ms Amy Morrow, would take up position on the Education Committee once formally appointed as governor by DfE.

Committee heard that the Principal Lecturer for entrepreneurship had been appointed and planned to take up her position mid-December. Also that confirmation of funding for a HE in FE advertising campaign had been received and would be shaped through the Sector Marketing Managers Group.

Mrs Brown drew members' attention to the addendum paper attached to the report which reflected changes following postponement of the original meeting date. In particular she highlighted the importance of information on the Whole College SER for 2020-22 and QIP 2022-24. The draft SER/QIP would be considered at the November meeting of Committee.

Members noted that Dr Graham was keen to progress an Intellectual Property group for the sector and that development of a policy would be taken through Resources Committee

The Principal placed on record his thanks to Ms Monteith and Ms Hilary Hagan for taking forward the TAG audit and referenced the benefits accruing to the College from the investment in robotics.

59.9 Enrolments Monitoring and Learner Outcomes

The Chair welcomed the HODs to the meeting. He congratulated Ms Hampsey on her appointment as Assistant VP T&L; Ms Monteith as Head of T&L Excellence; and Mr Wallace as temporary Head of HSC&A.

Ms Hampsey presented the report as reflecting the position at 23 September and updated members on changes to enrolment figures at 30 September. Overall the College was in much the same position as last year, no bounce back following Covid and this was representative of the FE sector position.

HODs outlined areas of challenge and the potential for future change and members considered and debated the rate of conversion from students showing interest in courses to actual recruitment.

Updated enrolment figures would be provided to the Governing Body meeting on 5 October with a verbal update on any significant change.

59.10 Student Experience

Ms Monteith presented the overall summary report for 2021/22. Committee noted positive uptake in class representation; decline in survey participation over recent years, largely due to Covid; and actions being taken to increase engagement.

Members noted that students were generally content with the student service and management of expectations.

59.11 Annual Safeguarding Report

Ms Monteith spoke to the report and advised on arrangements made over the summer period for students to pay their respects to 2 former class members.

Members noted a consistent downward trend in safeguarding incidents with the January 2022 audit having returned Satisfactory assurance.

Members commended Ms Monteith on the quality of both the staff training carried out and the work undertaken with students.

Mr Higgins advised that Internal Audit had identified areas of good practice whilst conducting the safeguarding audit and these were identified within the internal audit annual report.

59.12 Complaints Report

Members considered the 2021/22 summary report and noted that an increase of 39% in formal complaints since the previous year related mainly to an issue with facilities, which had now been addressed.

Ms Monteith stated her intention to do awareness training for staff on reporting and dealing with complaints and noted Mr Shevlin's suggestions on analysis of figures and clarity of definitions going forward.

59.13 Any Other Business

Dr Graham would be attending a Department of the Taoiseach's Shared Island Unit conference on comparison of North-South education and training systems on 12 October and would provide feedback at the next meeting.

The Chair thanked staff members for the time and effort put into preparing very detailed and constructive papers for the meeting.

59.14 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 17 November in Farm Lodge.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 5.57pm.

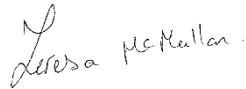
Mr K Chambers



Date 16 November 2022

(Chair)

Mrs T McMullan



(Acting Secretary)