

Northern Regional College

Education Committee

Minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 13 September 2021 on Microsoft Teams, commencing at 5.00pm.

Present: Mrs I Allison (Chair), Mr K Chambers, Ms A Close, Ms A Dynes, Dr P Graham, Mr M Higgins, Mr D Macauley, Mr T Montgomery

In Attendance: Mr I Abraham (54.1-54.9), Mr A Ballantyne (54.1-54.4), Mr B Bryson (54.1-54.13), Mr R Bolt, Mrs C Brown, Dr L Firth, Ms H Hampsey (54.1-54.5), Ms D Kerr (54.1 – 54.11), Mr M Murray (54.1-54.5), Ms J Small

Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

54.1 Apologies and Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the new educational year, especially the new academic staff governor, Mr Macauley.

Congratulations were extended to Ms Close on her reappointment as Student President.

There were no apologies.

54.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

54.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2021 were approved.

Proposer: Mr Chambers Seconder: Ms Dynes

54.4 Matters Arising

Members noted that the Ulster University re-approval process was now complete and all other matters arising relating to curriculum planning, visit to QUBIS facility and HE return to DfE 2021/22, would be covered under agenda items.

It was agreed that reports from staff members would be brought forward on the agenda.

54.9 ETI Entrepreneurship Hub Evaluation

Committee noted correspondence received advising that a 2-day ETI evaluation would take place in October, date to be confirmed, and consideration was given to 11 areas of interest outlined in the summary communication. Mr Abraham presented an outline action plan for the evaluation and members were advised of the key aspects of interest for the Governing Body's participation in the review. The Chair noted that her involvement would be required over the

2-day visit by ETI once dates were known. A member of Committee was sought to take part in a working sub group.

Action: Dr Graham was nominated as Governor representative on the Entrepreneurship Hub sub group and second GB representative for the visit, as required.

54.8 Enrolment 21/22 Update

Ms Kerr and Mr Bolt presented current figures for enrolments to 13 September alongside forecast figures and gave an update on challenges, mitigating actions and plans to develop enrolment moving forward.

Committee heard about a significant drop in figures across the sector and resultant pressure on College HE funding, whilst being reassured on the positive uptake of new provision, aligned to industry demands, being put in place by the College.

Members were informed that a sectoral review of HE in FE provision was going through final stages and noted the need to extend communication and appreciation of the value of FE provision, especially to schools.

54.11 College Development Plan

The CDP Progress Report at July 2021 was taken as read. Ms Kerr advised that a reduced MaSN proposal had been submitted to DfE and, whilst the risk position remained unchanged from the April report, it was hoped that the extension of the employer incentive scheme would have a positive impact on Apps NI placements. Members noted that the CDP Progress Report would be reflected in the annual accounts.

Members thanked Ms Kerr for her report and were content with outcomes given the challenges of the past year.

54.5 Chair's Communication / Correspondence

Three items of correspondence had been received and were noted:

- CDP Commissioning Memo 2021/22: progress on the first draft is on track for submission by 24 September 2021.
- Staff Resumption Guidance: staff and students have now returned to face-to-face teaching, adhering to current guidelines. Students are being encouraged to avail of the mobile vaccination centres currently set up in the College and a move to blended learning will be considered if necessary. Further update from the Executive is awaited.

Mr Higgins outlined costs and extra work resulting from Covid-19.

Action: A formal message of thanks to be sent to all staff on behalf of governors, to acknowledge their work over the past 18 months.

- MaSN update.

54.6 Minutes from Teaching & Learning Committee

The minutes of the Teaching & Learning (T&L) Committee meeting on 18 June 2021 were taken as read.

54.7 Teaching & Learning Report

Mrs Brown spoke to her report and highlighted key points including staff and student achievements; successful training and Teacher Assessed Grading (TAG) process resulting in a small number of requests for Centre review/appeal; low attrition rates resulting from intervention work carried out over the past year.

Members highlighted the importance of maximising publicity around staff and student achievements and noted that CCEA would be using the College as a model case study.

Committee extended their congratulations to staff for the work and support provided to students, and emphasised the necessity for decisions made by governors to be trickled down throughout the organisation to all staff.

Action: Mrs Brown would pass members' congratulations and best wishes for success to all awards finalists.

54.10 Safeguarding Report

The annual Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Report 2020-21 was considered. Dr Firth summarised the contents of the report and highlighted a low level of risk in relation to safeguarding, given the policies and procedures in place. A good working relationship with the ETI representative was noted.

Members noted the recommendations contained in the report including a proposal to appoint 7 achievement coaches, in line with best practice, which would be included in the College Covid-19 bid to DfE for additional support.

Mr Higgins stressed the responsibility of all staff in carrying out the safeguarding role and undertaking relevant training updates.

54.12 Whole College Quality Improvement Plan

Mr Bryson presented the WC QIP 2020/21 review August 2021 and the associated action tracker. Members noted no red actions, with amber actions being monitored. Mr Bryson advised on reporting issues with the LMS, progress on which would be considered by the sector reporting group, chaired by Ms Small.

54.13 Complaints Report

Mr Bryson spoke to this report and drew members' attention to the low number of complaints which were mainly connected to course related issues. Committee heard that lessons learned from follow up investigations had now been applied.

Mr Higgins reported that training in investigations for staff and senior managers would take place over the autumn and would be extended to any interested governors, following on from comments recorded in performance reviews.

54.14 Student Experience Report

Committee considered this report summarising all student body events over the past year. Dr Firth acknowledged Ms Close's proactive work as Student President and outlined the activities of the Student Experience Forum, which had been introduced last year as a result of an audit recommendation. Dr Firth reported very positive engagement with student members who had provided excellent feedback on issues during the year.

Ms Close confirmed that she was happy with the summary provided and members thanked her for her work on behalf of the student body and for a comprehensive report.

54.15 Any Other Business

No other business.

Mr Macauley affirmed the contents of foregoing reports and was content with their accuracy.

54.16 Date of next meeting

10 November 2021 on Microsoft Teams.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.54pm

Mrs I Allison



Date: 10 November 2021

(Chair)

Mrs K Wallace



(Secretary)