

Northern Regional College

Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee held on 30 September 2020 on Microsoft Teams, commencing at 4.55pm.

Present: Mrs I Allison (Chair), Mr K Chambers, Ms A Dynes, Dr K McCambridge, Mr T Montgomery, Prof T Scott

In Attendance: Mr A Ballantyne (49.8), Mrs C Brown, Ms H Hampsey (49.8), Mr M Higgins, Mr B McGahan, Mr D Russell (49.8), Ms J Small, Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

49.1 Apologies

None.

49.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

It was agreed to take item 49.8 next on the agenda.

5.57pm Mr Ballantyne, Ms Hampsey and Mr Russell joined the meeting.

49.8 College Development Plan and Education Report Card 2

Ms Small presented the CDP and Education Report Card 2020/21 noting changes to the prescribed format and the revised submission date. Ms Small explained the difference in calculation of target numbers from that applied for the 2019/20 report, and gave an overview of activity for the key areas of FE full time, HE, TfS, Apps NI and part-time.

Mrs Brown stated that the update on enrolment numbers, which would be given by Heads of Department (HODs), would present a snapshot of enrolment figures at this time. A more focused analysis of enrolments for the academic year would be brought to the November meeting of Committee.

Ms Hampsey, Mr Russell and Mr Ballantyne outlined activity for their relevant departments, noting a downturn in numbers due to social distancing requirements; cancellation of a number of courses due to low recruitment; and efforts made to work with other colleges/campuses to retain courses wherever possible.

Prof Scott explained the College's priority for the current year was to retain as many full-time students as possible, with recruitment continuing for another 2-weeks due to the delayed commencement of the academic year as a result of Covid-19. Ms Small outlined focus on delivery of 20 'Innovate Us' projects this academic year.

Mr Higgins outlined the Department's funding model for FE and the long-term effect of falling enrolment and qualifications on same. Members noted that the annual bilateral meeting with the Department would take place on 15 October this year.

5.30pm Mr Ballantyne, Ms Hampsey and Mr Russell left the meeting.

49.3 Appointment of Committee Vice-Chair

Members agreed the appointment of Mr Montgomery as Vice-Chair of the Education Committee.

49.4 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2020 were approved.

Proposer: Mr Montgomery Seconder: Ms Dynes

49.5 Matters Arising

None.

49.6 Chair's Communication

Members considered and accepted the proposed changes to the Committee Terms of Reference and noted the indicative workplan, based on the normal academic year. Members noted that the workplan for the current academic year altered from this as a result of changes to submission dates for various documents. SLT would review meeting dates to ensure alignment with the amended workplan.

In response to a question from Mr Chambers, Prof Scott explained how benchmarking was applied to FE colleges. She confirmed that links with professional and technical bodies were being explored for new provision.

The revised Terms of Reference were adopted.

49.7 Correspondence

Members noted the request by the Department for submission of the FE QIP along with a number of guidance documents from ETi.

49.9 Curriculum Update

Mrs Brown spoke to her report and outlined key topics including changes to curriculum, update on calculated grades and outcome of assessment appeals to date in relation to final grades. Members discussed the impact of deferred assessments on students and Mrs Brown advised that no final year students had been affected. Members noted information on arrangements in place to retain and promote internal HE provision.

Committee were advised that future focus for the business curriculum would be identification of a suite of programmes that provided progression pathways from L1 upwards, in response to business needs.

Ms Small advised Committee that the slight difference between CDP numbers and those shown in the curriculum update were a result of timing differences in calculation of totals for the 2 reports.

The Chair congratulated the curriculum team for the low level of student appeals and a well managed process.

ACTION: Totals in the interim report would be updated and the report re-issued.

49.10 SER/QIP

Ms Small took members through the WC QIP review noting progress against actions from the 2019/20 QIP.

Ms Small referred members to the Project Initiation Document (PID) and advised that the new SER QIP for the current year was now being initiated. She outlined revised timelines for the 2020/21 process and reported that the College was on track to achieve the revised submission date.

An update would be presented at the Education Committee in January and then to the Governing Body.

49.11 Any Other Business

None.

49.12 Date of next meeting

SLT would revise the Schedule of Committee meetings to ensure alignment with amended submission timelines.

ACTION: The Secretary would circulate the new meetings schedule to Committee when available.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.07pm

Mrs I Allison



Date: 10 November 2020

(Chair)

Mrs K Wallace



(Secretary)