
MINUTES OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, STRAND ROAD CAMPUS, ON MONDAY 12 MAY 2008 AT 4.00P.M.

PRESENT: Prof F Monds (Chair)
Miss E Cavanagh (from 4.15pm)
Mr S Murphy (Director)
Mr A Rainey
Mr E Beattie (ex-officio)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr C Morrison (Assistant Director, Curriculum)
Mr D McClelland (Secretary)

5.1 APOLOGIES

Apology was received from Dame Geraldine Keegan. The Director advised that Mr Kinnaird (Assistant Director, Client Services) was unable to be present due to a business commitment in England.

5.2 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10 MARCH 2008

It was proposed by Mr Murphy seconded by Mr Rainey and agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

5.3 MATTERS ARISING

4.3 (3.3) (2.5) Academic Board. The Director reported that, because of impending staff structural changes, the first meeting of the Board had not yet taken place. The Chair recommended that, even if structures were not completely resolved, it would be useful to have an initial meeting before the end of the term.

4.6 College Development Plan (Part 2). The Director reported that there were no serious concerns over this year's plan. He indicated that DEL was intending to allow a more flexible arrangement for next year but that he felt that its timing schedule for returns did not contribute to effective planning. The Chair requested the Director and Secretary to detail key dates and Committee responsibilities in relation to the CDP cycle.

4.7 China Development Proposal. The Assistant Director reported that tender documents were being prepared. He also indicated that a strategy for marketing FE (NI) abroad was being developed through the auspices of the British Council. The Chair suggested that it would be helpful to be alert to these developments in relation to our own proposal.

4.8 ETI Inspection of Higher Education in Further Education. The Assistant Director reported on a number of initiatives having been taken particularly in connection with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). He considered that there were job opportunities in these fields but that there was little uptake. Members felt that it was important to continue to actively promote STEM programmes.

5.4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chair referred again to the Committee considering key strategic themes on a rolling basis and that it would be helpful to have these planned in advance for meetings during the in-coming

academic year. The Director suggested a number of topics which could be included on the agenda of future meetings.

5.5 POLICY ON TEACHING AND LEARNING (Ref: Paper EC5.5)

The Assistant Director outlined the draft policy document which he said was intended to focus on the teaching and learning needs of students. Members expressed their appreciation of its contents and suggested that, in addition, the following should be included

- A statement on the specific support provided for students from ethnic minorities
- Common areas should be grouped together
- Persons with responsibility for ensuring implementation of the differing aspects of the policy should be clearly defined
- An outline of how the policy will be communicated to students
- A review period for the policy should be stated
- A commitment to communicate the College's Teaching and Learning ethos, approach and achievements to the wider community.

Subject to these amendments it was agreed to recommend that the Policy on Teaching and Learning be adopted by the Governing Body.

5.6 QUALITY ASSURANCE

5.6.1 Investors in People (Ref: Paper EC5.6.1)

The Director outlined the proposal to work towards the IIP standard which he indicated would, for the moment, be limited to involving non-teaching staff due to current industrial action by teaching staff. Following advice from DEL it was suggested that an implementation plan with a timescale of 12 to 15 months be set which included various milestones to be achieved during this period. Members suggested that

- It would be helpful to have access to the initial baseline assessment being used
- Reports should be made at each milestone stage
- There would be interest in the project by all members of the Governing Body.

The Director indicated that it was intended to appoint a manager for quality who would report to the Assistant Director (Client Services).

5.6.2 Retention and Achievement Rates (Ref: Paper EC5.6.2)

In introducing the item the Director made the following comments

- Data in tables is based on the CDP format required by DEL
- Targets set need to be achievable
- Disengaged can lower figures
- Need to work at increasing the 'achievement rate'.

Members considered that

- Format was appropriate but that it would be useful to see figures at a lower level. The Director agreed to divide the data into 4 or 5 curricular areas and provide equivalent statistics
- Benchmarking reports year on year and with other colleges would be helpful.

5.7 MINUTES OF NW WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FORUM (Ref: Paper EC5.7)

Members noted the contents of the minutes and included the following matters in their discussion:

- It would be useful to have access to the paper being prepared under item 5 of the minute
- Need for the Governing Body to engage with the forum on an active basis to identify issues of mutual concern

5.8 CORRESPONDENCE

None.

5.9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 5.9.1 **Distance Learning.** A member enquired if any courses were provided using this method. The Director indicated that DEL has not agreed to fund such courses.
- 5.9.2 **Professional Development.** A member drew attention to the facility offered by LSDA for staff to track their own professional development. It was suggested that a commitment to continuing professional development might be included in future contracts for new employees.
- 5.9.3 **Key Performance Indicators.** A member suggested that each Committee of the Governing Body might wish to consider identifying the KPIs for which it has responsibility.

Date of next meeting: Next meeting is due on Monday 3 November 2008 at 5.30pm in Strand Road.

This being all the business the Chair closed the meeting at 5.30pm.