
MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, STRAND ROAD CAMPUS, ON MONDAY 23 MARCH 2009 AT 4.00P.M.

PRESENT: Prof F Monds (Chair)
Miss E Cavanagh (from 4.10pm)
Mr S Murphy (Director)
Mr A Rainey

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

8.1 APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

8.2 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2009

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

8.3 MATTERS ARISING

7.3 College Development Plan. The Director reported that, following the recent meeting with DEL he considered that the College's budget for 2009/10 would probably be closely based on the figures submitted by the College.

7.5 China Development. In reply to a member's question the Assistant Director (Curriculum) said that he understood that new arrangements were being put in place shortly which should ease the process for Chinese students applying for visas. The Chair remarked on the beneficial exchange of staff and students which had taken place recently.

8.4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chair commented on the balance in the agenda between routine monitoring items and those of a strategic nature.

8.5 DRAFT DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR TRAINING FOR SUCCESS (Ref: Papers EC8.5.1 to EC8.5.6)

A member expressed concern at the volume of material provided to members for this item. The Director said he would seek to ensure that a briefer paper was presented in future years. The Director explained that the Plan was separate from the College Development Plan as the work related to the training side of DEL with whom there was an annual contract. The Director indicated that there were 2 key elements addressed in the Plan

- Provision of follow-up for pre-apprentices attaining level 2
- Implications for resources in a climate of reduced employer opportunities.

The Assistant Director (Curriculum) pointed out the need for further staff development in relation to completion of self-evaluation reports and for the effective use of ILT to support training. The Director referred to the need for discussion with the awarding bodies to accept simulated work-experience as part of awards. The Chair commented that he was content that the documentation was in order and members agreed to support its submission to DEL.

8.6 QUALITY DOCUMENTS (Ref: Paper EC8.6)

The Assistant Director (Client Services) presented the document to members which he said introduced a holistic approach to quality across the organisation covering functional areas as well as academic. He described the 4 sections which would be completed on an annual basis thus having the capability of providing detailed information on College trends and performance over a wide range of issues and at differing levels. The Chair expressed his appreciation of the quality of the documentation, the good use being made of IT and the integration being attained across the college. He recommended that the Staffing Committee be made aware of these developments.

8.7 MARKETING STRATEGY (Ref: Paper EC8.7)

The Assistant Director (Client Services) outlined the Plan describing current activity of the Unit. The Chair commented that it was a helpful explanation of the work of the Unit. He also commented on the quality of the Unit's publications. In reply to a member's question the Assistant Director said that the Unit would soon be directly involved in the use of the College's web-site. Another member felt that audiences were not clearly identified in the document. The Chair expressed his appreciation of the opportunity to learn more about the activities of the Unit.

8.8 ETI INSPECTION REPORTS (Ref: Papers EC8.8.1 to EC8.8.3)

Discussion centred around the action plan for Travel and Tourism provision which had been classified as below average in a recent inspection report (presently in draft form). The Assistant Director outlined a number of strategies which would be used to address weaknesses. The Chair asked that the Governing Body be kept informed of developments. Members also noted the proposed action plans arising from the inspection of the use of ILT in FE College and for the provision of students with learning difficulties in FE Colleges.

8.9 ENROLMENT AND FLU UPDATE (Ref: Paper EC8.9)

The Director presented the data as at the end of February. He indicated that overall the FLUs for the year would probably come in near target. He pointed out the problems associated with level 1 provision, age legislation and DELs 5% ceiling on adult and community education. Members noted the update.

8.10 QAA REFLECTIVE STATEMENT (Ref: Paper EC8.10)

The Assistant Director (Curriculum) explained that the statement was required by QAA in advance of the developmental review of higher education which it would be carrying out at the College in May. In reply to a question the Assistant Director indicated that QAA would be accepting the College's self-evaluating process. Members noted the contents of the statement.

8.11 REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTION PLANS

The Assistant Director indicated that the results of action plans would be highlighted in self-evaluation reviews. The Chair felt that, as far as the Committee was concerned, reporting to it could be by exception. This was agreed.

8.12 ACADEMIC BOARD (Ref: Papers EC8.12.1 & EC8.12.2)

The Director commented favourably on the work of the Board and its willingness to take responsibility for quality and performance. He also mentioned the acceptance there had been of considering a classroom observation scheme. Members noted the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2009.

8.13 NW WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FORUM (Ref: Paper EC8.13)

Members noted the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2009. The Director reported that the Chairperson had since resigned from the Forum.

8.14 CORRESPONDENCE

None

8.15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

Date of next meeting. It was agreed to meet on Monday 1 June 2009 in Strand Road.

The meeting ended at 5.30pm.