
MINUTES OF THE NINETY SEVENTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE TRAINING ROOM, NORTHLAND BUILDING STRAND ROAD CAMPUS, COMMENCING 1330

PRESENT:

Mrs J McKeever (Governing Body Temporary Chair)
Ms M Breslin
Mr P Canavan
Mrs D Creevy
Mrs S Fisher
Mrs M Gormley
Mr L Murphy (Principal & Chief Executive)
Mr B O'Neill
Prof M Ó'Neill
Mr P Thompson
Mr F Smyth
Ms V Toland

REMOTE ATTENDANCE - GOVERNORS

Mrs C Shongo
Mr B Quinn

IN ATTENDANCE;

Ms L Watson, Director of Further Education (DfE)
Mr P McKeown, Finance Director
Dr C O'Mullan, Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards
Ms S Kelly, HR Manager
Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services
Dr D Lavery, Head of Department, Technology & Creative Industries
Mrs S Traynor, Head of Department, Training & Skills
Dr L Hegarty, Head of Department, Health Sport & Science
Ms K McCaul, Head of Department, Business & Professional Services
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

Dr C O'Mullan introduced the four Heads of Department and invited Mr D Lavery, Head of Department, Technology & Creative Industries to present to the Board.

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Presentation – Embedding Sustainability

Dr Lavery provided a Power Point presentation on the College's work on sustainability. This included work cross-college and the challenges and barriers to sustainability. A Sustainability Working Group has been established in the College. A recent appointment has been made for a Sustainability Champion to help lead the development of a Sustainability Strategy, to support embedding sustainability in the curriculum, building partnership and supporting the Sustainability Group.

Funding opportunities locally and international need to be explored further. A culture change is required for everyone to take responsibility for sustainability. The importance of embedding sustainability in the curriculum was highlighted. The Annual College Conference in January 2022 was based on 'Embedding Sustainability in the Curriculum'. Dr Laverty highlighted recent activity including student projects and plans for future work in this area.

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Presentation – Community Education

Mrs Traynor, Head of Department, Training & Skills provided a presentation on the work cross college in the area of Community Education. Mrs Traynor brought members through the many Community education partnerships the College works with including the Social Inclusion Projects – NEETS (not engaged in education, employment or training). A Community Education Working Group has been established within the College (May 2022). This group meets bi-monthly. Community Education enrolments increased by 26% in January 2023 compared with January 2022.

Mrs Traynor was pleased to report that with funding received from the National Lottery the Strabane Community Group launched a new digital hub. The College is an education partner of this group delivering a number of courses across the community. Mrs Traynor added that to enhance the provision and funding of programmes it would be beneficial to have the services of a bid writer.

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Presentation – Allied Health

Dr L Hegarty, Head of Department, Health Sport & Science presented to members information on the Allied Health Professions. The College is the FE Sector Lead for Health & Social Care. Collaboration and research take place with many local stakeholders including the Ulster University, C-TRIC and the Western Health and Social Care Trust. Dr Hegarty provided details on the College's Design Innovation for Assisted Living Centre (DIAL) in supporting innovation in areas as design, engineering and digital technologies and to promote independent living. It is a space for teaching and learning for students, professionals, carers and the community.

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Presentation – HMP Magilligan

Ms K McCaul, Head of Department, Business & Professional Services provided a PowerPoint presentation on the education provision in Magilligan. There are currently nineteen staff delivering a wide range of programmes in Magilligan. There were 558 enrolments in 2021/22 with achievement rates of 94%. Student satisfaction achieved 98%. These programmes are based on skills for employment and self-employment. The current contract completes in March 2026. The learners recently achieved many successes in the annual Koestler Awards.

Following the presentations from the Head of Department members got the opportunity for a question and answer session. The Governing Body Temporary Chair thanked the Heads of Department for their informative presentations.

Dr D Laverty, Mrs S Traynor, Dr L Hegarty and Ms K McCaul left the meeting. Members took a short break at this juncture.

Dr C O'Mullan, Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Curriculum Overview

Dr C O'Mullan provided the meeting with a brief overview of the curriculum which is the core of the College. This included the strategic context, the range of curriculum, pathways and policy, the governance framework around curriculum. The demography of enrolments showed the College had 63% of student enrolments from quintile 1 and 2 in 2021/22, the highest percentage in the Sector. Members were advised of the many cross-College multidisciplinary forums. Data on enrolment trends for 2017/18 – 2021/22 showed the reduced numbers in FE, HE and Essential Skills. Recruitment to Apprenticeship NI (APPSNI) has steadily improved over the five years from 2018/19 – 2022/23. Other challenges were noted including the lack of effective 14-19 Policy and the increase in financial constraints. Members were provided detail on the FE and Curriculum Reform at Level 2 and Level 3. The College curriculum planning cycle linking quality and performance, resourcing and budget was noted with the approach to how priorities are considered for decisions, resulting in a viable curriculum portfolio. The Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards completed her presentation with a summary of the many recent curriculum achievements.

DfE Partnership Agreement – Mr P McKeown, Finance Director

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Report 1 | DfE Commissioning Letter – December 2022 |
| Report 2 | Draft Partnership Agreement DfE V NWRC |
| Report 3 | Risk Assessment Worksheet DfE |

The Finance Director referred to previous reporting of the Draft Partnership agreement that was previously discussed at the Governing Body (November 2022, June 2022, November 2021).

The Finance Director brought members through the changes to the Draft Partnership Agreement (Report 2) and Risk Assessment Worksheet (DfE) (Report 3) noting and providing explanations to the new risk scores.

The Department's review has concluded that the College remains 'low' risk. A final review of the Annual Engagement Plan will be completed prior to sign-off. The Partnership Agreement is subject to final review by the Department and DoF before these can be formally signed-off.

Members were content with the Draft Partnership Agreement and the Risk Assessment.

The Governing Body Temporary Chair welcomed Ms L Watson, newly appointed Director of Further Education, DfE to the meeting. Just recently appointed Ms Watson was taking the opportunity to meet the staff in each College. A short discussion took place on the FE Review and the budgetary challenges ahead.

The Governing Body Temporary Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and input for the meeting. The meeting closed at 1530.

Date of next meeting: 8 March 2023

Signed; -----
Governing Body Temporary Chair

Date: 8 March 2023

APPROVED