



Governing Body – Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on **Tuesday 3rd November 2015** at **5pm** in **Meeting Room 2,**
The SPACE, Bangor Campus.

Item No	Item
1	<p><u>Attendance and Apologies</u></p> <p>Present: Mrs H Reid (Chair) , Mr K Webb, Mrs K Scott, Ms K Fraser (arrived 5.40pm), Prof A Woodside, Mr S Pollard (arrived 5.05pm)</p> <p>Apologies: Mrs D Smyth, Dr R Davison</p> <p>In Attendance: Dr M Malone (Director of Curriculum & Information Services) , Mr R Armstrong (School Partnership Manager), Mr R Duncan (Head of Pastoral Care), Mrs C Henderson (Head of Quality), Ms S Hull (Minute Recorder), Mrs H Miller (Head of Quality), Mr Paul Walsh (Campus Manager DPK & Ards)</p>
2	<p><u>Declarations of conflicts of interest</u></p> <p>The Committee members were asked for any declarations of conflicts of interest and none were noted.</p>
3	<p><u>3.1 Minutes of meeting held on 22 September 2015</u></p> <p>Professor Woodside proposed the adoption of the Minutes as a true and accurate account and these were seconded by Mrs K Scott.</p> <p><u>3.2 Minutes of confidential meeting of 22 September 2015</u></p> <p>The Principal & Chief Executive proposed the adoption of the Minutes as a true and accurate account and these were seconded by Ms K Fraser.</p>
4	<p>Matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Committee Work Programme <p>The Draft Committee Work programme was tabled. The Chair invited committee members to propose items for the programme or work for 2017/18. . It was confirmed that there would be a strategy day in January 2016 and there may be some items raised at this which could be included in the plan of work. It was noted that 5th January 2016 was the draft date given for the Strategy Away Day.</p>

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	<p>Mrs K Scott asked that entrepreneurship be the focus as all were aware of enterprise. A discussion ensued with the Director of Curriculum & Information Services explaining that these two areas were integrally linked. All agreed the proposed work programme.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEL Circular on CDP – 2016/2017 to 2018/19 <p>This document was presented for information. The Chair asked if there were any questions, none were raised, the Principal & Chief Executive added that the document followed the normal pattern set out in previous years.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p><u>Safeguarding Presentation – Mr Roger Duncan and Mr Paul Walsh (joined meeting at 5.15pm)</u></p> <p>The Principal & Chief Executive introduced R Duncan (Head of Pastoral Care) and Mr P Walsh (Campus Manager DPK & Ards) and explained their enhanced roles following the exit of Senior Management on the VES.</p> <p>The Head of Pastoral Care gave a presentation and talked about pastoral care and the changes over the past years, reporting that the SOP and policies are updated continually and that Jim Gamble ex CEOP had been to the College to do training on cyber bullying. The Chair asked about delays on Access NI checks, Head of Pastoral Care confirmed that there were no current delays. It was noted that any referrals come through instantly via the app and the Lead Designated Officer responds usually within 5-10 mins. It was reported that mental health issues have grown to more than 50% of the causes for concern within SERC. Head of Pastoral Care stated that all new staff are informed if they have any concerns over students to contact him and he will forward them to the appropriate Agencies. Head of Pastoral Care then gave some case studies of cases which have occurred in past years and how these have been dealt with. The Chair thanked the Head of Pastoral Care and Campus Manager (DPK & Ards) for the presentation and their attendance. Mr Pollard said it was reassuring that the systems were so robust and commented on the compassion shown. The Chair reported that both she and Mr Pollard are Safe Guarding Governors and wished the Head of Pastoral Care and Campus Manager (DPK & Ards) well with their careers.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p><u>Causes of Concern</u></p> <p>The Principal & Chief Executive gave an update on the causes for concern and to date there were 91. Head of Pastoral Care said that there are spikes with referrals usually around Christmas and final submission dates around Easter but between these periods there were also peaks and troughs.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the response times from Agencies were appropriate. The Head of Pastoral Care said that at times they could be a little faster but they are inundated also, adding that the PSNI are very quick. The Chair asked if they tend to bounce the issues back to the referrer. The Head of Pastoral Care said that he has dealt with a lot of social workers and he would demand they get involved to resolve the issues but this does happen occasionally. The Chair asked if all the Safe Guarding Officers would have the confidence to do this. The Principal & Chief Executive added that all issues come through Gateway to Head of Pastoral Care. Professor Woodside asked if any of the issues were drug related and was this a problem. The Head of Pastoral Care said that 1-2% are related to drug abuse but this is not a problem within SERC. Professor Woodside asked if there were any issues which could result in someone harming</p>

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others. It was reported only in relation to bullying and students being disruptive in class resulting in others being affected. Mrs K Scott referred to the online training for staff and asked if there was an opportunity for staff to discuss this. Head of Pastoral Care said that if anyone has issues they can speak to any Safe Guarding Officer and all the information is also talked about at the staff briefings throughout the year and because of this staff are more confident to deal with issues.

	2012/13	2103/14	2014/15	2015/16 (11 Sept)	2015/16 (21 Oct)
Total Referrals	286	266	259	12	79
Social Services/PSNI	33	46	32	3	13
Mental Health/Depression	51	86	129	6	48
Self-Harm	36	25	27	1	10
Thoughts of self-harm	18	39	35	4	16
Suicide	0	2	1	0	1
Homelessness	Not recorded	29	22	1	7
Bullying	Not recorded	Not recorded	15	0	4

The Campus Manager (DPK & Ards) talked about Hearts Opened Problems Eased (HOPE) where two counsellors from PIP came in and trained 6 students to be peer mentors, where they then report any issues to staff before any serious issues arise. The Principal & Chief Executive added that very often students can be aware of issues before lecturers are.

Professor Woodside asked how we compare to other Colleges. Head of Pastoral Care said he was unsure as we all adopt different processes. Professor Woodside asked if we were aware of the biggest issues within the Campuses. Head of Pastoral Care said not at present but he could detail this information. The Chair referred to the number of suicides around the Downpatrick and Newcastle area which impacted on SERC. The Principal & Chief Executive stated that ETI had looked at pastoral care within SERC and this had been graded as outstanding.

Ms K Fraser arrived at 5.40pm

Mr Duncan and Mr Walsh left meeting at 5.50pm

8 Chairman's Business

None was noted on the Agenda.

9 Enrolment Update

The Director of Curriculum & Information Services presented a paper and gave an update on enrolments and FLUs. It was noted that the Department have not changed their funding mechanism from 2006 which was having a significant financial impact. The Director of Curriculum & Information Services reported that a 2% tolerance had been introduced on the FLU target and that this will be reduced to 1% this year. The Director

	<p>of Curriculum & Information Services added that since FT students account for 87% of the FLU then any reduction in FT numbers has a significant impact on the College.</p> <p>The Director of Curriculum & Information reported on the reasons as to why FT enrolments have fallen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falling demographics • Secondary schools developing and expanding sixth forms • Competition from schools offering similar qualifications • Moving away from 2 year programmes at level 3. <p>The Director of Curriculum & Information Services advised that measures have been put in place and that any courses which under delivered last year are being reviewed, adding that DEL are now reviewing the funding and secondary schools are having a big impact on level 3 courses. The Chair thanked the Director of Curriculum & Information Services for the informative report. Professor Woodside said that while he worked in UU posters had been put up asking students to 'drop in don't drop out' and retention figures had improved so he was thinking of something proactive which may help students to stay at the College. The Director of Curriculum & Information Services explained that there are case conferences held every 6 weeks where every student is analysed with regards to attendance and learning and that SERC Extra are always looking for trends, this process was held as exemplars by ETI when inspected, adding that we are always looking at ways to improve retention. Mr Pollard said that it appears the problem is the funding model as the statistics are very good. The Director of Curriculum & Information Services explained that money is deducted and taken back by DEL under QPA for any loss of a student or a student not achieving.</p> <p>The Principal & Chief Executive advised that retention this year had gone up from 92.7% – 93.8%. Professor Woodside said that when you are not getting students enrolled then this becomes an issue. He asked what can we do as a College to get the numbers up which are being hit badly by the recession such as tourism and hospitality and construction. The Principal & Chief Executive stated that initial figures for construction applications were strong but did not turn into enrolments and the explanation could be the downturn in construction.</p> <p>The Director of Curriculum & Information Services explained that 80% of students are new applicants every year and the life span of a student's enrolment at the College moves very quickly, adding that a big issue is what the local schools are now offering. Mrs K Scott asked how SERC compared to other colleges. It was noted we were not aware of that at this stage. Professor Woodside asked if there were industrial liaison boards. The Director of Curriculum & Information Services said that every area have industrial panels and in addition we have had open evenings with Head of Quality (Mrs H Miller) adding every school is given a target each year with regard to their involvement with industry but getting businesses involved hasn't been easy. Professor Woodside suggested looking at the areas UU have scrapped such as housing and transport as there is now a void to be filled. The Director of Curriculum & Information Services said that we are currently doing all the gas and renewables and would be happy to look at any other areas, we currently have 4 YTP and 5 HLAs running and wish to expand these.</p>
10	<p><u>Collaboration Programme Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Project

	<p>The Director of Curriculum & Information Services gave an update and stated that they had been approached by DEL back in June, as there would be an underspend YTP they had suggested to DEL if they be happy to employ experts in this area. The programmes would include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work based learning• Project based learning• Blended learning <p>Currently 6 staff from the 6 Colleges have been seconded and are referred to as 'Evangelists'. The Director of Curriculum & Information Services reported that he had already meet with C Bell, M Mclvor and Y Croskery from DEL and this has been agreed. The Director of Curriculum & Information Services said that a team had visited the BASQUE region and looked at their vocational qualifications instead of professional and project qualifications and brought back their model of working. Staff have now been appointed and will be embedded within the Department, they will then report all workings through the Principals Group's and Industry, as we need to ensure they buy into this. The Director of Curriculum & Information Services reported that he gave a presentation at the recent CNI conference outlining the vision and the feedback was very positive. Mr Pollard welcomed this initiative and noted the work based learning and engagement involved.</p>
11	<p><u>School Partnership Briefing Mr R Armstrong (joined meeting at 6.22pm)</u></p> <p>The School Partnership Manager presented a report and gave an update detailing the salient points referring to Appendix 4 and stated that schools are now holding onto a higher level of students than before and this is set to continue with changing demographics also affecting our intake as outlined in the Director of Curriculum & Information Services report previously. The School Partnership Manager stated that we have better facilities than the schools but this does not stop the schools duplicating and wasting resources, adding that some students are receiving poor careers advice and are returning to school for the wrong reasons. Schools are developing their own capacity to deliver STEM and therefore we have declined from 43 to 33 schools on last year so income is also down. The School Partnership Manager pointed out that achievement rates are consistent and notable successes have been achieved in the last few years in STEM areas.</p> <p>The School Partnership Manager talked about the Entitlement Framework Funding, Pathways and Transition at KS4 and post 16 and Area Planning and reported there is no funding beyond next year and so this could help with FT students, explaining that some schools did not permit SERC to talk to their students and was conscious that the biggest influence on a young person career path are parents and teachers.</p> <p>The new Area Planning have implications as to where students will attend. The School Partnership Manager said he was unsure what schools were offering year 6 students outside the Grammar sector, adding that we are at a cross roads with regards to collaboration with schools and we need to discuss in both SERC and with other colleges the way forward looking at our PR across the whole sector. Mr Pollard thanked the School Partnership Manager for the paper and referred to the possible opportunities for SERC as a result of the area planning process.</p>

	<p>The School Partnership Manager said that the Area Planning meetings held were very sectoral never mind the FE sector and how there needs to be joined up thinking, however, it's good that FE is back at the table. Mss K Fraser said that it appears maybe there is just too much provision for post 16 students. The Schools Partnership Manager agreed that this was the case and that some of the non-selective schools are aspiring to have sixth forms and have not yet addressed the under-performance issues at 14-16.</p> <p>Mrs K Scott said that we need to see the currency of the courses offered to students and who is tracking this, adding that all sixth forms have to offer 27 choices but don't have to run them. The School Partnership Manager said we are unsure how beneficial these sixth forms are to students and even DEL are unsure what some Schools are offering.</p> <p>Professor Woodside said it appeared that Lisburn Campus is getting no opposition from local schools and as a Governor of Friends they are delighted with the collaboration with SERC. Professor added that unfortunately careers people are unsure what is out there and so don't always know what to offer. There was a discussion about careers and what they know to offer. Professor Woodside explained that W5 and Sentinus work with STEM with regards to Careers and SERC is never at the event, this is not the fault of SERC as they are never invited and that maybe we need to go through a 3rd party. Mr Pollard asked if statistics are available on the progression of students from FE, which could be comparable to the progression of students from Secondary Education. The School Partnership Manager said that we don't have this data. The Director of Curriculum & Information Services said that they would be meeting with DEL on the YTP and would hope to become an awarding body in our own right so we can change quickly and give the students and industry what they want. The Director of Curriculum & Information Services said that it must be noted that we have great relationships with the Schools and the School Partnership Manager has done a great job in ensuring this.</p> <p>The Chair said that a cohesive and comprehensive approach across DE and DEL would aid the planning and provision at 16+ The School Partnership Manager said that there are some great Principals out there and we need to have the debate on what best to give a 16 year old, so it the debate has begun which is a positive thing. The Chair thanked the School Partnership Manager for his detailed report and delivery.</p> <p>Mr Armstrong left the meeting at 7.00pm</p>
12	<p><u>Draft Whole College Self Evaluation Report</u></p> <p>Head of Quality (Mrs H Millar) reported on WCSEER which will be sent to the Department at the end of November. ETI will undertake an inspection and HE will go off to QAA. There are so many audits in addition to this and the document is in line with the CDP and give us the overall direction we plan to go. Head of Quality (Mrs H Millar) stated that in recent years we have got highest grade awarded by ETI for out WCSEER . Head of Quality (Mrs H Millar) referred to Page 11 regards enrolments and noted that this was written by and ex inspector so that was a valuable contribution. As an HE college we will be going into a review in the next 2 years. Head of Quality (Mrs H Millar) referred page 80 and noted that we have a big push on retention and that self-evaluation by teams are ongoing.</p> <p>Head of Quality (Mrs C Henderson) reported that we look at areas where retention is not good and monitor the practise and areas for improvement, referring to page 65 on</p>

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	<p>the 156 week programmes there has been good improvement. Head of Quality (Mrs C Henderson) said that we look at programmes self-evaluation at individual team level.</p> <p>The Chair asked for any comments or questions. Mr Pollard said it was a very good read and referred to page 83 where he thought there was an error with regard to the %. Head of Quality (Mrs H Millar) said she had already noted this but thanked him for pointing it out adding that the document is draft and all needs to be proof read and if there were any other inaccuracies then to forward them to her.</p> <p>The Principal & Chief Executive explained that every Unit both academic and corporate goes through the same process producing SERs and QIPs and this is then monitored through the monthly IMPMS which then feeds into the WCSER/QIP. Any teams who are weak are then tracked. A new online SER has been brought online and this process has proved to be very beneficial for all concerned. The Chair congratulated all members on the document and their excellent work.</p>
13	<p><u>Date and time of next meeting</u></p> <p>Tuesday 9 February 2016 at 5pm in Bangor Campus.</p>
14	<p><u>Close of Meeting</u></p> <p>The meeting concluded at 7.15pm</p>