

**Minutes of a meeting of the Education Committee of the Governing Body (the “Committee”)
held on Monday 20th June 2022 at 17:30, in Meeting Room, D Floor, Lisburn Campus and via
Microsoft Teams Videoconference**

Item No	Item
1.	<p>Chair’s Business:</p> <p>a) Attendance and Apologies</p> <p>Present: Mr K Webb (Principal/CEO), Mr J Mackell, Mr A Corbett, Mr S Pollard, Mr A McCrum, Mr D Stewart, Mr D Wilson, Dr D McConnell, Ms M Corrigan, Mr G Hetherington (Temporary Chair of the Governing Body), Mrs D O’Hare, Mr S Hagen, Mr M McQuillan</p> <p>In Attendance: Mrs H McKee (Director of Strategic Planning, Quality and Support (the “Director of SPQ&S”), Dr M Malone (Director of Curriculum & Information Services (the “Director of C&IS”), Ms V Healy (Minute Taker), Mr William Greer (Chief Training and Contracts Officer) (Item 7 only) , Mrs Claire Henderson (Chief Officer, Quality Excellence and Development) (Item 6 only), Mr Paul Walsh (Head of Pastoral Care) (Item 5 only) and Ms Catherine Shipman (Student Engagement Manager) (Item 5 only)</p> <p>Apologies: Ms G Diamond, Mr M Huddleston and Mrs K Fraser</p> <p>In the Chair: Mr Pollard</p> <p>b) Declarations of Conflict of Interest</p> <p>The Chair invited members to declare any known or perceived conflicts of interests. There were none declared from those that were present, however the Chair advised members that he had received an emailed declaration from Mr M Huddleston who had advised that he had been retained by City and Guilds for the next twelve months on the Industry Skills Board. He also is the industry lead for CCEA on curriculum review for the next academic year.</p> <p>c) Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 12th April 2022</p> <p>The Chair invited members to review the minutes from the previous meeting. The Committee agreed the minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>

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	<p>Agreed: That the Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 12th April and that the minutes be tabled for approval at the next meeting of the Governing Body.</p> <p>Proposer: Deborah O’Hare</p> <p>Seconder: John Mackell</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Matters Arising:</p> <p>Members noted there were no actions from the previous meeting.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Correspondence: Letter from DfE re 2022/23 Budget Position Update</p> <p>The Principal referred members to the circulated letter from the Director of FE, DfE. He advised that it would be unlikely that the College would receive a budget until September at the earliest with no Executive at present. He went on to say that by the end of September would take the College to 45% of the cash requirements for 21/22, and that the DoF Permanent Secretary can authorise up to 95% of the 21/22 budget. It was also noted by the Committee that November would take the College to the 6-month period which without an Executive would then trigger another election.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>14 – 19 Strategy Development Framework Document</p> <p>The Principal referred the committee to the circulated Framework and Action Plan documents. He reported that since these documents had been circulated, things had moved on and the DfE and the DE Ministers wished to launch the framework document at Bangor Academy and SPACE Bangor tomorrow (21st June). The Principal went on to say that while the two Ministers were signing off the framework document, it did not have Executive approval nor did the associated action plan have Executive approval or funding. The Principal also highlighted that originally colleges were asked to endorse the framework document but felt that this could not be done as Governing Bodies had not seen the document or had time to consider if they wished to provide an endorsement. Principals therefore agreed to provide a welcome statement, contents of which were noted in the circulated cover report. It was also noted by the committee that although the Action Plan had been circulated, the Framework document or the action plan had not been shared with the wider schools community and the Principal asked in particular that they would not be shared more widely. The Chair of the committee indicated that Mr M Huddleston had a keen interest in the direction of travel of this framework document and in his capacity as a member of</p>

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the Industry Skills Board had expressed some concerns and asked that it would feature on the agenda at the next meeting.

A discussion took place between members and it was noted that there was a level of inconsistencies between the framework document and an earlier version that had been issued in January. The Chair of the Governing Body indicated that it might be something for the committee to signal our disappointment in the changes that have been made recently to the document and the fact that we had refused to endorse it but issued a welcome statement. This was also echoed by members and it was agreed that the committee would keep an eye on its progress.

Ms M Corrigan joined the meeting at this juncture (5.47 pm)

Action: 14 – 19 Strategy Development Framework Document to feature on the next Agenda

5. Safeguarding, Care and Welfare presentation

The Chair welcomed the Head of Pastoral Care and the Student Engagement Manager to the meeting. They both addressed the meeting to present an overview of the Resilience and Wellbeing Framework. The presentation included slides on:

- Activities/Delivery in AY 2021/22
- Resilience and Wellbeing Framework Themes (three themes)
- Resilience and Wellbeing Framework
- Measuring the Effectiveness
- Any Questions

The Chair asked members if they had any questions, and the following were noted:

- Mr Mackell enquired in relation to the training that was provided for staff. The Head of Pastoral informed the committee that a variety of staff training is provided, including a staff induction on a regular basis regarding safeguarding and care to students, Designated Officers Training, approx. 40 staff have come through the ASSIST training, approx. 30-40 staff have received the mental health first aid training, Inspire and Action Mental Health attend the college to do training.

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- Ms O’Hare highlighted that the Resilience Framework in the College was very comprehensive, that there was a good blend of internal and external priorities and that she welcomed the pragmatic measurement of effectiveness.
- Ms Corrigan concurred with the comments made by Ms O’Hare and that this was an excellent piece of work.
- Mr McQuillan enquired how do students become aware of this resilience framework and the support available. The Student Engagement Officer advised that this is done as part of the induction process, including, engagement with the students, seminars/workshop with the team, Freshers week where those organisations are invited in and breakout sessions with external support services and opportunities to meet face to face. The use of online hub is also part of this and an online help channel, blogs and stories on online media. She concluded by saying that at an early stage students will be aware of those services and how to access them.
- Mr McCrum endorsed the comments made above and also felt that this presentation was very interesting. He referred in particular to slide two “Delivery in AY 21/22” and asked was there a growing trend for those accessing these services, and in relation to culture how do they propose to measure the culture improvement when they present themselves. The Head of Pastoral Care reported that the culture was difficult to measure and that he was very keen to include the student voice in the evaluation. He went on to say that we have quarterly case conferences where staff have a chance to report back on any issues that students are facing and measure what needs to be done. In relation to Trends, the cause for concern figures at the end May were 483 which were non-covid related cases and he was very much of the opinion that there was an increase in this issue. He concluded by saying that last year had been quite difficult and challenging, post covid, and the ongoing cost of living circumstances were having an impact also.

The Chair thanked both the Head of Pastoral Care and Student Engagement Manager for their excellent presentation and comprehensive nature of their report and the framework they had developed. They both left the meeting at this juncture.

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<p>6.</p>	<p>International Work</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Mrs C Henderson, Chief Officer Quality, Excellence and Development to the meeting. A comprehensive presentation was provided to the committee on the international activity within the college this year. These slides included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SERC International Unit • Online Delivery • Erasmus+ • Global Partnerships including Gulu VTI • Future Direction <p>The Chief Officer Quality, Excellence and Development thanked the committee for listening and asked if anyone would like to raise any questions. The following were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Mackell asked what was the nature of the partnership with Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic. Mrs Henderson responded that these were Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility partnership projects and these partners will also be used for the links for Turing Scheme. • Mr McQuillan asked about the foundation year programmes, if there were any barriers in getting them up and running and could they be delivered part-remote. Mrs Henderson responded that various options had been examined and three areas looked at. The Principal advised the committee that the College was anticipating to bring students from LGU in their second year of their HND and then return to complete their degree in Pakistan. • Mr McCrum asked in terms of funding, what were the ramifications for funding and how did the College see the international work going forward. Mrs Henderson indicated that Turing would not be at the level we had for Erasmus but the College was always watching out for funding opportunities. We have a very good relationship with the British Council and the Department of International Trade and are always on the lookout for updates that come through each month, although opportunities had been slow. • The Chair thanked Mrs Henderson for her comprehensive and interesting presentation. Mrs Henderson left the meeting at this juncture.
<p>7.</p>	<p>Employers :Traineeships and Apprentices (including HLA) Update</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Mr W Greer, Chief Training and Contracts Officer to the meeting. A comprehensive presentation was provided to the committee on the Training Programmes Update. Slides included: Skills for Life and Work; Traineeships; Key Features of the Traineeship; Project Based Learning and Transversal Skills; Traineeships – tracking of Trainee T Skills through Case Conference; Monitoring of Progress on Traineeships; Apprenticeship NI; Apprenticeship Enrolments; Key Performance Indicators;</p>

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Apprenticeship NI Level 2&3 – meeting the needs of local employers and beyond; Higher Level Apprenticeships – HLA Enrolments; Priorities to address reduction in HLA enrolments; Key Performance Indicators; Sector Performance Report on InnovateUs and Skills Focus for April 21-March 22; SERC Performance on Skills Focus and InnovateUs.

Mr Greer thanked the committee for listening and asked if anyone would like to raise any questions. The following were noted:

- Mr Mackell enquired about the three new Foundation Degrees. Mr Greer advised that he was very hopeful that they would be approved by the OU and this would allow SERC to apply for them to be delivered as HLAs. Mr Greer outlined the separate process required for HLA approval, confirmed that proposals has been submitted to DfE and advised that a response was expected in July. Mr Mackell highlighted that he was very impressed and satisfied to see such a high calibre presentation and the work of the College.
- Mr McQuillan commented in SERC’s success in securing a very high proportion of the Innovate Us and Skills Focus funding and asked if it would be possible to look at the outputs of the work with those companies. Mr Greer advised that a DfE evaluation report is completed for each company and that a member of staff speaks directly to the company to ascertain how many new jobs have been created and how many jobs saved.
- The Principal highlighted that between these two programmes there was £5m of funding which represented a small proportion of the £250m funding for the FE sector. The Principal commented that as there is not going to be an increase in 16-19 year olds a higher proportion of the overall funding could be directed to programmes such as InnovateUs and Skills Focus to address skills shortages. He indicated that he believed what is needed is a much more fundamental look at what the priorities should be. The Chair indicated that he felt that a culture fix was required within employers. A brief discussion then took place in relation to the lack of funding for upskilling and reskilling. The Chair indicated that it was positive to see the College working with

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	<p>the OU and the NI Social Care Council. Mr Greer highlighted that he would like to develop more HLAs than there are at present.</p> <p>A brief discussion then took place between the committee in relation to the research work that had been carried out by Stranmillis on SERCs PBL and Transversal Skills. It was noted that the report concluded that the PBL activities and the tracking of transversal skills were very beneficial to both staff and students.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Greer for his comprehensive presentation. Mr Greer left the meeting at this juncture</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>College Development Plan</p> <p>a) Draft College Development Plan 22/23</p> <p>The Director of Strategic, Planning, Quality and Support referred to the circulated draft College Development Plan for 22/23. She highlighted that the DfE had not issued their commissioning note. She also reported that the Plan was still much in draft form and that the Business Services data would be fully populated in advance of next week’s Governing Body meeting. It was noted by the committee that approval was not being sought for this Plan at this stage.</p> <p>b) Applications and Enrolments</p> <p>The Director of Curriculum & Information Services presented the latest report to the committee, he highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First table displays the unique enrolments. Overall, these sit at 11055 which is an increase of 499 in comparison to last year’s figures. The cleansing of data and enrolments are continuing over the summer period. There will be students on multiple enrolments • FT FE numbers are down marginally from previous report, this is due to adjustment in figures with students transferring and completing • The Traineeship enrolments are marginally down from the previous report, this is due to the transfers of some student numbers to the App NI, which in turn has seen their numbers increase.

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- Universities have been lowering entrance levels and presenting prospective students with unconditional offers, encouraging many students to accept these offers before results or alternative options are known or considered.
- The College has the highest MaSN occupancy in the sector at present. We are 82% of our MaSN allocation.
- Overall, the current PT enrolment figures currently sit at 10755 this is 1077 above last year’s figures which equates to an increase of 11%. The main reason for the increase in PT enrolments is that Essential Skills initial and diagnostic assessments are now completed, and additional PT classes have been able to run compared to previous years due to covid. The increase in figures can also be attributed to second semester PT enrolments which took place in January.
- There has been a significant increase of 336 in our business services cohorts, compared to the previous report. The total also surpasses last year’s figures.
- Essential skills figures have marginally increased from the previous report, mainly due to initial and diagnostic assessments having been completed and additional adult students also completing these courses. Essential Skills enrolments are 8% down on last year’s total.
- The HE PT enrolments have steadily increased and have now surpassed last year’s total sitting at 541 which equates to an increase of 11% on previous year’s total.
- The College will be working based on the final figures and that in previous years we have good trends but the covid-19 pandemic has created such disruption and we were having to look more closely at our predictions for next year.
- Dr Malone asked the Committee if they had any questions: The following were noted:
Mrs O’Hare highlighted that Level 3 will remain under pressure with the current issues within the schools sector and with the slight inflation in results. She went on to say that schools were funded in a different way and that each student has a funding level of 33 % higher for a 6th former and she recognises that there are funding barriers and would welcome the 14-19 work. The Principal indicated that according to the Action Plan there would be no funding review for 5-10 years. Dr Malone indicated that we will continue to have pressures from the schools sector and universities going forward and there was a need for the College to create a distinct product.
- Mr Hetherington concluded by saying how this underlines the importance of developing a 6th form policy and reiterated the importance of this.

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	<p>The Chair thanked Dr Malone for his detailed report.</p>
9.	<p>Higher Education:</p> <p>a) HERB Minutes</p> <p>The Director of SPQ&S presented the HE Review Board minutes from 1 June 2022 to the committee for consideration. Nothing further was noted.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 5px;"> <p>Agreed: The committee reviewed and approved the HERB minutes from the meeting on 1st June 2022</p> <p>Proposer: Alan McCrum</p> <p>Seconder: Deborah O’Hare</p> </div>
10.	<p>Items for Information:</p> <p>a) Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Report</p> <p>Members were asked to note the report that had been circulated. The Director of SPQ&S highlighted that In light of the earlier presentation there was nothing further that she required to add.</p> <p>b) ETI Report on Connected Programme</p> <p>The Principal brought to the attention of members the ETI Report on the Connected programme. He highlighted that this report does not reference the College, the South West College on behalf of the sector had applied for the funding and the report covered all of the Colleges. The Chair added that this was a positive report and asked members to note and reiterated that it did not identify any individual college</p>
11.	<p>Policies for Review/Approval:</p> <p>There was nothing for approval</p>

SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL COLLEGE**Minutes of a meeting of the Education Committee of the Governing Body (the “Committee”)
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12.	Any Other Business: No other business was discussed.
	Date and time of next meeting: It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to take place on Monday 20 th September 2022, at 17:30, venue TBC.

The meeting was concluded at 7.35 pm