

**Minute of the Learning & Teaching
Committee Meeting
Held in the Boardroom, Kilmarnock Campus,
On Tuesday 2 June 2015 at 5.30 pm**



Present: Barbara Graham (Chair)
Angela Alexander
Nicki Beveridge
Julie Bradley
Heather Dunk
Stephen Greenwood

In attendance: Brendan Ferguson (Secretary)
Moira Birtwistle (Director, Hospitality, Tourism, Business and IT)
Jackie Galbraith (VP, Strategy, Planning, Performance)
Elaine Hutton (Director, Creative)
Julie Maxwell (Director, Care, Education & Sport & Fitness)
Michael McHugh (Director, Quality Enhancement)
Gavin Murray (Director, STEM)
Carol Nisbet (Director, Access & Inclusion)
Cara Durnie (NHS Ayrshire & Arran Addiction Services)¹
PC Lisa Thomson (Police Liaison Officer)

1 Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no declarations of interest.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Bill Costley, Emma Hall, Alan McGregor, Tom Wallace, Bernadette McGuire, Michael Breen, and Jane McKie.

3 Minute of the Previous Meeting held on 19 March 2015 (Paper 1)

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Angela Alexander
Seconded: Heather Dunk

4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not already included on the agenda.

¹ Cara & Lisa were present for Items 1 – 5 only.

5 Presentation by Police Scotland and NHS Ayrshire & Arran on Liaison Officers Activity September 2014 to March 2015.

PC Lisa Thompson, Ayrshire College/Police Scotland Liaison Officer and Cara Durnie, Ayrshire College/NHS Ayrshire & Arran Addiction Services Liaison Officer, provided a presentation on the work they have been undertaking in this pioneering liaison project with Ayrshire College in the six month period September 2014 to March 2015.

The presentation demonstrated that 178 Workshops had been delivered to 2650 students during the period concerned. Subject areas of the most well attended workshops included *Drug Awareness, Alcohol Awareness and Social Media*.

Key Projects undertaken during the period included:

- *Respect Week (Personal Safety)*
- *Alcohol Awareness Week*
- *North ADP Volunteers Project*
- *Peer Education*
- *Research, i.e. Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drug Use.*

Also provided was a breakdown of the “Safeguarding” work undertaken during the period including *Crime Reports Raised, Safeguarding Matters, Personal Advice Provided, Alcohol & Drug Brief Interventions and Students Signposted*. The Presentation concluded with the perceived benefits being realised by the liaison posts as:

- *Joint Working Approach*
- *Breaking Down Barriers*
- *Improved Relations Between Organisations*
- *Improved Service for Students*
- *Keeping the Wider Community of Ayrshire Safer and Healthier.*

The Committee was impressed by the work being undertaken by the Liaison Officers and the benefits that were clearly accruing for the student community. Members encouraged the service to make their presentation more widely available in order to demonstrate the benefits and added value that the Liaison Officers were providing to the College Community.

The above presentation was very warmly received and the Liaison Officers commended on their obvious enthusiasm and the value of the pioneering work they were undertaking. Members found the information provided to be informative and beneficial to their understanding. The Committee felt that this work, and in particular the research being undertaken, could lead to the award of academic credit and encouraged the Liaison Officers to further explore this possibility.

The Committee also felt that the information contained within the presentation deserved a wider audience and encouraged the College and the Liaison Officers to give this further consideration, for example an

approach to Colleges Scotland to provide a presentation. In addition, the College was encouraged to consider putting the work undertaken by the Liaison Officers forward for the Herald Awards.

6 2014/15 WSUMs Position as at 15 May 2015 (Paper 2)

J Galbraith introduced the above paper and took members through it as written. The paper outlined how the College had been presented with a number of challenges this year, in particular the industrial action taken by some members of EIS/FELA which resulted in a number of January Start programmes being withdrawn. As a result, the College would make a provision of 2000 WSUMs in the next set of management accounts for a projected shortfall in the WSUMs delivered. J Galbraith added that Staff were currently working on a number of learning opportunities designed to bring WSUM delivery closer to the target number.

The Committee noted the above report and acknowledged the challenges that had been faced. The Committee expressed its support for the College initiatives designed to bring WSUM delivery closer to target.

7 2014/15 Student Support Funds as at 30 April 2015 (Paper 3)

H Dunk introduced the above paper and noted that the key item was the £290k overspend projected for 2014/15. The Committee noted that this overspend was directly resultant on the shortfall in the student funding budget allocation provided by SFC for 2014/15, and would have been approximately £1.24m had the College not taken the decision to vire funding from discretionary and childcare support and also the receipt of c£580k of SFC in-year distribution funding.

The Committee again expressed its concern at the shortfall in funding being received by the College and the consequent necessity to close discretionary funding, with its associated implications for some of the College's most vulnerable students. The Committee reiterated its view that this situation was unsustainable in the longer term and required to be urgently addressed. The Committee noted a report from the Principal on the use of the Principal's Discretionary Fund to prevent the evictions of vulnerable students and how the 13 most vulnerable students had been identified and were being supported.

Also noted was the work that had been undertaken in the development and implementation of new attendance management systems and the positive impact this had on ensuring that student funding was being properly directed.

The Committee noted the above report and again expressed its concern at the student funding shortfall received from the SFC in 2014/15.

The Committee was pleased to note the work that had been undertaken in implementing the new student attendance management systems and commended H Canning and the Student Support Services Team for the work they had undertaken.

The Committee noted the increase in student funding allocation for 2015/16.

8 2015/16 Applications Status as at 18 May 2015 (*Paper 4*)

M McHugh took members through Paper 4, in the process confirming that the recruitment was showing very positive results for 2015/16. The College was well ahead of its position at the same point in the previous year and this reflected improvements in the newly established curriculum teams' conversions of applications to acceptances earlier in the recruitment period. This was considered to be doubly significant because not only was the College well on course to meet its recruitment targets for 2015/16, but research also demonstrated that the earlier an acceptance is received the more likely it is that the learner will successfully complete the study programme.

The Committee noted and welcomed the above paper and congratulated the Curriculum Directors and the Performance and Planning Team for their work together in producing such excellent results at this stage of the recruitment process.

9 2015/16 Schools Programme Applications Report (*Paper 5*)

C Nisbet introduced Paper 5 stating that, in common with Paper 4 above, it represented another encouraging position. While the paper noted that a number of courses had been cancelled, additional courses had been provided in areas of high demand.

H Dunk added that a lot of work has been undertaken with the local authority and school partners, on the basis of previous experience, in order to mitigate against the risks of failing to meet the overall schools applications credit target.

Further meetings with Directors of Education are planned to mitigate any areas where there are reduced numbers of school pupils.

The Committee noted the content of the above paper and congratulated the staff involved on their monitoring of demand and their flexibility in changing the courses offered to meet student requirements as the situation evolves.

10 Student Services Interim Report (Paper 6)

The above interim report was introduced by J Maxwell who took members through it as presented. A number of questions were asked and satisfactory responses received. Members were favourably impressed by the report which was considered to be an excellent summary of the work being undertaken by Student Services.

The Committee noted and welcomed the above report.

11 2014/15 Risk Register: Learning & Teaching Extract at February 2015. (Paper 7)

Members noted the content of the above extract and concurred with the risk position and scores being adopted post the industrial action. It was noted that the recent Risk Workshop had highlighted a number of issues designed to take the Risk Register forward as a high level strategic management tool. As a result of this it was expected that change would take place in the formatting and presentation of the Risk Register during the forthcoming 2015/16 academic Year.

The above Learning and Teaching extract was noted and approved for inclusion in the final version (V5) of the 2014/15 Ayrshire College Risk Register to be received and considered by the Board of Management at its scheduled meeting on 25 June 2015.

12 Organisational Review 2015: Review of Access and Inclusion and Student Services Directorates (Paper 8)

The Principal reported that the consultation process referred to in the above document had now closed and the responses considered and discussed by the EMT. The responses were overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the proposals. A number of changes had been made as a result of the consultation responses received and, as a result, a number of job titles have changed and an administrative assistant post has been added. Administration posts would be filled through redeployment. All changes would be implemented in time for the start of the new academic year.

The above report was noted.

13 2014/15 Early Withdrawal Report (Paper 9)

J Galbraith went through the above report, explaining its content and the tables attached.

The Committee noted the analysis of the 2014/15 early withdrawals and welcomed the work being done to identify vulnerable groups, the reasons for early withdrawals and the actions being taken for 2015/16.

14 SFC Quality Action Learning Pilot (*Verbal*)

M McHugh provided a verbal summary of the progress of the above pilot exercise. M McHugh added that the view of the staff involved had been very positive and that a worthwhile, in depth and supportive view of the curricula had been undertaken.

The verbal report was noted and welcomed.

15 Learning & Skills Directorates' Updates June 2015 (*Paper 10*)

The Learning & Skills Directors had each provided a written report which had been consolidated into the above paper. Each in turn took the Committee through the work and progress of their Learning & Skills area.

The information contained in Paper 10 and the updates provided by the Directors was noted and welcomed by the Committee.

16 Student Association Report (*Paper 11*)

A Alexander took members through the Student Association Report and updated information where appropriate. A Alexander explained that the three student Presidents for 2015/16 had now been elected using a new electronic voting system. The system had proved to be very successful and had seen an almost 100% increase in the number of votes cast.

A Alexander also reported that Sharon Graham had left her post as a student President in 2014/15 early to take up an excellent job offer that had been made to her. The Student Association had been supportive of Sharon's decision and wished her well in her new post.

The Committee noted and welcomed the above report and commended the Student Association for the tremendous work they had undertaken and completed in 2014/15.

The Committee also thanked Sharon Graham for the contributions she had made over the last year and wished her well in her new role.

22 AOB

The Chair noted that this was Stephen Greenwood's last meeting of the Committee and that he was leaving his role as the elected support staff member of the Board at the end of the 2014/15 academic year. Members joined the Chair in thanking Stephen for his contribution to the work of the Committee and wished him well in his future endeavours.

22 Date of Next Meeting – The date of the next meeting would be confirmed by the Board of Management at its meeting on 25 June 2015.