

**Minute of the Learning & Teaching
Committee Meeting
Held at the Kilwinning Campus,
On Thursday 8 September 2016**



Present: Barbara Graham (Committee Chair)
Holly Bates
Julie Bradley
Margarette Bryan
Heather Dunk
Alan McGregor
Lainey McKinlay

In attendance: Brendan Ferguson (Board Secretary)
Moira Birtwistle (Director - Hospitality, Tourism, Business & IT)
Michael Breen (VP)
Helen Canning (Director - Student Services)
Alison Cook (Assistant Director, SFC)
Jackie Galbraith (VP)
Julie Maxwell (Director - Care, Education & Sport & Fitness)
Michael McHugh (Director - Quality Enhancement)
Gavin Murray (Director - STEM)
Carol Nisbet (Director – Partnerships & Employability))

1 Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and, in particular, new members Margarette Bryan and Lainey McKinlay, and Alison Cook who was attending as an observer.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from committee member Bill Costley, from Elaine Hutton (Director Creative), and from EMT members Jane McKie and Donna Vallance

3 Minute of the Previous Meeting held on 2 June 2016 (*Paper 1*)

Subject to the completion of a minor editorial amendment noted by the Secretary, the minutes were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: H Dunk
Seconded: J Bradley

4 **Matters Arising**

Page 1, Item 4 – Matters Arising; H Dunk had raised with SFC concerns over any change to Extended Learning Support which could lead to a decrease in the funding available to the College.

Page 3, Item 10 – Nethermains Provision; It was confirmed that the Nethermains lease had been extended by one year.

5 **Developing the Young Workforce (Presentation)**

Carol Nisbet made a presentation on the work being undertaken in Developing the Young Workforce (DYW). The presentation explained various strands of the DYW initiative including: courses supporting the Schools-College Partnership, Modern and Foundation Apprenticeships and opportunities to enhance the prospects of young people with additional support needs.

The presentation was well received and commended by the Committee.

The Committee welcomed the information contained in the above presentation and encouraged the continuation of the work being undertaken. The Committee also looked forward to receiving further information in the future on the success of the objective of achieving a significant increase in the number of female learners undertaking STEM programmes at Ayrshire College.

6 **Performance Indicators (Presentation)**

Michael McHugh made a presentation which demonstrated the progress made in reducing withdrawals during session 2015-16. The presentation also demonstrated the challenges facing the College in supporting students to complete courses successfully, given the high proportion coming from areas of multiple deprivation. The Committee noted the progress made in data analysis such that it was now possible to act upon “predictive analysis” in order to identify those students most at risk, e.g. those under 16.

The Committee noted and welcomed the above report and the excellent progress being made in the use being made of data analysis.

7 **Report of the Education Scotland Evaluation Visit, 5-6 May 2016 (Paper 2)**

J Galbraith introduced the above report. The Committee noted that the report’s content recognised the progress being made by Ayrshire College and the healthy partnership approach which underpinned this progress. M Birtwistle, on behalf of curriculum staff, welcomed the open and honest debate held during the visit and

the positive nature of the discussions. Alison Cook (Assistant Director, Scottish Funding Council), who had attended the visit, echoed this view, stating that it was a very positive event, representative of work and conversation in progress.

The Committee noted the positive nature of the above report and welcomed the progress being made.

8 External Verification Report 2015/16 (Paper 3)

M McHugh presented Paper 3 and took the Committee through it as written. The paper recorded the results of external verification activity 2015/16. The Committee felt the results were very positive and demonstrated that the internal processes were working well.

The Committee noted and welcomed the above report.

9 2015/16 Credit Report – Financial Position at July 2016 (Paper 4)

M Breen introduced the above standing report, explaining that it had already been considered and approved by the Finance Committee. The report demonstrated that the 2015/16 credit target had been met and exceeded by approximately 2,000 credits.

The Committee welcomed the above report and recorded its congratulations to all staff involved.

10 2015/16 Student Support Funds – Final Position at July 2016 (Paper 5)

M Breen took members through the above paper, which had also been considered and approved by the Finance Committee, and remarked that the demand led nature of these funds made it an extremely challenging budget to manage. As a consequence, there were underspends in three of the four areas of student support. M Breen noted that this was contrary to the previous year's position.

The Committee noted the reason that the College had again been unable to disburse all of the SAAS funds for discretionary support for HE students was that SAAS regulations required that students had accessed the full student loan before they were eligible for discretionary funds. In many instances Ayrshire College students did not want to accumulate debt and therefore did not take the full student loan. This had the potential to impact adversely on student retention and the College and the Sector have been lobbying SAAS to have this regulation reviewed.

The Committee noted the above report and encouraged further discussion with SAAS.

11 Student Services Report (Paper 6)

H Canning took the Committee through the above Paper, in the process explaining that interviews had been conducted with the most vulnerable students following the first week of the new session. 170 care experienced students had been identified, compared with 35 identified in 2015-16. In addition, during the same period there had been a significant increase in overall requests to Student Services from students and it was likely that this figure may rise further in 2016-17.

The Committee noted and welcomed the information contained in the above Report and the clear evidence of progress being made. The Committee also welcomed the appointment of a Mental Health Adviser, a jointly funded post, similar to the successful Police and NHS Liaison Officers.

12 2016/17 Enrolments Update

M Breen provided a verbal update on the progress of enrolments as at early September. M Breen explained that the update provided at this point was still early in the session with not all enrolments yet in the MIS system and the position was still moving. After some discussion, the Committee noted that while the complete picture had yet to become clear, in overall terms enrolments progress to date had been relatively healthy although noting that again school programmes and HE recruitment had been lower than expected. In relation to the HE courses it was noted that some Universities had actively targeted students to increase their own numbers. M Breen reminded Members that some HE students apply to both College and University and, when their exam results are known, then made the choice. M Breen reminded the Committee of the three working parts of the process i.e. Applications, Enrolments and Retention. The Committee noted the progress the College had been making in its focus on retention (as discussed in Paper 7 below) and the work being undertaken in order to gain a better understanding of the reasons for student withdrawals and also no shows at the enrolment stage.

The Committee noted the Enrolments Update and looked forward to the standing credit reports for the new academic year.

13 Student Retention 2016-17 (Paper 7)

J Galbraith took the Committee through the above Paper, designed to provide an update on the actions being taken to improve student retention. It was noted that 2015-16 retention improved by 2.5% overall compared to the previous year, reflecting the extensive efforts made by staff in supporting students using the real time information being provided to curriculum managers. In 2016/17 particular effort was being directed towards the identification of potential early withdrawals. This had been addressed proactively using an on-line induction tool and individual interviews with vulnerable students. The resultant predictive analytics were expected to lead to significant progress in decreasing the number of early withdrawals.

A number of questions were asked and satisfactory responses received.

The Committee noted the contents of the above paper.

14 Ayrshire College Student Association (ACSA) Report (Paper 8)

H Bates, as the Student President for 2016/17, took the Committee through the above report. In the process H Bates identified ACSA's priorities for 2016/17 including:

- Enhancing Student Engagement.
- Training of Class Representatives.
- The development of the Respect Campaign.
- The creation of a better understanding of and support for Mental Health welfare.
- Creation of a Care Experienced Students Forum and the appointment of a Care Experience Officer.
- The Women's Campaign

H Bates added that a good start has been made at the Freshers' Fayres which had been very successful. Visits would also be undertaken by the President and Vice-President to every class during September.

The Committee also noted the well-deserved nomination of the "#ThisAyrshireGirlCan" campaign at the forthcoming Herald Diversity Awards and wished ACSA well when the final awards were made.

The above report was noted and welcomed and ACSA congratulated on the flying start that it had made to 2016/17.

15 Academic Year 2016/17 Corporate Risk Register: Proposed L&T Committee Extract (Paper 9)

M Breen took the Committee through the above Risk Extract and explained the methodology agreed at the meeting between the Audit Committee and the Committee Chairs in June 2016, and subsequently approved by the Board of Management at its meeting later that month. This methodology reflected the discussions which had taken place over the previous year and which all members had contributed to. M Breen then took the Committee through the individual risks, commenting that these would evolve over time and as members gained a greater understanding of the new methodology, particularly around risk appetite.

The Committee discussed and agreed the risks contained in the above extract without change. It was noted that moving forward risks in relation to education contracts and business development would best sit in the remit of this committee. The rationale being that these activities are central to the College's role in relation to skills development and growing the economy. Draft Risks to be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee approved the Risks contained in the above extract for inclusion in the Corporate Risk Register.

It was agreed that the Risk Extract to be updated for the next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee in relation to the risks described above.

13 The Following Papers Were Received for Information.

SDS – CPP Report for North, East and South Ayrshire (*Papers 10a, b & c*)

Enterprise and Skills Review – Consultation Responses (*Paper 11a & b*)

SFC “Impact and Success of College Mergers in Scotland” (*Paper 12*)

14 Date of Next Meeting – The next meeting of the Committee would be 24 November 2016 at the Kilmarnock Campus.