
APPROVED NOTES ON THE EIGHTY FOURTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2021, COMMENCING 0930

PRESENT:

Mr G Finnegan, Governing Body Chair
Ms M Breslin
Mr P Canavan
Mrs R Dougherty
Mr D Ferns
Mr S Gillespie (until 1100)
Mr G Killeen
Mr L Murphy, Principal & Chief Executive
Mr M O’Kane
Prof M O’Neill
Mr B Quinn

IN ATTENDANCE;

Mr L Cooper, Director of the Independent Commission on the College of the Future
Mr P McKeown, Director of Finance & Economic Engagement
Dr C O’Mullan, Head of Curriculum & Operations
Mrs C McGovern, Boardroom Apprentice
Mrs É Doherty, Governance Secretary

Due to restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic all members and attendees were joining the meeting remotely via video conference.

84.1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Governing Body Chair welcomed everyone to the Strategy Day with an extended welcome to Mr Deaglan Ferns, Student Governor who was attending his first Board meeting. The Governing Body Chair added that the Board welcome the student voice representation at the Board. Apologies were received from Dr N Hand and Mrs L Taggart.

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO MEMBERS

- **College Strategy**
- **Mr L Cooper – Pen Picture**
- **Report 1 - Executive Summary - The College of the Future**
- **Report 2 - The College of the Future (full report)**

The Governing Body Chair provided a summary of the format for the meeting. Referring to the main paper, the Governing Body Chair reported that the College of Future will empower people throughout their lives with the skills they need to support better productivity and innovation and strengthen every community’s sense of place. These are all closely aligned to the College’s purpose and strategy for making lives better through more jobs, better skills for work and a great place to live and work.

Mr L Murphy, Principal, introduced Mr L Cooper, Director of the Independent Commission on the College of the Future which was commissioned by the Four Nations College Alliance. The Principal and other Sector Principals sit on this Board. Work of the Four Nations College Alliance includes drawing lessons and insights from reform trajectories and from exemplary institutional practices, which includes a case study from the College. There are also four nation's specific reports some of which have already been published. The NI Report will be issued following consultation with the NI Executive.

The Principal then invited Mr Cooper to present his report.

Using a PowerPoint presentation Mr Cooper brought members through key points from the work of the College of the Future including the background, context and the vision. The two central questions for the Commission were; what do we want and need from our colleges from 2030 onwards and how do we get there?

The report sets out eleven recommendations for reform and renewal of the college systems. Following on, the nation specific reports will include focussed recommendations relevant to their individual circumstances.

Mr Cooper referred to the big challenges colleges face which included an ageing population; climate emergency; productivity challenges, post Brexit; Industry 4.0 and the issues of equality, diversity and social inclusion which has further been compounded by the economic and social impacts of the pandemic. The Independent Commission states that Colleges have a key role to play with a strategic remit across people, productivity and place. This will require colleges to act as system leaders across their communities, on the acceleration of digitalisations, short/medium term impacts on employment and the need for reskilling and raising productivity.

Mr Cooper referred to the strengths within the NI Colleges and in particular with the establishment of the Curriculum Hubs model.

A break out session with an opportunity for further discussion on a strategic priority to take forward then took place. Members returned to the group with feedback. In summary Mr Cooper reported that within all groups there was a focus on supporting the economically inactive, a mechanism for delivery ie. the Community Team within the College and the potential opportunities for the Health & Social Care Hub.

In conclusion, the Governing Body Chair stated there was obviously a clear willingness to address the issue of the economically inactive. **It was agreed to focus on this priority area, to make a statement of strategic intent and resource accordingly. It was also agreed it would be useful to have discussion with a number of strategic civic partners in this space.**

The Governing Body Chair thanked Mr Cooper for his contribution that was greatly appreciated and to everyone for attending. The Governing Body Chair closed the meeting ended at 1225.

Date of next meeting: 23 February 2021

Signed; _____ **Governing Body Chair**
Mr G Finnegan

Date; 23 February 2021

APPROVED