

Access and Inclusion Committee meeting minutes

The thirty-seventh meeting of the Access and Inclusion Committee was held at 9.30am on Thursday 8 March 2018 at 99 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh.

Present: Professor Maggie Kinloch(Chair)
Angela Cox
Vincent Docherty
Hugh Hall
David Livey
Iain MacRitchie
Dr Veena O'Halloran
Dr Edward Sosu (items 18/08 to 18/15)
Professor Valerie Webster
Joshua Ryan-Saha (items 18/01 to 18/09)

Officers: Fiona Burns (Secretary)
Catherine Carr (items 18/11 to 18/15)
Sharon Drysdale (items 18/01 to 18/15)
Loretta Hamilton
Matson Lawrence
Sheila Meehan (Clerk)
Cathy Mitchell
Nick Stansfeld
Anna Thomson

Apologies: James Dunphy
Professor Charlie Jeffery
Leni Oglesby
Susan Stewart
Jodie Waite
Lorna Caldwell
Lynn MacMillan

18/01 Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed members, Council executive and observers to the meeting.

The Chair also welcomed David Livey who was attending in place of Jodie Waite.

18/02 Declarations of Interests

The Chair reminded the members of their responsibility to indicate if they had or may be perceived to have a conflict of interest under any item.

18/03 Chair's business and Council executive update (AIC/18/01)

The Committee received and noted the Chair's business and Council executive update.

The Council executive confirmed that an update would be provided, at the May 2018 Committee meeting, on the unique learner number and basket of measures.

The Committee also noted the feedback from the sector on the requirements of the British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan and the resulting difficulties with the timing and resource requirement for publication of the plans in both BSL and English.

The Committee **agreed** to the responses to feedback from the November 2017 workshop session.

18/04 Minutes of 21 November 2017 meeting (AIC/17/Min3)

The minute of the meeting of 21 November 2017 was confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

18/05 Matters arising (AIC/18/02)

The Committee noted the matters arising from the last meeting of the Committee.

18/06 Long-term agenda (AIC/18/03)

The Committee received a paper informing members of substantive agenda items proposed for the next meeting.

The Committee **agreed** that a Scottish Government representative would be invited to attend the May 2018 meeting to allow a full discussion for the Regional Improvement Collaboratives' item.

18/07 Update on Council business (Oral)

The Chair gave an oral update to the Committee on the recent Scottish Funding Council Board business meetings.

The Committee noted that, at its recent meetings, amongst other things the Council had considered:

- The development of SFC's Strategic Plan 2018-2023.
- A progress update on the Outcome Agreements for 2017-18 and 2018-19.
- The Infrastructure Framework, which was considered and endorsed.
- The Innovation Centre programme, phase two, including the multi-agency appraisal process.
- The college and university indicative funding allocations and outcome agreements for 2018-19.
- The outcome of the Rurality Funding consultation.
- A summary of the Royal Society of Edinburgh's outcome agreement and funding allocation.
- An annual update on the monitoring and evaluation of strategic projects.
- Risk management and a statement of SFC's risk appetite.

The Committee noted that the Enterprise and Skills Board was meeting regularly and was focussing on a longer term vision with a greater emphasis on collaboration.

18/08 The Data Lab, future skills and what this means for access and inclusion (Oral)

The Committee received a presentation, from Joshua Ryan-Saha of The Data Lab, on future skills and what they mean for access and inclusion.

In discussion the Committee noted that:

- The Data Lab used computational methods to extract better insights from data.
- The economy was changing and the impacts of automation would result in a risk to jobs.
- Changes in automation would affect manufacturing, transport, customer service and routine jobs, but would also impact on professional roles, with healthcare being revolutionised by better diagnostics and prediction of disease and bespoke treatments.
- 9%-40% of jobs were at risk of redundancy, but other roles would

grow significantly or be created in as yet unknown areas.

- Empathetic and social interaction roles would continue to be valued.
- Artisanal and craft jobs would still to be required and creative roles would continue to be valuable, including combined creative and technology, i.e. gaming.
- There would be an increase in need for algorithmic decision making and ethics in data roles.
- Teachers were needed to support the demand for computing in schools.
- Occupation redesign was taking place and colleges and other routes to training would have an opportunity to upskill the workforce with financially accessible computing courses as well as high end mathematics and statistics to support data literacy.
- It was important to communicate the message that Scotland was a great place to work in data science. Creating employment in those roles now would help future-proof and protect Scotland economically and help to encourage a global workforce to make Scotland their home.
- In England coding was a mandatory part of the curriculum and private schools run python courses (programming language) which was advantageous for those students but had the result of increasing economic stratification.
- There was a skills shortage for computing teachers and more needed to be done to promote/integrate computing science to support upskilling.
- Small interventions could have a massive impact and intervention at governmental level was needed to drive change. The learner journey should take into account the outdated curriculum and needed to rebadge qualifications to ensure that students were globally competitive.

18/09

Skills policy at the SFC (Oral)

The Committee received a presentation, from Sharon Drysdale, Outcome Agreement Manager, Skills, on skills policy, interdependencies and challenges.

In discussion the Committee noted that:

- A draft Digital Strategy had been considered by the Skills Committee and was updated following input from The Data Lab.
- Key drivers for the skills team work were Scottish Government skills policy, i.e. Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), Early Learning

and Childcare etc.

- The STEM Strategy was in its implementation phase, with partners engaging well, through STEM hubs, and different models being used in different areas to progress the aims.
- There were challenges around gender balance issues, qualifications and articulation.
- More flexible training opportunities were needed so that people could learn while employed, and so that seasonal workers could learn in gaps between employment.

The Committee advised that:

- Investment and resource were needed at every level to support the STEM Strategy and address the needs of the current workforce who were struggling with technology.
- It was important to ensure that policies were put in place now that overcame inequalities in the future.
- If students trained to be digitally expert along with studying human psychology that combination would support their futures.
- The school curriculum needed to address digital needs for the future and the mature workforce needed access to flexible learning opportunities to support their upskilling.

The Committee **agreed** that a paper highlighting the skills discussions and the Committee's feedback be presented to the April 2018 Council Board meeting.

18/10

Access outcomes – draft outcome agreements; COWA implementation (AIC/18/04)

The Committee received a paper providing an early assessment of the impact of the 2018-20 outcome agreements (OAs) on SFC's national access ambitions and an update on implementation of the Blueprint for Fairness.

In discussion the Committee noted that:

- SFC were expected, by the Scottish Government, to take a significant leadership role in progressing the COWA recommendations.
- Colleges had responded well to the request for improvements around care experienced and SIMD.
- Universities needed to improve their access projections for

AY 2019-20 and AY 2020-21 or COWA targets would not be achieved.

- A review of the Widening Access Retention Fund was to take place.
- SFC was to develop a national bridging programme following completion of the Universities Scotland Bridging Programme implementation work.
- A new Access Measures Group had been set up to consider SIMD and other access measures and the Group would value and seek more feedback from the college sector particularly to support that work. The aim was to create a basket of measures to support future funding decisions.
- The access thresholds template would be presented to the next meeting of the Access Delivery Group that is chaired by the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science.

18/11 Update on School Engagement Framework (AIC/18/05)

The Committee received a paper providing an update on the progress of the development of the School Engagement Framework since November 2017.

In discussion the Committee noted that:

- It was key that the Framework was understandable and clear to young people and their families.
- The schools own tracking systems were to be used to identify pupils and assess intervention rates. It was important that involvement in the programme would be valuable for the pupil throughout, not just for institutions to meet targets.
- Current groups were coming together in a cluster approach to rationalise the landscape and reduce individual initiatives.

18/12 Developing the Adult Engagement Framework (AIC/18/06)

The Committee received a paper updating on the development of the national Adult Engagement Framework.

The Committee noted that:

- Retention at degree level was improved when students had been part of a SWAP access programme.
- There was a bid to increase SWAP funding to allow for a proposed extension to their work which would involve Community Engagement.

The Committee were invited to email the Clerk if they wished to suggest any potential measures for the Framework or any elements for further consideration or consultation.

18/13 At Risk Groups - update (AIC/18/07)

The Committee received a paper providing an update on work to support at risk groups in accessing, participating and staying in further and higher education.

In discussion the Committee noted that:

- The proposed areas for first consideration at the next meeting were mental health and veterans.
- The Council executive would seek to assess the numbers of estranged students.
- Students with mental health issue needed welfare and wellbeing support and sharing of good practice on coping strategies would be helpful.

The Committee **agreed** that a discussion paper on mental health and veterans be presented to the May 2018 Committee meeting.

18/14 Impact for Access project evaluation (AIC/18/08)

The Committee received a paper reporting on the review of the Impact for Access fund to assess how the funding has met its aims.

The Committee noted:

- That, individually, all projects were good but difficult to pull together and a more strategic and embedded approach in institutions would be preferable.
- How the findings of the research projects were being incorporated into the work to implement COWA, DYW and the Gender Action plan, as well as in development of the School Engagement Framework and Adult Engagement Framework.

18/15 Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place at 9.30am on Tuesday 22 May 2018 at 99 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh.