

Access and Inclusion Committee meeting minutes

The thirty-eighth meeting of the Access and Inclusion Committee was held at 9.30am on Tuesday 22 May 2018 at 99 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh.

Present: Angela Cox
Vincent Docherty
James Dunphy
Hugh Hall
Professor Charlie Jeffery
David Livey
Dr Veena O'Halloran
Susan Stewart

Officers: Fiona Burns (Secretary)
Michael Cross
Carina Macritchie
Sheila Meehan (Clerk)
Cathy Mitchell
Anna Thomson

Scottish Government: Lynn MacMillan

Apologies: Professor Maggie Kinloch(Chair)
Iain MacRitchie
Leni Oglesby
Jodie Waite
Lorna Caldwell
Dr Edward Sosu
Professor Valerie Webster

18/16 Welcome and introductions

In Maggie Kinloch's absence, Veena O'Halloran chaired the meeting and welcomed all members, observers and executive officers to the meeting.

18/17 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.

The Chair invited members to indicate if they wished to discuss the starred item on the agenda. No paper was unstarred for discussion.

18/18 Chair's business and Council executive update (AIC/18/09)

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

The Chair advised that the Council Board were inviting a representative of Advance HE to a future meeting and the Committee would be updated following that meeting.

18/19 Minutes of 8 March 2018 meeting (AIC/18/Min1)

The minute of the meeting of 8 March 2018 was confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

18/20 Matters arising (AIC/18/10)

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

18/21 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:

- SFC's draft Framework Document with the Scottish Government.
- SFC's Scheme of Delegation.
- Interaction with the Strategic Board for Enterprise and Skills.
- The sectors' achievement of Commission on Widening Access (CoWA) targets.
- The Outcome Agreements 2018-19 and linkages between those and the final funding allocations.
- The college and university final funding allocations for 2018-19.

- The Royal Society of Edinburgh's outcome agreement and funding allocation.

In discussion the Committee advised on the importance of the Learner Journey and Access workstreams being aligned.

18/22 The 15-24 Learner Journey Review (AIC/18/12)

The Committee received a paper providing the Scottish Government's report: *The 15-24 Learner Journey Review*.

In discussion the Committee noted that:

- The Review had involved a large amount of consultative activity, particularly with learners, as well as commissioned research on young people's views and experience
- The Education Secretary had presented the review as built on the three policy pillars of Getting it Right for Every Child, Curriculum for Excellence, and Developing the Young Workforce.
- A core theme was the need for unity in the system, and the need for partner agencies to deepen their levels of collaboration
- The recommendations within the report contained a mix of specific (for example, on the use of IT) and general (in discussion of the options from beyond S5 in school).
- The report included a long term vision.
- A new Joint Director of SDS/SFC has been appointed to lead work on the greater alignment of skills provision.
- The Learner Journey Review Group would be meeting on 23 May to discuss implementation.

The Committee advised that:

- A whole system approach was needed with the focus on the learner.
- Advanced Higher provision was patchy, especially in areas of disadvantage, and investment in schools was needed to improve Advanced Higher provision so that students could progress appropriately to 2nd year at college or university.
- Students wanted to stay for 6th year at school to benefit from leadership experiences and other non-academic learning; there were also benefits for the schools in having a strong 6th Year cohort in their mentoring impact on younger students.
- Parents were encouraging their children to stay on to 6th Year to

allow their children to reach a level of maturity before advancing to university.

- Often the number of pupils receiving the 5th/6th year offer was very small so another platform was needed to provide for that small number to ensure equity for all.
- The role of SFC was to encourage greater collaboration between colleges and universities to unlock opportunities for learners.
- It was important that SDS was integrated into the system and that the apprenticeship offer was adequately promoted as part of the whole system approach.
- A cost cutting approach would not work as provision was limited due to the expense involved in producing Advanced Highers and due to staffing shortages.
- Harmonisation of school timetables would be useful, also the potential for students undertaking Advanced Highers at university and an increase of online provision should be investigated to meet needs.

The Committee **agreed** that:

- An update would be provided to the Committee, by email, on progress with the Learner Journey agenda in advance of the next Committee meeting.
- In addition to the advice noted above, Committee members should alert the Council executive to any further feedback they wished to offer ahead of the June Council Board meeting.

18/23

Update on the Implementation of the Commission on Widening Access recommendations (AIC/18/13)

The Committee received a paper providing an update on some of the work to implement the recommendations from the CoWA report, *A Blueprint for Fairness*.

The following paragraph is withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs

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The Committee also noted:

- The update on the National Access Delivery Group and that SFC

templates (informing on progress with each CoWA recommendation) would be considered at the Group's 20 June meeting.

- The update on Non-academic factors in applications.

The Committee advised that:

- When considering Non-academic factors in applications, high tariff subjects, e.g. medicine, veterinary science and law should also be taken into account.
- The Open University's success should be captured and should be referenced in tables referring to CoWA targets with an explanation as to why their student numbers cannot be included, i.e. CoWA's focus on where the biggest access issues occur, i.e. full time students.
- It was important to consider and be mindful of:
 - The flow of students with the capability to benefit from a university education.
 - That a capped system provided inherent challenges for funding and in trying to meet targets, as well as unintended consequences such as displacement issues.
- Some regions had limited pools of relevant students and this would cause difficulties in meeting targets.
- There would potentially be strained college/university relationships due to competition for students from a limited pool. Outcome Agreement managers covered regions and would monitor for issues while supporting collaboration between the colleges and universities.

18/24

Access and Inclusion Committee effectiveness review (AIC/18/14)

The Committee received a paper reporting on the outcomes of the Committee's review of its effectiveness.

In discussion the Committee advised that:

- They noted the improvement actions provided in the paper.
- They were keen to act strategically and drive the Council's access agenda.
- Consideration of policy developments outside Scotland would be useful and the Committee members could tap into their networks globally to support that.

The Committee **agreed** that SFC's Chair would be invited to attend the Committee's strategic workshop in November.

18/25 Long-term agenda (AIC/18/11)

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

The Committee advised that:

- A fuller strategic discussion was necessary to consider the learner journey and that a whole system, collaborative approach was needed.
- It was necessary to recognise that, to achieve the economic development ambitions at scale, then that ambition needed to be supported by skills.

The Committee **agreed** that a fuller strategic discussion on the learner journey would take place at the November strategy workshop.

18/26 Draft Outcome Agreement guidance for 2019-20 to 2020-23 (AIC/18/14)

The Committee received a paper providing changes to the access related elements of the Outcome Agreement guidance.

The Committee noted that CoWA plans were to be incorporated within the Outcome Agreements to bring all relevant CoWA reporting together.

In discussion the Committee advised that:

- The SFC should use the term gender related violence rather than violence against women to ensure the policy applies to all genders.
- It should be recognised, when reporting of levels of students with protected characteristics, that care must be taken when analysing small student populations.

18/27 SFC Equality and Diversity Update (AIC/18/15)

The Committee received and noted a paper updating on progress towards SFC's Equality Outcomes for 2017-2021.

18/28 Future Access and Inclusion Committee meeting dates (AIC/18/17)

The Committee received a paper providing the schedule of Access and Inclusion Committee meeting dates for 2019/20.

18/29 Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place at 9.30am on Wednesday 14 November 2018 at 99 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh.