

**HERTFORD REGIONAL COLLEGE CORPORATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
QUALITY, STANDARDS & CURRICULUM PLANNING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 3 OCTOBER 2018**



700 PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

700.1 Attendance, Apologies for Absence & Membership

Membership: Ricky Irons
Tony Medhurst
Philomena Shaughnessy (From Item 701.1)
Charlotte Simmonds
Jan Wing (Chair)

In Attendance: Mike Carver
Jayne Chaplin (Clerk)
Angela McLean
Wayne Wright

700.2 Declarations of Interest

None reported.

700.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 February 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

700.4 Matters Arising

None to report with all matters covered on the agenda.

701 ITEMS OF FORMAL REPORT OR FOR REVIEW OR APPROVAL

Philomena Shaughnessy joined the meeting at this point.

701.1 College Performance 2017/18:

In the form of Year-end/Annual Reports, confirmation was provided of year-end activity and progress in the implementation of quality improvement objectives for 2017/18, comprising:

701.1a Teaching, Learning & Assessment Report

Providing an overview of the year-end position, the report included report of:

- An overall College observation profile of 87% effective teaching, learning & Assessment. Noting that it represented a 22% in year quality improvement, the closer alignment was observed with student achievement, currently at 85.6% overall for classroom-based learning, including English and maths; along with a correlation of findings with the judgements made in joint learning walks during the March 2018 Ofsted inspection.
- The objective of the Learning Walks as one initiative to drive improve the consistency of teaching, learning and assessment, which had included focus on English and maths and Governor Learning Walks (see also Minute 701.1c). Members were advised that approximately 325 learning walks had been conducted with a further 104 completed during

Ofsted inspection week, which members were advised, provided opportunities for swift and timely intervention to improve performance with feedback and actions arising from each forwarded to the Curriculum Manager and the Quality Team.

- The range of in-year developments to improve teaching, learning and assessment.

Following response to points of clarification the report was reviewed in more detail. Reflecting further on the assessment of the overall strengths and areas for development, members explored with Management:

- The internal moderation process questioning how it ensured consistency in quality across the College. There was report of the process that included independent verification, management and joint moderation and validation panels during the self-assessment process, which included governor representation and involvement. Those governors that had participated in the Validation Panels shared their respective experiences, confirming the robust nature of the process.
- The Ofsted terminology by which progress was reviewed agreeing that it would be helpful for such information to be provided to assist the Committee in the challenge and review of progress.
- The lesson observation data observing that as the information as currently presented did not differentiate between lecturers initially identified for support from those identified subsequently in order to assess the extent of any improvement in performance. Agreeing that it would be helpful for such data to be provided to allow member to better understand the impact of the development processes in place, it was requested for future reports to make such a distinction to enable members to more readily assess progress.

After consideration, the report was noted.

701.1b Complaints

It was reported that the number of formal complaints received during 2017/18 had declined in comparison to the number received over the previous three academic years.

The data was reviewed in further detail and following response to points of clarification, discussion with Management included:

- The breakdown by term, noting the slight change in trend compared with previous years, questioning the term 1 complaints, recognising the nature of the matters raised to be unsurprising, relating specifically to first term issues around enrolment and exam results.
- The complaints about the quality of Teaching and Learning acknowledged to be unsurprising as the core of College business and recognising the correlation of the decline in number with the increasing positive trend highlighted in the summer term student survey.
- The Summer Term Survey, welcoming the overall positive responses. There was more focused review however of the:
 - i Red rated response to the question regarding things learnt in-year that helped prepare for employment, observing the response rate to be reflective of a general misunderstanding of the question

- ii Amber rating to the question regarding feeling safe at College, noting this to be partly reflective of the incident reported early in 2017/18 with the majority of respondents to the question being from Broxbourne; and responses based on interpretation of travelling to the College rather than experience on site. It was confirmed that the question was to be reworded for the purposes of clarification.

Members reflected more generally on the data presented. It was suggested that to review progress in the context of all material factors, it would be helpful for future reports to include data regarding the number of complaints appealed and the outcome, the number of learners on each site when reporting on complaints by location and in reporting on complaints about teaching, learning and assessment, a breakdown by department.

After discussion, the report was noted.

701.1c Governor Learning Walks

After observing discussion that had taken place elsewhere on the agenda (Minute 701.1a refers), there was note of the feedback presented following the summer term Governor Learning Walks.

Members sharing their respective experiences in support of the positive feedback reported, which was confirmed to be considered invaluable in informing discussion and question of Management at Board level and enhancing knowledge and understanding of the College and its processes and its students and staff.

The report was noted.

701.2 Outcomes & Quality Improvement:

Reports were presented providing an update on year-end activity and progress in the implementation of quality improvement objectives for 2017/18, comprising:

701.2a Strategic Objectives Update: Learner Outcomes (draft)

An update was presented on learner outcomes for the 2017/18 academic year.

After noting the data for the year-end was being finalised, the position to date was summarised with members noting an oral update on progress since publication of the report with:

- A College retention rate of 92.9%, an increase of 0.7% from the previous academic year
- A pass rate of 92.5% observed to be exceptional performance for the College
- Overall outcomes of 86%, representing a significant improvement on the previous year
- That of 21 curriculum areas, fourteen had improved outcomes compared to 2016/17, four have remained high with most being above the national average; and in three areas where performance fell all had relatively low student numbers with the consequence of any in-year withdrawals therefore having a disproportionate impact on retention rates and, ultimately, outcomes.

After welcoming the improved performance, the data was reviewed in more detail and following response to points of clarification, discussion with Management of outcomes included:

- The overall vocational achievement rates of 91% with 19+ learners and for 16-18 learners at 94.3%, and 87.4% respectively.
- The College GCSE results for maths and English of Maths of 19% and 29%, which whilst recognised to be improved remained below the national average of 22.6% and 33% respectively.
- The significant improvement in Functional Skills was commended, welcoming report that it was anticipated for such results to be above the national average for the first time.

After commending Management and staff for the hard work in the achievement of such positive results and noting that the final position for the year would be confirmed in due course, the report was noted.

701.2b Quality Improvement Plan: Update

The College QIP was presented showing progress for the 2017/18 year-end.

The year-end position was summarised, and points of detail were answered and clarified as necessary.

Reviewing the report in further detail discussion focused on those areas assigned a red or amber rating, observing the need for focus going forward to remain on:

- Improving attendance following an overall attendance rate of 83% at year-end in contrast with the 90% target
- The achievement of good progress in developing confidence and skills linked to English and Maths, which whilst improved remained below national average.

In the context of the year-end results, there was observation of the stretching and challenging nature of the targets. Welcoming and endorsing the ambitious expectation set to drive quality improvement, the format and nature of the data presented was commended, agreeing that it provided a realistic and accurate picture from which review and challenge could be made.

The update was noted.

702 Academic Year 2018/19

702.1 Student Enrolment: Update

Reporting on year to date enrolment, with an update on progress since publication of the report, members were advised that:

- Figures to date for 16-18 learners showed a reduction of almost 200 learners with the possibility of the figure declining further with students currently still within the induction period and the potential to leave before 42 days funding qualifying period.
- Although the cut off point for Higher Education learners to receive funding had not yet been reached, to date there had been an increase in the number of students with an improvement on numbers recorded for the same period in the previous year.

Discussion of recruitment with Management included:

- 16-18 learner recruitment and the factors affecting numbers reflecting on the limited access to schools notwithstanding the changes introduced to address it as a long standing and historical issue, noting the ongoing intention to maintain pressure on this regard to ease the situation.
- In the context of the shortfall, the anticipated impact on funding noting that the financial impact would materialise 2019/20 with the funding allocation for the year being based on the current year numbers.
- Higher Education recruitment noting that in contrast with the College's improvement in numbers, the impact generally of the declining demographic in 16-18 learners on HE enrolment noting that the College's main HE partner, the University of Hertfordshire, was reporting a decline of 15 in applications with a similar pattern occurring amongst the Hertfordshire colleges with HE provision.

The report was noted.

702.2 Compliance

Reports were presented providing details of activity and action taken in respect of compliance matters, comprising:

702.2a Safeguarding Update

An oral report was received from the Committee Chair summarising Safeguarding and Prevent activity for the first term of the new academic year.

Covering the period up to the end of September 2018, members were advised:

- That to date the number of safeguarding referrals was in-line with those reported for last year with no Prevent related referrals recorded.
- In terms of the categories of abuse, those relating to emotional/psychological abuse had seen a slight decrease numbers of these referrals, although experience suggested that such referrals would increase as the term progressed.
- Whilst an increase in criminal convictions had been identified, liaison was taking place with MIS to look at the way in which this was being recorded to better ascertain the reasons for the increase. It was noted however that nearly 50% of students with criminal convictions were on short courses that were not on campus or were with sub-contractors.
- Of the strategies to address safeguarding issues and the activities and arrangements in the promotion of Prevent and British Values

After consideration, the update was noted.

702.2b Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults and Prevent Policy & Procedure

A report outlining amendments to the College Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults and Prevent Policy and Procedure.

Setting out the College arrangements for the promotion of the safeguarding of all staff, students and visitors the key changes were summarised, noted to include updates in line with the recently updated 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidelines and GDPR compliance.

Following review, it was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to the Corporation:

- **APPROVAL** of the updated Safeguarding Policy & Procedure.

703 ANY OTHER BUSINESS & NEXT MEETING

703.1 Any other business

No other business was raised.

703.2 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 5 December 2018

Signed:



Chair

Date: 5 December 2018