

1. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Attendance, Apologies for Absence & Welcome

Membership: Mumtaz Van Der-Vord
Antonio Weiss (Chair)
Elizabeth Warriner

In Attendance: Pat Carvalho
Jayne Chaplin (Clerk)
Chris Faux
Stephen Porter

Apologies: Mike Allen
Ketan Sheth

1.2 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

1.3 Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2015, were confirmed as a correct record, and were signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising upon which to report.

2 COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT SESSION

After receiving a presentation updating members on the forthcoming draft Ofsted Common Inspection Framework and SFA Success Rates changes there was review of the:

- 2.1 Rationale for Ofsted's plans for shorter, more frequent inspections for good providers
- 2.2 Retention of the four grades, noting that an overall outstanding judgement would not be feasible without teaching and learning being considered outstanding; and the introduction of a new judgement of personal development, behaviour and welfare, intended to be reflective of the breadth in age ranges of students.
- 2.3 Greater emphasis on safeguarding and curriculum mix with the former reflective of the new requirements flowing from the introduction of the Prevent Agenda
- 2.4 Removal of grading by subject areas and lesson observations and the focus on progression and value added
- 2.5 Intended review of progression in Maths and English, which it was reported would be over a two rather than the originally proposed one-year period and that in this context account would also be taken of students' starting point at the time of joining the organisation.

2.6 The forthcoming changes for the calculation of success rates advising members of a significant change in methodology:

- From calculation based on an overall look at success by age, subject sector area, duration and level
- To the use of a starting point not just of overall success but also timely completion for age groups and qualification type and size whilst still using the cross-cutting analysis of gender, disability and ethnicity.

There was further and particular discussion of the extent to which the College's newly introduced Gold Standards compared with in-line with the revised framework. Members were advised that whilst a review would be undertaken once the final document was published, management were optimistic that the Standards were broadly in-line and noting that with a refreshed College self-assessment process, curriculum areas to commence its review against the new framework in the autumn term.

Following questioning, the Chair extended members' appreciation to the Vice Principal for an interesting and informative update.

3. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT & MONITORING

3.1 Summer Term Monitoring Reports:

3.1a Three-year Plan KPIs Update

A report was presented updating members on progress in the implementation of the curriculum and quality objectives for the year in the Three-Year Plan.

Considering progress discussion included:

- The review of attendance data, after reporting it to be slightly down on the previous year. Following questioning of the data reported by curriculum areas, there was discussion of proposed improvement strategies. Advising members of research showing a trend for high attendance maintained during the autumn term remaining sustainable throughout the remainder of the year, plans were noted for measures focused on the first eight weeks of term.
- The oral update on the latest data on teaching and learning aspect of performance reviews noting that whilst there had been a 5% decline since last reported, the proportion of outstanding performance had increased with the proportion of performance requiring improvement decreasing.

Questioning in more detail the nature of the anomalies identified in the teaching and learning observations (KPI 3a refers), members were advised that following the introduction of the Gold Standard criteria further work was required with staff to ensure greater consistency of and confidence in the making of judgement based on the outstanding criteria. Reflecting on the College's Gold Standards in the context of the Ofsted criteria for outstanding performance, the need was acknowledged to perhaps more explicitly show a correlation with the meeting of the Standards and the

achievement of and the range of factors forming a judgement of outstanding performance.

- The concerns remaining about cross College Maths and English attendance and achievement. Welcoming confirmation of the appointment of the current Curriculum Manager for ESOL as the new Section Head for ESOL, English and Maths and observing the opportunities presented for the sharing of good practice throughout those areas.
- The prediction for full apprenticeship framework achievements now reported at 70% overall with Construction and Childcare predicted to be below national averages but above MLP, acknowledging the impact of the cessation of the Building Lives programme.
- The interim FE Choices report from the SFA highlighting feedback differing from the focus discussion at the recent Learner Voice Committee. Advising members of an overall score in-line with the College target, it was noted however that issues remained at Level 3, 16-18 learners that would require further analysis to ensure appropriate action could be undertaken. Reflecting further on the potentially underlying factors and the extent to which the rate of improvement was considered sufficient, the previously reported staffing issues in the Business curriculum area were confirmed now to be largely resolved although members were advised that any positive impact was not now expected to become evident until the new academic year.
- An overview of the staff changes following the recent restructure, welcoming confirmation of the appointment of the current Head of Department - Business, English, Media & Health Studies into a Director role with a remit including responsibility for safeguarding; and noting that the search continued to appoint candidates for the unfilled positions.

After consideration, the report was noted.

3.1b Quality Improvement Update

The Quality Improvement Report was presented updating members on progress with the College's quality improvement initiatives.

The report was summarised. There was review of:

- The progress with the College "Gold Standards, noting that work had continued on the aspects of the learner journey and most support functions with those for the Learner Journey now complete and most support functions almost completed. Discussing further the Standards it was agreed that there would be a presentation to the Corporation in the autumn term to ensure that members would know the Standards against which future monitoring would be taking place.
- Progress in the embedding of teaching and learning improvement strategy and discussion of the problems reported with the Advanced Practitioners scheme. Noting that notwithstanding some appointments made, there remained a shortfall members were advised of the subsequent decision for the posts to be redesigned.

The report was noted.

3.1c Targets – Progress & Year-end Predictions

A report was presented on progress against targets and outlining year-end predictions.

Noting those matters covered elsewhere on the agenda (Minute 2 refers) there was consideration of the predicted rates, noting the initial presentation of the data profiled against the new success rate methodology. Reviewing the data, there was consideration of the predicted rates:

- Reporting on continuing concerns about Functional skills attributed to the combined impact of the non- attendance at exams of approximately a third of students as well as the small number of students passing at levels 1 and 2. In response to questioning members were advised of key changes being planned for both a new management structure to closely align ESOL, English and Maths, currently in separate departments, and a detailed action plan for embedding successful piloted strategies.
- For Apprenticeships and the impact on the original prediction of functional skills achievement and data management errors discussing also the risks associated with the Building Lives Centre closure, which it was noted were being closely monitored and acted upon.
- With overall Level 2 predictions expected to be poorer than the 84% target. There was further discussion noting that this was attributed to the introduction of external assessment to over half of the main qualifications, which had proven challenging for students and required different teaching and learning strategies. In response to questioning members were advised that the College had challenged Edexcel regarding the level of questions and poor administration of the online exams noting that opportunities had been provided for students to do compensatory activities as well as retake the online exams.

Members were also advised of future plans for the requirement for reporting on progression data with BIS piloting a model to show sustained employment as well as progression to further/higher education, feedback for which it was reported had been cautiously positive. Discussing with management:

- The extent of any challenge this would present to the College. It was noted that the most significant challenge was expected to be that the reports would only work with volumes of students above 100 in a particular sector and make comparison with the London Borough of Harrow employment figures. In response to questioning it was confirmed that a report on the new model would be presented to the Committee at the Autumn Term meeting.
- In the context of the current environment, the likelihood of the use such information to impose further funding cuts noting that the position in this regard was unclear.

The report was noted.

3.2 Learner Services Update

An update was presented.

Key developments were outlined noting in particular:

3.2.1 The changes made under the new restructure including:

- The joining of Additional Learning Support (ALS) with the LLDD curriculum provision as a natural fit alongside the launch of the new LLDD Centre and growth in High Need Learners (HNL); and Exams joining the MIS team.
- The continuation of the Careers and Employability and the Enrichment Teams working together across a host of activities but assuming a greater role providing relevant 'wrap around' activities for students in each curriculum area.

3.2.2 The continued development of the proposals for implementation of plans based on the Student Journey Gold Standards now developed.

The report was noted.

4 CURRICULUM MATTERS

4.1 Curriculum Strategy: Update Report

A report was presented updating members on developments with the College's Curriculum Planning and Development Strategy.

Progress was summarised and reviewing the key challenges and developments there was particular consideration of:

- 4.1.1 The range of the external factors with the potential to impact on the College's achievement of its strategic objectives including the lack of funding protection for post 16 EFA and adult SFA provision with the exception of apprenticeships, traineeships, 24+ loans, English and Maths
- 4.1.2 The Internal factors highlighting the challenges faced in needing to accelerate the College's response to the speed of change not only in the delivery of an innovative and responsive curriculum but also overcoming the challenges of the take-up 24+loans and fully exploiting opportunities for drawing down funding available
- 4.1.3 The further challenges potentially presented from the Government's forthcoming Treasury Statement in July 2015 with additional funding cuts anticipated.

After discussion the report was noted.

5 SAFEGUARDING

5.1 Safeguarding Learners: Update Report

The safeguarding learners update report was presented providing an update on developments and activity.

Progress was summarised reviewing in particular:

5.1.1 with the national interest around the prevent agenda, and the subsequent legislation introducing legal duties coming into effect in July that the subject had been raised at some of the key college forums and had been followed by a nominated lead attending training at AoC Prevent Duty for Colleges Conference. It was confirmed that wider training was scheduled during Staff Development for July 2015 with a whole College action plan under development to ensure compliance with its new duties.

5.1.2 The membership of the safeguarding team, which it was reported was being reconsidered with the current senior designated lead due to retire, confirming that the Corporation would be advised at its next meeting of the new arrangements.

The report was noted.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS & MEETING EVALUATION

6.1 Any Other Business: Staff Changes

After reporting on current and forthcoming staff changes the Committee:

6.1.1 Congratulated the Vice Principal, Pat Carvalho, on her appointment as Principal and successor to Tony Medhurst.

6.1.2 Extended its thanks to the Head of Quality and Learning, Chris Faux, for all his hard work during his time with the College and wished him and long and happy retirement.

6.1.3 Congratulated the Curriculum Manager for ESOL, Staff Governor and Committee member, Mumtaz Van Der Vord, on her appointment as the new Section Head for ESOL, English and Maths.

6.2 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 10 June 2015

6.3 Meeting Evaluation

Members completed the meeting evaluation forms and the meeting closed.