

**HARROW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CURRICULUM, QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE 2014**

1. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Attendance, Apologies for Absence & Welcome

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

In Attendance: Pat Carvalho
Jayne Chaplin (Clerk)
Chris Faux
Kevin Grindley
Steven Porter

1.2 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

1.3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2014, were confirmed as a correct record, and were signed by the Chair.

1.4 Matters Arising

None.

2. COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT SESSION

A presentation was received updating members on the College's proposals for becoming outstanding.

Welcoming the rationale for and endorsing the focus on the development of Student Attributes there was discussion of the proposals including the integration into the College systems and processes, which it was confirmed would be revised where necessary.

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

3. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

3.1 Summer Term Monitoring Reports

3.1a College Development Plan Update

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

After reporting on generally positive progress in most areas there was particular consideration of:

- Objective 1j, 86%+ overall success rate, and the monitoring and review of specific QIPs, noting plans for undertaking a major change to QIP documentation to ensure the effective monitoring of incremental progress effectively.
- Objective 2b, teaching, learning and assessment, noting progress overall to have been assigned a red rating. There was further discussion of the range of learning technologies available noting that whilst it had been hoped for staff and students to be more proactively engaged in setting up their own user groups, overall plans had not developed as organically as anticipated. After reflecting on the reasons potentially inhibiting greater progress and in response to questioning, it was confirmed that it was proposed for this to be reviewed further in order to ascertain plans for improved integration into teaching and learning activities during 2014/15.
- Objective 3g, achieve the College's learner recruitment and activity targets for all areas of delivery, noting the red rating assigned to progress in the achievement of the target for 19+ 24+ loans and acknowledging the extent to which the College had influence over the take-up of such loans. In response to questioning, members were advised of plans for the engagement of Heads of Department in strategies for the improvement of loan take-up during 2014/15

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 and there was particular consideration of:

- The outcomes of the Lesson Observation process. Reporting on outcomes to date and advising members that after judgments in the lowest ratings had identified two or three issues wrapped into in one category, it was reported that changes were being made for the new academic year to the process to ensure their disaggregation along with feedback to observers on how to improve observations and avoid potentially over-generous judgements.
- The report on the Spring Term complaints, noting the main focus of complaints concerned lecturers and course organisation and, correlating with the findings of the QDP Survey recently discussed by the Learner Voice Committee, with level 3 learners identified to be less satisfied than other learners.
- Proposals for the changing of the Self- Assessment process to support the journey to outstanding. Endorsing the proposed approach, members were advised of the support in place to assist in a radical rethink in how the College undertakes the self-assessment process.

The report was noted.

3.1c Targets: Progress and year-End Predictions

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

Presented in its revised dashboard format, progress was summarised reporting that management attention has been focussed on:

- The achievement of College targets for improving quality and performance in general and attendance, retention and teaching practice in particular.
- The post inspection action plan/quality improvement plan guiding the support and training programme for teaching staff. With development activities are devoted to teaching and learning best practice.
- Looking towards 2014/15, with attention being given to funding reforms and the implications these will have on the College curriculum.

Reviewing the report and accompanying commentary, there was particular consideration of:

- The student attendance data, noting whilst data suggested an improved picture for 16-18 year old learners, in contrast, 19+ learners and four particular ethnic groups, were all identified to be below target. There was further discussion of any underlying factors including the impact on attendance arising from the timetabling of classes in some instances; and the action being taken was noted.
- Predicted success rates for English and Maths, requesting for this to be reviewed further at the next meeting; and for A Levels, which members were advised had been a challenging target. Noting that whilst achievement of the target was not predicted, members were advised that it was anticipated for the 2012/13 rate to be exceeded, acknowledging that it was necessary for rates to improve in order for the College to become outstanding.

Discussing the content of the dashboard, it was agreed that it would be helpful for future reports to also include GCSE Performance data.

The report was noted.

3.2 Learner Services Update Report

The Learner Services Update Report was received.

Members were advised of the extensive review and appraisal process that had taken place noting the subsequent restructure to secure business efficiencies within all delivery areas. There was review and particular discussion of the rationale for and the ways in which it was anticipated the changes would improve the utilisation and effectiveness of staff and systems.

The report was noted.

3.3 Staff Development Follow-up: (CUREE) Report

A follow up report was presented summarising the key elements of the College's planned response to the Centre for the Use of Research & Evidence in Education (CUREE) report findings

The plans were reviewed exploring in particular with management the College's recognition of the need to move from a deficit to a positive model, through support to teachers in becoming outstanding. Exploring further the planned approach members were advised of the need to expand the number of Advanced Practitioners (APs) with the delivery of coaching training in house and with the APs to be encouraged to commit to taking one module per term.

The report was noted.

4 CURRICULUM MATTERS

4.1 Curriculum Strategy: Update Report

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

After confirming that the College had been advised of indicative funding for 2014/15 from the SFA that represented a cut of just below a 15% and from HEFCE for HE provision, with funding remaining the same as for the current year, it was reported that:

- 4.1.1 The overall focus for 19+ provision would be the delivery of more full-time provision with a greater emphasis on Level 3 to meet the increased 24+ loan amount and HE Provision. It was noted however that whilst this would mean a further reduction of short adult programmes alongside the 15% funding cut the College was pursuing alternative funding through ESF, DWP and SFA mandated funding, sitting outside of the SFA main funding
- 4.1.2 The EFA funding allocation had similarly been reduced as a result of the reduction in funding for 18 year olds. It was reported however that whilst the reduction had been capped at 2% of the allocation, the full impact would be in place in the budget in 2015/16, which had been reflected in the forecast from that year. Noting application numbers to date, members were advised that the College was working to improve its conversion rate to ensure more 16-17 learners on programme.

Reviewing in more detail the summary of the Departmental Plans:

- 4.1.3 The closure of Performing Arts and Travel & Tourism was noted, following low recruitment in the former and on-going quality issues associated with the latter.
- 4.1.4 Members were advised that whilst the College had not been successful to date, opportunities for ESF funding were being pursued in order to bridge the gap in funding.

After discussion the report was noted.

5 SAFEGUARDING

5.1 Safeguarding Learners: Update Report

An updated was presented on the College's safeguarding arrangements and progress with the most recent service review and developments.

After summarising the report there was particular consideration:

- 5.1.1 Of the nature of and underlying factors attributed to the concerns raised by cross service safeguarding team members regarding the growing number of student/clients presenting behaviour related to underlying mental health issues.
- 5.1.2 In the context of the College's statutory responsibilities and any potential negative reputational impact, of the likelihood of cases in existence that required more immediate escalation and action. In response to questioning, members were advised of the nature of those improvements regarded as necessary, noting the intention to both develop the ways to categorise cases, in order to improve the sufficiency of information for clearer and easier analysis and monitoring of safeguarding cases, and to facilitate the identification of emergent patterns within the student body.
- 5.1.3 Following confirmation of the successful bid to raise expectations and achievement for underachieving learners (REAL), in association with funding from the John Lyons Trust, of the College's opportunity to implement and embed a counselling and mentoring service in order to support its most vulnerable learners. Welcoming confirmation of the successful bid, members were advised of plans for the recruitment of a Project Manager to introduce a counselling and mentoring programme over a 3 year period.

The report was noted.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS & MEETING EVALUATION

6.1 Any Other Business

There was none.

6.2 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 10 December 2014

6.3 Meeting Evaluation

Members completed the meeting evaluation forms and the meeting closed.