

**HARROW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CURRICULUM, QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 10 JUNE 2008**

1. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Chair, Attendance, Apologies for Absence, Welcome & Introductions

Membership: Tyler Briscoe
Gillian Eldridge
Muna Mohamod
Tony Medhurst (Principal)

In Attendance: Jayne Chaplin (Clerk)
Susan Harrison
Rena Prindiville
Bob Vesey

Apologies: Leslie Wilson

Members were advised that following the resignation of the former member and Committee Chair, Ken Goulding, Gillian Eldridge had agreed to become a member of the Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that Gillian Eldridge would be the Committee Chair.

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were undertaken.

1.2 Declarations of interest & confidential items

There were no declarations of interest declared.

It was **RESOLVED** that item 3.1 would be taken as a confidential item.

1.3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 February 2008 were confirmed as a correct record, and were signed by the Chair.

1.4 Matters Arising & Agenda Order

1.4.1 Perceptions Research (Minute3.1.1)

It was reported that the report for the College management team had been based on two sets of research involving parents and young persons and employers.

It was noted that the overall conclusions of the research had been:

- That with regard to employers, there was a need to promote better the Business Base brand; and
- That young people and parents had good knowledge but that little of the information had been made available from schools.

2. COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT SESSION

2.1 Interactive presentation: Skills for life

An interactive presentation on Skills for Life was received from Bob Vesey, the Director of Curriculum Development.

Members were advised:

- 2.1.1 That the skills identified as essential for success and the overall context within which the Skills for Life agenda was set.
- 2.1.2 How individual development was based on an individual learning plan, devised according to the individual's needs.
- 2.1.3 That the College's planned approach had followed a period of consultation with learners to ensure the most appropriate approach.

There was a discussion of the consultation that had taken place and the issues that had been highlighted, how the College had responded and the resources available in the promotion of skills for life.

The Chair thanked Mr Vesey for an interesting and informative presentation.

3. QUALITY, SELF ASSESSMENT & PERFORMANCE MATTERS

3.1 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE

3.2 Quality & Development Report

The Quality & Development Report was received.

Members were advised that the report was the Quality Manager's termly report and the key points of note were:

- 3.2.1 That of the observations of teaching and learning, 241 in total to date, 100 had been Assessment of Learning (AoL) observations; 120 had been routine Curriculum Manager/ Student Achievement Manger observations; and 21 observations had been Probationary observations. Members were advised that

- the focus of attention had been on those who had previously been graded a 3 or 4, in order to bring about an improvement in those grades
- 3.2.2 The statistics outlining the average grade, average student attendance and punctuality and the average number of students present in each class for each Section and Faculty.
 - 3.2.3 The individual subject student satisfaction course evaluation survey had highlighted that the overall satisfaction rate was 90%, a 1% improvement on last year. It was noted that the overall satisfaction rate for students at the Harrow-on-the-Hill campus was 92%, a 2% improvement on last year, and 88% for students at the Harrow Weald campus, which is the same as last year. There was a discussion of the areas of least satisfaction, which mainly concerned the overall physical environment, at the Harrow Weald Campus in particular.
 - 3.2.4 The range of and participation in the staff development activities and the CPD requirements that staff are required to fulfil in each year.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

- 3.2.5 **NOTE** the report.

3.3 Project Monitoring Reports

3.3a Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate

The Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate Report was received.

Members were advised that the report summarised the position to date with the AS and A Level franchise agreement between the College and the Central Consortium, which was scheduled to come to an end in July 2008.

It was reported that:

- 3.3a.1 The retention data in each year group was high with comparative figures for retention in the college at 90% (AS) and 93% (A2). It was noted that retention in the college was generally above sector averages and that the Collegiate AS retention rate at 96% was the same as in the previous year.
- 3.3a.2 The unit results for January 2008 for the Collegiate centres and for Collegiate students studying one or more subjects in the college had generally been good with the exception of Bentley Wood. It was noted that work had been undertaken to improve grades in the June series in subjects and centres where the results were out of line.
- 3.3a.3 The College continued to lead on the development of the Diploma in Creative and Media. Members were reminded that it had previously been reported that for 2008-09, the Diploma would be offered at Harrow College (Level 3) and Harrow High School (Level 2). It was noted however, that the fact that high school option blocks were not aligned was making it difficult to recruit for the level 2 diploma in schools and it was likely that numbers in the first year would be low. Members

were advised that the Collegiate had been unsuccessful in its Gateway Bids in round 2 so that no new diplomas would be in development in Harrow for 2009-10.

After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to:

3.3a.4 **NOTE** the report.

3.3.b Retail CoVE

The Retail CoVE update Report was received updating members on performance to date and summarising the challenges and opportunities facing the CoVE.

Members were reminded that the College's Retail CoVE – 'Retail Skills', a partnership between Key Training (lead), CNWL and Harrow College, was in its third and final year. It was noted that in 2009 the CoVE brand would be dissolved and replaced with The Training Quality Standard as the new kite mark of excellence.

With regard to performance, members were advised that:

- 3.3b.1 The targets were set yearly against the original base line figures within the CoVE bid and the overall required growth is 50fte's.
- 3.3b.2 The College had generally performed well against the CoVE targets in years 1 and 2.
- 3.3b3 For year 3, Harrow College had some stretching targets but that it had made a positive contribution to the CoVE targets to date.

It was reported that there were a number of key challenges to overcome in this final year of the CoVE including:

- 3.3b4 The Curriculum offer. It was noted that Skillsmart had removed a pure customer service route for those working in a retail environment in favour of the more specialised Retail NVQ. Members were advised that the preference of most employers was to support a customer service qualification and take up of the retail qualification route had therefore been slow.
- 3.3b5 Long term commitment. It was noted that a large proportion of the retail workforce was transient and that there had therefore been difficulty in committing to a long term training programme. Members were advised that in response to this the CoVE partners had offered a range of short certificated programmes, which had been moderately successful in engaging learners within SME's.
- 3.3b6 Infrastructure capacity. It was noted that most large retail employers ran their own training and development programmes or link with national training providers who can offer a national coverage. Members were advised that the CoVE had worked, in the main, with SME's who may have had one, or at most, two learners in the same location. It was noted that this model was expensive to support and, that to counteract this, the College was recruiting and training more assessors to increase the number of assessment visits and the speed of achievement.

3.3b.7 The costs of Level 4+. It was noted that there is interest within the retail sector in management development and that the college had built a range of options for managers. Members were advised, however, that management qualifications at level 4 and above were prohibitively expensive, especially to a sector where salaries were historically low. It was noted that the college was working with a number of partners to try and establish a modular retail management programme that can be paid for / funded in small chunks to support greater engagement.

There was a discussion of the opportunities being pursued including:

3.3b.8 Recruitment and Job Brokerage to corporate clients. Members were advised of a recent submission to Westfield developers in relation to the new White City Shopping Centre that provided an opportunity to set up a pre-employment job brokerage in partnership with the White City Employment Group and Westfields. It was noted that there were approximately 7000 vacancies to be filled between May 08 and October 08.

3.3b.9 A Retail Academy, being led by CNWL with Skillsmart. It was noted that the main academy would be based within the new Wembley Stadium development, although there was an opportunity to mirror this provision within the White City Shopping Centre and that the College was discussing this as part of the pre-employment bid.

3.3b.10 The development of a Retail Diploma Development, aiming to add this to the vocational offer of the college when this stream goes live in 2009/10.

After further consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

3.3b.11 **NOTE** the report.

3.3c London Borough of Harrow – LLDD Strategy

The London Borough of Harrow – LLDD Strategy Update Report was received.

Members were advised that the College was commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council in February 2007 to produce a borough-wide strategy and implementation plan to develop and deliver programmes for young learners 16-24 with learning difficulties and disabilities.

It was reported that:

3.3c.1 The project involved working with key partners to map current provision, produce a gap analysis, and the development of the strategy and implementation plan.

3.3c.2 The remaining part of the project was to develop an appropriate infrastructure with clear progression routes, advice and guidance services, an area wide prospectus and suitable facilities and equipment.

It was noted that:

3.3c.4 Progress to date included:

- Setting up a Steering Group with representatives of all strategic parties
- Contracting of a consultant to carry out the mapping exercise and development of the strategy
- Desk research and initial interviews with a wide range of stakeholders
- Development and finalisation of the Strategy and Action Plan

3.3c.5 Current activities were concentrating on the delivery of key objectives in the Implementation Plan which were:

- Opportunities for progression to employment – through the employment of a Job Broker to work with employers to identify suitable employment opportunities and provide training in how to support young people into work.
- The provision of appropriate advice and guidance for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities and their parents and carers to provide information about their options post 16 and the support available.
- The development of the vocational curriculum to develop more vocational routes post 16.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

3.3c.6 **NOTE** the report.

3.4 Progress on Targets: Term 3 Update Report

The Progress on Targets: Term 3 Update Report was received outlining the progress on targets and the strategies that had already implemented to address the shortfall in numbers.

It was reported that although steps had been introduced to close the gap by recruiting throughout the year the position previously reported regarding under-recruitment:

- 3.4.1 For the 16-18 funding stream remained below target, with a shortfall of 296.
- 3.4.2 19+ full and part time numbers were both down by 5 and 22 respectively.
- 3.4.3 For Skills for Life, with a shortfall of 237. It was noted that the target had been particularly challenging with the LSC changing the criteria and that also the ESOL contract had helped, the numbers were not reflected in the Skills for Life targets.

Members were advised that:

- 3.4.4 Changes in patterns of recruitment required the College to continue to view 16 to 18 recruitment as a continuous activity.

3.4.5 There was a need to build stronger partnerships. It was noted that historically relations with external agencies, such as Connexions, had not been as positive as they could have been and that the College was looking to strengthen future relationships by addressing misconceptions about the nature of the College's curriculum provision.

There was a discussion of the curriculum changes that would be required, being a key strategic requirement if the college was to deal effectively with the changes in LSC funding and increased competition in the local area.

It was agreed that a report briefing the Corporation on the key curriculum development and changes planned to respond effectively to the LSC priorities and maximise funding opportunities would be presented to the July meeting

After further consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

3.4.6 **NOTE** the report.

3.5 Directorate of students: Update Report

The Directorate of students report was received updating members on developments since the last report and highlighting some of the activities that have taken place in the current academic year.

It was noted that:

3.5.1 Although operations had continued with a reduced team essential support services for students had been maintained and the Every Child Matters agenda had been taken forward.

3.5.2 Since the appointment of the new Principal a review of the area had been conducted and plans were being put in place to strengthen and develop this area of activity for 2008-09.

It was reported that the Directorate of Students encompassed the following areas of activity:

3.5.3 The student experience, which included a variety of student centred support and enrichment activities.

3.5.4 Student Services, which had responsibility for a variety of student support, advice and welfare services.

3.5.5 Aim Higher, a DFES sponsored programme designed to encourage young people from backgrounds with little or no family experience of higher education to go to university or to advance to and through college

Members were advised of the range of activities that had been undertaken in each of those areas during the Academic Year.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

3.5.6 **NOTE** the report.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS & MEETING EVALUATION

4.1 Any other business

No other business was raised.

4.2 Date of Next Meeting

TBC

4.3 Meeting Evaluation

Members completed the meeting evaluation forms and the meeting closed.