

**HARROW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CURRICULUM, QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2008**

1. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Attendance, Apologies for Absence, Welcome & Introductions

Membership: Tyler Briscoe
Rosy Crehan
Gillian Eldridge (Chair)
Fidelis Griffith
Therese Lorphevre
Muna Mohamod

In Attendance: Jayne Chaplin (Clerk)
Jeannie Cohen- Brand
Chris Faux
Susan Harrison
Tony Medhurst (Principal)
Emma Wood (item 2 only)

Apologies: Muna Muse

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 3.4 and all matters relating to it would be taken as a confidential item.

1.3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 June 2008 were confirmed as a correct record, and were signed by the Chair.

1.4 Matters Arising

1.4.1 Quality & Development Report- Teaching & Learning Observations (Minute 3.2.1)

The number of lesson observations conducted included all observations that had taken place to date and it was agreed that the Head of Quality & Standards would check and report back to the Committee.

2. COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT SESSION

2.1 Interactive presentation: Faculty of Science & Health

An interactive presentation on the Faculty of Science & Health was received from the Head of Faculty, Emma Wood.

Members were advised of the curriculum offer, type and level within the Faculty:

- 2.1.1 Hair, Beauty & Fitness
- 2.1.2 Health, Care & Counselling
- 2.1.3 Science & Maths
- 2.1.4 Skills Centre

The roles and responsibilities of the each Curriculum Manager were explained and it was noted that within the Faculty there was also a Student Achievement Manager and an Application of Number/Functional Maths Co-ordinator.

The value of learning through experience, the developments in the curriculum and the particular challenges faced and being addressed were discussed.

The Chair thanked Ms Wood for an interesting and informative presentation.

3. QUALITY, SELF ASSESSMENT & PERFORMANCE MATTERS

3.1 Draft Self Assessment Report 2007/08 (inc. Corporation SAR)

The College's draft Self Assessment Report (SAR) was received.

It was noted that:

- 3.1.1 The College was required to assess its performance annually and to provide a report of the assessment for the LSC and Ofsted, as well as for internal use.
- 3.1.2 The report was in first draft and that the final report would be produced for the Corporation's December meeting.
- 3.1.2 The SAR set the agenda for the College quality and improvement priorities for 2008/09. It was noted that action plans for each area had already been drawn up, progress against which the Committee would monitor at forthcoming meetings.

Members were advised that:

- 3.1.3 The SAR had been written in the context of current issues and developments and the likelihood of an Ofsted inspection in late 2009 or early 2010.
- 3.1.4 As the report would form the basis of any such inspection, it was important for the College to be fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses. It was noted that on that basis a more robust approach had been taken with regard to grades and comparison benchmarks.
- 3.1.5 Unlike previous reports, the detailed judgements included contributory grades in recognition of Ofsted's change in approach.

The summary of graded judgements was outlined and there was a discussion of:

- 3.1.6 The media and performing arts provision which it was noted had been graded 4. It was reported that it was an area of provision that had been performing below national benchmarks.
- 3.1.7 Key question 2, the effectiveness of teaching, training and learning and the key strengths identified.
- 3.1.8 Key question 5, the effectiveness of leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting learners, to which the Corporation's assessment of its performance had contributed, and which, in the context of the challenges currently faced across the College, it was noted had now been graded as "satisfactory".
- 3.1.9 Every child matters and the supporting statements used with regard to the section "staying safe", which it was considered the range of links, services and support mechanisms available could be highlighted more strongly.
- 3.1.10 The organisation's capacity for improvement, which had been graded as "good", and the evidence used in support of the grade. Members were advised that the grade allocated reflected the awareness of the direction in which the College was moving in future and the strategies for improvement being out in place.
- 3.1.11 Key question, Achievement and Standards, graded as "satisfactory". The key strengths, improvements made since the last self assessment and the areas now identified for improvement were noted, in particular:
 - The good and improving high grades for 16-18 year old learners at all levels, with a 4% increase to 28%.
 - The good rate of improvement of success rates for the large number of ESOL learners.
 - The poor success and achievement rates at AS level.
 - The unsatisfactory success rates for young men on Level 1, which it was noted was already the subject of further analysis.

The College's success rates were summarised. It was noted that overall success rates, which for 2006/07 and 2007/08 included the Collegiate franchise, showed an improving 3-year trend, from 8% below the national benchmark in 2005/06 to 2% below the national rate in 2007/08.

Members were advised that College would be concerned to monitor its underlying performance once the Collegiate results were excluded.

There was consideration of the success rates and the grades awarded in the SAR and after a wide ranging discussion the Committee endorsed the SAR grades as allocated.

The Committee noted the work that had gone into producing the SAR and thanked the Vice Principal and the Quality & Standards Manager for all the work that had gone into the production of the report.

After extended discussion of the report and the grades, it was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to the Corporation the **APPROVAL** of the College SAR 2007/08 subject to:

- 3.1.5 The strengthening of the Every Child Matters Section, "staying safe", to place greater emphasis on the range of links, services and support mechanisms available.
- 3.1.6 Including the good rate of improvement of success rates for the large number of ESOL learners as further evidence to demonstrate the College's capacity to improve, in the relevant section of the SAR.
- 3.1.7 Generally, making more explicit the intention for and expectation of provision to improve further in future and in particular for the progression from grade 2 to grade 1.

3.2 Success Rates 2007/08

See Minute 3.1

3.3 Ofsted Annual Assessment Visit: Feedback

The Ofsted Annual Assessment Visit feedback report was received.

Members were advised that the conclusions of the Inspectors following the monitoring visit, undertaken in September, had been that the College had:

3.3.1 Made reasonable progress in relation to:

- Improving teaching and learning
- Gathering and using students' views; and
- Implementing workforce reforms

3.3.2 Made significant progress in developing employer partnerships.

It was noted that although it was considered that insufficient progress had been made in improving achievement and in the analysis and use of value-added data to raise standards, the risk analysis had concluded that an inspection should not be brought forward.

There was a discussion of the feedback and in particular the impact measures taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning and the low attendance last year at workshops to support teaching and learning. It was noted that attendance had now been made mandatory.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

3.3.3 NOTE the report.

3.4 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE

4. CURRICULUM MATTERS

4.1 Draft Quality Improvement Strategy

The Quality Improvement Strategy was received.

It was reported that the aim of the Strategy, which was a requirement under the Instrument and Articles of Government, was to ensure that the learner entitlement would contribute to the pursuance of the College's mission and values, and to respond to internal and external challenges outlined in the College Strategic Plan.

It was noted that it supported the College's four key Strategic Aims and that its principles were:

- 4.1.1 To set out the College's approach for quality improvement and to identify key mechanisms by which it could be achieved. It was reported that it was designed to support striving for excellence in standards and to determine the ways in which the staff of the College could contribute.
- 4.1.2 To demonstrate the College's commitment to striving for excellence and finding new and more effective ways of meeting customers' needs.
- 4.1.3 For the College to continue to be responsible for its own improvement, an important part of which was to ensure that activities remain responsive to the needs of learners and employers with support and timely intervention being a key approach in achieving this.
- 4.1.4 The sharing good practice across the College to enable staff to support and learn from each other.
- 4.1.5 The need for effective partnerships.

There was a discussion of:

- 4.1.6 The key processes in achieving the strategy; the Colleges commitment to the quality cycle, the quality framework and the learner support cycle.
- 4.1.7 The quality management target to consider linking each College Governor to a subject sector area to engage in the provision, meet students and support the self assessment process, a target which the Committee endorsed. Members were advised that the initiative had also been the subject of discussion at a recent meeting of the Search and Development Committee and that this was being developed further for introduction during the current Academic Year. It was agreed that it would be beneficial as a topic for wider discussion at the Corporation residential in February.

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

- 4.1.8 **RECOMMEND** to the Corporation the **APPROVAL** of the Strategy.

4.2 Quality & Standards Manager's Report

The Quality & Standards Manager's Report was received.

The activities undertaken in the autumn term to date were summarised and there was a discussion in particular of the Personal Development Scheme (PDS) that allowed college staff to join any college part time class free of charge to pursue a wide range of adult learning activities and which could be expanded to include governors.

After consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

- 4.2.1 **NOTE** the report.

4.3 Annual Report & Impact Assessment for Business Base

A presentation was received from the Director of Business Base.

Members were advised of the key impacts in the areas of:

- 4.3.1 Employer engagement
- 4.3.2 Curriculum development
- 4.3.3 Sales and business development
- 4.3.4 Income generation; and
- 4.3.5 The added value services

The next steps were summarised and there was a discussion of the objectives planned including making employer partnerships more visible and increasing the College profile as the partner of choice.

The way in which the Corporation could provide support was considered and it was agreed that it would be beneficial to include a session on the Business Base activities

as a topic for wider strategic discussion at the Corporation residential would be beneficial.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked the Director of Business Base for an informative presentation.

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

4.3.6 **NOTE** the report.

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

5.1 Committee Annual Report

The Annual Report for the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee was received outlining the work of the Committee during the period 1 August 2007 to 31 July 2008.

Members were advised that the format of the report had been revised to include a statement from the Chair giving an overview of the main sector issues relevant to the Committee's work, along with the highlights of the business considered.

The contents of the report were discussed and the Committee's attendance rate for the year was noted. After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

5.1.1 **NOTE** the report.

5.1.2 **RECOMMEND** to the Corporation the approval of the Committee's Annual Report for 2007/08.

5.2 Committee Terms of Reference

A report was received on proposed amendments to the Committee Terms of Reference.

Members were reminded that the Terms of Reference set out the remit and procedures to be followed by the Committee and that to ensure that the Terms of Reference remained in line with good practice it was necessary to periodically review them.

In reviewing the Committee's business and terms of reference, it was reported that amendments had been proposed to ensure that they continued to reflect the recent changes in the Instruments and Articles of Government relating to the publication of minutes and terms of reference on the College website for a minimum period of twelve months.

After consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

5.2.1 **NOTE** the report.

5.2.2 **RECOMMEND** to the Corporation the approval of the Committee's Terms of Reference.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS & MEETING EVALUATION

6.1 Any other business: Vice Principal's Retirement

Members were advised that it was the Vice Principal's last meeting before her retirement early in the 2009 spring term.

The Chair paid tribute to the Vice Principal and thanked her for all her hard work during her time at the College and, on behalf of the Committee, wished her a long and happy retirement.

6.2 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 February 2009

6.3 Meeting Evaluation

Members completed the meeting evaluation forms and the meeting closed.