Doncaster College | University Centre

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MINUTES OF THE CURRICULUM, QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2017

Present

Ian Falconer	Governor
Gavin Hinchliffe	Governor
Nigel Jackson	Governor
Paul Senior	Governor
Anne Tyrrell	Governor and Interim Principal and Chief Executive
Keri Walker	Governor
Meryl White	Chair

The quorum for the meeting was three Members.

In attendance

Kathryn Brentnall	Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality
Paul Pascoe	Governor
Mark Stephenson	Assistant Clerk to the Corporation

The meeting was held in the Boardroom at the Hub and started at 5.30 pm.

Item	Minutes	Action

Visit to Learning Resource Centre

Prior to the formal meeting (at 5.00 pm), a number of Members / attendees took part in an escorted tour of the Learning Resource Centre, where the major changes made (including the investment in ICT), following relocation of the High Melton Campus curriculum areas over the summer, were highlighted.

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Charlotte Desourdy, John Doherty, Diane Bailey and Catherine Parkinson.

Nigel Jackson, Gavin Hinchliffe, Paul Senior, and Anne Tyrrell were welcomed to their first meeting of the Committee.

2 Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded of the need to declare interests as and when they arise within the agenda and recognised that there is a register of standing declarations of interest held by the Clerk.

There were no new declarations of interest.

Item	Minutes	Action

3   Appointment of Committee Chair and Vice Chair

In the context of the proposed merger, it was confirmed that the appointment of the Chair would be for this meeting only. Meryl White, the current post holder, indicated her willingness to be considered; there were no further nominations and Members duly appointed Meryl White as Chair.

It was confirmed that this is likely to be the Committee's last meeting before the proposed merger with North Lindsey College (scheduled for 1 November 2017); this provides a context for the agenda items and Members' consideration, but, should the merger be delayed or not take place, the Committee will meet in accordance with the College's agreed Meetings Calendar 2017/18.

4   Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 June 2017 and any matters arising

The minutes were agreed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising:

Item 5: Learning Resource Centre (LRC) – those who attended the earlier visit to the LRC commented positively about the large amount of work done and the improvements made for students (in particular access to ICT); additionally, the new Waterfront Cafeteria has been well received;

Item 6b: Quality and Performance Progress Report – it was reported that College managers continue to look at the presentation of data / information, especially in relation to HE and Apprenticeships; it is envisaged that updated arrangements will be brought to the next meeting;   **KB**

Item 10: National Policy Update – it had been agreed previously with the Chair that an update on the new Apprenticeship regulations would be brought to the next meeting;   **KB**

Item 12: Curriculum links – Members welcomed the links made by Programme Managers with employers across the borough;

Item 7: Safeguarding (students not wearing ID) – Members queried the actions taken by management to address this issue; some discussion took place and a number of key points were made:
- Reference was made to a meeting of the Student Parliament;
- A summary of actions taken by management was provided – a coordinated approach with a consistent message based on professional standards / workplace expectations, using email reminders, meetings, behavioural training and appropriate action taken by security staff;
- Governors and managers remain committed to providing an open, welcoming, and approachable College for its students; this must be balanced with the need to provide a safe and secure environment in which people can

learn;

- Student governor feedback indicates that security staff have the right balanced approach to dealing with security matters; the practical arrangements for tackling students who forget their lanyards / ID badges was considered (requirement to sign in as a visitor);

5   Determination of Any Other Business

None.

6   Quality and Performance Progress Reports

Members received a Quality and Performance Progress Report which sets out the key issues relating to:

- The Curriculum Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as at September 2017 for Classroom based provision 2016/17 (to date), Maths and English, Higher Education, and Apprenticeships;

- The College's Self-Assessment Report 2017/18 Monitoring Arrangements / Timescales (now to be known as the Performance Assessment Report – PAR);

The key points in the Report were highlighted.

Curriculum KPIs

a) <u>Classroom-based provision (including English and Maths)</u> - It was noted that, as previously at this time of year, this is the Committee's first opportunity to look at performance data for 2016/17; overall retention for classroom-based provision (including English and Maths) is expected to be at around 92%, whilst student achievement information continues to be received. Currently, it is anticipated that achievement, with 8% unknown outcomes still to be recorded, will be similar to 2015/16 at around 81% - slightly below the national rates for 2015/16 (83%). Some disappointment was expressed about the static nature of the figures and that the gap between College rates and national rates is not being closed quickly enough.

Through Governors' questions and discussion, a number of key points were made:
- Maths and English – whilst there is a positive message with 277 students achieving English and Maths grades A* to C/4 for the first time, achievement is static and remains below national rates; there is some recognition that many students come from difficult backgrounds / a negative experience at school; despite retention being relatively high the gap in achievement rates requires full investigation; specific queries were raised about students' preparedness to attend / sit the end of year examinations and the levels of support and interventions provided by the College at key stages during the year;

Item	Minutes	Action

- A number of management actions aimed at improving the position were summarised and included: individual target and progress monitoring, importance of a good start (classes established quickly), improvements to the coordination of teaching and learning, inspiring teaching, closer attendance monitoring, more analysis of data, closer relationship between the individual curriculum areas and the English and Maths team; the personal experiences from the two staff governors perspectives were summarised (more proactive, unrelenting approach adopted with class allocations established quickly and a strong focus on attendance); reference was also made to a process whereby individual students are RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated
- Important that all staff are aware of the high priority placed on English and Maths by Governors and College leaders and are fully supported;
- Vital that resources are made available and prioritised at the right time to meet students' needs;
- There was confirmation that, with the proposed merger, there are opportunities for staff teams to share best practice in English and Maths (in this respect, NLC is currently performing better than Doncaster College);
- Enrolments for 2017/18 – Governors were pleased to note that the College has enrolled to its allocation for 16-18 year olds and that, to allow for some early withdrawal, a stretch target (around 8%) has been included for each curriculum area; there was some discussion about the importance of appropriate room allocations in the context of class sizes / students' needs and the flexible use of ICT; enrolments for 19+ continue to take place through the year;

b) <u>Higher Education</u> – Governors conveyed their thanks to all those involved in the move of HE provision from the High Melton Campus to the Hub, CAST, Communications College and Doncaster College East. There is a clear ambition to revitalise and grow the College's HE offer in Doncaster.

There have been many positive comments from students about the new locations (all validated by the University of Hull) and the improved access to ICT; the initial concerns relating to a potential loss of the distinctive ethos of HE have not materialised – the facilities and services made available for students on the Hub's 4th floor have been welcomed.

More formal feedback from students on the new arrangements will be sought at the student forums next week, and feedback from the NSS (National Student Survey) will be brought for consideration at the next meeting.

KB

c) <u>Apprenticeships</u> – overall achievement is similar to 2015/16, but timely completion rates have improved; both are above the national rates. Whilst there is increased competition for apprenticeships from other providers, Members were particularly pleased to note the College's success in winning contracts with local employers; the importance of the College working with the many Doncaster SMEs (Small to Medium enterprises) was highlighted.

It was confirmed that the Curriculum KPIs report is a College-designed dashboard to aid Governors' monitoring of key College data / information; Members are asked to make suggestions for improvement / refinement. The importance of Governors being able to undertake top-line monitoring of College performance against national standards was highlighted. Also, in terms of presentation of the dashboard, it was suggested that the headings are repeated at the top of each page. NLC communicates the same information to its Governors, but with a different presentation. There is also a commitment, following the proposed merger, to review information requirements at different levels of the enlarged college and for this to inform the procurement of management information systems.

KB

Performance Assessment Report (PAR) 2016/17

It was confirmed that the timetable for the production of the College's PAR is on schedule; Governors are invited to attend the formal moderation meetings during w/c 23 October 2017. Additionally, it was noted that desk-based moderations of selected curriculum area PARs and action plans will be undertaken with three other colleges.

RESOLUTION (CQP 10 /17):
Members noted and gained assurance from the contents of the Quality and Performance Reports.

Paul Pascoe left the meeting at 6.47pm.

7   Review of Committee 2016/17 and agree Key Priorities for 2017/18

Members received a report that set out a number of questions for the Committee's consideration of its own performance in 2016/17 and included a summary of the key priorities / areas for improvement agreed at the September 2016 meeting of the Committee. Additionally, it was noted that the Committee had reviewed its terms of reference at the last meeting.

Some discussion took place about performance of the Committee, and a number of key points were made:
- Members have closely monitored student enrolments, progress and achievement through scrutiny of the KPIs Report;
- Members have participated in SAR moderation meetings and a range of other College events, related to curriculum e.g. Children's University, Graduation, Enterprise;
- The Committee has received presentations on new developments such as Apprenticeships and the new levy;
- Suggested priorities for 2017/18 (to inform the merged college):
  - Higher Education - build on the movement of provision from High Melton; in the context of the requirements of the Quality Code for HE, consider the governance arrangements for overseeing the provision;
  - Promote apprenticeships more widely;

> o Provision of data / information – new management information systems (integrated performance), smarter, more efficient, consistency across the merged college;
>
> o Continue to closely monitor student performance – class-based provision (including English and Maths), Higher Education, and Apprenticeships.

RESOLUTION (CQP 11/17):
Members, having reviewed the Committee's performance in 2016/17, agreed the Committee's priorities that should be considered by the merged college board.

8   Risk Register – Committee Monitoring

Members received and noted a report that set out the three key strategic risks that apply to the Curriculum Quality and Performance Committee; it was confirmed that following discussions at meetings of the Assurance Management Group, the risks have been updated / rewritten to reflect the current position (the adjustments are highlighted).

In discussions about the Risk Register, Members raised two specific queries for consideration:

- In relation to recent HE curriculum matters, should there be an additional risk that sets out the mitigation / controls in place to prevent recurrence; College Managers to consider;   **KB**
- Increased competition for the College e.g. academies, universities, other colleges; after some consideration, it was recognised that this risk is overseen at Board level.

RESOLUTION (CQP 12/17):
Members reviewed the risk register, noted the related mitigation / controls, and agreed that there is no change to the risks at this time.

9   National Policy Update / Feedback from Events

Nothing to report at this time.

10   Any Other Business

The Chair referred to her attendance at a summer event at the High Melton Campus and a personal invitation to meet with a small number of HE staff; some discussion took place about the arrangements for such visits / meetings in the context of existing practices such as 'Governor walk-throughs', attendance at focus group meetings, and the different locations of HE provision. KB offered to make suggestions for Members' consideration, before arrangements are made through the Governance PA.   **KB**

11   Key Items for Feedback to Board

Committee Members:

- Asked detailed questions about the latest information on 2016-17 performance. Overall, this showed that performance was static with some positive areas of performance but other indicators showed that the rate of improvement needed to be accelerated. Intervention measures were outlined including an unrelenting focus on teaching, learning and assessment, more targeted activity, closer working between vocational and English and Maths teams to portray a whole curriculum approach and swift action to resolve timetabling clashes so students began courses promptly;
- Noted good enrolment figures for the start of the year, including 2500 in 16-18 year olds and the successful recruitment of Apprenticeships from local employers including large and small businesses;
- Reminded all Governors of the invitation to attend Performance Assessment Report sessions (PARs) week commencing 23 October and requested a short briefing sheet outlining expectations of governor involvement;
- Carried out a review of the committee's work in 2016-17 and listed specific priorities for related areas of activity in the context of the merged college, building on the committee's strengths;
- Noted amendments to the Risk Register and on-going work to mitigate risks;
- Agreed visits by Governors to HE areas including to provision largely based beyond the Hub;
- Acknowledged the communication drive to ensure the safety of students remained a top priority.

12   Date and Time of Next Meetings:

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 8 November, 5.30 pm in the Boardroom (if required).

The meeting closed at 7.12 pm.

Mark Stephenson
Assistant Clerk to the Corporation

Signed: ……………………………………… (Chair)   Date: ……………………