

**CHELMSFORD COLLEGE
QUALITY AND LEARNERS COMMITTEE
17 MAY 2016**

PRESENT: Sarah Noble (Chair)
Heather Clarke (till 3.20 pm)
Andy Sparks (Principal)
Barbara Vohmann
Susan Hughes

IN ATTENDANCE: Penny Petch (Head of Professional Standards & Student Services)
Caroline Williams (Deputy Principal)
Elaine Oddie (Chair, Corporation) (till 4.45pm)
Alison Davies (Director of Curriculum, Moulsham Street)
Marco Iciek (Director of Learner Development & Inclusion)
Mark Emerson (Director of Information Services)
Rob Millea FCA (Clerk to the Corporation)
Joanne Harrington (Assistant Clerk)

477. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Steve Houghton.

Luke Hain (Student Governor) was absent. The Clerk was asked to follow up his lack of attendance with him.

ACTION: CLERK

478. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Barbara Vohmann declared her interest as a staff member at Anglia Ruskin University. The Clerk declared his interest as Clerk to South Essex College. There were no other declarations made.

The Committee were informed by the Principal that the winding up of Chelmsford Training Services Limited (a 100% subsidiary of the College) has been commenced and this involves transferring the business and the employees of the Company to the College through the TUPE arrangements. Consultations with staff will begin on the 24th May 2016. are about to begin.

479. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 FEBRUARY 2016

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 9 February 2016 were **APPROVED** and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

480. MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk **REPORTED** the resignation of Angelika Baxter from the Board of the College and therefore as a Member and Chair of this Committee. Sarah Noble has agreed to act as Chair of this Committee.

Action points from the last Meeting regarding **controlled assessments and mock examinations for English & Maths** (minute 470) and **KPIs for attendance** (minute 466) in those areas are covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Student satisfaction decline (minute 454) – Marco Iciek reported that these were restricted to certain curriculum areas and are often to do with staffing difficulties. A SPOC Survey was done last week to see if the decline has been addressed. A copy of the results of the SPOC Survey will be loaded on the Governors' portal as soon as available.

Training for Governors on observing learners (minute 456) will be provided as they attend Learning Walks and there will be reference made to this training in the Governors' Development Plan for the next year, including hints and tips on how to do this. It was noted that Learning Walks have been planned with three governors shortly.

Barbara Vohmann reported that she had done a Learning Walk earlier today at Princes Road in the Assessment Centre there involving Electrical & Mechanical Engineering and Catering students and she gave very positive feedback, commenting in particular how 'on task' she felt the students were.

HE partner (minute 453) – progress being made with an arrangement with South Essex College on better terms than we had with our previous provider (ARU), for new starts beginning in September 2016. ARU will honour those learners who are already on course.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the latest METIS newsletter will be loaded on the portal for governors shortly.

481. PRESENTATION – ENGLISH & MATHEMATICS

Lisa Houghton (Curriculum Manager, English & Mathematics) gave a presentation to the Committee focusing on further activity and progress in

the delivery of English & Mathematics. This was supported by a written paper.

Progress

Areas of Improvement:

- Moderation of controlled assessments
- Staffing and timetabling (including evening classes)
- Curriculum changes
- Tracking of student progress
- Progress and Progression Reviews
- Staff development

Staff continue to work on these aspects.

Outcomes

Some small improvements have occurred this year but they are not yet good enough. In summary, they are:

- Increased controlled assessment completion (81% to 96% year on year)
- Grade C outcomes in these assessments up by 16% to 23% over last year
- Mock maths results 27% of students have achieved a high D
- Current functional skills success rates are improving

Attendance

This remains a significant challenge as attendance is lower on English & Maths compared to the other components of student study programmes.

Further intervention is planned including staffing and the attitudes of some students and parents.

Governors remain concerned that there is still a considerable challenge to raise standards and outcomes in English & Mathematics. It is a barrier to ensuring employability of students and will affect the potential outcome of the next Ofsted inspection.

Governors were informed that attendance is disappointing in Maths and English and changes have been made to the timetabling protocols which are intended to impact positively on attendance.

Students are still struggling in many cases but are more engaged than they have been in the past. It is intended to use high achieving learners

(‘champions’) at Maths & English to help their peers who are not performing well.

Changes in the GCSE curriculum for 2016/17 will be a significant challenge for many students in the future as it is generally accepted the new curriculum is more difficult.

All staffing requirements have been filled for the 2016/17 year. This is good news considering the relative difficulties in finding such staff, which Colleges are generally experiencing and at the right salary level, since it is very competitive. Governors asked and were assured that timetabling issues have been learnt from last year and have been addressed.

The Committee sounded a cautionary note (based on Ofsted comments) that controlled assessments should be carefully reviewed so as not to draw too much comfort from them.

Governors were invited to attend an English & Maths additional support session if they were available and were assured that the latest METIS newsletter will be loaded on the Governors’ portal.

ACTION: JH

Lisa was **thanked** by the Committee for her presentation. A repeat presentation at the Autumn Meeting next year from Lisa concentrating on this year’s outcomes was requested.

ACTION: CLERK

482. OFSTED IMPROVEMENT VISIT

Ofsted Improvement Letter

The Committee **RECEIVED** and **DISCUSSED** the letter from Ofsted following the recent Improvement Visit, undertaken by Matt Vaughan, HMI, on 24 March 2016.

The Principal spoke to the letter and to the conduct of the visit generally. The letter’s contents are broadly accepted by the College as there was an opportunity to comment on it.

The **Agreed next steps** are

- Ensuring sufficient support in place to secure rapid improvement in teaching, learning and assessment
- Set high expectations of teachers’ practice

- Use headline data to fully understand (with governors) the proportion of learners who are making expected or better progress than planned and thus improve the challenge being made by governors
- Ensure improvement planning includes monitoring updates that evaluate progress made against all identified weaknesses on a regular basis and when targets are completed in the College Improvement Plan
- Urgently improve attendance on level 1 and level 2 courses, particularly English and Mathematics provision

These points will be incorporated in the College Improvement Plan.

The next Improvement Visit will take place in Autumn Term 2016.

Ofsted Meeting with Governors

During the 24 March visit, the HMI met with three governors (Elaine, Michael and Sarah) and the Clerk.

The Meeting lasted about an hour and focused on the role of governors in the College Improvement process and activity and how they can influence the path to Good – i.e. how they can make an IMPACT?

The Clerk tabled and the Committee **RECEIVED** a Report on the dialogue described above.

After considerable debate particularly with regard to links by Governors with curriculum and business areas of the College, the Committee **AGREED** the following Policy, in principle, in order to address issues about Governor Involvement in the Improvement Process;

- Appoint champions for key areas, including areas of weakness
- Adopt the actions mentioned in the Board Development Day Report (item 2) and in Matters arising of the March Board Meeting (Schedule 3) as the governors' role in Quality Improvement
- Confirm training session on 21 October (Asking Challenging Questions) to be externally facilitated
- Keep the Board informed of curriculum KPIs and progress through the governors' portal
- Have a regular presentation on a curriculum area at each Meeting of this Committee
- Maintain a governors' log to record visits, learning walks, attendance at events, etc to evidence involvement and challenge.

The Clerk will document this policy and present it for **APPROVAL** by the Board in July 2016.

ACTION: CLERK

483. LEARNER PROGRESS

The Committee **RECEIVED** a detailed Report of in-year retention and projected success as at 30 April 2016 comprising a number of data tables and associated analysis.

Key points

- Recently published national rates for success reflect the impact of functional skills achievement
- Retention for 16-18 remains high, above last year, target and National rate
- Projected success rate for 16-18 is above last year, below target and above National rate
- Retention rate for 19+ is above last year, above College target and above National rate
- Projected success for 19+ is below last year, below target and below National rate
- Learners in receipt of Higher Needs funding continue to make good progress
- Projected success rate for the overall achievement of apprenticeship frameworks is above last year's outturn, on target and just above National Average

The Committee noted that, although predicted to exceed National rate this year, it is unlikely that targets will be achieved, nor will last year's outturn. This is a direct consequence of the effect on success rates of English & Mathematics and functional skills but there are issues in Level 1 and Level 2 provision in main curriculum areas, e.g. electrical engineering, art & design.

In response to a question from a Member about student induction procedures, the College does all possible to ensure students are on the right course but late enrolments are a challenge to manage effectively.

Management confirmed, in answer to a question from the Committee, that there are significant areas of concern in the likely outturn in a number of curriculum areas and it is going to be a big challenge to get these students to achieve.

In addition, the Committee observed that there was a 'dip' due to the academic restructure which has recently taken place. Accordingly,

intensive efforts are being undertaken during the last term of this academic year to get students to achieve.

Nevertheless, the good retention figures are a positive help in good success being achieved.

The Committee was informed of the planned **next steps**:

- Regular sharing of data with new Curriculum Managers to promote collective responsibility.
- Academic managers to closely monitor to ensure quick/appropriate intervention.
- Targeted intervention in English & Maths Functional Skills to respond to the threat of not achieving National rate again.
- Additional revision and exam preparation sessions planned.
- Performance review Boards in week beginning 9 June to call Managers to account for the current position in their curriculum areas.
- Student sign off and completion is scheduled for week beginning 27 June.
- Any student enrolling after the deadline for enrolments is automatically flagged 'at risk'.

The Committee **NOTED** the Report.

484. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Penny Petch (Head of Teaching & Learning) **PRESENTED** a Report providing the Committee with an overview of progress of Teaching, Learning & Assessment, concentrating on developments this term.

The key points of the Report were:

- 51% of all observations undertaken this year are graded good or better, 1% lower than at this stage last year, due to new staff and the College reorganisation
- 64% of optimised observations (when each person's best grade is considered) are graded good or better. This is 8% lower than the same stage last year. PP highlighted that 80% of the grade 3 observations relate to new staff and 50% of the grade 4 observations relate to new staff
- Five teachers have been on the ACE programme this academic year. Ten started the year on the historical NTI programme. Five teachers remain on an improvement programme.

- 185 Learning Walks have taken place this academic year (not including those done by Governors)
- Developments include: the establishment of a new curriculum structure supporting subject specialisms, student feedback following observations, involvement of students in observations, additional training days and continuing Advanced Practitioner support.

The observations this year (64% good or better) to date do not do not reinforce the idea that we have inspiring/outstanding teaching. Too much looks to be fairly average and this won't help our drive to improve.

Developments this term:

- Academic restructure with managers doing more teaching
- Collecting student feedback following observations
- Recruitment of further Advanced Practitioners
- Student satisfaction and involving students in observations
- Good focus in Teaching & Learning days
- Observation benchmarking
- HMI felt College's observations process was robust (Visit 24.03.16)
- Recruitment process to get candidates to teach a 'standard' class in a classroom environment rather than selecting 'good' students for them to teach

The Committee requested that the next Report include feedback from the Staff Professional Development Week – what was covered, analysis of staff satisfaction, etc and future areas of focus for 2016/7.

The Committee **NOTED** the Report.

485. MONITORING AGAINST COLLEGE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Deputy Principal **PRESENTED** the Committee with the latest update of the CIP, noting further progress against identified actions.

The key points of the Report are:

- Progress against priorities 1 and 2 is good, but impact not yet realised
- Progress against priority 3 is also good and the impact is starting to show through
- Retention of students on 16-19 study programmes is above last year, target and National Average, but the projected success rate is below last year, target and only just above NA. As a result, the College will struggle to increase the proportion of learners on these

study programmes who make good progress and achieve their qualifications, including English & Mathematics

- Standards of teaching, learning & assessment observed are inconsistent and in some curriculum areas, poor. The degree of stretch and challenge of students, particularly in written work, remains a significant concern
- Student achievement in GCSE/functional skills in English & Mathematics remains of concern, despite improvements to improve TLA standards

The Plan uses a RAG rating system and the issues above remain graded RED.

Governors reiterated their concern that inability to meet the targets in the plan may adversely affect the College's ability to improve its Ofsted grade and could threaten the existing grade of 3.

Governors asked that detailed scrutiny be applied regarding Teaching practice during the selection of new staff. Additionally, the emphasise on high level teaching practices is to be reinforced during staff induction and probation. This was agreed.

Governors also requested that CIP information be included into the Self-Assessment Report at the end of the academic year – progress made, future initiatives, etc.

Governors liked the new format of reporting progress enabling a clear understanding of information.

The Committee **RECEIVED** the Report.

486. DRAFT KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Committee **RECEIVED** a paper outlining a new format for reporting student performance against agreed KPIs, prepared by the Deputy Principal and the Director of Information Services.

The proposed changes reflect feedback from Ofsted, Governors and Senior Managers and gives a greater level of detail on:

- Headline performance, including projections by provision type
- 16-18 Study programme performance split by level
- Data of English and Mathematics attendance
- Data on Retention split by Gender
- Date on Retention of looked After Children

This picks up Ofsted priorities and includes a predictive column, which the Committee felt was a useful addition.

The Committee **AGREED** to adopt the new format.

487. KPIs AND RISK REGISTER

The Committee **RECEIVED** the Report from the Director of Information Services.

They noted the following key points:

Risk Register

- Curriculum areas identified as 'At Risk' all have detailed intervention Plans
- Significant progress continues to be made with work experience
- English and Mathematics remains the most significant challenge
- The implementation of the academic management structure is nearly complete

Key Performance Indicators

- Attendance has declined at levels 1 and 2 in which English and Mathematics continues to have a negative impact
- 49% of students on Study Programmes are not making the progress expected of them (especially level 2)
- Retention for students 'at risk' has continued to decline which indicates that we have been unable to change behaviours and promote success

488. COMMITTEE MATTERS

The Clerk **PRESENTED** a Report on Committee Matters, which was considered by the Committee, covering review of Terms of Reference, committee Self-Assessment, Schedule of Business 2016/17 and Schedule of Meeting Dates 2016/17.

1 The Committee **AGREED** some minor changes required to the Committee's Terms of Reference and, once made, **RECOMMENDED** they be approved by the Board at their next Meeting on 11 July 2016.

2 The Committee **AGREED** the Self-Assessment process suggested by the Clerk and the questionnaire will be completed by all Members and sent to the Clerk by the end of June for collation. The results will be reported back to the next Meeting by the Clerk.

3 The Committee **AGREED** the Schedule of Business and proposed Meeting Dates for 2016/17, subject to repositioning the Annual Report on Safeguarding to the Autumn Meeting.

489. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A written Safeguarding report was **RECEIVED** from Susan Hughes, Safeguarding Governor. The full Essex Child Safeguarding Report will be distributed to the Board and their approval sought at the Board Meeting on 8 July 2016.

She referred to the Government policy document KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) with which the College is obliged to comply. The final version should be available soon and it is to be implemented in September. All governors will be required to receive the document and understand the contents and their obligations under the document.

ACTION: CLERK

490. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 8 November 2016 at 2 pm.

There being no further business, the Meeting terminated at 5.00 pm.

Signed.....Date.....