

**CHELMSFORD COLLEGE
QUALITY AND LEARNERS COMMITTEE
20TH MAY 2014**

PRESENT: Janice Maclean (Chair)
David Law (Principal)
Barbara Vohmann
Angelika Baxter
Dick Madden
Scott O'Brien

IN ATTENDANCE: Caroline Williams
Marco Iciek
Alison Davies
Mark Emerson
Penny Petch
Donna Finning (Learner Voice Coordinator)
Michael Beaseley (President of Learner Voice)
Anewah Chen (Learner Voice Rep)
James Pieper (Learner Voice Rep)
Janet Mercer (Ofsted Inspector)
John Fowl (Clerk to the Corporation)

386 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO WELCOME NEW GOVERNORS

Apologies were received from Heather Clarke who due to the Ofsted inspection had opted to teach her class rather than arrange cover in order to attend the meeting. Sarah Nobel sent her apologies due to holiday.

The Chair welcomed Barbara Vohmann to her first meeting of the committee.

387 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TO NOTIFY ANY CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Dick Madden declared that he was a cabinet member for Essex County Council.

There were no confidential items notified.

388 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2014

The minutes were approved.

389 MATTERS ARISING

The committee was informed that staff from hair and beauty department had visited Stephenson College in order to share ideas and to benefit from their experience. The Colleges had now agreed to do a joint inter-College competition for hair and beauty therapy students. Chichester College also offer hair and beauty therapy courses and Caroline Williams and Alison Davies were planning to visit this College to see what if anything can be learnt for the delivery of this curriculum area.

Under item 377 Dick Madden asked for more information to explain what is meant by the students who have been in care presenting a particular problem.

Caroline Williams explained the issue regarding such students and the steps put in place by the College to provide the additional support that they need. Marco Iciek confirmed that the situation regarding such students who have arrived at the College, having been in care previously, has improved due to the support that the College had now put in place for them.

390 TO RECEIVE QUALITY & LEARNERS REPORT

The Student Perception of Course "SPOC" had been delayed until the summer term in order to gain the student perspective of the Ofsted inspection. The results of the SPOC survey will be provided to a future meeting of the Board of the Corporation.

The College continued to explore partnership working and Caroline Williams advised the committee that she had been invited to be the Further Education representative on the Essex County Council task group chaired by Professor Brian Lamb OBE. The purpose of the group was to agree on the protocols and procedure for managing the post-16 high needs student funding for providers across Essex and on the fringes of Essex.

Caroline Williams and Marco Iciek had visited Harlow College and attended the innovation centre based there. A number of ideas had been seen during this visit which it is hoped the College can introduce. A visit had also been undertaken by Marco Iciek and Dave Short to visit West Suffolk College to see how they offer their tutorial programme with the view to updating the tutorial programme currently in use at Chelmsford College.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

391 SUBSIDIARY DIPLOMA SUCCESS RATES

The Chair requested that future reports should be produced in the usual format approved by the Governors.

Mark Emerson presented the report to show the success rates for subsidiary diplomas. These indicate an overall success rate of 92% with the provisional grades indicating an increase in the percentage of 'high grades' largely due to Health & Care and Forensic Science courses. The Governors were pleased to see the improvement in success rates particularly in media.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

392 IN YEAR RETENTION UPDATE

The data had been compared to this time last year and showed an improvement of 6% excluding functional skills and 4% with functional skills included. The performance was measured against the national rate which for now will include data from sixth form Colleges rather than just general FE Colleges. The retention rate for the College was predicted to outturn at the national rate. Caroline Williams reminded Governors that whilst the data is encouraging they must remember that the College started at a very low level so to achieve this was noteworthy. Members reviewed the retention rate by

subject sector areas for both 16-18 and 19+ age students and Mark Emerson provided background evidence where there was significant change year on year. Dick Madden asked for an explanation of the drop in retention rates for Science and Maths and Caroline Williams explained that the number of starts in these subjects is not a head count but a count of subjects being followed by individual students. Governors were satisfied that there is a plan to improve retention rates further in the areas of concern.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

393 TEACHING LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Penny Petch presented data to show the teaching and learning observation scheme (TaLOS) grades awarded by the in-house observation team. With 71% of observations being graded good or better when the data had been optimised this percentage rose to 80%. It was stressed that the process is to improve standards overall and staff graded 3 or 4 receive the support necessary to help them improve and they are re-observed more frequently to allow monitoring and mentoring by Advanced Practitioners. Teachers falling into the grade 3 category on two successive observations are placed on a 'Notice to Improve'. Where improvement does not subsequently improve the staff on a Notice to Improve are then subject to the capability process which could lead to them leaving the College.

In response to a Governor query regarding the consequence for the students it was agreed that an update on this should be presented to the next meeting of the committee.

All the observation team have undergone updated training and some had attended the 'License to Observe' programme at Chichester College. Dick Madden asked whether there was a common theme emerging for those staff graded 3 or 4 and it was confirmed that for lesson observation some commonality is identified and this informs the themes taken during the 'learning walks' by senior staff. A pilot study will take place in which non-graded observations will be undertaken and this will be fed back in due course to Governors.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

394 QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY HE REVIEW

Alison Davies reported that the QAA Quality Review is a drawn out process and the committee was shown the extended timeline. There was some difficulty to get students to engage with the Review outside of their normal hours of attendance. The findings of the Review will be presented to the next meeting of the committee.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

395 PROGRESS OF AT RISK CURRICULUM AREAS

Hair & Beauty

The College self-assessment report identified Hair & Beauty and Engineering and ESOL as being at risk. ESOL is no longer offered by the College. Members were informed of the interventions that had taken place with the Hair & Beauty Therapy department and it was noted that the line manager is on maternity leave. In her absence Caroline Williams and Alison Davies are overseeing and managing this area of provision. It was noted that Alison Davies has appropriate knowledge and experience in this area of work.

Master classes had been delivered by Lee Stafford and these were extremely well attended. The committee was informed that early indications were that recruitment for hair and beauty therapy courses in 2014/15 is high and the College was anticipating a total of 250 students enrolling. Governors asked if the industry was able to offer employment to so many young people and it was confirmed that employment opportunities existed in both hair and beauty therapy companies and that the customer service skills the students learn suit them for employment in many other industries.

Engineering

The committee was informed that the steps taken so far to improve the provision of this part of the College had resulted in a 17% improvement in retention with the achievement rate on level 3 subsidiary diploma reaching 97% compared with 83% in 2013.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

396 FULL TIME TUTORIAL PROGRAMME 2014-15

Marco Iciek explained that the tutorial programme currently in place in the College had been in place for a number of years and that there was now a need to update it to reflect the use of the assessment centres. He outlined the changes that will be made and these will include 'learner coaches'. These positions had been advertised and for eight vacancies there had been 41 applicants. The committee was informed that the revised tutorial programme will incorporate the use of tablet technology. James Pieper the Learner Voice representative and a HE student expressed the view that this was a very good idea and it was noted that this tutorial programme will be in place by September 2014.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

397 OFSTED – LEARNER VIEWS

(Janet Mercer Ofsted Inspector withdrew from the meeting at this point)

Mark Emerson presented the results of the open survey that students had been invited to complete online. 260 students had logged on so far and Governors were shown the responses against each of the questions which overall gave a very positive picture of Chelmsford College.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

398 COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chair reminded members of the agreement to periodically review the Terms of Reference of the committee. Having looked at the Terms of Reference the Governors felt no change required.

The Chair emphasised the need for the committee to undertake self-assessment of its work against the Terms of Reference and the Governors present were asked to complete the self-assessment form prior to leaving and to hand them to the Clerk to the Corporation.

399 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

i) Learner Voice

James Pieper congratulated Donna Finning for the work she had undertaken in respect of establishing Learner Voice as the student voice in the College. He was very complimentary of the work she had undertaken and felt that her support had enabled the Learner Voice in the College to become well established. He has seen a vast improvement since he first came to the College in 2008. The Chair invited the Learner Voice representatives to put forward suggestions on how they felt the link between Governors and students could be improved further.

400 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on 11th November 2014 (TBC)

(Chair)

(Date)