MINUTES

Standards & Performance Committee Meeting

Date: **Thursday 19 January 2023**
Time: **2.00pm**
Venue: **Boardroom / Video Conference**

Present:

Andrew Fawcett (Chair)
Chris Ball
Dr Bill Webster (Principal)
Tom Martin
Gulnaz Brennan
Dr Gill Waugh

In Attendance:
Deborah Bradburn (Clerk)
Mark Burgoyne (Deputy Principal)
Karen Westsmith (Assistant Principal – Curriculum & Quality)
Tracy Clarke (Assistant Principal - Curriculum Development, Information and Technical Services)
Catherine Langstreth (Assistant Principal - Curriculum, Employer & Student Services)
Jill Hebden (Minute Taker)

1. SECTION A - BUSINESS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

1.1 Welcome to Members/Officers

Members were welcomed to the meeting, which commenced at 2.03pm.

1.2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Dr Sue Lomax and Fardean Farooq.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare any interests in relation to any item on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

1.4 Request for an item to be unstarred

No requests were received.

1.5* Minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 November 2022

The minutes of the meeting held 1 November 2022 had been previously circulated to Members for consideration.

Agreed: that the minutes are approved as a correct record and authorised for publication.

1.6 Matters arising from the previous minutes

The action log was presented. It was noted that progress had been made regarding the IT accessibility issue with other matters updated under the relevant agenda item.

2. SECTION B - COLLEGE MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

2.1 Applications, Enrolment & Progress Report

The Assistant Principals presented the Applications, Enrolment and Progress report noting the following key points:

Young People:

- Current recruitment was at 2267 an increase of 88 on the previous report. This was a reduction of 96 learners compared to this time last year due to the discontinuation of a partnership. Foundation Studies and ESOL continued to recruit throughout the year.
- Applications for 2023/24 looked positive with 156 offers ahead of this time last year. Most areas were seeing an increase in applications.
- Attendance was not at the 90% target for most curriculum areas. A new strategy was being trialled in Digital and English and Maths with Attendance Officers that contacted parents/guardians from the first learner absence. The impact would be measured and if successful applied to all curriculum areas.
- All Curriculum Leaders had created 'Skills Position Statements' that gave an overview of the work undertaken with stakeholders and the impact to learners. An internal audit on stakeholder engagement would be presented to the Audit Committee in March with consideration given to any areas that could be further developed.
- The DfE had provided work placement flexibilities that would broaden the pool of employers that could offer placements, to ensure students accessed high-quality and meaningful placements. Longer term flexibilities were in place that enabled paid employment to be used as work placement hours, provided it related to the vocational area.
- Curriculum areas that required improvement continued to be placed into the intensive support process. Performance enhancement reviews continued with each area chaired by the Deputy Principal to support continuous improvement in quality, compliance and recruitment targets.

(Dr Gill Waugh joined the meeting at 2.45pm)

Adults and Community Learning:

- Recruitment for adult education was 74% of target, funding was at 78% of target with non-formula funded provision enrolment at 73%. Both were ahead of target compared to the same time last year.
- Sector based academies were arranged for those areas that had lower recruitment ie. health and social care. The College also worked with the Royal Society of Public Health.
- Attendance overall was 85.2%, a slight increase of 0.4% from the previous report.

Apprenticeships:

- There were 226 new starters. The employer engagement team continued to work with employers to support vacancy matching and recruitment. The best-case achievement for 2022/23 was 78.6%, which was an increase on 10% since the previous report.
- The College would be considered as 'needing improvement' through the accountability framework for apprenticeship provision. The College had a meeting scheduled with the DfE to outline the evidence of strategies in place to improve achievement.
- 'Deep dives' continued and progress was monitored through monthly performance boards.

Governor Questions

Is the mix of Level 1, 2 and 3 provision balanced?

This would need to be reviewed at the end of the year. However, the initial feeling is that the lower levels will have increased slightly. The College is seeing less activity on Level 3 as qualifications have moved to T Levels. Health and social care are above target and recruiting healthily with learners going into pre-nursing rather than pre-social care.

Retention numbers are good overall, is attendance the issue?

The College is experiencing the same issues as colleges across Greater Manchester with non-attendance appearing to be a learned behaviour as a result of COVID-19. Learners are also coming into the College at a lower starting point than previous. A high proportion of the work undertaken in Foundation Learning is preparing learners for college. English and Maths are working more closely with curriculum areas to increase attendance.

Are there attendance issues across the whole College or in certain areas?

There isn't a pattern that is emerging in terms of one specific area. English and maths attendance overall is roughly 10% lower than vocational areas. Although the current level isn't at the 90% target it has increased on previous years.

What was the adult education position in other colleges?

The College has the second largest adult education budget and the national skills funding has been reduced. There are several independent businesses with short contracted courses that the College competes against. For example, in hair and beauty.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the information provided in the Applications, Enrolment and Progress report.

2.2 Intensive Support Action Plan Update 2022/23

The Deputy Principal presented the report noting that the intensive support process was introduced last year to support those areas that had been graded as 'requires improvement' in any aspect of the SAR with action plans for each area agreed with the Assistant Principal.

There had been five areas identified through the process:

- Tourism - for the delivery of 16-18 provision
- Business - for the delivery of 16-18 provision
- Motor Vehicle – for the delivery of apprenticeships
- Digital – for the delivery of adults and community
- Health & Social care – for overall effectiveness
- Skills Technical - for overall effectiveness

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Intensive Support Action Plan update.

2.3 College SAR 2021/22 & QiP 2022/23

The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented the report and noted the following:

- Most curriculum areas had completed the 'Quality and Curriculum Planning' panels except for Digital that would take place at the end of January.
- The College SAR was being finalised and would remain to self-assess as a Grade 2 for overall effectiveness in all aspects, for all provision and strongly met the skills need sub-judgement.
- Five departments had improved by one grade (four from Grade 3 to Grade 2 and one from Grade 2 to Grade 1); three departments had declined by one grade (two from Grade 2 to Grade 3 and one from Grade 1 to Grade 2).
- Three departments were Grade 1, eleven departments were Grade 2 and two departments were Grade 3.

Governor Questions:

What has been the feedback on the revised process?

Curriculum Leaders found that it was a very large piece of work to combine the Self-Assessment and Strategic Planning of Curriculum processes. However, there has been a benefit to completing both before the Christmas break and being able to start planning from January with a focus on achievement, attendance and recruitment.

Improvements to the new format will continue to be made to the new Self-Assessment / Quality Improvement Planning tool in order to create consistency across all areas.

Governor Feedback on the revised process

The College can be commended on a well organised and rigorous approach to the whole process. The content delivered was very informative in terms of the identification of strengths, weaknesses and future planning. Critical discussions and challenge in the panel meetings was good, strong and positive. There was some repetition in certain areas with identified refinements to be made.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the College SAR 2021/22 and QiP 2022/23 report and recommended the final report be approved for submission to the Board.

ACTION:

Clerk / Board

(Dr Bill Webster and Catherine Langstreth left the meeting at 3.28pm)

(Dr Gill Waugh left the meeting at 3.31pm)

2.4 Student Progression & Destination Report

The Assistant Principal (Curriculum Development Information and Technical Services) presented the report, highlighting the following points:

- 81% of learners on study programmes and 61% of adult learners showed a positive progression or destination. This number was expected to increase following the release of the UCAS data.
- 52% of young learners that had completed last year had returned to learning within the same subject area.
- 82% of learners that had completed a Personal & Community Development Learning (PCDL) course and 75% of learners that had completed an accredited course, through the Bolton Council contract, also had a positive progression or destination.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the Student Progression and Destination Report

2.5 Curriculum Strategic Planning

The Deputy Principal presented the report, highlighting the following key points:

- Each year qualifications were replaced and updated by awarding organisations and strategically planned and organised by Ofqual. There would be a further reduction in the number of qualifications that were in operation across the country.
- The Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) aimed to provide employers with a stronger voice in shaping local skills provision. The Skills for Jobs White Paper, published in January 2021, set out an ambitious employer-led approach aimed at making FE provision more responsive to local skills and economic needs.
- College reviews were undertaken to understand new qualifications as well as those being removed. Replacement or alternative qualifications were reviewed, appraised and underwent a validation panel prior to approval.

Governor Questions:

How does the College decide which programmes are delivered?

There are different aspects that are considered ie. what has been delivered previously, what were the quality of achievements, progression and destination etc. This is also considered

against the skills needs of Bolton and Greater Manchester that is multi-layered to also look at the needs of the locality and community.

The flowchart of the Quality & Curriculum Planning process showed the elements that were considered.

ACTION:

Include the validation panel process in the Quality & Curriculum Planning flowchart.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Curriculum Strategic Planning report.

(Dr Bill Webster and Catherine Langstreth re-joined the meeting at 4.02pm)

2.6 Link Governor Scheme

The Clerk informed the Committee that a governor was allocated to all link areas.

A consolidated feedback report and an updated link schedule would be brought to the next Committee meeting. The programme would be enhanced further with Board Members participating in learner journeys and links with learner forums.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Link Governor Scheme update.

3. SECTION C - UNIVERSITY GROUP MATTERS - FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

None.

4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

5. SECTION E - FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 15 March 2023 at 2.00pm

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 4.10pm

Chair's Signature:

Date: 15 March 2023