

**Minutes of the  
Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee  
held on Thursday 21 June 2018 at 8.00am  
in Room 814 at the Matthew Boulton Campus**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Apologies:</b>
Veronica Docherty (VD) (Chair)	
Keith Horton (KH)	
Cliff Hall (CH)	
Angela Myers (AM)	
Andrew Cleaves (AC)	
Mohammed Albukair (MA)	
Sonia Crook- Lake (SCL)	
Dan Zastawny (DZ)	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	
Louise Jones (LJ)	
Liam Nevin (LN)	
Elaine Bonar (EB)	
Kim Vaughan (KV) (for item 6)	
Tony Dennant (TD) (for item 9)	
Gill Coldicott (for item 8)	
Hazrat Islam (HI) (ESFA Observer)	

**Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies.

**Declarations of Interest**

There were none save for those already recorded in the Register of Interests.

**Item 1 - Minutes of Meeting held on 8 March 2018, Action Log and Matters Arising**

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

In relation to the action log it was noted that a briefing paper had been prepared on the profile of the usage of the mentoring service as requested by the Committee. KH noted that overwhelmingly it was female students who accessed the service.

AM questioned whether students with emotional and behavioural issues were referred to the service and generally how it was promoted with students

LJ advised that the College had four counsellors who were able to deal with low level issues and they would refer students on for specialist support. The service was well promoted through tutorials, and enrichment activities.

In relation to emotional and behavioural issues LJ advised that tutors may advise a student that they would benefit from counselling but the service was voluntary and it was a matter for the student to decide. The College's statistics were provided by the counsellors and they would not necessarily know the basis upon which the student had been referred.

With the permission of the Chair items of business were taken in a different order to that set out on the agenda.

## **Item 2 – Post Inspection Action Plan Update**

LJ summarised the report and advised the Committee that the headline issues were that attendance had increased to 88% which was a 2% improvement on the previous year, retention was at a good level, and at the time the report was written observations of teaching and learning where good progress had been made was 76%, but this had now improved to 85%.

Performance management measures were ongoing with 14 staff currently at stage 2, and 3 underperforming teachers had resigned in the last week.

The forecast for students who would achieve target grades were currently 52% and it was expected that this would rise to 60%.

English and Maths GCSE high grades continued to be an area of concern and there was some uncertainty around grade boundaries which had moved up following the November exams. The College had secured good attendance at revision sessions and additional breakfast sessions and it was hoped that this would improve performance against the forecast.

Finally, it was noted that the Teaching and Learning survey had provided good feedback with results in the top two quartiles for learning and assessment.

CH stated that there was lots of good data in the report on student feedback. However, he had noted in the Ofsted letter that the College were encouraged to assess the impact of staff development and it was not apparent from the report that this had been done.

LJ stated that the obvious measurement for this was in the percentage of staff who had not demonstrated good progress upon re-observation.

EB stated that impact of training could now be evidenced and this point would be addressed in the SAR.

KH noted that for A/S levels 40% of students were on track and for A level students the figure was 52%, and he questioned what the Executive view of this was.

EB stated that considerable work had been done with these cohorts but the expectation was that this would have generated greater progress than had been seen. There were limitations in the team that were being addressed with the new A level centre, the new curriculum and the new management arrangements. Generally the steps taken to revitalise A level provision were an acknowledgement that progress had not been quick enough but it was felt that these steps would be successful in revitalising A levels.

In summary, A levels and Access to HE were two areas where performance had lagged. However, most students at level 3 were making very good progress.

KH stated that the area of greatest concern now was the A/S level students as the College needed to be clear about what would be done in the next academic year to help them improve.

LJ advised that she would arrange for the new A level Director to provide a brief summary for the Committee of the steps that would be taken from September for these students.

KH stated that he remained unconvinced that the indicators measuring whether teachers were providing sufficient challenge to students were sufficiently comprehensive and he invited consideration of whether additional or alternative measures might be appropriate.

AM asked what the key criterion were for measuring progress and EB advised that the starting point was observation of students in the lesson to establish whether what they were saying and doing demonstrated improved understanding relating to the learning outcome, and this was used alongside other indicators.

CH asked whether managers regularly go into classrooms to check on progress, aside from formal observations. EB advised that departmental managers had been doing learning walks throughout the year and had received training to support their assessment. All learning walks are recorded on feedback cards and are used alongside observations to target improvement activity.

KH stated that the performance data against teachers developing learners' English and mathematics skills (23% grade 4+ English and 48% grade 4+ Maths) appeared to be in contrast with the narrative. LJ advised that this was because the national rates were very low and the College results were better than average. KH stated that it would be helpful to state this point in the narrative otherwise it gave the impression that the RAG rating should be red.

VD stated that the Committee would like to review underperformance by vocational areas and consider remedial measures for each. LJ assured that each area would be compiling their own SAR and this would be addressed in the SAR reported to the autumn meeting of the Committee.

AM noted that whilst only 4% of lesson observations had identified a development need in relation to extremism it was not clear whether the issues identified were serious. EB assured the meeting that the team were fully trained to refer significant issues through the appropriate channels

Accordingly it was

## **RESOLVED**

- **That the report be noted.**

### **Item 3 – College Forecast 17-18**

EB introduced the report and advised that the forecast for the previous year had been based on BRAG and the teacher understanding of student performance. This year the forecast was based on Markbook, which recorded student achievement during the course of the year.

In summary it was forecast that 16-18 achievement rates would improve by 2.5% to 81.8% against a target of 82% which was just above the national rate; adult learning would improve by 2.9% to 85.3% and would be 1.6% short of the national rate; apprentices would be 4.3% above national rate but timely apprenticeship completions would be 57%, 2.4% below the national rate.

CH noted that there was significant emphasis on timely achievement for the purpose of inspection and LJ agreed that this was a key measure.

KH stated that he was interested to know whether these forecasts were consistent with a "good" Ofsted outcome, what needed to be done to get to outstanding and what confidence the College had in the risk mitigation measures set out in the report.

EB stated that if the College was close to national rate and showing improvement on last year this would not hinder a "good" grade. The position would be different if results declined and were adrift of the national rate, but she did not perceive a significant risk in this.

In relation to risk management, the getting to good meetings provided a constant focus on areas of underperformance and Termly Review Boards were undertaking analysis down to individual student level. Department Directors were attending these meetings with detailed and credible accounts.

Accordingly it was

**RESOLVED**

- **That the report be noted**

**Item 4 – Update on Progress on Actions Arising from Ofsted Support Letter**

LJ summarised the issues arising from the feedback visit and it was noted that these had been discussed during the course of the meeting.

VD noted that the FEC report had raised issues concerning the pace of change and LJ stated that this issue had not arisen during the course of the day with the FEC staff. The emphasis had been on ensuring that there was sufficient evidence at inspection to justify a “good” grade for overall effectiveness and to demonstrate added value.

Accordingly it was

**RESOLVED**

- **That the update be noted**

**Item 5 – Quality Strategy/Journey to Excellence**

EB introduced the report and advised that the proposal was to move to a three year plan with the actions taken under the quality strategy this year forming the first year of the plan to drive good quality teaching and learning provision.

KH commended the plan noting the importance of setting out the journey to excellence, but felt that it would benefit from more focussed measures.

The Principal advised that this was the “organic” component of the developing strategy for the College and which would be developed for the Corporation Strategy Day in October, and KH stated that this should be explicit in the summary.

CH stated that staff ownership was important and the measures by which the College would be judged a great place to work were important.

LJ advised that this would be addressed in the business plan which set out the broader targets and that it was important that the Quality Plan focussed on curriculum and quality.

AM stated that a key focus on the plan needed to be how all staff contributed to effective learning and what excellence meant with regard to the student experience. CH stated that he felt that the initial paragraph did make this point but that it needed to emphasise excellent teaching rather than “good.”

The Principal advised that one aspect of successfully delivering the plan may be an “outstanding” Ofsted grade but this in itself was not the objective. KH stated that this demonstrated a confidence in what the College was aiming to achieve and it should be stated expressly in the document.

AM questioned whether the new tutoring framework would be uniform across BMet and EB advised that there would be consistent quality objectives but that curriculum areas would be empowered to develop a framework to deliver these.

Accordingly it was

## **RESOLVED**

- **That the Committee note the progress made during the current academic year against the current Quality and TLA strategies**
- **That subject to addressing the matters referred to in the preamble, the Committee recommend the Journey to Excellence Plan to the Corporation**

### **Item 6 – Safeguarding Policy Update**

KV introduced the report and advised that there had been two government consultations and minor changes to guidance which had resulted in a review of and minor changes to the policy now before the Committee.

VD asked whether all staff had done the necessary training and KV confirmed this and advised that the College had also recently taken part in Home Office research.

DZ asked whether as Heads of College were being appointed as deputies they had received the correct level of training and had the capacity to undertake the role, and KV confirmed this in both respects.

KH stated that he thought the policy was thorough and he was happy to support it.

Accordingly it was

## **RESOLVED**

- **That the Committee recommend the updated Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy to the Corporation.**

### **Item 7 –Higher Level Skills Update**

LJ introduce this report and advised that in summary over the course of the year there had been improvements in academic performance but there were concerns about the recruitment strategy as the College had not achieved its expected growth. In addition, there were concerns about achieving growth targets for 18/19 which were dependent on a significant number of “walk- in” students in September. There were a range of activities planned throughout the summer to promote HE programmes.

AM asked whether the College used stalls or pop up shops in key centres and LJ advised that this was not currently done but it did take part in HE fairs and was actively pursuing schools to allow the College to present the HE offer to their 6<sup>th</sup> forms.

The Principal advised that a significant issue this year had been the intake from BCU which had declined because of changes to course entry criterion applied by the University. However, the Deputy VC had promised 100 students to the College through its partnership arrangements in the next academic year.

LJ stated that the College needed to overhaul its approach to HE recruitment and recognised that it was currently advertising too late. The Principal added that HE had not had the same focus as the Post Inspection Action Plan but he and LJ would now be devoting leadership time to develop provision that was either complementary to HE partners or, alternatively to develop niche provision that was not in competition with the universities.

MA stated that the College also needed to focus its advertising on parents as they were influential in settling the HE courses for their children.

KH stated that there was significant competition in the City and the College must ensure as a starter that every student was aware of the pathway to HE courses offered by the College.

Accordingly it was

**RESOLVED**

- That the Committee note the report

**Item 8 – Student Council Report**

GC attended to present this item along with a Student Enrichment Officer and a member of the Student Council.

GC summarised that over 500 students a month were now being surveyed and this demonstrated an upward trend in satisfaction. The Committee were also advised that there had been positive developments in the range of enrichment activities that were being offered to students and the governance arrangements between the student council and the student governor had been strengthened. It was pleasing to note that there had been a record number of votes in the recent student governor elections.

It was noted that some issues were addressed more slowly than others and students continued to raise concerns that particular courses required greater use of copying, and therefore students needed additional printing credits. The Principal agreed that this issue had been raised previously and gave an assurance that it would be dealt with

Accordingly it was

**RESOLVED**

- That the report be noted

**Item 9 – Update on Harborne Academy**

TD presented this item and advised that the Progress 8 forecast was -0.1 against a target of +0.5. However, the general picture was that the Academy was forecasting to achieve or improve on its targets. The school now had a waiting list and last year was in the top half of Birmingham schools for Progress 8 attainment.

KH asked whether staffing was stable at the school and TD confirmed that no teachers were leaving.

VD noted the significant number of positive actions being implemented and congratulated the Academy.

Accordingly it was

**RESOLVED**

- That the report be noted

**Item 10 – Proposed Workplan**

LN advised the Committee that the workplan reflected the programmed activity for the next academic year. In light of the discussion at the Committee concerning the Journey to Excellence Plan it would be necessary to consider what data was provided to the Committee to monitor against the plan.

Accordingly it was

**RESOLVED**

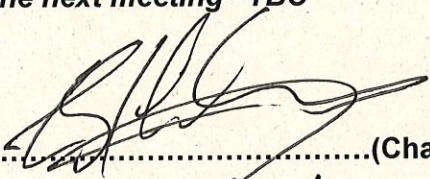
- That the Committee workplan for 2018-19 be approved

**Any Other Business**

The Principal proposed and it was agreed that for future meetings of the Committee, the high level teaching and learning measures from the Business Plan be used to preface the agenda pack so that it was not necessary to repeat information in different reports.

VD noted that this was the last meeting for SCL and MA and she thanked both for their contribution to the work of the Committee over their time as committee members.

***Date of the next meeting –TBC***

Signed:  (Chair)

Dated: 