

**Minutes of the
Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee
held on Thursday 8 March 2018 at 8.00am
in Room 814 at the Matthew Boulton Campus**

Present:	Apologies:
Veronica Docherty (VD) (Chair)	
Keith Horton (KH) (from 8.25)	
Andrew Cleaves (AC)	
Mohammed Albukair (MA)	
Sonia Crook- Lake (SCL)	
Dan Zastawny	
In Attendance:	
Louise Jones (LJ)	
Liam Nevin (LN)	
Elaine Bonar (EB)	
Alison Jones (for items 4 and 5)	
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 6 February 2018

These were agreed as a true and accurate record.

In relation to the action log EB advised that there had been some very recent guidance about how Colleges should administer the Employer Survey which would need to be discussed within the Executive and reported back to the Committee.

Item 2 – A Level Review

LJ advised that upon further consideration there was insufficient evidence nationally of successful operation of Model B and therefore Model A was the preferred model.

VD asked whether this would preclude the College from considering the model in future and LJ advised that it would not and the College would keep in touch with Grimsby College to learn from their operation of it.

LJ advised that following the last Corporation meeting there had been further reflection on the timescale for implementation, and acceptance that the proposals required a longer lead in than initially proposed. It was considered that 18 months would be reasonable and that this would mean that the new offer would be delivered to students from September 2019.

SCL asked whether the new A level centre would be operational from September 18 and LJ confirmed that it would and that a new A level Director and Programme of Study would also be in place.

KH stated that the timeline in the paper appeared more truncated than the proposal recently shared with governors by e mail and LJ advised that the students starting with the College in September had already applied and much but not all of the activity in the plan would be completed for the next academic year.

KH noted that page 4 of the report referred to improved student experience and excellent teachers. This was a bold ambition and was one of the reasons why governors had pressed for an extended implementation period. LJ stated that a new role profile was being developed for A level teachers and existing staff would be invited to apply. However, there would be greater expectations around coaching and support, research and development, and engaging with employers and higher education providers. Some staff would not be successful and therefore two alternative options were being developed; recruitment of experts already in the sector and secondly graduates that could be attracted through an internship. The key was to ensuring an effective balance in recruitment between the two.

KH stated that he welcomed the further consideration that had gone into the proposals and the extended implementation timescale but that he had expected to see more detail on marketing plans given that the geographic distribution of students was quite wide.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Committee recommend that the Corporation approve model A**
- **That the Committee recommend that the Corporation endorse the implementation plan set out in the report.**

Item 3 – SAR Refresh and Post Inspection Action Plan

EB introduced the report and advised that Solihull College had advised on the refresh and changes had been made to the content to include that advice.

In summary, for all judgement except outcomes there was now sufficient evidence to suggest that the College was at “good.”

KH noted that one of the risk indicators in the PIAP was that teachers were not providing sufficient challenge and he questioned what indicators were giving assurance. EB stated that inspectors would get feedback from students and the College was doing this through Inspirometer surveys. In addition they would review Markbook to establish whether students were on track to achieve as well as observing lessons to see if students were engaged. All of these indicators were also being reviewed by the Quality Team, and it was notable that attendance and retention were both improved, and these were also indicators of student satisfaction.

VD noted that the College had not been strong at differentiation in the past and questioned how this was now perceived. EB advised that observation was focussed on students and the process was providing greater clarity about whether they were making sufficient progress. Work was being done with departmental managers to provide support to teachers who were not helping students to make sufficient progress and performance management arrangements were now being implemented where support and guidance was not resulting in adequate improvements.

VD asked when the next progress check would be done and it was confirmed that the updated PIAP would be available at the end of January and would be made available to governors then.

KH asked whether in relation to level 3, 56% of students on track to meet or achieve target grades was where the College expected to be currently. EB stated that this was a huge shift from last when the ALPS score was 35%. The target for the end of February was 60% and the current position was close to this.

KH stated that the College objective was to be outstanding and questioned what would need to be done to achieve the target of 80%. EB stated that this was a longer term objective and the immediate priority was to get within the 60-65% range which would put the College on par with others locally.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Committee recommends that the Corporation approve the content and grading of the SAR refresh.**

Item 4 – Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

AJ summarised the changes that had been made since the last meeting and following on from a further discussion with VD, and took the Committee through each category within the draft strategy. In addition a new section had been added “what does Diversity and Inclusion mean to me?” and which would assist staff in understanding the practical implications for them. Following feedback from the Committee members the action plan had been shortened.

VD stated that the issues raised in the last meeting had been addressed and that she now felt more comfortable with the document generally, and the accountabilities were notably improved.

KH stated that the changes had enhanced the document but he felt that the strategy raised a point about ownership and agency – ownership vested in all staff and everyone had a responsibility for making it happen. At present the way in which students were portrayed in section 5 was too passive and the role of students and staff in delivering the strategy needed to be more clearly stated.

VD agreed with this analysis and stated that the previous governor lead for equality and diversity had made a similar point.

The Principal agreed with the reflection and advised the Committee that the amendments would be made in advance of the Corporation meeting.

DZ stated that the opening sentence in the strategy was bold and may need further consideration. If diversity and inclusion was already a great asset this would suggest that an action plan was not necessary.

KH stated that this point tied in with the notion of ownership. Everyone should be involved in delivering something that is a great asset for the College.

The Principal stated that he would give further consideration to DZ's point but that the College was one of the most diverse in the country. DZ agreed that he would also consider the matter and email the Principal directly with any further observations.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That subject to addressing the matters referred to in the preamble to this minute, the draft strategy and action plan as accordingly amended be referred to the Corporation for approval.**

Item 5 – Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report

AJ introduced the report and advised that once approved it would be published in accordance with the College's obligations under the Equality Act and the review had also informed the draft strategy.

KH stated that whilst respecting confidentiality it would be helpful to know what use was being made of counsellors and mentors and whether, for example, certain groups were more likely to access mental health support, but otherwise he felt that the report was comprehensive in its scope.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Committee approve the report.**

Item 6 – Gender Pay Gap Report

AJ advised that the report had been compiled in accordance with requirements prescribed in regulations and that there was an obligation to publish the report on the College's website by the end of the month. The mean gender pay gap identified by the College was 5.4% and the median was 13.92%. The College compared well against a basket of 36 Colleges that had published figures to date, with the average being 9.7% and 16.7% respectively.

VD asked whether the College was confident that it was doing the right things in respect of equal pay, and AJ advised that the report did not address that but that the College would be looking in more depth into the pay arrangements for job families.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Committee recommends to the Corporation that the report be published.**

Item 7 – Induction Survey

EB introduced the report and advised that it had been rewritten to reflect the changes to the data made since the last meeting. In summary there was strong evidence of improved satisfaction across most indicators but some areas had indicated a decline in satisfaction. More work was being done with learners in these areas and it was expected that this would result in improved feedback in the Big Teaching and Learning survey.

VD stated that whilst it was positive to hear that further work was being done on the areas where student satisfaction had slipped it was disappointing to see that student satisfaction with safety had declined.

There being no further discussion

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the report be noted**

Item 8 – Student Council Report

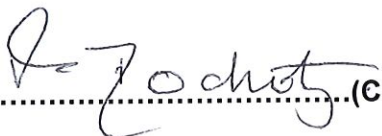
GC attended to present this item along with a Student Enrichment Officer and a member of the Student Council. The Committee were given an overview of the progress with Student Council meetings and the issues being addressed. There were many positive developments with the Student Council feeling that improvements in catering and estate management had been made in response to their feedback. The current issues that the Council would like to work with the College to address included improvements to library facilities, arrangements for lunch breaks and tailoring printing credits to the demand of particular courses.

The Principal stated that he would work with the Student Council so that these issues could be addressed by the management and the students would be clear how the College was acting upon them.

Any Other Business

There being no other business the meeting concluded.

Date of the next meeting – 21 June 2018

Signed:..........(Chair)

Dated:.....21 June 2018.....

