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Standards & Performance Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday 21st June 2022

Time: 2.00pm

Venue: Boardroom

Present:

Sue Lomax (Chair)

Andrew Fawcett

Chris Ball

Dr Gill Waugh

Rebecca Davison

Tom Martin

Bill Webster (Principal)

In Attendance:

Deborah Bradburn (Clerk to the Board)

Mark Burgoyne (Deputy Principal)

Karen Westsmith (Director of Curriculum and Quality)

Kate Wallace (Director of Curriculum Employer and Student Services)

Tracy Clarke (Director of Curriculum Development & MIS)

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 2.00pm.

1.2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from 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 16 March 2022

The minutes of the meeting held 16 March 2022 had been previously circulated to members for consideration.

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

1.6 Matters arising from the previous minutes

The action progress log was presented.

English & Maths:

The Principal had met with the Council Director of Children's Services and discussed the English and maths agenda. The College had also engaged with the local authority English and maths group.

Governor Questions:

Would English and maths be included in the local strategic plan?

The plan was not yet complete and would be discussed in due course.

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

2.1 Progress Reports

(Change in the Order of the Agenda)

(ii) Apprenticeships

The Director of Curriculum, Employer and Student Services presented the report with the following points highlighted:

- Achievement had increased to 49% with a best case of 69.9% against a target of 70%.
- The accountability framework, that the College would be measured against, would be implemented in year with the dashboard updated after each ILR return. The withdrawal rate was currently at 21% and would be rated as 'amber' on the accountability framework dashboard, as it was above the policy threshold. Withdrawals were mitigated wherever possible whilst staying within the funding rules. Many colleges across the sector would receive an 'amber' rating.
- Individualised performance boards continued to take place each month and had adopted some Ofsted style questions i.e. had the apprentice grown in confidence?

Governor Questions:

Withdrawals seem to be focused in certain areas?

There were pockets of withdrawals in certain areas ie. construction. Provision has been reviewed in terms of quality and it is clear that those apprentices, who do pass, pass with high grades.

Some programme provision would no longer be offered because of industry sector changes that could not offer 20% 'off the job' training and the impact this had on learner outcomes and

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achievements. The apprentices on those programmes would continue to be supported. Health programmes were now more aligned to Group initiatives.

Is there a similar picture nationally of a detrimental impact due to the pandemic?

Recruitment was not at the standard that the College was required to reach. There were legacy frameworks with such data distorting the true picture.

Had the College a disparity in learner types ie. gender, ethnicity?

This data could be included within the next report.

Has differentiated pay been considered as an option to recruiting and retaining staff in key sectors?

The College was looking at a package that included additional payments, advanced degrees etc. for recruitment to those 'hard to reach' areas. This was a single topic of conversation across the sector with no easy solution. The College is to discuss a package that is balanced and fair across all employees in order to stabilise the staffing structure. Discussions were taking place with employers and the opportunity of blended roles for practitioner technicians.

The College would also look at digital staff recruitment via the Group route. However, it was also about achieving the right balance of teaching quality within those specific areas.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the information provided in the Apprenticeship Update report.

ACTION:

Learner gender and ethnicity comparison data to be included in the report.

(i) Adult, Community & HE

The following update was provided by the Director of Curriculum and Quality:

- The College continued with a strong enrolment drive with new starts still coming through mainly in English, maths and digital.
- The combined allocation of the community and College contracts would allow the College to present adult provision in its entirety and provide a complete picture.
- The first HTQ's in digital would be ready for delivery from September 2022; discussions with the University were ongoing to streamline the current validation process to reduce any duplication.
- The College had continued the engagement work within targeted communities and had worked with sector partners to further increase the level of engagement.

Governor Questions:

When will the local strategic skills plan be provided?

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The plan would be in addition to the priorities of English, maths and digital at different levels with various mechanisms in place. The College was confident that the local skills plan would be fit for purpose as an external provider was commissioning it.

Will the Council provide guidance on benchmark figures?

The College would receive guidance to work to in partnership with the Council. The College and Council have a memorandum of understanding in place that will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that both organisations work closely together assuring that the needs of the local community are fulfilled. The transfer of the community budget to the College was on condition that the community funding would be identifiable within the College accounts.

Will the detailed termly report continue?

Yes, although it may be formatted differently and include slightly different information.

Did the transfer of contract involve TUPE?

No, as all staff involved are College employees.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the Adult, Community and HE report provided.

(iii) Maths and English

The Director of Curriculum, Employer and Student Services presented the report with the following points highlighted:

- The change in delivery model from September, to ensure attendance was maximised, would have an impact. Current learner attendance was not where the College would like it to be.
- The data presented on exam attendance could not be compared to previous years, as this year every learner was registered for an exam regardless of their attendance.
- Performance enhancement reviews continued to take place with Curriculum Leaders and Heads of Area that focused on improving progression.
- The condition of funding had reduced since it was last reported and was below the 5% tolerance rate.

Governor Questions:

Why was there a reduction in attendance from one exam paper to the next in the same subject?

The Head of Area is looking into each occasion when a learner did not attend an exam by contacting both the learner and parents.

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There have been more students that are anxious this year due to this possibly being the first time they have sat an exam. This has resulted, in part, to an increase in learners that required additional support, circa. 350-400 learners.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the information provided in the Maths and English Update.

(iv) 16 – 19 Study Programmes and T-Level Provision

The Director of Curriculum, Employer and Student Services presented the report with the following points highlighted:

- The enrolment for 2021/22 was approximately 67 learners ahead of target compared to the same time last year. The Employer Engagement Team were preparing for next academic year to ensure every learner had an opportunity to complete work experience.
- T Level learners were on track in terms of work experience and industry placements with curriculum staff development advancing well.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the information provided in the 16 – 19 Programmes and T Level Update report.

2.2 Intensive Support Action Plans

The Director of Curriculum, Employer and Student Services presented the actions plans, highlighting the following key points:

- English and maths timetabling had been completed and delivered to vocational areas to support attendance. The English and Math's Team were to hold a development away day to build on existing work.
- Health was currently being supported by the Head of Service until a Curriculum Leader had been appointed.
- The College recognised that attendance was fundamental in terms of a key performance indicator.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Intensive Support Action Plan report.

(Change in the Order of the Agenda)

2.4 Applications and Enrolments for 2022/23

The Director of Curriculum Development and MIS presented the report, highlighting the following points:

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- The learner enrolment target for the next academic year was 2405.
- Notification had been sent to GMCA that the College would not achieve the adult education funding allocation this academic year. Personal and community development learning enrolments were at 92% with the adult education element at 83% of funding target.
- The applications for school leavers was at the same level as this time last year although offers were slightly behind.
- The T Level target was 108 learners in the current year with 313 included in the T Level allocation for next academic year.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Applications and Enrolment report.

2.5 Student Attendance Report

The Director of Curriculum Development and MIS presented the student attendance report and noted the following key points:

- Attendance was at 82.4% overall and 7.6% below target, however this was 7.5% above the same time last year.
- Attendance remained a key performance indicator that was discussed at all main meetings across all funding streams and through monthly performance enhancement reviews. It was expected that attendance would continue to improve with the further move towards normal and regular routines.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Student Attendance Report.

2.3 Governor and Curriculum Reviews

The Deputy Principal provided an update, highlighting the following key points:

- The DfE had indicated that colleges must be able to identify how, what, where, when and why the curriculum had been set.
- The Strategic Planning of Curriculum (SPoC) was focused within the College to review every element of a curriculum area, to engage and consider if programmes met the needs of employers, the local area, learners and wider stakeholder panel.
- The College expected further guidance from the DfE on how to evidence stakeholder engagement and how governors would be involved in the process.
- The SPoC process was a good opportunity to assess each department course by course and consider whether the course was still valid and appropriate for the local area and employers.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Governor and Curriculum Review verbal update.

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Governor Questions:

Could the Standards and Performance Committee lead in this area?

The Committee needs to be more involved with the critical challenge that governors provide and that rigour. How as an organisation we look to test leadership, which governors sat within, need to be part of the process. Governors need to be assured of the curriculum plan, the factors that go into curriculum development, sequencing and establish what the learner has learnt etc.

(Gill Waugh left the meeting at 3.53pm)

2.6 Link Governor Scheme

The Clerk noted that the majority of Link Governor meetings had taken place with the remaining meetings scheduled. A report would be provided to the Committee in due course outlining feedback from Link Governors.

There remained the ongoing challenge to recruit a governor for environment and sustainability. It was proposed that the Principal lead in this area given the priority of the green agenda within colleges and the Green College Commitment.

Work was already underway on the College's environmental and sustainability objectives with an external consultant contracted to undertake baseline work across the Group that would assist the College to further develop its strategy to achieve becoming a net zero carbon college by 2038.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Link Governor Scheme update.

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

No University Group matters were raised.

4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Rainbow Flag Award

The College had renewed its effort to achieve the six quality standards within the Rainbow Flag award. The College had achieved two standards of 'Skilled Staff' and 'Inclusive Curriculum' and continued to work towards achieving the remaining four standards.

5. SECTION E - FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 1st November 2022 at 2.00pm

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 3.56pm