



Minutes of the Curriculum & Quality Committee

Dated 3 March 2020

Present: John Egan (Chair)
Phil Hunter (Vice Chair)
Joanne Beaumont
Nav Chohan
James Parker
Colin Forrest
Shoeb Desai

In attendance: Jeremy Stott (Clerk)
Julie Kitcheman (Vice Principal Curriculum)
Jenifer Birtwistle (HR Manager)
Susanna Butler (Minutes Secretary)

Meeting commenced: 18:00

Meeting closed: 19:43

01/20 Disclosure of financial and/or personal interest

18:00

There was no disclosure of financial or personal interest.

02/20 To agree the agenda and order of business as circulated

18:00

It was agreed to deal with item 7 before item 6 for continuity.

03/20 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2019

18:01

The minutes were approved as a true record

04/20 Matters arising

18:01

At minute 33/19 it was confirmed that clarification on Fit notes had been added to the Sickness Absence Policy.

It was suggested visiting the Gatsby discussion in light of the recent inspection report and it was agreed areas for improvement would be discussed as part of item 10 on the Inspection report.

05/20 To consider a Human Resources Report

18:03

The HR Manager reported an increase in the number of staff with 306 so far this academic year compared to 274 last year. This is due in part to some split roles where we have job shares. Sickness absence has significantly increased this academic year, mainly due to stomach upsets and the vomiting bug which was prevalent in Nov/Dec 2019. There has been an increase in long term sickness with 12 cases, 7 of which are due to stress or anxiety, and with one case being due to a long-standing disability. The majority have been supported back to work successfully and we have one

case being referred to occupational health, our new provider being Airedale NHS.

It had been suggested we look at creating a separate policy on succession planning but, after further research, it felt more appropriate to add something within the Recruitment and Selection Policy which is due for review this summer. The Principal added that, in considering succession planning within academic appointments, it is quite a leap from teacher to manager. We can think through some models where we can give some management responsibility to teachers who are ready to step up, but this starts to become unaffordable cross College. The best we can do is to provide management training/coaching/mentoring. It was queried if we have any part time managers and confirmed yes, and that part time work does not necessarily preclude applicants, plus we have the option of flexible hours. From April this year, new legislation dictates that we must advertise if a role offers flexible working.

The Gender Pay Gap Report was highlighted, with an Action Plan set out on pages 12-15 to help identify potential areas. There is a slightly higher rate of pay for males in college. This is mainly due to the lower pay scales and part time roles being more attractive to some women plus we have had an increase in catering staff who are on the lower scales. For Heads of Sector and middle managers, women outnumber men. There was a query on FE teacher training bursaries and grants, with a narrow window to express an interest, and whether we are planning to use those places. It was confirmed that we don't have the capacity for it at the moment.

It was agreed to recommend the signing of the Gender Pay Gap Report by the Chair of Corporation.

07/20
18:17

To consider the 2018/19 Annual Equality & Diversity Report

The Head of Student Services provided his update stating the main aspect in the first section is about learner achievement and reported there is nothing significant that indicates there are any deficiencies or points of concern. Comments were invited. Members commended the very detailed report which brings the College's Mission and Values to life.

The HR Manager reported on workforce stats and that the average age group for peer colleges is 47; we are 47.4. It was asked if we have an increase in aged 65+ and confirmed we do have a number of PT evening tutors.

J Beaumont arrived at 18:21.

The HR Manager left the meeting at 18:22.

The Head of Student Services presented a review of the Action Plan for the last academic year setting out the key work undertaken, which was a refurbishment of the College Sports Hall changing facilities. This cost £30k and has made a significant improvement for learners who can now use the facilities which best fit their gender identity without fear of discrimination.

The Action Plan for this academic year has come out of the Development

plan. It was queried if the plan should reflect the government resourcing of period poverty and it was confirmed we already have the red box for the 2nd year running and it was agreed to add this to the Action Plan. Also highlighted was the Sanctuary Award with resources being developed by full time ESOL learners to share with all staff and learners.

06/20
18:26

To review the Theme for the year – Work Experience & Industry Placements

The Vice Principal Curriculum updated governors on the key points which are:

An increase in total of all work experience placements in 18/19 to 85% (74% in 2017/18);

A very positive start to the term in 19/20, using the new Connect Software to record placements: where there are some barriers, it has been agreed paper versions can also be used;

Standardised WEx (work experience) Scheme of Work used across all groups;

Standardised documentation used by tutors, students and employers to record work placement activity and reflections.

There is some concern on the low number of placements in H&SC, though the mandatory placements are not a problem. The challenge is around DBS checks and on how and when we should spend this money (£55). If some don't stay the course, it might not be best investment in year 1 to pay the DBS fee and send on placements but rather offer voluntary placements in a different way, eg charity shop placements where a DBS is not required.

The CDF project has a target of 56 placements for 19/20 to plan for and secure, with the target of 27 placements achieved in 2018/19. There is an opportunity to look at another product to replace the BESTest tool for next year. There is a new product on the market that is similar and more cost effective so the Head of Registry will be investigating the options.

08/20
18:37

To consider for recommendation to the Corporation

All 3 policies below have been approved by SMT.

i) A review of the Safeguarding Policy & Procedure

The Head of Student Services/E&D Manager confirmed that everything has been checked to make sure it is still relevant and staff have reported that it is very helpful as a reference tool. In year, if we think there is a gap (such as the addition on county lines), then changes are made through discussions with SMT. It was queried, with the current Ofsted survey on knife crime, if we are we are likely to be approached. This is unknown as yet - the Head of Student Services said he has been to a regional meeting - one college had expressed concerns though generally, gangs and knife crime are not a particular concern for local colleges. It was asked if we have anything in this policy about bringing anything inappropriate into college

and confirmed that this is included in the Positive Behaviour Policy along with sanctions and the disciplinary process. It was asked which agencies we have most contact with and reported that contact is getting more difficult generally. We work mostly with Social Services but that is because of identified needs. We also work with Family Work and the Interventions Team on an ad hoc basis and now have to pay for the Youth Service. Austerity has stripped away many facilities and, with the reduced services, we manage more in house which leads to increased internal case loads. J Beaumont highlighted that Bradford University has a Community Police Officer on site and whether, if on occasion the College could benefit from that support, the resource could be shared. **ACTION:** It was agreed to look into this to see if sharing this resource would be possible. It was also felt worthwhile starting a wider FE police conversation.

It was agreed to recommend to the Corporation the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

ii) **The Admissions Policy**

The Head of Student Services/E&D Manager reported there was nothing particular to raise as an issue. It was confirmed that we still use Connexions, though their service is very limited.

It was agreed to recommend to the Corporation the Admissions Policy

iii) **The Quality Policy & Cycle**

The Vice Principal Curriculum presented this overarching policy which highlights top line events, and the Cycle is a simple version of what happens each month. Sitting next to that is a day by day Quality Calendar.

It was agreed to recommend to the Corporation the Quality Policy & Cycle

09/20
18:57

To consider the Learner Induction Survey Report

The VPC reported that we are very pleased with the full time learner ratings which remain very high compared to other providers. However, this is the first time on a report where we have seen a surprise dip in apprenticeship feedback. We have looked at the detail and there is a trend with a number of facets of the programme from Induction through to next steps. The teams are looking at this but won't be able to make any judgements until the next cohort of surveys. It was queried if the dip could be a result of the new apprenticeship standards. Although this could be the case, as the new standards are variable and there have been mistakes with the implementation, it does not excuse it. It is about the teams becoming confident and clarifying everything to the students.

P Hunter left the meeting at 19:01.

10/20
19:06

Ofsted Short Inspection Outcome

The Principal highlighted that we had had a mock Ofsted a week before the call came for the official inspection visit. The Ofsted team came in expecting to find a Good college and found the evidence to support that. One member said the narrative is disappointing, particularly para 2 on page 2 in reference to a 'sensible approach', as one of the things he admires about this college is the way it navigates the internal priorities alongside the external - which is not fully recognised in the report. The report also does not reflect a lot of the dialogue that took place.

There are three areas of improvement set out on page 4. The first about learners' understanding of their personal progression was picked up from looking at rail students where someone wasn't clear about how to follow a particular path and a couple of FT learners who had not yet had their progression interview (although these were planned). Our learning point is that we have to be assured that every student has had 1:1 discussion about where they are going at key points in the course. It was already an action from earlier in the year and we have started to do an audit on it. The 2nd on Maths attendance is an area we keep trying to improve on and is in our plans: attendance is a lot higher than our peer colleges. The third on ESOL courses was for a couple of learners that did not appear to be stretched sufficiently and did not acknowledge in the comments the outstanding team we have in place.

Such reports make few judgements, just commentary, and the 2 day visit was just a snapshot of what goes on, so there is a lot that had not been explored. It was agreed that if we wish to be considered as Outstanding we should start to be braver in our SAR ie. if we want the opportunity for Ofsted to assess whether we are Outstanding, we need to start calling ourselves Outstanding.

A member commented that it was disappointing that the College's strategic approach around progression had not been recognised but, in summary, we are pleased with the outcome, but disappointed with the narrative.

11/20
19:29

To consider

i) An in year Retention Report, including Apprenticeships

The Principal reminded members that retention has now become the more important measure as opposed to achievement rates. All classroom based areas are doing well. However 25 apprentices from one company have reduced to 7 active learners which will bring down the average across College. The positive is that other areas are doing well - as are end point assessments.

ii) A progress report on the Risk Register related to the curriculum

The Principal talked through the risks and highlighted new Cyber Security Awareness training for all staff which is currently in progress and cost just £1 from Skillsgate. It is an online learning programme with a module each week, so it is not over facing, and with a certificate issued at the end.

A new risk has arisen under 6d on infectious diseases with the Coronavirus. We have displayed Government posters about this across college and are following DfE advice.

8c on the impact of new 14-19 and/or 19+ national and local level policy is a high risk which was agreed seems sensible with the T Level risk. It was queried if the qualification review could provide a lifeline and if we could add something in the mitigation about keeping them in the offer. Our target is 30, but we have just 10 applications.

9a on Ofsted inspection is green with the recent visit grading us Good.

12/20
19:41

Any other business

i) Date of proposed meetings to December 2020

- 23 June 2020
- 1 December 2020

ii) To consider which recommendations/proposals are reported to the Corporation in more details

- **Minute 05/20** on the HR Report and recommendation of the signing of the Gender Pay Gap Report by the Chair
- **Minute 08/20 i)** on recommendation of the Safeguarding Policy & Procedure
- **Minute 08/20 ii)** on recommendation of the Admissions Policy
- **Minute 08/20 iii)** on recommendation of the Quality Policy