



Minutes of the Meeting of the Performance & Standards Committee, held on Tuesday 19 March 2019, 6.00pm in the Boardroom.

Present: Sarkis Mazmanian (Chair)
 Stuart Fraser (Vice Chair)
 Yvonne Kelly (Principal/CEO)
 Doug Trengove (Staff Member)

In attendance: Victoria Eastwood (Clerk to the Corporation)
 Brendan James (Head of Higher Level Skills – up to Agenda Item 8)
 Janet Bywater (Interim Director of Apprenticeships – up to Agenda Item 7)
 Alfred Cardona (Director of Quality & Transforming Learning)

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare an interest in relation to specific items on the Agenda if appropriate. None were anticipated.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – Monday 26 November 2018

The Minutes of the previous meeting, held on Monday 26 November 2018, were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising

An update on outstanding actions from the November 2018 Committee meeting were provided:

Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	By (deadline)	Update
Ongoing	The Committee to ensure that the Corporation are aware of the substantial governance changes with regards to Higher Education.	Chair	Ongoing- next Corporation Meeting.	Ongoing
6.	The Schedule of Business to be reviewed to combine some reports under Quality Assurance.	Clerk	March 2019	Under review for each meeting – a Teaching & Learning Update report has now been included within

				the Business Cycle.
6.	The Director of Student Support to provide a presentation at the December Corporation Meeting on the College's approach to knife crime and gangs.	Clerk	December 2018	Complete
8.	Curriculum Links report (providing the perspective from Governors and Curriculum Managers) be provided at the March Committee Meeting.	Clerk	March 2019	Complete – Included on March Agenda.
15.	Apprenticeship Risk Line Report to be provided at the December Corporation Meeting.	Principal	December 2018	Complete
16.	A separate report on actions to secure increased numbers for HE to be provided at the next Committee.	HHLS	March 2019	Complete – Included on March Agenda.

There were no additional matters arising that were not covered by the agenda.

It was agreed to move agenda items 7 and 8 to this point in the meeting and defer agenda item 5 to the end of the agenda.

7. Apprenticeships Update

The Interim Director of Apprenticeships (IDOA) was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

Stuart Fraser asked for clarification on the difference between levy and non levy apprenticeships. The IDOA advised that the apprenticeship levy was for employers with an annual pay bill of £3 million, 0.5% of which was used to fund apprenticeship training. Non-levy was provided by the government for smaller employers that did not fall into the levy bracket. 95% of the costs of the funding were paid by the Government and the companies paid the remaining 5%.

The IDOA reported that the planned 2018-19 combined apprenticeship income

target remained at £2,478,000, comprising £1,678,000 non levy and £800,000 levy. The target Qualification Achievement Rate was 70%; a 6% increase on that achieved for all age groups in 2017/18 and 2% above the national average. As of 01/03/19 based on actual income to date of £1,956,667 the College had achieved 79% of the budget target. Based on these figures the projected year end forecast was currently £2,397,961 or 97% of the budgeted target. This projection was based on achieved starts, forecast planned starts; carry over funding, projected achievement funding and additional learning support income. This left a shortfall of £80,039 or 3% of the budget.

Stuart Fraser questioned whether the shortfall would have a material impact on performance. The Principal advised that the shortfall would be mitigated by a reduction in costs. The IODA added that additional planning was underway to make up this shortfall, but the position was deemed to be high risk.

For 2018-19, the planned combined apprenticeship income target was £2,478,000; currently comprising £1,678,000, non-levy and £800,000 levy. At present there was £735K against £800K target for levy funding and the College was at 73% of profile target for non-levy. £299k non levy and £262k levy activity would be required by the end of July 2019 to hit targets.

The Chair queried whether the College had the statistics of how many students had withdrawn from apprenticeships during the previous year. The IODA stated that this projection had been factored into the achievement rates and therefore if the College exceeded these it would be a bonus.

Stuart Fraser stated that a 70% QAR suggested that 30% of the students failed and questioned whether these students became NEET. The IODA advised that the 30% reflected some students that would not complete the programme but also those students that would still complete but not in a timely manner.

Stuart Fraser asked whether this was an employer issue or an issue for the College. The IODA stated that there were various issues including health, employment and assessment. All students were monitored and RAG rated and interventions were in place to ensure all students completed in a timely manner.

The IODA reported that both the Business Engagement and BIE Teams were working on a range of assurance activities to secure the planned funding income. This included a revised strategy for both Levy and non –levy employers, with scheduled starts dates proposed in April and May 2019.

Stuart Fraser queried whether the majority of levy payers were public sector. The IODA responded that the vast majority of levy payers were private sector but they were not spending the money as there was less incentive to do so.

In response to a query from Stuart Fraser, the IODA informed the Committee that the College used LMI data to look at growth employment areas, were mindful of current offers and focussed on engaging with existing employers to use their levy in additional areas. The Principal added that it was difficult to find levy paying employers and there was reluctance from the Government to publish the details. However, the College was using various strategies to increase access to levy employers.

The IODA advised the Committee that predicted achievement rates outturn was 67.4% against the target of 70%. This was a 2.6% growth on last year and in line with national average.

The Chair asked whether there had been occasions where the College had been unable to find employers for students. The IODA stated that this could depend on the time of year and, occasionally, the College could not satisfy the vacancy immediately but would work with the organisation to ensure the students were at the appropriate standard. Vacancies were also advertised on the National Apprenticeship Network. Levy paying employers, however, tended to recruit their existing staff into apprenticeships.

The IODA reported that the College's levy pot was increasing at a rate of £5,501 per month. The current balance of the account was £44,259. There were 42 current apprentices including 21 in designated apprenticeship roles such as Teaching Assistants, AAT, Digital, Business Admin, Fitness and Leisure; the remainder undertaking apprenticeship qualifications, such as Project Management and Leadership & Development as part of their CPD plan. The College expected to spend £4,454 per month to support its existing apprentices. Planned activities were underway to enrol more apprentices to use up existing funds and enter co-investment in December 2019.

The Chair referred to the table of pending apprenticeships – levy bids awaiting feedback and the IODA provided an update on the current position. In addition two bids had been released that day that the College would enter a submission for.

The IODA informed Governors that employers who had attended the recent Inspiration Day at the College had discussed the need to recruit more apprentices. A recruitment fair had therefore been arranged for May to enable students to meet with employers. Employers would also be asked to cascade details within their supply chains.

The Interim Director of Apprenticeships was thanked for her report and left the meeting.

Agreed: That the current position be noted.

8.Higher Level Skills Update

The Head of Higher Level Skills joined the meeting.

This Agenda Item was minuted confidentially in accordance with Instrument 17 (2) (d).

The Head of Higher Level Skills left the meeting.

6. Learner Voice Strategy 2018/19

The Director of Quality & Transforming Learning (DOQTL) provided a summary of the College's Learner Voice Strategy including the "Six Ways to Have Your Say" approach to student feedback. The Committee were advised that the College was in the process of completing the mid-year survey and this included questions on progression and identifying risk areas.

Stuart Fraser commented that the effectiveness of the Six Ways was not clear, particularly with regard to the position of Student Governors. The Clerk provided an update on the current position concerning Student Governor recruitment.

The Principal stated that the report did not articulate the level of engagement and a more comprehensive report detailing learner involvement was required.

Stuart Fraser added that a learner voice schedule for the forthcoming year would be useful as the results of the induction survey were usually reported on at this meeting.

Action: the Learner Voice strategy to be reviewed to include detailed learner involvement/level of engagement and a learner voice schedule to be included.

9. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2018/19 – Update

The DOQTL advised that the document provided progress against key measures: overall QAR - retention and predicted achievement. 16-18 retention was currently at 94% and retention for adults was 98%.

The Committee were informed of the following:

- Apprenticeships – improvement of 4%
- 32% of teaching was good or better – moving in the right direction but there were still risks
- Biggest risk was attendance for English and Maths at 70% and attendance/progression in some NTI areas.

The DOQTL stated that some of the actions being taken to improve English and Maths involved students, checking learning, training, assessment and looking at the quality of learning walks and the impact.

Agreed: That the current position be noted.

10. Teaching & Learning Update

The DOQTL provided an update on the teaching and learning initiatives that had taken place, including learning walks and action research communities (ARC). Governors were advised that all lesson observations were now completed.

In response to a question from Stuart Fraser, the DOQTL replied that 212 (out of a total of 232) formal lesson observation records had been received for observations that had taken place between 29th October 2018 and 28th February 2019. A further 21 observations had been completed and full records were due shortly.

Stuart Fraser highlighted that agency staff performance was lower than for permanent staff. The Principal advised that agency staffing was part of a bigger agenda as it was costly and not working in some areas and therefore there was a need to minimise the current risk and going forward.

Stuart Fraser questioned whether it was easier to deal with agency staff and if they were more detached from the College. The Principal advised that agency staff solely deliver classes and have little time to turn around issues if required. There were some very good agency staff but sometimes they were appointed quickly and later found not to be at the required standard.

Stuart Fraser noted that Digital Media/Engineering/English and Maths seemed to be constantly under Notice to Improve (NTI) and it would be beneficial for the full Corporation to explore the reasons behind this as no improvements on the previous year were evident. It was agreed that a full NTI report would be presented at the April Corporation Meeting.

The Chair stated that Engineering observations were worse than other subjects. The DOQTL responded that discussions were taking place concerning capability and interventions were in place. The Principal added that this was a difficult area to recruit staff to and the content of theory lessons needed to be more engaging. Workshops to promote good practice for theory lessons were underway and also part of the College's

April SLD day.

Action: Complete NTI report to be presented at the April Corporation Meeting.

11. English and Maths Update

The Chair referred to the attendance table for English and Maths and queried why attendance was so low. He stated that English and Maths had one of the higher observation rates (the majority of lessons being graded good or better) which did not correlate with the attendance figures. The DOQTL replied that this was a challenge across the sector. The students concerned were re-taking the subjects and the learning needed to be adapted to encourage them.

The Staff Governor stated that the volume of students completing English and Maths seemed low. The Principal advised that she would check the figures.

Stuart Fraser raised concerns that the outcome of mock exam week was still unknown and added that there seemed to be a lack of urgency on establishing the current position.

The Chair asked what measures were in place for students that did not attend. The Principal advised that the delivery of English and maths and how learners were engaged was being addressed through a range of intervention measures. High quality teaching and learning ensured high attendance and low quality produced low attendance.

The Chair asked the Staff Governor for his view on why attendance was so low. The Staff Governor responded there was a sense that there was insufficient focus on attendance in the early stages and controls within tutorials needed to be considered.

The Chair asked if the statistics could include a sub break down of students who were repeating the subjects or progressing. The DOQTL agreed to provide this.

Action:

Figures for students completing English and Maths to be checked.

English and Maths statistics to include a sub break down of students who were repeating the subjects or progressing.

Update on mock exam week to be provided at the next meeting.

5. Curriculum Links/Governance Engagement Strategy

The Clerk provided feedback on the Curriculum Links/Engagement Strategy to date and reported that the experience had been positive for both Governors and Curriculum Managers.

The Committee were informed that it was agreed to keep the meetings informal in the first instance but the introduction of a pro-forma to allow more consistent and formal feedback was suggested. A template had been provided by the Clerk and this was agreed to be used going forward.

In addition, the Clerk advised that a further way to raise the profile of Governors would be the introduction of '60 seconds with..' a brief article in the College's electronic newsletter spotlighting a different Governor each month and the reintroduction of Governor profiles being displayed in the College. It was agreed that this would be beneficial and would be discussed with the full Corporation.

Action: Pro-forma for curriculum links to be issued going forward.

Clerk to discuss with the Corporation the re-introduction of Governor profiles across the College and the Governance feature in the online newsletter.

12. Any Other Business

There was no further business.

19. Date and time of next meeting – Tuesday 11 June 2019, 6.00pm.

The Chair thanked all those in attendance for their contributions. The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

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Ongoing	The Committee to ensure that the Corporation are aware of the substantial governance changes with regards to Higher Education.	Chair	Ongoing- next Corporation Meeting.	Ongoing
5.	Proforma for curriculum links to be issued going forward. Clerk to discuss with the Corporation the re-introduction of Governor profiles across the College and the Governance feature in the online newsletter.	Clerk	ASAP	Will be presented at the July Corporation Meeting.
6.	Learner Voice strategy to be reviewed to include detailed learner involvement/level of engagement and a learner voice schedule to be included.	DOQTL	To be presented at the June Meeting.	The strategy is under further detailed review alongside the schedule for the new academic year and will be presented at the October meeting.
10.	Complete NTI report to be presented at the April Corporation Meeting.	DOQTL	30 April 2019	Complete
11.	English and Maths statistics to include a sub break down of students who were repeating the subjects or progressing.	DOQTL	June Meeting	Included in the English and Maths Update.
11.	Figures for students completing English and Maths to be checked.	Principal	ASAP	English and Maths report updated.
11.	Update on mock exam week to be provided at the next meeting.	DOQTL	June Meeting	Included in the English and Maths Update.

