

STAFFORD COLLEGE CORPORATION

**MINUTES of
CURRICULUM STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE,
7 MARCH 2011**

Present: I Mason (Chair), I Blachford, Mrs S Green, Mrs H Haroon-Iqbal, G M Humby,
Miss S Kenny, S Willis

In attendance: Mrs S Justice (Assistant Clerk), Mrs J Gormley, J D Morris, Ms A Piercy,
Miss E Reed, Mrs G Stepney

Apologies: J P Charleton (Clerk), G Taylor-Marshall, Mrs V Woodward

484.0 MEMBERSHIP

It was reported that Miss S Pinnock, Student Member (HE) had recently resigned from the Corporation. Action was currently being taken to fill the vacancy.

485.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded members of their duty to declare an interest, financial or otherwise, in any items on the Agenda. No interests were declared.

486.0 MEETING HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2010

(a) Minutes

It was RESOLVED:

that the minutes be confirmed as a true record and be signed by the Chair.

(b) Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

With the Chair's permission, Agenda Item 5 was taken as the next item of business.

487.0 THE LEARNER VOICE

(a) Student Council Meeting

Mrs G Stepney, Student Liaison Officer, presented the unconfirmed minutes of the Student Council meeting held on 9 February 2011, when items considered included arrangements for the next Learner Voice Conference and fundraising events.

(b) Learner Voice Conference

Planning for the next Learner Voice Conference on 17 March 2011 was well in hand, following a very successful event last year. It was hoped to broaden the range of student participants for this year's event.

(c) Student Governor Training

In the absence of Miss S Kenny, Student Member, Mrs Stepney reported on her behalf that the LSIS Student Governor training event held in London on 27 January 2011, attended by both Student Members, had been both enjoyable and informative with plenty of useful networking opportunities. The LSIS training event held in Birmingham last November had proved to be of less value.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

At this point Mrs Stepney left the meeting.

488.0 FACULTY/UNIT ANNUAL REPORTS

Miss S Kenny, Student Member, joined the meeting during the next item of business.

(a) Skills, Support and Enterprise

Mrs J Gormley, Head of Skills, Support and Enterprise, presented her Unit's Annual Report for the year to February 2011, outlining the considerable expansion to its areas of responsibility that had taken place in the past year. These areas cover the three key roles of Curriculum and Delivery, Service to Cross-College Provision, and the co-ordination and management of external funding and projects. An overview of the work undertaken in each of the areas was given.

Key risks faced by the Unit included the impact upon recruitment of the removal of EMA, particularly for Foundation Learning students, the effect of the current economic climate on recruitments to Apprenticeships, and fee increases for ESOL students as a result of changes to funding for that area of work. Colleges were currently awaiting information from the Government about support arrangements for students to mitigate the loss of EMA.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

At this point Mrs Gormley left the meeting.

(b) Faculty of Technology

Mr J Morris, Head of Faculty of Technology, presented the executive summary of his Faculty's Annual Report to February 2011, highlighting the expansion to the Faculty by the addition of Hair and Beauty and 14-16 provision following Faculty restructuring in May 2010.

The Faculty SAR for January 2011 had awarded grade 2 (good) ratings for all key categories to reflect improved success rates, particularly for Engineering and Hair and Beauty.

The findings of both Staff and Student Questionnaires in 2009/10 had been positive, with excellent feedback received in respect of developments at Palmbourne. Improvements continued to be made involving those courses under close monitoring during the year.

Key risks for the Faculty included the impact of the economic downturn, particularly on work-based activities and the search for work placements, the provision of part-time courses and 14-16 provision, where local authority support was no longer available. Next year the Faculty would be working to maintain its rating for overall effectiveness as 'good', and to ensure continued high quality provision at its off-site premises at Palmbourne and the Chetwynd Centre as the capital project progressed.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

At this point Mr Morris left the meeting.

The Chair took this opportunity to welcome Miss Kenny to the meeting and outline the comments made earlier by Mrs Stepney, which were endorsed by Miss Kenny.

489.0 ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) highlighted the proposed revisions to the College's Accessibility Statement for 2011/12. Key proposed changes, in addition to a change of colour and design for the next year, covered updated contact details and reference to ongoing improvements to College facilities/services, including the new building, and with particular focus on learners with disabilities.

Discussion took place regarding the use of images, some phraseology and the choice of colour for the text and background, all of which would be taken into consideration before the production of the final version.

It was RESOLVED:

that the proposed Accessibility Statement for 2011/12 be approved.

490.0 COLLEGE CHARTER

Miss E Reed, Quality Manager, highlighted the proposed revisions to the College Charter for 2011/12. These included the College's updated mission statement and reworded commitment to the equality of opportunity for all learners by the inclusion of the nine protected characteristics contained in the Equality Act 2010.

It was RESOLVED:

that the College Charter for 2011/12 be approved.

491.0 STUDENT INDUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Miss E Reed, Quality Manager, presented a report which summarised the results from the Student Induction Questionnaire conducted in the early part of the Autumn term 2010. These were very positive, showing that the vast majority were above the National Average with very good distance travelled over the last four years. The negative comments relating to HE reflected the issues faced by the College last year when HE recruitment numbers were capped. A repetition of this situation was not envisaged for next year.

The Chair welcomed the report as evidence of the College's excellent progress in listening and responding to the views of learners.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

492.0 PEER REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT (PRD)

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented a report which outlined the purpose of the initiative in sharing good practice and provided an update on reviews undertaken to date by the PRD group of which the College is a member. Under the scheme the host College becomes the College under review and decides the subject and extent of the review to be carried out.

Work to date had focussed on Safeguarding (reviewed at Burton College) and reasons for success of high achieving courses (reviewed at Stafford College), with a visit planned to Grantham College to review their approach to Individual Learning Plans.

The additional benefits to be gained from this type of collaboration were highlighted, together with the need to balance these realistically against the associated demands on staff time.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

493.0 SUCCESS RATES

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented the annual report on success rates for students who had completed their courses in summer 2010. The data had been presented in a different format from previous years to reflect the new methodology used for calculating success rates and approach to grading judgements. Trend analyses in future reports would emerge as a result of the new format.

The College's overall success rate for long qualifications remained satisfactory at 72%. Retention rates were good for both age categories, as were achievement rates, particularly in the 16-18 age group.

Employer Responsive success rates were outstanding, well above the National Average and exceeding the previous year's strong results. Those for Apprenticeships had become one of the key strengths of the College, as identified in last December's Self-Assessment report (SAR).

Key areas for improvement as shown in the College's SAR, together with strategies for improving those courses under close monitoring, were noted.

Following discussion members acknowledged the good progress made by the College to improve success rates, retention and achievement and to target areas for improvement.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

494.0 STUDENT DESTINATIONS

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented an analysis of post-course student destinations for full-time students who had completed their studies in Summer 2010. It was noted that the data had not been amended to reflect the new Faculty structure since the current format presented the information more meaningfully and enabled better comparison with previous years.

The report highlighted the continued effective progression pathways between levels of study and confirmed that progression from level 3 courses to higher education remained at 50%.

Although the number of "not known" destinations had increased slightly, the College was still actively pursuing student responses in this respect.

In response to a question on the presentation of future data, it was noted that this was still under review, dependent on the nature of the information to be captured from the analysis.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

495.0 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 6 June 2011 at 5.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm.