

Preston College

Redacted and abridged ¹ Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting held on 23rd June 2022 at 5.30 pm, Boardroom

Present:

Mrs Lynda Mason	Acting Chair
Mrs Janine Garcia	
Mr Robert Marshall-Slater	Until Minute 14
Mrs Laura Mason	

Apologies:

Mr Martin Collard	
Mrs Louise Doswell	Principal and Chief Executive
Mr Nevan Hunter	(retrospectively)
Miss Maty Geuye Seck	Student Governor
Mrs Tina Southworth	Student Services Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead

In attendance:

Mrs Kat Fawcett	Assistant Head of Learner Support: SEND
Mrs Marie Haworth	Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support
Ms Debbie Ireland	Head of Curriculum, 14-19
Mr Mick Noblett	Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs Clare Rayner	Clerk to the Board
Mrs Lyndsey Roe	Head of Quality, Teaching and Learning
Year 2 Scholarship Students	For Minute 3

1. Welcome and apologies

The Acting Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that apologies had been received from Louise Doswell, Principal and Chief Executive, and Mr Collard.

The Acting Chair reported that, as agreed at the previous meeting, to maximise time for questions on all items some reports would be taken as read and would not be presented.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

¹ Please note that any matters which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis have been removed from these minutes

3. Meeting with Year 2 Scholarship Students

Following an informal networking session held before the meeting, the Committee formally met with Year 2 Scholarship Students to discuss their experience of studying at the College and their future plans.

The Acting Chair thanked the learners for their contribution and wished them well for the future.

Year 2 Scholarship Students left the meeting.

The Committee agreed that it was valuable to meet with learners at the start of the meeting and hear about their experience at the College. Members suggested it would be worthwhile to capture learners' reflections on their time at the College and future plans.

During discussion with management after the meeting with students, the Committee noted that:

- students were invited to join the College's alumni group;
- the College's Sprint Start programme resources were still available for new students before they joined the College and supported the College's induction programme, however the resources were no longer used as frequently as they had been during the pandemic.

4. Minutes of the Meeting

a) 3rd March 2022 – Part 1

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd March 2022 (Part 1 and Part 2) were agreed as a correct record.

Resolved: The Minutes of the Meeting (Part 1 and Part 2) held on 3rd March 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

5. Matters Arising

The Committee noted the matters arising report. The Clerk reported that Ms Haworth would provide a verbal report on the gender achievement rates for Maths and English, from Grade 4 passes and above, under Item 13, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Learner Destination Report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the matters arising report.

6. Support for Learners 2021/22 and Annual Safeguarding Report

Ms Haworth and Mrs Fawcett presented the Support for Learners 2021/22 report which included the College's Annual Safeguarding Report. Ms Haworth and Mrs Fawcett reported:

- on the increase of safeguarding concerns recorded since 2020. Members noted that the majority of these concerns related to incidents outside College and, for many learners, College was a safer place;

- on the new College posts created in September 2021 to support learners due to the rise in safeguarding concerns recorded at the College;
- on the College's success in supporting looked after learners,;
- that the College was working towards becoming a trauma informed college as over 70 staff had already completed trauma informed training.

Ms Haworth recorded thanks to Mrs Lynda Mason for her support during the year as the Safeguarding and Prevent Link Governor.

In response to queries from members, the Committee noted:

- that due to the increase in learner mental health referrals, the College had trained some staff as mental health first aiders to enable them to support learners with mental health needs, in particular learners that were self-harming. In addition, there were also plans for a team of NHS psychologists and nurse practitioners to visit the College in September 2022 to review the College's case load and support and advise College staff;
- the ongoing preparation for new starters in 2022/23, including the sharing of knowledge across College of which learners required additional support;
- the support provided to staff who were dealing with safeguarding concerns, including the counselling services available;
- the College's fitness to study (FTS) procedure was in place to support learners who experienced significant disruption in their learning due to a range of factors that impacted their wellbeing, safety and mental health;
- that the volume of learners on the FTS procedure had significantly increased during 2021/22, , Members noted that during 2021/22, a number of learners had been withdrawn from their programme due to poor mental health, a number of learners were on stage one and stage 2 f the FTS procedure;
- the possible reasons why there was a higher volume of learners from Health and Social Care on FTS during 2021/22 and that overall management considered that the FTS procedure was working appropriately and some learners had been moved on to other courses which were considered more appropriate;
- support provided to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) learners who were anxious about starting at College;
- significantly more apprentices had requested additional support during 2021/22 than in previous years.

Members commended management and staff for the support provided to FTS and SEND learners.

Members noted reference in the report that some Ofsted inspectors at other inspections had asked learners to identify on a map of the college anywhere they felt unsafe and queried whether College management had undertaken this exercise at the College. Mr Noblett confirmed that the Student Council had assisted the College with this exercise and had identified areas, such as the smoking shelters and the perimeters of the College, as areas where learners felt less safe. He reported that in response management had increased the staff presence in these areas.

In response to a query on addressing learner behaviour issues, Mr Noblett reported that improving learner behaviour had been a key issue during 2021/22 academic year and outlined initiatives to address this including: staggered lunchtimes, increased numbers of staff on lunch rotas and a continued focus on improving attendance and learner behaviour during 2021/22. He confirmed that as a result of these measures, and as learners settled into College life, behaviour had improved as the year progressed. Members noted that, due to Covid, most learners joining the College in 2021 had experienced a break in face to face education and this had contributed to behaviour issues across the sector as learners re-started full time on campus learning.

Ms Haworth reported that teaching staff and work based tutors had worked hard to support teaching and learning during 2021/22 to support learners as they acclimatised to onsite learning after Covid.

The Committee noted the Support for Learners 2021/22 and annual Safeguarding Report 2021/22.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Support for Learners 2021/22 and annual Safeguarding Report 2021/22.

7. Careers Provision 2021/22

Ms Ireland, Head of Curriculum, presented her Careers Provision 2021/22 report. Ms Ireland reported:

- on the challenge for staff during 2021 as learning switched between online and on campus and the return to full time on campus teaching in September 2021;
- that following the College's achievement of the full Gatsby Benchmarks during 2020/21 the College had achieved the 'Quality in Careers Standard' in October 2021 following a full external validation of the practices and impact on our learners. Ms Ireland explained that for prospective learners, parents and external stakeholders this was a positive endorsement of the care and support the College offered to learners and would be recognised by Ofsted as being good practice in development and delivery of careers

education. Ms Ireland highlighted some of the strengths identified during the assessment including partnership working, guest speakers, trips, extended learner induction and support for SEND and high needs learners;

- on how Careers and Education Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) provision was imbedded into the College curriculum;
- on the development of College staff in developing CEIAG provision including supporting an additional four staff members in working for Level 4 Advice and Guidance qualifications and a further three staff members working towards the Level 6, which represented a significant investment and commitment in staff CPD;
- on the valued contribution of Mr Collard, the Careers Link Governor, as a critical friend to management on careers matters;
- the College collected alumni data to assess impact.

In response to a query, Ms Ireland reported on identifying suitable T Level industry placements for Science learners and this would remain a focus as T Level learner numbers continued to grow. Members commented positively on the College's achievement of extended T Level placements for 100% of the learner cohort. The Committee noted that management also anticipated that sourcing engineering placements would become more challenging in 2022 as the learner numbers for this cohort also continued to grow. Management would continue to review staff capacity during Business Planning. However, the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) projects would provide opportunities.

The Committee noted that in February 2022, Ms Ireland and the Clerk, alongside the Careers and Enterprise Company and the Association of Colleges (AoC), presented at an AoC webinar on Strategic Governance. Ms Ireland and the Clerk had shared good practice relating to College's introduction of a Careers Link Governor.

The Committee noted the Careers and Enterprise Company's: Career Education: A guidance for College governors, at Appendix A, which provided a helpful overview of careers guidance in colleges and questions governors could ask management when reviewing progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks.

The Committee noted that Mr Collard had been appointed as Link Governor for Careers in March 2020 for a two year term and that Mr Collard met with the Head of Curriculum termly to discuss careers matters and act as a critical friend. The Committee noted the role description for the Careers Link Governor, at Appendix B, and agreed to recommend to the Board the re-appointment of Mr Collard as the College's Careers Link Governor for a two year term.

Resolved: The Committee:

- **noted the progress made in developing provision and working towards the successful achievement of the Gatsby Benchmarks, Quality in Careers Award Standard and the Matrix Accreditation;**
- **noted the Careers and Enterprise Company's: Career Education: A guidance for College governors, at Appendix A;**
- **recommended to the Board the re-appointment of Mr Collard as the College's Careers Link Governor for a two year term.**

8. Student Council and Learner Voice Update

Mr Noblett presented the Student Council and Learner Voice Update report. The Committee noted that Miss Maty Geuye Seck had sent apologies for the meeting as she had an exam the next morning. Mr Noblett reported:

- on the challenges for the Student Council when arranging meetings during 2021/22 due to timetable changes;
- on the Learner Voice Summary for 2021/22 which highlighted areas of strength and areas for improvement;
- on the 'You Said We Did' 2021-22 report at Appendix A;
- that Miss Maty Geuye Seck had stepped down as Chair of the Student Council;
- the return to face to face Learner Voice feedback at the end of 2021/22 and plans to continue this during 2022/23, as during Covid there had been greater reliance online surveys;
- that Student Council activities would be reviewed ahead of the start of the 2022/23 year as it was increasingly difficult for learners to participate in developing and delivering a Student Council strategy alongside their studies and work experience placements within one academic year. Mr Noblett explained that one option might be for the Student Council to provide feedback from learners to the Committee and management on key themes. Mr Noblett also suggested that the remit of the student governor (16-18) could also be reviewed and other models explored to ensure that the student governor (16-18) and the Committee gained value. The Clerk added that there were only four Quality and Standards Committee meetings a year, and as sometimes the elected student governor could not attend meetings due to their study or work commitments, it might be beneficial to review current arrangements so that other Student Council members who were available could attend Committee meetings and provide feedback. It was noted that any new proposed procedure would need to be aligned with Ofsted best practice and separate from the remit of Learner Voice. Management also highlighted the importance of capturing the key themes from learner feedback and the voice of apprenticeships in end of year student surveys.

The Committee noted the Student Council and Learner Voice Update report. The Committee were supportive of management and the Clerk reviewing the role of the Student Governor (16-18).

Resolved: The Committee noted the Student Council and Learner Voice Update report.
Action: Management and the Clerk to review the role of the Student Governor (16-18).

9. Partnerships Update

Mr Noblett presented the Student Council and Learner Voice Update report. Mr Noblett reported:

- that the Lancashire Institute of Technology (LIOT) stage one bid had been successful, and the College had subsequently worked with other colleges and University partners to prepare the stage 2 submission. The Department for Education had reviewed this information and the LIOT was approved in January 2022;
- that LIOT delivery would commence in September 2023 with planning and development taking place during 2022/23;
- that the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 called for more collaboration between colleges and that the Lancashire Colleges had collaborated positively in delivering a SDF pilot in 2021/22. He reported that seven projects had been delivered across the County to date. He reported that Preston College was leading a project relating to Low Carbon Construction across eight college partners. This project would continue until December 2022, with the College benefitting directly from capital and delivery resource development;
- on the proposed sub-contracting arrangements for 2022/23.

In response to a query on management capacity to deliver SDF project work alongside business as usual College commitments, it was noted that to date projects had been additional work for management and staff and a project co-ordinator would be appointed going forward.

In response to a query on achievement rates in College partnerships, Mr Noblett confirmed on achievement rates for learners with the Prince's Trust and reported that learner feedback was strong. It was noted that Preston North End was a shared provision as part of the College curriculum with collective delivery and therefore achievement rates were incorporated into the College's outcomes.

The Committee noted the Partnerships Update and agreed to recommend to the Board the approval of the proposed sub-contracting arrangements for 2022/23.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Partnerships Update and agreed to recommend to the Board the approval of the proposed sub-contracting arrangements for 2022/23.

10. Performance Outcomes and KPIs

Ms Haworth and Mr Noblett presented the Performance Outcomes and KPIs report. Ms Haworth and Mr Noblett reported:

- the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) report has been split into classroom based provision 16-18 and Adults, HE and apprenticeships covering attendance, retention, recruitment and progression;

- the College had closed the achievement gap for Looked after Children;
- 16-18 Apprenticeship retention had been significantly impacted in the last two years by the pandemic with apprentices furloughed, undertaking career change, gaining full time employment or being made redundant.
- introduction of a new dashboard and a new accountability framework;
- early indications on 2022/23 learner recruitment based on learner numbers registered to date.

Management and members discussed the contribution of management and staff in increasing learner numbers in recent years and, in particular, the work of the Schools Team in working closely with feeder schools and developing taster sessions for prospective learners.

Members commented on the evidence of the higher profile of the College externally and commended the work of the marketing team. Members noted that case studies with learners and employers had also been developed.

The Committee noted the Performance Outcomes and KPIs report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Performance Outcomes and KPIs report.

11. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update

Mrs Roe, Head of Quality, Teaching and Learning, presented the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update. Mrs Roe reported:

- on plans for staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in 2022/23 to continue the momentum gained during 2021/23;
- that the theme of the learning walks had been “reset and renew;”
- on the outcomes of learning walks during 2021/22 which had been consistent throughout the year;
- that learning walks had started later during the 2021/22 to give staff time to re-adjust to the return for full time on campus teaching after the disruptions of Covid;
- that staff continued to be flexible to the changing needs of learners.

In response to questions to management from members, the Committee noted:

- the format of learning walks during 2021/22 was a professional discussion with staff rather than formal grading. The learning walks team reviewed lesson plans, intent and how the learners progressed through the lesson;
- how management used the learning walks to support staff and identify trends;
- the opportunities for staff to share best practice;

- that general feedback from learning walks was shared during the teaching and learning hub;
- the percentage of staff had one formal learning walk visit per year during 2021/22 with aspirational targets for all staff to have a learning walk before Christmas 2022;
- the increased sector focus on colleges' assessing the local skills and training needs which was now also a statutory duty and would form part of forthcoming Ofsted inspections. The Committee noted how local skills needs were already considered as part of the College's curriculum development.

Members commended management for the progress to date. A member suggested that the College's work with the University of Central Lancashire on PGCE delivery made an excellent case study as it demonstrated the College's strategy.

Members and management discussed the importance of staff being able to articulate the College's intent statements. Members suggested it would be helpful to develop position papers which detailed the College's approach to apprenticeships, learner behaviours and attitudes and how the College supported high needs learners. It was noted that the College planned to produce an impact report 2021/22 which would include case studies.

The Committee noted the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update.

12. Quality Improvement Plan Update

The Committee noted the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Update and discussed with management:

- the return to examinations in some areas for the first time since 2019;
- initiatives to improve learner attendance during 2021/22;
- anticipation of outcomes for apprenticeships and the impact of Covid;
- changes to apprenticeship funding criteria were due be published, with plans to change the policy for "off the job training " from 20% of an apprentice's working hours to a consistent figure which was irrespective of the hours worked. Consultation on accountabilities was ongoing;
- the progress made by the College and how external benchmarking exemplified this. Members requested destination data for all learners to be included in the QIP. Ms Haworth confirmed that the College could demonstrate when learners left apprenticeships and courses for employment or other reasons which were beyond the control of the College.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Quality Improvement Plan report.

Action: To include destination data for all learners.

13. Policy Review

Ms Haworth referred members to her report which recommended an extension of the current SEND policy until 30th March 2023 as the College were still waiting for the Department for Education (DfE) to publish a Green Paper on SEND reforms which would inform the College's SEND policy and procedures. The Committee agreed to recommend to the Board the extension of the current SEND Policy until March 2023

Resolved: The Committee agreed to recommend to the Board the extension of the current SEND Policy until March 2023.

14. Draft Quality and Standards Forward Work Programme

The Clerk presented her report on the draft Quality and Standards Forward Work Programme (FWP) 2022/23. The Clerk reported:

- on a proposal to change the format of the October meeting to include interactive sessions on: Stakeholder Skills Plan and the first part of the Self Assessment Report (SAR) review and to invite all governors to attend this meeting. The Committee noted that employers might also be invited to this session;
- on changes required to Committee reporting to reflect the new statutory duty for further education colleges to review how well its education or training provided met local needs. In addition, from September 2022, Ofsted inspections would focus in greater depth on each college's contribution to meeting skills needs and inspectors would make a worded sub judgement on this. The Clerk explained that, whilst the Board would have overall oversight of the College's skills strategy and plans, it was anticipated that the Quality and Standards Committee would review the skills plans regularly, and in particular the contribution from College Schools and, to ensure that the Committee could effectively review the local skills impact by College provision. The Clerk explained that, in order to achieve this, proposed that from March 2023 onwards, the Quality and Standards Committee would have a different College School present at each meeting;
- further additions to the work programme might be required as the new AoC's Code of Good Governance for English Colleges (2021) was adopted by the College during 2022/23.

The Committee discussed the plan and requested that, in addition to meeting scholarship students, opportunities to meet with apprentices and other learners were added. Following discussion it was agreed that the best way to achieve this was for governors to be invited to attend learning walks again and this would be built into the governor stakeholder engagement plan for 2022/23.

The Committee noted the report and approved the Quality and Standards Forward Work Programme 2022/23.

Resolved: The Committee approved the Quality and Standards Forward Work Programme 2022/23

Action: To include learning walks in the governor engagement plan for 2022/23.

Robert Marshall Slater left the meeting.

It was noted that the meeting was not quorate from this juncture and all other reports would be discussed and noted.

15. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Destination Review

Members noted the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Destination Review report. Members noted that learner destination data by EDI categories.

During discussion with management, members noted that the report evidenced good progression data and strong in year retention rates across EDI categories. The Committee and management discussed:

- the impact of Covid on the mental health of many learners;
- exams took place in May/June 2022, with many learners sitting an exam for the first time.

Ms Haworth distributed and presented a report on the gender achievement rates for Maths and English, from Grade 4 passes, based on teacher assessed grades, and above which showed there was not a significant difference on achievement by gender. The Committee noted that a copy of the report was also available on the Governors' Portal.

Members noted the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Destination Review report.

16. Higher Education Update

Ms Haworth presented the HE Education Update. Ms Haworth reported on the:

- current factors impacting on the College's HE provision;
- changes to Office for Student's conditions of registration;
- the potential impact of the Department for Education's HE policy and reform consultation;
- the positive working relationship with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and positive relations with the University of Derby during the teach-out period.

In response to queries from members, the Committee noted:

- the HE assurance procedures which were in place at the College;
- ongoing challenges with HE staff recruitment and retention which was a sector issue as there were currently higher salaries within industries. Members noted initiatives in place at the College including offering teacher training qualifications.

Members noted the report.

Members noted:

- **the report and the current factors impacting on the College's HE provision;**

- **changes to Office for Student's conditions of registration;**
- **the potential impact of the Department for Education's HE policy and reform consultation.**

17. Student Experience Audit

The Clerk reported that the Internal Audit Report on the Student Experience Audit had been included in the pack following a request from the Committee at the previous meeting. The Committee noted the Student Experience Audit Internal Audit Report.

Members noted the Student Experience Audit Internal Audit Report.

18. Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Expression

The Clerk reported that the College was developing a Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Expression. The Clerk explained that, whilst it was the remit of the Resources Committee to review and advise the Board on the Code, she would send the draft to the Quality and Standards Committee over the summer and asked member to review from a learner perspective as part of the consultation process.

A member suggested it would be helpful for the Clerk to review UCLan's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Expression during the development of the College's code.

Members noted the verbal report on the College's draft Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Expression.

Actions: The Clerk to:

- **share the draft Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Expression with the Committee;**
- **review UCLan's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Expression.**

19. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee would be confirmed after the July Board meeting.

The Acting Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 19.40pm.