

Preston College

Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting held on 20 June 2024 at 7pm, Zoom

Present:

Mrs Laura Mason (Chair)

Mrs Helen Curtis

Mrs Jane Hilton

Mr Robert Marshall-Slater

Mrs Lynda Mason

Mr Simon Nixon

Principal and Chief Executive

Absent:

Miss Aoife Cullen

Mrs Jen Walters

In attendance:

Mrs Marie Haworth

Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support

Mr Mick Noblett

Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning

Mrs Clare Rayner

Clerk to the Board

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and welcomed Mrs Helen Curtis to her first meeting of the Committee.

The Committee noted that apologies had been received from Miss Aoife Cullen and Mrs Jen Walters.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

The Chair thanked members for their flexibility in changing the meeting time and location. The Chair explained that to ensure all matters for decision were considered first, the order of the reports had been changed. She reminded members that the pack was bookmarked to help members navigate between reports.

2. Declaration of interests

Mrs Curtis noted that there were references to the University of Central Lancashire in the reports and if required she would leave the meeting for these discussions.

3. Minutes of the Meeting – 29 February 2024

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 29 February 2024 as a correct record.

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 29 February 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising

The Committee noted the Matters arising report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Matters arising report.

5. Accountability Statement

Mr Noblett introduced the draft Accountability Statement 2024/25 which would demonstrate how the College delivered on its statutory Local Needs Duty.

Members discussed the draft with management and commented that the statement read well. A member suggested that more content was added on the impact on learners, including adding reference to World Skills UK.

The Committee noted progress against the Accountability Statement 2023/24 and agreed to recommend the draft Accountability Statement 2024/25 to the Board for approval.

In response to a query, Mr Noblett provided an update on the Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology and confirmed that the College expected to exceed learner number targets.

The Principal and Chief Executive commended Mr Noblett and College staff for the considerable work which had gone into the draft statement. He reported that the College had requested an extension from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to allow time for the Board to review the draft. He reported that subject to Board approval on 4 July 2024, the statement would be submitted to the ESFA on 5 July 2024.

Resolved: The Committee noted progress against the approved Accountability Statement 2023/24 and agreed to recommend to Board the approval of the Accountability Statement 2024/25.

Action: To add more content on the impact on learners.

6. Partnership and Sub-contracting

Mr Noblett referred members to his report on Partnership and Sub-contracting. He reported that the College's formal partnership with JTL Training Ltd would come to an end, though positive collaboration would continue. He reported that the College would launch its own apprenticeship provision in Building Services Engineering which would commence from September 2024.

The Chair reported that, in her capacity as Curriculum and Skills Link Governor – Construction, Mark Taylor, Head of School, had briefed her on the end of the formal subcontracting arrangement with JTL and the reasons for it.

Mr Noblett also referred to the introduction of Sector Advisory Groups during 2023/24 which would ensure contributions from local businesses to the College's curriculum development, which demonstrated how the College continued to review local skills needs.

The Committee noted the report and agreed to recommend to Board the proposed sub-contracting arrangements for 2024/25.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Partnership and Sub-contracting report and agreed to recommend to Board the proposed sub-contracting arrangements for 2024/25.

7. Higher Education Update

Mrs Haworth presented the Higher Education (HE) Update. She reported on:

- HE recruitment and participants numbers;
- that attendance had bounced back;
- good graduate outcomes;
- the HE action plan which had been discussed at the previous meeting;
- minor changes to the Student Protection Plan, at Appendix A, with minor amendments to dates and titles.

The Committee discussed the report with management. Members congratulated staff for the excellent learner outcomes, noted a majority of learners had achieved first class honours.

The Committee noted the report and agreed to recommend the changes to the Student Protection Plan to the Board for approval

Resolved: The Committee noted the report and agreed to recommend the changes to the Student Protection Plan to the Board for approval.

8. Forward Work Programme

The Clerk referred members to the draft Quality and Standards Forward Work Programme for 2024/25 at Appendix A. She reported that:

- an additional report on Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) had been added and would include more metrics for review;
- that the Committee might need to make changes to the plan once the External Governance Review Action Plan has been agreed
- the external reviewers had suggested that the Committee consider incorporating HE into each relevant agenda item rather than having a separate HE report;

- the external reviewers had recommended that the Board appoint a SEND link governor;
- as the Board had held an external governance review in 2023/24 the Committee had the option of not having a Committee review of 2023/24.

The Committee discussed the suggestions and agreed:

- that the Committee should continue to have a separate HE report, and that this was particularly important as the College did not have a separate HE Committee;
- that as the Safeguarding and Prevent link governor discussed SEND learners with management, from both a safeguarding and achievement perspective, a separate SEND link governor was unnecessary. The Committee agreed that the role description for the Safeguarding and Prevent link governor should be amended to reflect this;
- that the Committee would not hold a separate Committee evaluation of 2023/24.

A member queried if there would be opportunity for the Committee to consider the format of reports at some point during the 2024/25 academic year as it was important that the voice of the Quality and Standards Committee was considered during the review. The Clerk reported that the draft External Governance Review Action Plan would be considered by the Board on 4 July. The Principal and Chief Executive explained that Board and committee reports and packs would be reviewed over the summer with the aim of reducing volume. He welcomed feedback from members.

With the amendments agreed, the Committee approved the draft Quality and Standards FWP.

Resolved: The Committee:

- **approved the draft Quality and Standards Committee Forward Work Programme 2024/25, with the amendments agreed;**
- **noted that the Committee might need to make changes to the plan once the External Governance Review Action Plan has been agreed;**
- **agreed to advise the Board that the appointment of a SEND link governor was unnecessary as the Safeguarding and Prevent Link Governor currently discussed SEND matters with management.**

9. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

The Principal and Chief Executive presented the draft Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. He reported:

- that the strategy had been renamed following the suggestion at the previous meeting;

- information on the definitions of equality and equity had been included, which was particularly important as colleges had responsibilities for equality as outlined in the Equality Act;
- amendments to the employee objectives following review by the Resources Committee;
- governing body objective had been added which had been reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee.

Members welcomed the changes to the report and the explanation of the difference between equity and equality and welcomed the inclusion of governing body objectives.

The Chair referred to the helpful Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training session which the Board had received from Mr Jeff Greenidge from the Association of Colleges (AoC) in 2022 and suggested that it would be beneficial for all governors to complete this training, particularly as the session had to cut short. The Clerk explained that she had tried to re-arrange the training, however, Mr Greenidge had not had any availability on the College's dates. She undertook to review other options for 2024/25.

Resolved: The Committee agreed to recommend to the Board the revised learner objectives to the Board in the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

Action: The Clerk to review other options for Board EDI training in 2024/25.

10. Every Lesson Matters

Mr Noblett presented the Every Lesson Matters report. He reported that despite the best efforts of staff, attendance had not returned to pre-pandemic levels. He reported on the introduction of a strengths based approach which recognised that different learners required different targets for attendance. He outlined how the framework would be delivered and outlined the different intervention and actions which would be introduced with the objective of encouraging learners to make incremental progress.

Members commented positively on the new framework which members agreed was an excellent piece of work. Members discussed with management the challenge of getting learners ready for the workplace, where high attendance would be expected, but also recognising that for some learners more meaningful and achievement targets would be beneficial. Member also commented that whilst the College's overall attendance did need to improve, it was ahead of many other colleges when benchmarked and hopefully the introduction of a strength based approach would help attendance increase further.

A member suggested that management review the framework to ensure that the document was accessible from an EDI point of view.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Every Lesson Matters report and provided feedback on the plan to introduce the framework.

Action: Management to review the accessibility of the document.

11. Safeguarding and Support for Learners Update

Mrs Haworth presented the Safeguarding and Support for Learners Update report. She reported:

- the safeguarding and Internal Audit had been rated strong by the College's internal auditors;
- the support for learners, including Looked After Children at the College;
- the draft Prevent risk assessment at Appendix A.

The Principal and Chief Executive reported that the Audit and Risk Committee had reviewed the Safeguarding Internal Audit and were delighted with the outcome and had recorded thanks to all staff involved.

Members commented positively on the Safeguarding arrangements at the College and the support for learners, noting the achievements of learners at the College whilst facing significant challenges.

Mrs Haworth responded to a query on funding for looked after children, she confirmed that some funding would be received but it was insufficient.

In response to a query on the completion rate of Safeguarding and Prevent training. It was noted that it was difficult to achieve 100% due to staff on maternity leave or long term sick but every effort was made to ensure staff were fully briefed. It was noted that some additional face to face training would also be introduced.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Safeguarding and Support for Learners report and the Prevent Risk Assessment.

12. Performance against KPIs 2022/23 Outturn

Mrs Haworth referred members to the Performance against KPIs 2022/23 Outturn presentation. They reported:

- achievement targets were currently strong with retention rates standing at 92.5% for 16-18 year olds and 94.6% for adults;
- on the expected an achievement rate of 67% overall subject to End Point Assessment (EPA) availability

Members discussed with management the challenges with delays for EPA and the impact this had on the College's achievement rates. In response to comments, Management assured members that the College continued to raise this issue with the ESFA, Ofsted and Awarding Organisations.

Members discussed the introduction of learner disciplinary numbers to the report and commented on the high number of disciplinaries and warnings. Management confirmed that the numbers could include the same learner being issued with a number of verbal or written warning and depending on the issue, some learners might be excluded without warnings. The Committee noted the importance of the Committee having visibility on the volume of issues.

Members commented positively on the achievement rates and commended staff on their work to engage and support learners to achieve.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Performance against KPIs 2022/23 Outturn report.

13. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update

Mrs Haworth, Vice Principal Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support presented the TLA Update. She reported on:

- the College's approach to TLA with the whole school over a two week period;
- response to Learner Voice feedback;
- the College's approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) to date.

The Committee discussed the report with management, in response to queries from members, the Committee noted:

- management did not grade observations, but did ask individuals that demonstrated outstanding teaching to share their approach with others;
- out of the 10 staff that required improvement some had been identified as part of observations and others had requested additional support;
- the College operated a staff mentoring programme;
- management was exploring AI and there were indications that some programmes could significantly reduce staff workload.

In response to a question on how the College ensured that staff stayed up to date with industry developments, Mrs Haworth confirmed that many staff, for example in Hair and Beauty, worked in the industry and also taught learners at the College for other Continuity Professional Development days were arranged and employer engagement was key. There were also opportunities for staff and employers to feedback on the

college's curriculum. It was suggested that this could be emphasised and celebrated in future reports.

In response to a request, Mrs Haworth undertook to provide an update on the outcomes for the staff receiving additional support.

The Committee noted the report.

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

Action: To provide an update on the outcomes staff receiving additional support.

14. Progress and Performance Against the Quality Improvement Plan

Mrs Haworth referred members to Progress and Performance Against the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) making reference to the accountability statement and the improvements made in response to feedback from Ofsted in January 2023.

Members discussed the QIP, they welcomed the detail provided and thanked management and staff for compiling the report. Members discussed the feedback from the external governance review that the report was too long. Members were of the view that the detail was helpful and members would review the updates before each meeting, rather than the full report.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the QIP and the current progress and performance against key QIP milestones.

15. Learner Experience – Careers and Progression

Mr Noblett referred members to the Learner Experience Careers and Progression update. He reported that the Board did not currently have a link governor for careers. However, the Board had introduced five link governors for Curriculum and Skills during 2023/24. The Committee agreed that the current focus should be on the Curriculum and Skills link governors.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the report.

16. Learner Voice/Student Council/Student Governor Update

Mr Noblett referred members to the Learner Voice/Student Council/Student Governor Update. The Chair commented that it was evident from the report that College management was change orientated and responded to comments from learners. The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the report.

17. Complaints and Compliments Termly Report

Mrs Haworth referred members to Complaints and Compliments Termly report. She reported:

- that the majority of complaints in this term related to agency staff;
- the College's had addressed concerns about pace of teaching;
- the College was currently dealing with a difficult and complex historic complaint from 2007/09.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the report.

18. Date of next meeting

The Clerk reported that Mrs Walters had sent an email which she would forward to the Executive Leadership Team and that she had wished all members well.

The Committee noted that the date of the next meeting would be confirmed at the Board meeting on 4 July 2024.