

**Minutes of the  
Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee  
held on Tuesday 20 June 2017 at 8.00am  
in Room 814 at the Matthew Boulton Campus**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Apologies:</b>
Veronica Docherty (VD) (Chair)	
Keith Horton (KH)	
Jenni Ord (JO)	
Andrew Cleaves (AC)	
Mohammed Albukair (MA)	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	
Louise Jones (LJ)	
Liam Nevin (LN)	
Tony Dennant (TD) (for item 7)	
Elaine Bonar (EB) (for item 2)	

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Sonia Crook-Lake.

**Declarations of Interest**

There were none save for those already recorded in the Register of Interests.

**Item 1 - Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 7 March 2017**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting

**Matters Arising and Action Log**

The action log was noted.

VD noted that there was a delay in finalising the Equality and Diversity strategy. JO stated that her view, as the governor representative for equality and diversity was that the current steering committee was poorly attended and not sufficiently dynamic. LJ stated that the structure was being changed as part of the new strategy with the steering committee composed of senior staff and the link governor.

Jo stated the importance of ensuring that the components of the strategy were integrated into the quality improvement plan and that it was not viewed as a free standing plan and LJ agreed and advised that it would be a key part of the business plan.

**Item 2 – Post Inspection Action Plan Update and Presentation**

EB presented the Post Inspection Action Plan update following which the Committee debated the progress and further actions identified

In relation to progress at level 3 JO noted that inconsistent use of Markbook was a specific risk and asked what assurance there was that arrangements would be made before the summer break so that this was consistently used from the beginning of the academic year. EB advised

that the CCQ meeting was reviewing progress and time had been allocated by the Quality Team to work with teams that were behind.

KH noted that the conclusions from the Big Teaching and Learning survey included the view that assessment and feedback was too infrequent and sometimes not of adequate quality. He asked how the College would identify and address these quality issues. EB gave examples of the methods being deployed which included observations, learning walks, work sampling, and the increased use of progress and learning coaches to drive these activities.

JO asked how the detailed information on teaching performance gained in this way was used in the formal performance review process. LJ stated that the College now had the ability to draw all relevant information into one place which would allow the College to assess performance against KPI's and which would feed into the performance development scheme, whereas previously these reports and processes were not integrated.

JO observed that this would be a rigorous form of assessment for teaching staff and questioned whether this would be the same for support staff. LJ confirmed that there would be consistency in the overall approach to performance development including in relation to support staff, and that there were a number of KPIs in the business plan that were applicable to support staff.

KH stated that he could not see reference to students in the plan and how the College would gauge whether they felt that quality was improving.

The Principal advised that monthly student surveys would be undertaken in the next academic year.

VD stated that the Committee was fully behind the work but needed to be satisfied that the work being done would have the necessary impact.

LJ stated that the implementation of the teaching and learning strategy was demonstrating clear improvements and the details contained within the presentation were designed to increase the pace of improvement.

VD asked how the Pivotal programme was being included within student induction and LJ advised that the "ready, respectful and safe" rules introduced under the programme were being incorporated into all policies including induction.

KH stated that he would welcome a further review of progress in the autumn.

JO stated that the presentation was positive but questioned how it linked with the College's recruitment strategy. LJ stated that plans were in place for a re-launch of Matthew Boulton College but recognised that the link between the improvement activities and recruitment needed strengthening.

Accordingly it was

## **RESOLVED**

- **That the report and presentation be noted.**

### **Item 3 – 2016-17 Forecasts**

LJ introduced the report and noted that the forecast for Education and Training (E&T) was 81.1% and for apprenticeships it was 76.3%

KH noted that the forecast in a number of SSA for apprenticeships was showing a decline. LJ stated that these were primarily areas of small provision whereas improvements were predicted in the areas with the largest provision. The main area of concern was Retail and Commercial

where a partnership had not worked as well as expected, impacting on achievement rates. Further work was being done with these students to help them to attain a recognised qualification.

VD noted that Appendix 2 showed a high number of failed frameworks in one area. LJ stated that she had already asked the Head of Faculty to examine the reasons for this.

JO noted that the forecast achievement for 19+ was that Stourbridge and Sutton would have the two lowest achievement rates amongst the Colleges but that the converse was true for 16-18.

LJ explained that this reflected the different composition of courses run at each College. She observed that it was more concerning where there was a significant disparity between attendance/retention and forecast achievement, as there should not be large numbers of students who had completed the course but were not achieving. This was an issue that she was pursuing within the team

Accordingly it was

#### **RESOLVED**

- **That the report be noted.**

#### **Item 4 – Quality Strategy**

LJ introduced the report and advised that the report underpinned the implementation of the Post Inspection Action Plan and was aligned to the business plan as the quality framework for delivery. There were five quality development objectives which were aligned to the strategic objectives.

KH asked why the College's fourth objective was not included, in so far as it was concerned with investment in learning. LJ stated that the emphasis of the objective had been on financial efficiency. However, the challenge was fair and the Strategy would be amended to reflect that.

VD stated that the report presented the responsibilities for delivering the strategy in a way that appeared hierarchical and it was important that all staff saw themselves as playing a part in delivering the quality objectives. The Principal agreed to consider how in the implementation of the plan, this point could be addressed. However, he was satisfied that EB was leading by empowering rather than dictating and that the focus of the quality regime was on development rather than policing.

JO stated that the emphasis on roles and responsibilities was a positive development as this had been requested by governors previously. However, she stressed that it was important for this to also include the role and responsibilities of students as part of their learning contract.

#### **RESOLVED**

- **That the Committee recommend the Quality Strategy and Development Plan to the Corporation.**

#### **Item 5 – Higher Level Skills Update**

LJ introduced the paper which provided an update on in-year academic performance, the outcome of the annual provider review conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council, business planning and partnership arrangements.



It was noted that performance had improved from last year in respect of retention, attrition and attendance. The forecast success rate was 74.5% against a target of 74.6% and forecast progression was 88.7% against a target of 84.5%.

VD noted the improvements in retention and attrition and noted that progression was not yet finalised. LJ confirmed this but reiterated that the College expected to meet the target.

VD asked how the College was progressing with the plan to provide separate facilities for HE students. LJ confirmed that this had not yet been introduced at the Matthew Boulton or Stourbridge campuses and that consideration was being given to developing HE provision at Kidderminster Academy.

KH stated that Derby University had experience of separating provision for HE and FE students following their partnership with Buxton College and that the College should consider drawing on this experience.

Accordingly it was

#### **RESOLVED**

- **That the report be noted.**

#### **Item 6 – Big Teaching and Learning Survey**

LJ introduced the report and advised that student satisfaction taken as an average of all categories had increased from 83% to 87% with increased satisfaction also recorded in each of the six categories that were also surveyed in 2015/16.

KH stated that the satisfaction rates by departments demonstrated clearly where the College had made good progress and those areas where there was still much to do.

The Principal stated that the College had increased its score by approximately 10 points over two years and some measures were now in the upper quartile of performance, which was extremely encouraging.

Accordingly it was

#### **RESOLVED**

- **That the report be noted**

#### **Item 7 – Harborne Academy Update**

TD introduced the report and advised that the Ofsted progress inspection had resulted in a positive report but the Academy forecast was that it would not achieve its Progress 8 targets. The Academy was clear about the areas that required further improvement and there was intensive support being given to students in preparation for exams; study leave had been cancelled and revision workshops were being run.

VD noted that resources had been invested in additional staff and initiatives to drive improvement and questioned whether this was sustainable. TD stated that the Academy had drawn on reserves to prime improvements but this would not be sustainable in the new academic year.

KH stated that the monitoring report suggested a step change in behaviour in the school and wondered whether staff believed this to be the case. TD confirmed that this was the case and that the changes were well embedded with a stronger staff presence in corridors, welcome initiatives being routinely used and good student feedback.



Thereafter, the Principal advised the Committee that there had been no real progress in relation to the discussion with the DfE about changes to sponsorship, and since the process was not being led by the College there was little that could be done to drive a resolution.

**Any Other Business**

The Committee discussed whether a termly meeting was sufficient. The Principal confirmed that he would be happy to support such further informal discussions between meetings as committee members considered useful.

LN advised that in addition to the scheduled committee meetings, there were two Corporation meetings, in May and September that were not aligned with the committee meetings, but which would have academic matters as the highest priority agenda items.

Following discussion it was agreed that the formal arrangements were adequate in light of the matters discussed.

***Date of the next meeting – TBC***

Signed:  (Chair)

Dated: 7<sup>th</sup> Dec 2017

