

## BARNSELY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2017

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#### PRESENT

N Bowen	Governor (Chair)
S Burkinshaw	Governor (Student)
C Moss	Governor
D Shepherd	Governor
C Webb	Governor (Principal)

#### IN ATTENDANCE

A J Oaks	Clerk to the Board
D Harding	VP Curriculum
P Briscoe	VP Quality
L Leek	Principal, SFC
J Miccoli	VP Teaching, Learning and Student Support

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Prior to the start of formal business the Committee received a briefing from the Principal of the SFC and the Director of Quality & Standards for SFC on ALPS. The purpose of the briefing was to explain the scoring and methods used to monitor AS and A2 progress. The Committee welcomed the briefing and was reassured by the level of detail and action taken by staff to drive up scores with a view to meeting targets. Following discussion, Governors felt very comfortable with the level at which staff were able to analyse the data and intervene appropriately when necessary, which provided excellent transparency over the process. The Committee received Item 5 of the Agenda in the presence of K Anderson, who then left the meeting.

#### APOLOGIES

17.01 Apologies were received from T Abbott and R Hooley.

#### DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

17.02 The Chair reminded members of the requirement to declare any financial or personal interests in any agenda items. Members reserved the right to declare any interests should any arise during the course of the meeting.

#### MINUTES

17.03 The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

#### MATTERS ARISING

17.04 The Chair referred to the actions arising and to the point relating to the new operating model for quality assurance of HE. D Shepherd had attended a webinar in January aimed at College senior staff and Governors which explained the background to the changes and data sources that would be used by HEFCE to assess student experience. D Shepherd had provided comprehensive feedback to Governors following the webinar, a further copy of which was tabled to the meeting for information. He added that he believed the Committee to be appropriately informed and up to date following discussions at the last meeting. The Chair agreed, commenting that much discussion had taken place in November in relation to the HE Student satisfaction survey and that Governors were fully aware of the issues inherited as a result of the transition from Huddersfield University to the College.

#### STUDENT PROGRESS IN YEAR – AS/A2 PREDICTED GRADES

17.05 The Committee received a report highlighting the results of the AS and A2 examinations and action being taken to safeguard performance in the summer exams. 2377 exams were sat in December 2016, an increase of 435 from the previous year. Mock results were reported to be

lower than in the previous year, with mixed patterns emerging between the two cohorts. The Principal of SFC explained that this year's A levels were the first of the reformed year 2 exams for many subjects and staff were applying caution to the setting and marking of assessments. The Principal SFC stated that the reformed A2 exam was now worth 20% of the full A level where it had been 40% previously and that some students had found the intensity of the transition daunting. As a result there had been an increase in student anxiety, safeguarding referrals and concomitant interventions evidenced. Further details were provided in response to Governors' questions around actions taken by the College to ensure students were appropriately supported.

- 17.06 The Committee was informed that ALPS at this point in the year were forecast rather than being based on the mock exam results due to the differing structure and content of each syllabus, which required subject staff to apply judgement in relation to classwork, homework and mock exams to reach a grade prediction for each student. Current ALPS predictions was 2 for AS and 6 for A2. Actions and interventions in relation to A2 were detailed in the report and had been discussed during the briefing. The Principal SFC referred to the key strategic objective which was to deliver a sustainable and outstanding sixth form college and spoke of the initiatives being undertaken to attract out of district gifted and talented students to the College. In response to a question from the Chair about the need to attract more able students and for them to achieve more highly in the SFC, she confirmed that the college's 'gifted and talented' Co-ordinator who was a Russell group practitioner worked closely with students and was running a series of events and masterclasses for schools with gifted students. The Principal SFC reiterated that every member of staff in the SFC was clear about the actions required to ensure strategic targets were met.
- 17.07 In response to a question from C Moss in relation to the extent to which students were supported, the Principal SFC explained that there had been an increase in concessions for exams mainly due to anxiety issues, however many did not qualify for external support that may be available to some, therefore the College staff were having to draw upon their own resources to support students as needed. Responding to a question from D Shepherd regarding meeting the strategic objectives, the Principal SFC remarked that ALPS for A2 would need to be improved to a score of 4 and that she was confident this could be achieved. Governors acknowledged that the improvement in ALPS scores was significant and comparative to other outstanding sixth form colleges but were mindful of the need to improve the score at Year 2.

The Report was received.

#### **STUDENT PROGRESS IN-YEAR – VOCATIONAL**

- 17.08 The Committee received a report summarising headline vocational college Level 3 value added performance. The VP Quality stated that the analysis showed a strong and improved position with a VA score of +0.19 which was above average. Of 981 students, 756 were on programmes that reported a positive L3 VA score. Student performance was monitored carefully through ProMonitor throughout the year. Governors noted the risks associated with low VA scores which could potentially trigger an Ofsted inspection. The VP Curriculum commented that unlike the ALPS scores which were internal to the college, this data would be published nationally. The Principal commented that in terms of A Level results the College compared well regionally, whilst the vocational results placed the College above others in the city region. He added that with further improvement the College could move to the top of national performance tables.

The Report was received.

#### **ENGLISH AND MATHS PERFORMANCE**

- 17.09 The Committee received a report summarising the latest performance in English and Maths which was a strategic priority. Results of resits undertaken in November showed 36% achieving A-C grades for GCSE English, and 26% for Maths. Learners continued to be supported on an individual basis and non achievers would have the opportunity to take the exam again in June. The VP Quality commented that while he had hoped the results to be slightly higher, it was to be noted that the national average was also very low. Governors were

keen to understand what impact this would have should there be an inspection and discussed the outcome of the recent good practice visit by Ofsted for Maths and English, which were excellent, with Ofsted commenting the college was amongst only 8 in the Country who were able to demonstrate good practice.

- 17.10 The VP stated that the College was proud of the results but would continue to maintain the impetus to improve. A decline in attendance and punctuality across English and maths provision was reported, both for centralised provision and for functional skills delivered within some departments. Details were provided of actions taken by management to allow intervention when necessary. In terms of retention, a significant factor affecting 2016/17 retention in 16-18 and 19+ was the carry-in of learners on year 2 of 2 for GCSE. The analysis showed that learners were not progressing on their main study programme following completion of year 1. The VP assured members that this had been anticipated and that he was confident the college would maintain its A-C grade performance.
- 17.11 The VP Quality commented that there was some excellent teaching and learning taking place, and that Ofsted had subsequently asked if the college would agree to them including some of the excellent practice in a national report designed to support the sector to improve English and maths outcomes for learners. Responding to a specific question from the Chair on funding, the VP Quality confirmed that a disadvantage uplift was provided for resits per study programme.

The Report was noted and received.

#### **TEACHING AND LEARNING UPDATE**

- 17.12 The Committee received a report highlighting activities being undertaken to support, secure and monitor improvements in teaching and learning and assessment across college, and provided a summary of graded lesson observations including GCSE English and Maths, Sixth Form College and vocational/other provision. The Chair stated that he particularly liked the explanation given of action taken by the college to support teachers improve grades, which was helpful. The Chair then made reference to the number of observations that were not 'good' or 'better' and sought further information about timescales for improving grade 3 and 4, to which the VP T&L explained the process of support through the work of the Advanced Practitioners who developed clear action plans. The APs also worked with the observers to ensure that actions were SMART, thereby ensuring a more rigorous process which resulted in reports for monitoring produced every two weeks. The introduction of Pro-observe enabled the 'live' position to be tracked at any time.
- 17.13 C Moss observed that the report did not include any data on lesson observations in HE. The VP T&L explained that there was much good practice shared with some aspects of the observation process common to both FE and HE, however HE teaching was not currently formally observed. C Moss agreed that the current policy for observing FE teaching did not lend itself to HE which was a more independent and facilitated type of learning and suggested that perhaps a policy could be developed using best practice in other institutions. The Chair agreed that it would be helpful for the Committee to receive reports on HE teaching grade profiles. In response, the Principal proposed the link governors for Strategic priority 7 work with the Deputy Principal and Dean of UCB with a view to producing a report for the Committee which focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning in HE. The Clerk undertook to arrange this and to add this item to the cycle of business for committee meetings.
- 17.14 In response to a question from D Shepherd regarding the current vacancies for Advanced Practitioners and ILT Stars, the VP T&L advised that an advert was ready to go out internally seeking outstanding teachers to take up the roles. The team of APs and ILT stars met weekly to pool resources and share good practice.
- 17.15 To conclude the report, the Principal thanked Governors for their commitment in terms of engaging with learners through a series of organised activities which showed that to date nine link visits had taken place.

The Report was noted and received.

## **RETENTION**

- 17.16 The Committee received a report showing the position with regard to retention compared to the same period in the previous year. At L1 and L3 16-18 the data was well above NA and College targets, with L3 at 98.8%. At L2 retention of 89.4% was below the NA and college target in 16-18 and below NA in Adults as a result of withdrawals in English and maths. It was anticipated that maintaining the A-C achievement rates at GCSE would compensate for the fall at L2. For Adults, retention was strong at L1 and L3. Governors noted that retention had been a key area of focus for the college with significant interventions in place. Overall the Committee were pleased with the increase in the overall rate of retention.

The Report was received.

## **ATTENDANCE**

- 17.17 The Committee received a report showing the position with regard to attendance compared to the same period the previous year. It was noted that attendance in English and maths was not included within the data. The Committee acknowledged that national benchmarking data was not available but recognised that the levels of attendance had been maintained from the previous year and were comparative with DFE data on schools in the Barnsley area which was around 94%. D Shepherd commented that punctuality between 98% and 99%+ was particularly impressive.

The report was received.

## **ANALYSIS OF LEARNER SATISFACTION SURVEY**

- 17.18 The results of the learner (induction) satisfaction survey were presented for consideration. The results had been benchmarked against c568,270 learners from 134 providers in the sector and showed a variation in positive feedback between departments, with learner satisfaction at the lowest levels in Construction and highest in Learning and Living for Work. Governors discussed the data, noting that in relation to Accommodation and Equipment while results were still in Quartile C there had been some improvement from the previous year.
- 17.19 Governors were aware of the historical issues within the Construction department and the Chair sought further information with regard to performance in the department following the appointment of a new Head. The VP Curriculum spoke of recruitment issues in the construction industry generally which had impacted and assured the Committee the College was monitoring progress closely. In terms of leadership, the Principal commented that the next round of business planning was likely to identify a need for further capacity in this department.

The report was received.

## **COMPLAINTS ANALYSIS TO DATE**

- 17.20 The Committee received a report summarising all formal complaints received since the start of the academic year. A total of 20 complaints had been received, an increase of 9 compared to the same period in 2015/16. Management actions had been prompt in terms of responding to and resolving complaints satisfactorily. A full and comprehensive analysis had been provided within the report for Governors' information. D Shepherd commented on the detailed annex, and observed that the report did not include complaints relating to the sixth form college. The VP Quality stated that he would ensure that this was incorporated into future reports.

The Report was received.

## **ANALYSIS OF EXTERNAL VERIFIER REPORTS**

- 17.21 A summary of External Moderator/External verifier reports was presented for information. A total of 16 reports had been received this academic year, of these, three required action plans to be produced, the detail of which was provided within the report. Governors were content with the action being taken to address the findings.

The Report was noted and received.

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

17.22 The next meeting would be held on Thursday 6 April 2017 at 4.00 pm.

*Signed N Bowen, Chair*

*Dated 6 April 2017*