

BARNSELY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 APRIL 2015

PRESENT	J Thirkell	Governor
	N Bowen	Governor
	C Booth	Governor
	P Bird	Governor (Staff)

IN ATTENDANCE	D Harding (VP Quality & Adults)	
	C Webb (Deputy Principal)	
	G Garvey (Principal: Sixth Form college)	
	A J Oaks (Clerk to the Board)	

APOLOGIES

15.24 There were no apologies.

MINUTES

15.25 The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2015 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

15.26 The Committee received a list of actions arising from the last meeting, noting that all actions formed agenda items for the meeting.

DATA DASHBOARD

15.27 The VP Q&A presented the data dashboard, demonstrating the breadth of data the Committee could drill down into, which could be accessed at any time by Governors for scrutiny. Several questions were raised by Governors to understand how the data could be used to assist in monitoring and challenge. J Thirkell commented on linking the development of a Q & S dashboard with the potential for extending the dashboard into a full corporate level one. The Chair stated that the most important thing for Governors was to see trends over time, the correlation with the improvements being made in teaching and learning and actions being taken by management to bring about improvements.

15.28 Further to a comment from the Clerk, the VP confirmed that whilst Governors would have access to the dashboard link, the report to the Committee would highlight any areas of concern to allow them to drill down into further detail. Governors were content with the proposed format which would continue to be developed.

SIXTH FORM COLLEGE RESULTS

15.29 The Principal of the SFC presented a report which summarised the current ALPS value added monitoring forecast. Snapshots were taken in November, January and March, the latter being the most accurate, including performance in coursework units and in respect of A level students, included the AS results from the previous year. The report provided a score for every subject together with an overall score at both AS and A level. An explanation of the scoring had been provided within the paper.

- 15.30 The forecast for AS indicated an improvement on the previous year from ALPS 5 to ALPS 2. If achieved in the summer, the value added would move from good to outstanding. A number of new staff had joined the SFC during the year resulting in positive value added in a number of subjects, with a significant number forecasting VA in line with the top 25 of colleges nationally. At A level, ALPS was forecast to move from 7 to 5, below the target of 4 but still moving up. 14 subjects were indicating better outcomes than in the January trial examinations. A number of courses were less than satisfactory but had moved from 17 to 7; The Principal commented that some of these were attributed to the impact of low scores carried over from AS units.
- 15.31 Governors raised several questions in relation to the new staff and the impact they had already made. The Principal spoke of staff changes and advised that the staffing structure would be reviewed after business planning round two had been completed in June. The Chair was keen the College continue to develop its partnerships with local schools with specific emphasis on activities targeting the highest achieving students in year 10 and 11. An Academic Ambition Co-ordinator had been appointed to provide a point of contact.

The report was received.

VOCATIONAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT REPORT

- 15.32 The VP Q&A presented the report which had been produced by the VP 14-19 Vocational Curriculum. The report summarised the recent reforms in vocational education and how the college was responding to this agenda. In relation to English and maths GCSE, new specifications would be taught from September 2015 that would include assessment of spelling, grammar and problem solving to demonstrate to prospective employers that young people have the necessary skills for the workplace. The Principal commented that this may be subject to change depending on the outcome of the general election.
- 15.33 The Committee agreed the report was most informative.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE FE AND HE

- 15.34 The Committee had received a report prior to the meeting highlighting detailed departmental data on attendance. Following an observation by the Chair regarding benchmarking, the Principal acknowledged there was no benchmarking other than Colleges making comparison with other colleges directly. He added that attendance was outstanding in the College and that there were no concerns. Governors raised questions about departmental monitoring and sharing of good practice. The Chair proposed that in order to identify trends over time it would be helpful to include the data from the previous term and prior year for comparison purposes. The VP Q&A commented that going forwards management would monitor the correlation between attendance and performance in each department.

The report was noted and received.

STUDENT RETENTION FE AND HE

- 15.35 The Committee had received a report prior to the meeting highlighting retention rates compared to the same point in the previous year.
- 15.36 Adult retention was well above benchmarks and college targets in all programmes. A slight fall in retention on adult L3 was due to an Access course in Early years which was currently being redesigned. 16-18 retention was above national average for all programmes and 2% above college targets for Long level programmes. Further to a comment from the Chair regarding trends, whilst it was not shown in the report, he had noted that retention had fallen since the report presented in February. The Principal responded, stating that there would be peaks and troughs around March and April and a slight gap between actual figures being recorded. The Chair proposed future reports include retention in the previous

term to allow monitoring of trends and to highlight any areas of concern. The Report was noted and received.

STUDENT PROGRESS IN-YEAR (PREDICTED GRADES)

- 15.37 The VP Q&A presented the data, reporting that more work on value added was required in vocational areas particularly in driving forward distance travelled. Actions being taken by management were clearly articulated including how the new approach of using ALPS scores would assist in driving performance improvement. Further to questions regarding league tables and the college's position, the slides showed how Barnsley College came out top amongst the Sheffield City Region Colleges for classroom based provision and overall success rates and was 6th nationally for Apprenticeship success rates. The Committee noted the performance outcomes.

SFC CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT REPORT

- 15.38 The Committee received a report that provided an overview of key developments in the SFC for 2015/16. The Principal of the SFC spoke of the A Level reform, with the first tranche of A Levels being implemented in September 2015 which included new specifications in around a dozen subjects. Governors were advised of actions being taken by managers to prepare for delivery. A decision had been taken to enter all students studying reformed A levels for the AS exams at the end of year 12. Considerable discussion took place with regard to the course offer in respect of the reforms and new teaching staff required.
- 15.39 The Chair commented that he was pleased to see the introduction of Economics at A level and sought further information about the capacity in the SFC. The Principal advised that initially the course would be run as a pilot for those students achieving a GCSE point score of 6 and above and that if it was successful the College would continue to deliver. In terms of partnership working with the schools, J Thirkell commented favourably on the innovative activities taking place and emphasised the importance of promoting stretch and challenge with all outstanding secondary schools that feed into college.

The report was noted and received.

TEACHING AND LEARNING UPDATE

- 15.40 The Committee received a comprehensive report summarising activities being undertaken to support and monitor improvements in teaching, learning and assessment across the college. The grade profile for lesson observations has also been provided. The Chair commented that the report was thorough and clearly showed the breadth of initiatives driving forward improvements, particularly iTEACH, Teachers of Tomorrow and Project Connect, which P Bird commented had significantly improved behaviour amongst students within Engineering.
- 15.41 The Committee noted that the grade profile for lesson observations had improved and was on target for the year. The Principal referred to tutorial targets which included Governors undertaking OWLs. The Clerk commented that whilst there had only been three OWLs, governors had engaged in many other learner focused activities including observing a graded lesson, learner forums and link visits.

ANALYSIS OF EXTERNAL VERIFIER REPORTS

- 15.42 A report summarising the outcome of external moderator and verifier reports was presented. From a total of 24 EV reports, 3 had required the College to take further action, details of which were provided for information. The Committee was satisfied with the College's response.

OVERVIEW OF THE CIF

15.43 The Committee received a report summarising key changes within the new Ofsted Common Inspection Framework being implemented from September 2015. A key change was to inspect schools, FE Colleges and non association independent schools under the same framework. The College expected Inspection handbooks to be issued during the summer term. Given the extent of the changes, it was agreed that a more detailed report should be presented to the next meeting.

OUTCOME OF QAA REVIEW

15.44 A HE QAA visit had taken place on 23 February, the results of which were summarised. The outcome of 'making acceptable progress' against the agreed Action plan was the highest accolade given. The Chair noted that in terms of the distance travelled by the College in respect of its HE provision, it was a massive accolade and that staff should be congratulated.

The Report was noted and received.

OTHER BUSINESS

15.45. The Principal reported that the SFA had recently issued financial performance data for each college and that a report would be presented to the Board on 12 May for discussion. He commented that whilst the College was in a very strong position, the QSR results would give a more accurate representation of the College's performance in comparison to others in the sector, and would present this to the Committee at the next meeting.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

15.46 The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 24 June 2015 at 4.00 pm.

Signed _____ N BOWEN (Chair)

Date _____