

Minutes of the Learning and Achievement Committee held on Monday 18 February 2008 at 17.15 hrs in the Principal's Room, Science Park Campus, Cambridge

The meeting was preceded at 16.30 hrs by a Governor Training Event with two presentations by Andrea Chilton, Vice Principal Quality—

- Framework for Excellence: a new monitoring framework for FE that focuses on responsiveness, effectiveness, and finance
- Self Assessment at CRC, including the process and the measures.

Handouts from the presentations are filed with these minutes.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Present Tony Cooper (Chair), David Adamson, Reza Assadi, Rick Dearing, Anne Kent, Jill Preston, Mary Abbot

In attendance Chris Sherwin, Andrea Chilton

Clerk Julia Kennedy

The Chair thanked Andrea Chilton for her presentation. By agreement an additional agenda item was incorporated in the agenda between items 5 and 6, item 6a: CRC – An Improving College.

			Action	By
1	Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest	Apologies were received from Mina Jesa and Zoe Hellewell. There were no declarations of interest.	Clerk	
2	Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2007	<p>The Minutes were agreed to be a true record and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that all action points had been dealt with. Governors wish to be alerted to the priorities for staff development, and this will be incorporated in the outcomes from classroom observations.</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>CS</p>	<p>18.02.08.</p> <p>18.06.08.</p>

3	Feedback from the Student Liaison Committee	<p>In the absence of the Student Governor, Andrea Chilton provided a report. The Student Liaison Committee meets once per term. Generally the feedback provided is very positive. The Academy Board meetings, where issues are dealt with in more depth, are considered by the Committee to be effective, and issues raised are properly addressed or explained. Two main issues raised in the Committee were computer use in the LRC and difficulties created by gaps in timetables.</p> <p>Governors discussed access to PCs and the difficulties of timetabling, and whether questions could be added to the student questionnaire to test whether these are college-wide issues.</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the feedback from the Student Liaison Committee.</p>	ACC	18.06.08.
4	L&A/08/07-08 Report on Validation of the Self Assessment Grade for Leadership and Management for 06/07	<p>This paper provides feedback on the validation of the leadership and management SAR, as carried out by Andrew Middleton, a practising OfSTED inspector. The College's self assessment is considered robust but a number of recommendations were made. There were three priority actions, two of which relate to using the correct uplifted National Averages (items 3 and 39).</p> <p>Governors discussed the difficulty created by the lack of clarity in relation to the National Averages and the potential impact in areas where assessment was border line.</p> <p>Andrea Chilton confirmed that the validation exercise had no negative impact on staff morale. The Chair reported on his session with Andrew Middleton, and the importance of Governors being aware of the areas of success and the priorities for development.</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the report on the validation of the self assessment grade for leadership and management.</p>		

5	L&A/09/07-08 Report on Attendance Trends	<p>This report provides an analysis of attendance trends over the last three years, reports on actions taken, outlines further proposed actions, and asks Governors to comment on the robustness of management actions to increase attendance.</p> <p>Attendance is moving quickly towards a better position and is supported by changes in the way attendance is recorded and managed. The investment in monitoring systems and the use of global texting is showing results. Attendance in 8 out of 15 academies is at or above 85%. ESOL courses are no longer offered with a fee remission and this has affected student attendance.</p> <p>Governors noted the significant improvement in attendance in Engineering, and considered whether there is scope for further improvement in follow up, for example by use of a standard letter.</p> <p>The Committee recommended the report on attendance trends to Corporation and endorsed management actions to increase attendance.</p> <p><i>David Adamson and Reza Assadi left during this agenda item. The time was 5.50 pm and 6.00 pm respectively.</i></p>	 CS CS	 18.06.08. 19.03.08.
6 (a)	L&A/10/06-07 CRC: an improving College	<p>This paper provided by the Principal provides a summary of progress, and identifies improvements made in the College position against benchmarks and key priorities for further development.</p> <p>Significant improvements include the financial position, which is summarised in three graphs. Staffing remains a key issue, with the challenge of recruiting and retaining staff in the local buoyant economy. Partnership development with schools and local authorities is outstanding, and work is progressing with employers and employing organisations.</p> <p>Priorities include staffing, curriculum development, student behaviour, satisfaction and success (including attendance and some low level student behaviour issues) and consolidating the alignment of the College to deliver government priorities.</p>		

		The Committee received and noted the report will be provided to the OfSTED inspection team and thanked the Principal for a very useful summary.		
6	L&A/10/07-8 College Performance Report, Spring Term Update for 07/08	<p>This is a risk based report against strategic aims 1 to 4 and Objectives 1 to 6 and 8. The report shows a high number of green flags and that the College is on track to achieve all targets in the development report. The report covers overall success rates, work based learning (WBL), high grade profiles, skills for life, destinations, and student satisfaction.</p> <p>There has been another significant increase in overall success rates. The minimum levels of performance report (MLOP) is very pleasing, with performance improvements against 2005/06. Overall success rates for WBL have also improved but some small areas of underperformance that mean the courses may be subject to tender. High grade profiles on Level 3 courses is 8% above the benchmark, and both the numbers taking key skills qualifications and success rates have increased.</p> <p>There are issues in two areas. The Committee agreed that, in view of the confidentiality of performance information, only the Chair need to be kept up-to-date.</p> <p>Governors commented on student satisfaction: 96% of students are happy to be at the College. Governors also asked about equality and diversity: legislative requirements are being met, and one of the Governors is providing valuable input.</p> <p>Targets were considered and Governors agreed that they are no longer sufficiently stretching. Proposed revised targets will be settled with the Chair of the Committee and the Chair of Corporation and emailed to Governors, with the aim that revised targets will be ratified by Corporation in March.</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the College Performance Report for the Spring Term and agreed that revised targets would be emailed to Governors for their consideration.</p> <p><i>Jill Preston left the meeting during this agenda item at 6.15 pm.</i></p>		

7	L&A/11/07-8 Good News Items regarding Learner Achievement	<p>The purpose of this item is to assist Governors to keep up-to-date with the College by identifying exceptional achievements of staff and students. Updates are also posted on the website.</p> <p>Governors agreed that it is important that staff and students know that Governors receive and applaud the news, and that letters of congratulations are to be provided to individuals and teams when appropriate. On this occasion, congratulations are to be provided to the Access Team, the Supportive Education team and to Wayne Stimson who has gained a place to study Natural Science at St Edmund's College Cambridge University.</p> <p>The Committee recommended these achievements are brought to the attention of Corporation. The Chair offered thanks and congratulations.</p>	CS	19.03.08.
8	Evaluation of the Meeting Against Key Question 5 of the Revised Common Inspection Framework	<p>8.1 Assessment of performance against targets explored at the meeting: performance is considered good against the targets.</p> <p>8.2 Recommendations to Corporation to include the “good news” items and to note that key indicators have been achieved, progress is on track, and remedial action taken in relation to red flags.</p> <p>8.3 Evaluation of the meeting and identification of any changes necessary to maintain the effectiveness of the Committee: the performance reports continue to provide an excellent picture of progress over time. The Committee considered that it important for Chair to be briefed on performance matters that are confidential.</p>		
9	Date and time of next meeting	The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 18 June 2008 at 5.15 pm with Governor training prior to this meeting at 4.30 p.m.	Clerk	
10	Any other business	There was no other business.		

