

Minutes of the Learning and Achievement Committee held on Monday 29 November 2010 at 17.00 hrs in the Principal's Room, Science Park Campus, Cambridge

The meeting was preceded at 16.30 hrs by a Governor Training Event, an update on Key Curriculum Developments presented by Laurence Wells, Associate Principal/Head of Partnerships and Curriculum Development. The slides from the presentation are filed with these Minutes.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Present Tony Cooper, Anne Constantine, David Adamson, Reza Assadi, Jamie Easton, Dawn Fisher, Anne Kent, Vicky Parrett, Jill Preston, Anne Ridgeon

In attendance Chris Sherwin
 Jackie Cannell [for item 3]
 Steve Caley [for item 8]

Clerk Julia Kennedy

The agenda was varied to take items 4 and 5 [Report from the Director of Learning and Achievement and Final Learning & Achievement Performance Report 2009/10] before item 3 [Child Protection Policy].

			Action	By
1	Apologies for absence and declarations of interest	There were no apologies for absence. There were no declarations of interest.		
2	Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2010	The Minutes were agreed to be a true record and signed by the Chair. All items from the Minutes had been actioned. Governors discussed the Governor links with curriculum areas and asked the Clerk to provide a list of Governors and their links.	Clerk Clerk	

<p>3</p>	<p>L&A/01/10-11 Child Protection Policy: annual review of implementation and review of wider safeguarding arrangements [for approval]</p>	<p><i>Jackie Cannell joined the meeting for this item.</i></p> <p>The Corporation must ensure that the College has adequate Safeguarding, Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Policies and Procedures and that their implementation is monitored. The purpose of Jackie Cannell's paper was to update Governors on referrals under the policies. Copies of the policies were attached –the Safeguarding Policy was new and provided an over-arching approach. Jackie's role, positively endorsed by Anne Kent [Safeguarding Governor], includes ensuring that policies and procedures are reviewed in response to changing requirements, information is provided for staff, and a rolling programme of training is in place.</p> <p>Governors questions and comments included—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social networking: a group including IT and HR staff were reviewing this and focus groups had considered bullying and cyber bullying; use of the VLE is encouraged and the aim of helping learners to make informed choices was having a positive impact [endorsed by Dawn Fisher] • key areas for development: Jackie explained that new systems were in place to ensure all staff had regular training. <p>Jackie confirmed that there were procedures for dealing with issues that were less severe than an “allegation”.</p> <p>The Committee received the Annual Review of Implementation of the College's Safeguarding, Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policies and Procedures. The Committee noted that the College has an appropriate policies and procedures to deal with Child and Vulnerable Adult protection situations, noted the policy and procedure were being adequately implemented, and recommended the report to Corporation.</p>		
<p>4</p>	<p>L&A/02/10-11 Report from the Director of Learning and Achievement [for information]</p>	<p>The Director's report summarised the key issues from each paper being considered at the meeting. Section 1 provided an overview of the papers, and Section 2 was a curriculum development update. While success rates and teaching and learning continued to improve, there was a major challenge in improving attendance, and getting student questionnaires completed was an issue. Anne had made an early impact on focusing the curriculum for progression –and there were exciting examples of progression from Colleges including instances where students had become self-employed.</p> <p>The Committee received the Report from the Director of Learning and Achievement, which provided a useful over-view and the opportunity for the Committee to focus on any challenges.</p>		

<p>5</p>	<p>L&A/03/10-11 Final Learning and Achievement Performance Report for 2009/10 [for information]</p>	<p>The reports on performance in Learning & Achievement presented to the Committee at each meeting had been collated to provide a comprehensive report that enabled Governors to dispose of the termly reports.</p> <p>Governors questions and comments included—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether incorrect success rate data had been corrected and accepted by the SFA • strategies to improve attendance and their effectiveness: new initiatives included attendance tracker, learner progress review, publicising research that demonstrated the link between attendance and success rates, disseminating good practice across the College, and better systems and procedures • reasons for the variations in attendance rates between curriculum areas • whether there was a correlation of attendance and discipline • the importance of career goals in motivating good attendance. <p>Governors noted there was a need to improve the accuracy of attendance data as well as to improve attendance rates.</p> <p>The Committee received the Performance Report for 2009/10 and noted the high level of progress over the last two academic years shown on pages 4 and 5.</p> <p><i>Dawn Fisher, who was present to the end of item 5, left at 5.50 pm, and the Chair thanked her and Jamie Easton to their contribution to the discussion.</i></p>		
<p>6</p>	<p>L&A/04/10-11 Learning and Achievement Performance Report: Autumn Term 2010 Update [for approval] and Appendices</p>	<p>Chris Sherwin explained that a full analysis of success rates would be brought to the spring term meeting. Committee discussion focussed on success rates and Chris summarised the progress made. The results for advanced apprenticeships were less positive than in 08/09, with the recession and job losses making an impact. Governors noted that the SAR validation was being worked through and asked about—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • impact of funding policy changes • HE, and plans to increase HE provision • Hefce funding • reviving BTEC provision • the Students' Union. <p>Governors noted the potential for the Students' Union to be a more active force in the College, and the potential to have a sabbatical officer in the role of President.</p> <p>The Committee received, noted, and approved the Autumn Term update to the College Performance Report for 2010/11.</p>		

		The Committee recommended that the Corporation note the College has performed well against the 10/11 milestones of the relevant objectives from the Strategic Plan.		
7	L&A/05/10-11 Ofsted College Performance Report for 2008/9 and Framework for Excellence Scores for 2009/10 [for information]	<p>The paper covered the key features of college performance as viewed by Ofsted in the 2008/09 academic year and as reflected in the 2009/10 Framework for excellence scores. Although the data was historic, some elements such as gender balance and ethnicity remained current. Governors noted changes in the way Framework for Excellence scores have been reported.</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Ofsted College Performance Report for 2008/9 and Framework for Excellence Scores for 2009/10.</p>		
8	L&A/06/10-11 Proposals for revised curriculum offer for international students [for decision]	<p><i>Steve Caley attended for this item.</i></p> <p>The Committee was asked to endorse SMT's decision to introduce a limited A Level programme for International and EU students at full cost from April 2011. Steve acknowledged that Governors were being asked to revisit a programme that the College had withdrawn. However this was an opportunity to target relatively small numbers of high level students in Russia and the Far East with an intensive programme. Governors questions included—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent of the curriculum to be offered and whether it included Maths • the level of competition and who the competitors were • costs and risk • whether additional staff would be required • plans for student residences • whether there was sufficient classroom accommodation • opportunities for progression. <p>The Committee approved proposals for revised curriculum offer for international students.</p>		
9	L&A/07/10-11 A CRC entitlement curriculum for successful progression [for information]	<p>Anne's paper briefed the Committee on plans to revise the entitlement curriculum for full-time learners to develop students' abilities to progress successfully to their destination.</p> <p>Students attend CRC to attain a career or progress to university – qualification is the route rather than the outcome. The principle that underpinned the proposal was that a full-time learner's curriculum should include, in addition to their</p>		

		<p>planned qualification outcome, elements that prepare learners for their destination and help them aspire to achieve. Chris Sherwin and the academy heads had examined entitlement curriculum for successful progression and found that it was not consistent across the College. Anne now sought feedback from Governors.</p> <p>Governors were very positive in their response to “an exciting initiative that could provide a cogent banner overarching all that CRC does”. Governors asked about practical issues, use of mentors and work shadowing, staff time required, appeal to parents, relationship with ARU, and involving employers.</p> <p>The Committee endorsed a CRC Entitlement Curriculum for Successful Progression and noted that suggestions for a brand name were sought.</p>		
10	L&A/08/10-11 Learner Involvement Strategy: review of implementation [for approval]	<p>The paper provided information arising from the review of the Learner Involvement Strategy and outlined the actions taken to improve, in particular, arrangements for gathering student opinion and consulting with students on improvement plans.</p> <p>The Committee took the opportunity to ask Jamie Easton whether he considered there was sufficient learner consultation and noted that Jamie considered it depended on the context but that the overall student experience was positive.</p> <p>The Committee received, noted and approved the review of the Learner Involvement Strategy.</p>		
11	L&A/09/10-11 Managing Risks – Key Corporate Risk 1 [for approval]	<p>This paper provided a progress report on the management and mitigation of risks that relate to the Committee’s terms of reference. The net risks [after controls] were colour coded for severity.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the situation in relation to a surplus of post-16 places in the wider Cambridge area, including 3 new sixth forms. The SMT was increasingly concerned at the impact on CRC, which was reflected in Risk 1.2L.</p> <p>In this context the Chair of the Committee, Tony Cooper, indicated his intention to resign from the Corporation. Risk 1.2L was a red flag even after controls and he considered he could not remain in a situation where the activities of the College that he headed posed a significant risk to CRC. He suggested that the post-16 landscape in the region was at a tipping point as it had been predicated on an increased demography that was not forthcoming and, as a result, it had become very competitive.</p>		

		<p>Governors discussed whether the severity of the risk was accurate, given Corporation's role both in assessing the appetite for risk and their need to understand CRC's "feeder" schools. Governors noted that an opportunity to review risk is afforded by the Audit Committee, which has an over-view of risk register, and by Corporation, which is required to review risk management on an annual basis.</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Risk Register Review: Key Corporate Risks 1 and 2. The Committee recommended to the Corporation that risk was included as an agenda item at the January Away Day and each item rated red presented with KPIs attached –and that consideration of risk at the Away Day to include the attribution as set out in the Risk Register and the efficacy of the remedial measures.</p> <p><i>Anne Kent left the meeting at the end of this agenda item at 7.00 pm and David Adamson left shortly afterwards.</i></p>	Clerk	21 Jan 2011
12	L&A/10/10-11 Annual Report to the Corporation from the Learning and Achievement Committee [for approval]	<p>The Annual Report summarised for Corporation the progress made in meeting the 09/10 targets in the Strategic and Development Plan relating to teaching and learning, and confirms that the Committee met its responsibilities in the 2009/10 year.</p> <p>The Committee approved the Annual Report and recommended it to the Corporation.</p>	CS	2 Dec 2010
13	L&A/11/10-11 Good News Items regarding learner achievement [for information]	<p>This paper provided information on staff and students who have made exceptional or unusual achievements. Governors noted that the students concerned had received recognition through the Star Awards.</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Good News Items.</p>		
14	Evaluation of the meeting	<p>In order to evaluate the meeting and identify any changes necessary to maintain the effectiveness of the Committee, the Chair asked the following questions—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the agenda and papers clearly presented? • Was there time for sufficient debate and critical review of each item? Difficult considering content: Do members consider that they were able to participate fully? <p>Governors considered that the agenda and papers were clearly presented . They had not needed to refer to the Appendices to the Performance Report that were</p>		

