

SANDWELL COLLEGE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee
held on Wednesday 25th January 2017,
in room 6F/39, at Central Campus,
commencing at 4.30 p.m.

Present:-	Mrs. T. Hurst	(Independent)	(in the Chair)
	Ms. D. Gill	(Student)	
	Mr. K. Ellis	(Independent)	
	Mr. G. Pennington	(Principal)	(part of meeting)
	Mr. J. Tew	(Independent)	

Also in Attendance:-

Miss J. Berry	Corporation Secretary	
Mr. D. Holden	Vice-Principal	
Dr. M. Lamb	Assistant Principal and Director of Sixth Form	(part of meeting)
Ms. A. Llewellyn	Director for Adult, Community and Foundation Learning	
Ms. H. Shergill	Quality and Standards Manager	(part of meeting)
Mr. P. Smith	Careers, Students Services and Safeguarding Manager	(part of meeting)

L17.01 Welcome L17.01

The Chairman welcomed the Student Member to her first meeting of the Committee.

L17.02 Declarations of Interest L17.02

There were no declarations of interest.

L17.03 Apologies L17.03

Apologies were received from Ms. Sheridan, Assistant Principal – Curriculum and Student Services.

L17.04 Minutes of the Meeting of the Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee held on Wednesday 19th October 2016 L17.04

The minutes of the meeting of the Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee held on Wednesday 19th October 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be approved.

L17.05 Matters Arising L17.05

There were no matters arising.

The Chairman then asked that members consider agenda items 7, 15 and 12. These discussions are detailed below under minutes numbered L17.07, L17.15 and L17.12.

The Principal joined the meeting.

L17.06 College Self-Assessment Report 2015/16 and Quality Improvement Impact Statement L17.06

The Vice-Principal presented the draft College Self-Assessment Report 2015/16 and reminded members that performance against many aspects of the self-assessment had been reported to the Board of Governors and/or its committees through various reports.

Members considered the strengths and areas for improvement within the Summary of Judgements. In response to a query, the Vice-Principal confirmed that Governance should be included as a strength within Leadership and Management.

Members were reminded that 'Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare' was a new aspect of the Self-Assessment Report in line with the OfSTED Common Inspection Framework. A discussion took place during which a number of additional strengths were suggested for inclusion in this part of the report. In response to a query from the Student Member a discussion took place regarding work experience opportunities for learners and how these were organised.

RESOLVED: that, subject to a number of amendments, the College Self-Assessment Report 2015/16 be recommended to the Board of Governors for approval.

L17.07 Programme Standards Review – Safeguarding

L17.07

The Careers, Students Services and Safeguarding Manager had been invited to attend the meeting to make a presentation on the work of the College's Safeguarding Team. The Safeguarding Manager outlined the structure of the Team and the responsibilities of the designated safeguarding officers, together with the links that had been established with curriculum departments.

The safeguarding incidents that had occurred during 2015/16 were outlined, in comparison with those that had occurred in the first term of 2016/17.

Members were informed of the work that was undertaken with community partners including Sandwell MBC, the police and schools.

In response to a query, members were informed of the risk assessment processes that were undertaken when students joined the College. The College's safeguarding raising awareness and training sessions were outlined and it was noted that these were compulsory for all staff and students. Members were pleased to note that external speakers had made presentations to students on the implications and impact of various aspects of crime. Members asked that they be informed of future events.

The positive impact on learners of the College's approach to safeguarding was discussed.

The Chairman thanked the Safeguarding Manager for attending the meeting and for his interesting and informative presentation.

RESOLVED:

- a) that members of the Committee be informed of future events on the implications and impact of various aspects of crime.
- b) that the presentation be received.

The Safeguarding Manager left the meeting.

L17.08 Quality Improvement Plans:

L17.08

GCSE English and Maths / Business Studies

The Vice-Principal presented the Quality Improvement Plans for GCSE English and Maths and Business Studies, which the Committee wished to keep under review. The Vice-Principal informed members of initiatives that had been introduced to improve these areas of provision and the impact they had had to-date.

With regard to GCSE English and Maths members were pleased to be informed of the outcome of the November exam re-sits and were interested to learn of the streaming initiative that had been introduced. Changes within the staffing structure were explained, together with the developments and initiatives that had been introduced in vocational areas.

With regard to Business Studies members were informed of leadership and management changes that had been introduced and initiatives to ensure the sharing of good practice. Additional support mechanisms for students were outlined.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

L17.09 Outcome of Student Surveys L17.09

The Vice-Principal presented the outcome of a student induction survey that had taken place at the end of the first term 2016/17. The survey gained students' views on their early experiences at the College including the application and enrolment processes, induction, student support services and awareness raising activities e.g. safeguarding and Prevent.

A discussion took place and the Vice-Principal outlined initiatives that would be introduced to address areas for improvement identified by the survey.

The Student Member outlined her experiences of the application and enrolment process and suggested possible improvements.

The Principal suggested a number of additional aspects that could be included in the survey including student experiences in relation to initial advice and guidance. It was suggested that in future years trends and comparators should be included in the report.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

L17.10 External Validation 2016/17 – New Arrangements L17.10

The Vice-Principal informed members of changes that had been made to the ways in which external validation of curriculum areas would be undertaken during 2016/17. This had been discussed earlier in the meeting under agenda item 15.

It was noted that the external validation processes would also support the College's preparations for its next OfSTED inspection. A brief discussion then took place regarding preparations for the next inspection in relation to governance.

RESOLVED: that the verbal report be received.

L17.11 Key Performance Indicators and Forward Forecasting 'At a Glance' L17.11

The Vice-Principal presented the Key Performance Indicators report and outlined the College's current position against target in relation to learner numbers, apprenticeships and adult funding, together with applications compared to the previous two years and in-year retention for 2016/17.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

L17.12 Higher Education Update and Strategy L17.12

The Assistant Principal and Director of Sixth Form joined the meeting.

The Assistant Principal presented a report providing a summary of the College's higher education provision, its strategy for moving forward and its partnership arrangements with a university.

The strategy for expanding higher education provision was outlined and members were pleased to note that this would give students progression routes from Level 1 to higher education.

The advantages of the partnership arrangements particularly in terms of quality of provision, flexibility for students, affordability, employability, accessibility and delivery methods were explained in detail.

The Assistant Principal outlined the rationale for the qualifications that would be offered and it was emphasised that these related to the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership's strategic priorities and the skills needs in Sandwell and beyond. The estimated student numbers and income from 2017/18 to 2019/20 were outlined. The College was confident that there was a demand for the provision that was being developed.

The Chairman raised a number of queries with regard to the development of higher education provision and the Principal reminded members that this initiative was an integral part of the College's Strategic Plan and had been approved by the Board of Governors. The Chairman of the Board informed members that he had asked that this report be presented to the next meeting of the Board of Governors.

In response to a query, members were informed of the market analysis that had been undertaken and the entry requirements that had been set, which took into account accessibility and flexibility.

In response to a further query, the Vice-Principal explained the final steps of the approval process with the university.

A member emphasised that the higher education provision would provide a much needed progression route for the College's very successful 'A' level provision and would meet a significant need within the local community.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Higher Education Update report be presented to the next meeting of the Board of Governors.
- b) that the report be received.

The Chairman thanked the Assistant Principal for his attendance at the meeting. The Assistant Principal left the meeting.

L17.13 Inter-Faith Chaplaincy Update

L17.13

The Director for Adult, Community and Foundation Learning presented a report updating members on the work of the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Group. The membership and role of the Group was outlined, together with the ethical framework within which it operated and the activities it organised.

Members considered a revised Protocol that had been developed in relation to the Quiet Contemplation rooms within the College.

In response to a query, the Director explained how the use of the rooms was monitored and it was emphasised that the rooms were used by staff as well as students.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

- L17.14 Risk Management Report L17.14
- The Vice-Principal presented a risk management monitoring report relating to curriculum, quality, equality and diversity.
- RESOLVED: that the report be received.
- L17.15 Policies and Procedures L17.15
- i) Teaching and Learning Policy
- The Quality and Standards Manager joined the meeting.
- The Vice-Principal reminded members that at the previous meeting it had been agreed that a flowchart should be presented to members detailing the revised teaching and learning observation process in order that members could gain a greater understanding of its various elements.
- The Quality and Standards Manager presented three flowcharts illustrating the teaching and learning observation process in the week prior to the review, the review week and the post review week. Members were informed of three possible observation outcomes and the various elements of the development plans that were then implemented. The range of support and training available to staff was discussed.
- The Vice-Principal explained the revised external review aspect of the observation process that had been introduced for 2016/17, which was aimed at giving assurance that the process was accurate and evidence based.
- In response to a query, the Quality and Standards manager explained the ways in which both formal and ad-hoc feedback of students' experiences at the College was obtained.
- Members concluded that the teaching, learning and assessment observation process was very thorough and robust.
- The Chairman thanked the Quality and Standards Manager for attending the meeting and for her informative input to discussions.
- RESOLVED: that the report be received.
- The Quality and Standards Manager left the meeting.
- L17.16 Any Other Business L17.16
- There were no items of other business.
- L17.17 Determination of Confidential Items L17.17
- The Committee agreed that none of its discussions should be minuted confidentially.
- RESOLVED: that none of the Committee's discussions be minuted confidentially.

L17.18 Date of Next Meeting

L17.18

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee would take place on Wednesday 22nd March 2017, commencing at 4.30 p.m., at Central Campus.

The meeting terminated at 7.05 p.m.