



**WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held in the Board Room at the Derby Road site on Monday 20th April 2015 at 5.00pm

BOARD MEMBERS Diana Meale
PRESENT: Beverley Nita
 John Holford (acting Chair)
 Dame Asha Khemka

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
 Patricia Harman, Deputy Principal Teaching & Learning
 Elaine Martin, Director Quality and Performance
 Paul Rana, Head of Student Support
 Eleanor Taylor, Head of Higher Education & International
 Louise Knott, Director Communications, Marketing & Learner Engagement
 Amanda Jogela, Head of School: Lifestyle Academy

15.15 APPOINTMENT OF THE MEETING CHAIR

In the absence of Kate Allsop it was agreed that John Holford would chair the meeting.

AGREED: to approve John Holford as the Committee meeting Chair.

15.16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Acting Chair reminded those present to declare at the start of the meeting any interests in any items to be discussed. No interests were declared.

15.17 WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Kate Allsop and Rob Martlew.

15.18 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19TH JANUARY 2015

Members reviewed the minutes and were satisfied that they were a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

AGREED: to approve the contents of the meeting held on 29th January 2015.

ACTION by whom	DATE by when
Acting Chair	20.4.2015

Q: an example of governor questioning
CH: an example of governor challenge

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

There were no matters arising.

15.19 **ACTION PROGRESS REPORT**

Members reviewed the updated table and all were happy that matters were progressing as required.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

15.20 **PREVENT UPDATE**

The Director: Communication, Marketing and Learner Engagement introduced this item and drew members to her detailed written report which, all agreed was very comprehensive. A copy of the Action Plan was circulated as it had been omitted from the pack despatched. She confirmed that Appendix 1 is the college's response to the Prevent agenda.

Key points noted in the report were:

- Statutory guidance is likely to come into force in July 2015
- *Prevent* is a pro-active duty
- Any college concerns are to be referred to the local Channel Panel
- Statutory Guidance can be split into a number of headings – Partnership, Risk Assessment, Action plan, Staff Training, Welfare, Pastoral support and Prayer Rooms, Speakers and Events and Safety online.
- Within the FE sector, Ofsted will be expected to judge how well a college is meeting its obligations under the Act

In terms of the Policy presented for discussion, it was confirmed that this has been shared with the trade unions and they are happy with the content. The Director: Communication, Marketing and Learner Engagement confirmed that she had met with the local *Prevent* coordinator over Easter and he is satisfied that the package of documents proposed are robust.

Q The committee questioned the college risks and challenges in relation to the *Prevent* agenda. It was explained that there was a risk regarding staff knowledge and understanding. To mitigate this risk the college will expect and train staff to treat a *Prevent* concern in exactly the same way they would a Safeguarding concern. Also acknowledged was the risk/challenge to fully equipping staff to be able to deal with and manage classroom debate. Staff will need the right skills set to effectively manage and support appropriate discussions. It was confirmed that the college will also be responsible for partner activity too and there is a need to make sure they all have robust processes and procedures in place.

Q: an example of governor questioning

CH: an example of governor challenge

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

Members were advised that 337 members of staff have already undertaken some general 'awareness' training. It was explained that the college has offered Channel awareness training online. Once the training is completed a certificate is awarded and 337 members of staff have submitted these certificates to the HR department so far. It may be that there are more completed with certificates in the pipeline. The Clerk reminded that Governor *Prevent* training has been arranged for 14th May 2015.

The committee acknowledged that not all extremism was linked to Islam and agreed that this was a key message to staff. All agreed that it was important to not to fall into the mind set of thinking that 'something like extremism couldn't happen in Mansfield'.

CH In reviewing the report, members discussed the comments made at section 2.2 in relation to 'Speakers and Events'. The committee felt that there needed to be a careful balance between allowing freedom of speech and the processes proposed for managing the distribution of materials (page 117).
Q The committee questioned whether all student societies are registered with the Student Union? It was confirmed that, yes, usually they are. It was explained that the Student Union in an FE college is different to a university setting. Assurance was given that the policy proposed gives an appropriate mechanism for questioning and challenge.

Members discussed section 3 of the policy and agreed that the use of the word 'values' was correct but felt that 'British values' was perhaps a step too far. It was accepted that the college needs to take a very pragmatic approach and that what is important is diversity, tolerance etc and all of these values already sit within policies and processes in place for equality and diversity and safeguarding. It was accepted that there will always be difficult 'boundaries' in relation to these issues.

Q The committee questioned the use of the word '*Prevent*'. They felt that it was important to have mechanisms in place for actively promoting and encouraging debate and discussion. They asked that the senior team take this forward and ensure appropriate mechanisms are established. One suggestion was to link radicalisation discussions in with debate on core college values and how these are explored. The committee felt that the key issue is the promotion of 'values', whether they be 'British', 'college', 'human' etc. It was agreed that this needed to be embedded throughout all areas of the curriculum.

The Principal accepted that the college has an opportunity and responsibility to educate in the widest sense. Students need a platform for debate but indicated that this needs to be in a safe environment. It was acknowledged that the *Prevent* agenda/policy is one that has been handed down by government and the college therefore has a responsibility and obligation to respond.

Q: an example of governor questioning
CH: an example of governor challenge

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

The committee was happy that there had been careful and sensitive discussions regarding implementation. The committee asked the senior team to look to encourage student debate on the issue of values in an innovative way.

To monitor in the future it was agreed to:

- (i) Re visit the policy after 12 months of operation
- (ii) An update on *Prevent* activities/developments and any issues/referrals to be built into the regular E&D/Safeguarding reports presented to this committee and the Board

Dir: C,M&LE

April 2016

Dir:C,M&LE/
DP

Each
report

AGREED: to

- (i) Note the update, risk assessment and action plan provided, and
- (ii) Approve the *Prevent* Policy presented.

15.21 DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and drew members' attention to her written update. Key points noted:

- QAA review is scheduled for week commencing 8 June 2015. The review covers all HE courses irrespective of the university which is the validating body. The SED was uploaded to deadline together with significant supporting documentary evidence which will form the basis of the review.
- Mock Inspections – Nine mock inspections have been completed between November 2014 and March 2015; seven Schools of Learning, Employer Engagement and Student Support. There were lots of learning points following this process. A report was prepared following each inspection. In some areas the grades were very disappointing (para 3.5) and not where the college would want them to be which is a grade 2 or above. A real difference seems to be the shift in focus regarding English and maths. Teaching is clearly now not just about the observation grade. One area that performed really well was Foundation Studies. In Employer Engagement the team saw a different emphasis on English and maths and this may be as a result of the new CEF to be introduced in September. Some differences in approach were taken by different inspectors irrespective of the currency of Ofsted training.
- Ofsted College Inspection Results – The number of outstanding colleges has significantly declined. Influential factors as noted by Ofsted are set out in paragraph 4.2, a number of them are linked to English and maths.

Q In relation to the grades set out at paragraphs 3.5 and 3.8, the committee questioned where this would leave the college in relation to the next inspection anticipated.

Q: an example of governor questioning
CH: an example of governor challenge

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

CH They questioned how confident the college is and how can the Board be assured regarding internal judgements. The Deputy Principal confirmed that the mocks had made staff all aware of where the shifts in focus was, this will help the college to concentrate on areas of weakness and areas for development.

CH The committee all agreed that the possibility of a grade 3 was a concern and asked what plans were in place to address this and improve. The Deputy Principal confirmed that all areas of provision have an action plan in place to address issues identified. There have been some staff changes since the mocks and significant staff training to support improvements. It was acknowledged that from a statistical perspective there had to be some colleges who 'required improvement' but they did not want WNC to be judged as one of them. Whilst acknowledging that grades were important, the committee felt that they were only one part of the offer to students and that it was important to be mindful of the needs of the community that the college serves.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

15.22 QUALITY REPORT

The Director: Quality and Performance introduced her detailed report and drew some key information to members attention:

- Section 2 – a summary of the new measures of success and the impact on the college. A key change is the inclusion of functional skills (English and maths) when presenting headline data.
- Section 3 – in year retention. Full data analysis provided at appendix A-C.
- Section 4 – identifies where there are any particular areas of concern. Maths and English are included.
- Section 5 – provides a summary of learner withdrawals. On the basis of numbers and reasons.
- Section 6 – provides a summary of the lesson observation process for this year. These are the internal processes and judgements. Of 161 graded observations, 78% were graded as good or better. Anyone graded as a 3 or a 4 are being supported to improve. There has been an increased focus on using joint observations to moderate judgements. Section 6.9 summarises the external validation processes, this allows confidence in the internal judgements. Both developmental and graded observations have been undertaken in the year. The committee were reminded and acknowledged that teaching, learning and assessments is not just about observations and includes many other methods of performance assessment.
- Section 7 – summarises the support in place for improving teaching, learning and assessment.
- Section 9 – summarises off campus observations and support.

Q: an example of governor questioning

CH: an example of governor challenge

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

The college has worked hard this year to ensure partners take ownership of the observation process.

The college has a risk based approach to involvement in partner observations but completes a 100% moderation exercise of paperwork that comes into the QLP. Section 9.4 makes it clear that new partners in particular are subject to significant support. The results are starting to show a positive impact.

- Section 11 – this is a QIP update. The committee felt that good progress was being made within the context of the fact that there are a lot of areas to cover simultaneously. The committee acknowledged that there was a lot of detail included within the QIP and a balance had to be struck between the level of data available and key issues to be discussed. The committee suggested that the QIP report when presented at meetings could be supported by a ‘top 10 areas of concern’ summary. They asked if it was possible to look at thematic issues throughout the year. It was acknowledged that the information provided on pages 23 and 24 clearly highlight the areas for concern and that this should give confidence regarding the processes in place. All agreed that the QIP should continue to operate as a working document.

Dir Q&P

July 2015

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided

15.23 HIGHER EDUCATION UPDATE

The Head of HE and International introduced this item and provided a presentation with key matters to note:

- Timetable for the review
- The focus of the review
- The possible judgements
- Key actions taken in 14/15 – one key action was to improve the NSS response rate. Members were advised that the response rate is 85.4% which is significantly improved on the prior year and above target. It was noted that unfortunately the college will not obtain the survey results until after the QAA review and to address this, a separate internal survey has been completed.
- Target areas of good practice

Members were reminded that a full copy of the SED is available on the portal. Governors felt that it would also be useful to have this as an emailed reference document. The Clerk confirmed that this would be sent out.

Clerk

May 2015

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

15.24 DESTINATIONS REPORT

The Director: Quality and Performance introduced her detailed report.

Q: an example of governor questioning
CH: an example of governor challenge

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

Key points noted:

- The report covers college delivered classroom based learning
- The college has used a different process for collecting destination information this year. Learners have been contacted four months or longer after they have left college.
- Section 3 summarises the findings. The college has been able to identify 67% of known destinations; there are still 33% unknown which equates to 929 leavers. Table A provides a detailed breakdown of the responses.
- Section 3.5 – of those students who have gone into employment, further analysis is being undertaken to assess whether they gained employment in the same sector in which they studied at college. An initial review would indicate that there was a high proportion that did not, but this is something to investigate further.
- Section 5 summarises the Employer Responsive provision. This is an area where it is slightly easier to collect data.
- Section 6 summarises the HE position (based on UCAS entries). In terms of a review by gender it was explained that the statistics are influenced by subject areas. Section 6.5 shows the 10 most popular subject areas, it was confirmed that this information is used to guide the college curriculum offer. Page 77 details the top universities where students were placed. Section 6.7 shows Russell Group placements

As a general observation, the committee question why Sheffield Hallam University appeared to perform well in table 6.6 but not in 6.7. It was explained that this is influenced by particular courses and curriculum areas.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

15.24 LEARNER VOICE UPDATE – INDUCTION SURVEY

Paul Rana introduced this item and confirmed that:

- The learner induction/on-programme survey results show the college 2% above benchmark for the survey results nationally, with the college's overall scores being 90% across all questions.
- In terms of Schools of Learning, Construction and Building Services and Lifestyle Academy, overall scores were highest at 94%, whilst Academic Studies, Public Services and Sports Studies overall score was lowest at 86%.
- Table 2.2 summarises the overall responses.
- Table 2.3 breaks the responses down by Schools of Learning.
- The RAG rating shows 'green' which are the highest scores and 'red' which are the lowest.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

Q: an example of governor questioning
CH: an example of governor challenge

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

15.25 **SAFEGUARDING**

The Deputy Principal introduced her written report and drew a number of items specifically to members' attention:

- The number of potentially at risk vulnerable students has increased slightly.
- Q • Retention rates continue to be monitored closely and show an expected pattern. The committee questioned whether retention could be lower at the end of the year. It was confirmed that this could be the case but assurance was given that the college works incredibly hard with this group of students in very challenging circumstances. Lowest retention rates relate to those students with convictions, caution, reprimand or warning.
- Good progress is being made in relation to the Safeguarding Development Plan 14/15. A new section relating to radicalisation and extremism has been added and will be developed further.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

15.26 **AOB**

There were no items of additional business.

15.27 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk reminded Governors that the next scheduled meeting was Thursday 2nd July at 5.00pm.

Meeting closed at 7.05pm

Q: an example of governor questioning
CH: an example of governor challenge

Signed : _____ Chair

Date: