

QUALITY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: MONDAY 29 FEBRUARY 2016

PLACE: RM H007 MERTON CAMPUS

TIME: 5.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Yvette Stanley (Chair), Sue Rimmer (Principal), Karen Fullman, Cllr Brenda Fraser.

IN ATTENDANCE Chris Wright (Vice Principal Planning & Resources)
Jason Pemberton-Billing (VP Curriculum & Quality)
Bev Giarraputo (VP Curriculum & Learner Services)
Mary Segovia (Director of Human Resources)
Natalie Watt, Clerk to the Corporation

The Chair of the Committee congratulated Cllr Brenda Fraser on her appointment as Mayor of Merton Borough from May 2016.

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| <p>1. Apologies for Absence
Lucy Ashman</p> <p>2. Declarations of Interest
None</p> <p>3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 30 November 2015 were approved and signed by the Chair of the Committee.</p> <p>4. Matters arising from the minutes –<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noted that all items were covered on the agenda.</p> <p>5. Pay Award – Presented by the Principal.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Principal confirmed that the financial status of the College continued to be extremely challenging.• However it was noted that the sale of the Tower Block had now gone through.• The Principal informed the Committee that she was hoping to factor in a one off payment to staff into the next year's budget.• On-going consideration would continue to be given to building in a pay rise given that there had been none in recent years however this would be dependent on financial performance. Noted.• It was agreed that an update would come to the next meeting.</p> | <p>Principal</p> <p>Update RECEIVED.</p> |
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6. Human Resources Termly Update 2015/16– Presented by the Director of Human Resources & Workforce Development.

Items discussed:

- Members noted in particular the update on Business cases and employee relations.
- The Director of HR also confirmed that the joint system was now operational and on line facilities were being rolled out.
- Members congratulated the Director of HR on resolving all Employment Tribunal cases.
- Members noted the progress against College CPI's at paragraph 11.
- Members were also informed that Mazars Internal Audit Service had given the sickness absence system substantial assurance at the recent audit. Noted.
- Members noted the update on CPD activities and the mandatory training at paragraph 19. The Principal informed Members that teaching staff used Wednesday afternoons as development sessions. Noted.

Report RECEIVED.

7. Staff Survey Report – Presented by the Director of HR and Workforce Development.

Items discussed:

- Members were informed that the College had a 60.1% return rate which was considered good.
- Members discussed in some detail the strengths identified on page 3 and areas for improvement on page 4.
- Discussion followed on levels of satisfaction across all staffing areas and by type of contract. Noted that Merton and Tooting campuses were more positive overall.
- Members also considered the draft action plan attached for information at Appendix A. Members endorsed the proposed plan
- The Principal was invited to comment. Members were informed that given the challenging circumstances, the level of change and the lack of a pay rise in recent years that the Senior Management of the College were pleased at the levels of satisfaction that staff demonstrated in the survey. Noted.

Report RECEIVED.

8. South Thames College Quality Improvement Plan – Mid Year Review – Presented by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality.

Copies of the report were tabled for completeness.

Items discussed:

- The VP Curriculum and Quality confirmed to Members that significant progress had been made in year although it was too early to fully predict results.
- Members were informed that the main area of challenge was in ensuring that students had the necessary level of work placement within their courses.
- Recording of this area had significantly improved since the

previous year and students were more engaged in identifying the additional activities that they took part in.

- The Chair of the Committee invited the VP to highlight any key areas of concern.
- Member's attention was drawn to English and Maths provision.
- Members were informed that significant progress had been made since Christmas but that the area had proved more challenging than expected.
- Detailed discussion followed on how English and maths was delivered across curriculum areas.
- Members discussed the actions now in place and noted the consistent use of pro monitor across the curriculum.
- Members discussed the need for continual challenge in this area to ensure that it was robust in its delivery. Agreed.
- Members discussed the variations that existed from course to course and debate followed on how to continue to raise the profile of maths and English.
- Members expressed an interest in case study options to help provide context.
- Members requested that a campus break down across the range of delivery would be helpful and would enable them to drill down. Agreed.
- Members asked for more information on how vulnerable learners coped with the additional demands placed upon them on maths and English.
- Members were informed that rigorous monitoring of attendance is in place and even more so where vulnerable learners had been identified
- Members requested evidence to support this for the next meeting. Agreed.

VP C&Q

VP C&Q

Report RECEIVED

9. Teaching, Learning & Assessment Report – Presented by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality.

Items discussed:

- Members noted the more rigorous process that had been introduced and were reminded that a smaller team had now been established to ensure consistency across the College.
- Discussion followed on how outcomes were linked and fed into CPD for staff to have maximum impact.
- Members discussed areas of concern and debated how to triangulate the information provided.
- Following further discussion Members asked for a balanced scorecard for each school to be provided to enable them to triangulate outcomes. Agreed.
- It was agreed that indicators needed to be in place for the teams to measure themselves against.
- Members discussed the current system of a 5 day window and challenged how useful this was to staff.
- The Principal confirmed that this would be further reviewed for the coming year.
- Members discussed the impact of learning walks and how the

VP C&Q

information as collated and feedback to staff

- Members stated that there was a need to reassess where teachers focus was and to ensure that any feedback was responded to.
- The Principal informed Members that she had initiated a number of meet the teacher meetings with staff to gain direct feedback from groups of teaching staff on any issues they wish to raise on Teaching and Learning.

Report RECEIVED.

10. Maths and English – Presented by the VP Curriculum and Quality.

Items discussed:

- Members discussed at length the impact on students who had been told subsequent to enrolment that they needed to take up GCSE English and maths.
- Members expressed particular concerns at the impact on student's mental health in relation to the level of pressure and distress caused by late notification of re-marks (external to the College).
- The Principal provided feedback on recent national events that she had attended and informed Members that she had spoken with the Minister personally on this topic.
- Members noted the considerable challenge facing staff and the need to ensure that students were able to cope with the level of additional work required of them.
- Member acknowledged that predicted success rates for GCSE A-C and functional skills were below target at present and discussion followed on the steps being taken to improve this position.
- Members noted that level of challenge facing staff. The Principal confirmed that this had been a key focus area across the College. Members noted in particular the impact of the measures taken at paragraph 5.

Report RECEIVED.

11. HE Review Report – Presented by the VP Curriculum and Quality.

Items discussed:

- Members noted the comprehensive summary provided and the confirmation at paragraph 2 regarding the loss of the licence for tier 4 visas.
- Members debated the long term viability of the International provision and the Principal confirmed that this area would be under scrutiny and review in the coming academic year.
- Members discussed the need for re targeting of international work and HNC to appropriate markets.
- Members noted the current success rates for HE provision but reiterated the need for these to be improved.
- Members expressed concern over the HNC Business but noted that the QAA action plan had measures in place to address this and other qualifications that were of concern.
- Discussion took place over the viability of groups and class sizes.
- Members debated the pros and cons of combining group's mid-

year.

- Members were informed that 3 new courses were planned for September 2016.
- Members requested that a report be brought back to the Committee on the delivery of these courses in the Spring Term 2017. Noted.
- Members discussed at length the importance of progression and the need for progression routes to be well established.
- Members reviewed the success rates reported and requested that any courses with predicted success rates below 80% be reported back to the Committee at the next meeting. Agreed.
- Members discussed recruitment for the coming year and also requested that an update on early recruitments be brought to the next meeting. Agreed.
- Members were informed that joining UCAS had provided immediate benefits particularly for recruitment in Health and Social Care courses.
- Members provided feedback on recent learning walks that had been undertaken and debated how they could get assurance about courses being taught to the proper standard.
- The VP Curriculum and Quality provided an overview of what HE lessons would seek to deliver.
- It was agreed that a strategy needed to be developed that enable clear line of sight and monitoring that HE courses were being taught to the correct standard. It was agreed that the VP C&Q would take this forward and report back to the next Committee.
- Members volunteered examples of their experience at other institutions, Members endorsed the need for stretch and challenge to be re-emphasised to staff.

VP C&Q

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Report RECEIVED

12. Prevent & British Values – Presented by the Vice Principals Curriculum.

Items discussed:

- Members noted the comprehensive plan and confirmed that training had been received by all Members of the Corporation.
- Members were informed that the Internal Audit Service had completed an audit on PREVENT and had confirmed it was given substantial assurance.
- Members discussed the embedding of British Values and STC values (see page 8).
- The VP C&LS confirmed that all adult students were to have introductory sessions this term and that Prevent training was being built in to the daily learning experience.
- Members noted the highly visible poster campaign launched across the College. Members discussed the need to ensure that the topic was demystified for staff and students.
- The VP C&LS was able to provide assurance that this was all in hand and had been addressed from the start of this academic year.
- The VP also confirmed that Prevent and British Values had been cross referenced in key policies.

- Members were also informed that the focus of the Learner Conference was around British Values. Learner forums were also being asked to provide feedback on the topic.
- Members enquired about e safety practices and were informed that this was part of the Prevent strategy and an e policy for networking particularly in relation to vulnerable students was introduced as easy read versions.
- Members discussed the 'Dark Web' as an area of concern. The VP C&LS acknowledged that the College was aware of it (and had extensive security software in place on campuses) but that it was not explicitly addressed anywhere so as not to draw further attention to its existence. Noted.

Report RECEIVED.

13. Curriculum Planning 2016/17– Presented by the VP Planning & Resources.

Items discussed:

- Members were informed that the annual process of reviewing the course file was well underway and ahead of programme compared to the previous year.
- The Principal confirmed that excellent progress was being in made despite a number of significant additional projects i.e. merger and Strategic Area Reviews also being undertaken.
- The VP Planning and Resources acknowledged the need to combine course files with Lambeth however South Thames was also working on standalone options until the merger was formally agreed.
- Members noted page 4 and the summary of the delivery profile in particular.
- Members discussed the profile and were advised that the actuals for the current year were being finalised.
- A further moderation exercise would also be undertaken prior to the completion of the course profile.
- Members noted that the College was developing a rolling 4 year curriculum plan which was seeking to target growth strands and this was being formulated with the assistance of KPMG.
- Members queried when they would receive an update on enrolments and progression. The VP Planning and Resources confirmed that this would be provided at the next meeting.
- The VP Curriculum and Quality confirmed that academic validation of the course file being constructed would take place post Easter.
- Members noted that the 6th form would disappear from the course file at the end of this year.

Report RECEIVED.

VP P&R

14. Risk Management Update – HR & Curriculum and Quality.

- **This report was not available for the meeting.**

Information Only Items

- 15. **Learner Voice Activity Update Spring Term 2015/16**
Members noted that complaints had reduced and requested that further reports be broken down by age and campus. Agreed.
Report RECEIVED.

- 16. **Equality & Diversity Committee Minutes for:**
 - i)16 June 2015 – RECEIVED
 - ii)14 December 2015 – RECEIVED

- 17. **Safeguarding & Vulnerable Adults Mid-Year Update 2015/16–**
Presented by the VP Curriculum & Learner Services.
Items discussed:
 - Members discussed the continuously high level of safeguarding issues that were arising throughout the year.
 - The Chair of the Committee confirmed that she regularly meets with the VP Curriculum and Learner Services and that the high level of activity was of concern.**Report RECEIVED**

- 18. **Any Other Business**
 - **Feedback and update on Learning Walks for Governors.** -
Noted that feedback was emailed to the SLT and was discussed at Item 9. The Clerk confirmed that some Governors would be taking part in eth quick poll exercise due to commence w/c 21 March 2016.

- 19. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**
 - Tuesday 7 June 2016 at 6pm at the Merton Campus.

Signed By: _____

Date: _____