



**MINUTES OF:  
THE CORPORATION'S QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING  
3.00pm, WEDNESDAY 3 APRIL 2019**

<b>Members:</b>	Margaret Capon; *Michael Clarke; *Robert Lassefer; Vicky Prior; *Luke Rake (Principal); *Elaine Taylor (Chair); *James Tirrell; *Linda Wyatt
<b>In attendance:</b>	*Nicky Porter (Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Progression); Lawrence Ware (Director of Systems Integration); *Vanessa Gifford (Clerk)

ITEM NO.	DETAIL	ACTION
1.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  There were no declarations of interest <b>NOTED</b> .	
2.	<b>APOLOGIES</b>  Apologies for absence <b>RECEIVED</b> from Vicky Prior and Lawrence Ware.	
3.	<b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2019</b>  The Committee <b>AGREED</b> the minutes of 6 February 2019 as a true and accurate record, and <b>APPROVED</b> them for website publication.	
4.	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>  The matters arising were <b>NOTED</b> as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Careers Strategy had been presented to the last Corporation meeting and the College was in a strong position. The Audit had been completed and Action Plan in place. It was noted that a further audit would take place at the end of the year and the results presented to the October Corporation meeting.</li> <li>• The Principal advised that the Equine data had been within the report but presented with the Agriculture Department data. The data had not been circulated but the Principal would update the Committee later on the Agenda.</li> <li>• The Assistant Principal (Student Experience &amp; Progression) advised that she was working on collating information on jobs for the Enrichment Programme.</li> <li>• The Principal advised that there was no gender difference with the results of the Staff Survey.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NP</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>NP</b></p>

5.

## FE PERFORMANCE REPORTS 2018/19

The Principal circulated the report and talked the Committee through the narrative. The Principal advised that he was looking into a number of processes and systems and hoped that the streamlining would be in place for the start of the new Deputy Principal (Learning & Progression). The Principal had held two formal meetings with managers and further 1:1's. The following points were **NOTED** from the report:

### Recruitment

- 16-18 Student applications were currently 14% up overall on the previous year and looking very healthy. It was noted that the data included Level 3 returning students.
- New business was up 15%.
- The graph showing the split of new applications per department and highlighted the following:
  - \* Agriculture was 11% up for new business however there was a decline overall of -8%. This was due to the managed approach for two year courses.
  - \* An exception to growth was the Equine Department despite the team's best efforts. The Principal advised that there was stiff competition from other colleges and this would be monitored.
  - \* Horticulture applications included Construction, which was the growth area.

As a whole the Principal considered that recruitment for 2019/20 was encouraging, and put it down to increased reputation and effective marketing, as well as;

- a) The College being a credible choice to 6<sup>th</sup> Form
- b) Improved management of the period between application and enrolment had improved by keeping the students interested with invites to Open Day, information postcards, summer school and taster days. The Principal acknowledged that there was more to do and advised that an online shop would be available as part of the new website. The first phase would enable kit to be purchased, with the second phase being the introduction of online applications for courses, which would be available in around 6-9 months.

### Retention

- It was noted that the current Retention figure was 88.4%, which was below last year's figure of 92%. The Principal advised that there was no uniform reason for this but there had been a spate of withdrawals post-Christmas. Since picking up academic management he was strengthening the withdrawal process as senior intervention was not as strong as it should have been. He confirmed that he was now the only person who could sign off a withdrawal, and he expected all avenues to have been pursued, detailed data captured, with no further actions possible, before a student was withdrawn. The Principal fore-warned the Committee that the current retention would impact the quality of data and finances at the end of the year.
- Appendix 1 was noted and the Principal confirmed that 'Other Reasons' stated on a withdrawal would be interrogated further. Concerns were expressed regarding the increasing number of withdrawals due to mental health issues. The Committee discussed whether there was any way that this could be mitigated and if anything

could be actioned, and the conclusion was there should be no changes because students had to be prepared and ready for work to a required standard that was expected by employers.

- The Committee discussed how resilience could be created as the Principal considered that around 10% of students were not resilient or ready for the world of employment.

It was noted that there was a 'Mind Matters' programme to assist staff on resilience and counsellors in place with the welfare team for students to access. The Library Resource Centre was the focal point for students, and ways to make information more transparent were being investigated, however there was an increasing number of students with anxiety issues. Members suggested that support mechanisms were very visible during the recent visit to Strode College and the Principal advised that he was encouraging the display of posters on walls and suggested that members tested this during the tour set up for the next Corporation meeting. It was noted that if parents were involved in any issues they were generally resolved, however many students requested that parents were not contacted so it was very difficult. It was noted that a Parent Portal was being developed as part of the monitoring system.

It was acknowledged that the College's Core Values were Inspire; Challenge; Care, however it was agreed that students also required resilience.

#### **Attendance**

- The Principal advised that attendance was reasonably good, and SMT was scrutinising the data in more detail to enable trends.
- However, the Principal advised caution with some of the data as the efficiency of college systems did not assist full scrutiny, but as the Committee was aware all college systems were currently being streamlined and integrated.
- There appeared to be a declining trend in attendance and the data was currently being disaggregated by department to give a further level of scrutiny.
- The Principal advised that he was monitoring registers to ensure rigour and there were some issues with the default settings of systems which were being resolved.
- The Committee noted that attendance for English and maths was good, and HE was similar to the previous year.

#### **Progress**

- The Principal advised that he was challenging the Academy Managers (AM) on progress and tracking of students and there were varying forms of competency with inconsistencies in rigour.
- Tracking was now being shared at all AM meetings which highlighted that students were making good progress in learning, but this may not translate into positive results for examinations.
- Progress monitoring would be assisted by the introduction of a single system which was being developed.
- The Principal advised that the College had struggled with Value Added and it would be a target for the new Deputy Principal (Learning & Progression).

#### **Enrichment**

- The Committee was pleased to note the wide range of enrichment activities and the Principal advised that success would be celebrated in

	<p>due course.</p> <p>It was agreed that the current scrutiny of College data was a firm foundation for the new Deputy Principal (Learning &amp; Progression) when he commenced, which would assist progress in many areas without influencing his judgement.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>HE PERFORMANCE REPORTS 2018/19</b></p> <p>The Higher Education Update was <b>NOTED</b>, and the following points made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee noted that recruitment was acceptable but not growing.</li> <li>• The Principal advised that there were ongoing discussions with other partners regarding improving HE provision around Dorset.</li> <li>• The issues around staffing and planning in HE had been a long legacy, with staff having to cover and make many site visits which took them away from the College. The Principal had assisted with resolving some recent complaints to ensure that appropriate mitigation was in place. He advised he would be monitoring the situation closely for 2019/20 to ensure that timetabling was appropriate.</li> <li>• The Principal advised that the Head of HE was thorough and had resolved a couple of outstanding issues with the OFS application.</li> <li>• The National Student Survey was currently ongoing with a 64.71% response rate, and the Head of HE was encouraged to persuade students to participate. It was suggested that the timing of surveys should be considered.</li> <li>• The HE Link Governor advised that mental health issues were occurring in HE as well as FE.</li> <li>• HE attendance was acceptable and could have been affected by the staffing issues but the Principal hoped that this would now start to improve.</li> <li>• The Principal remained hopeful that the two new programmes would still run despite low numbers. He understood that students were interested in the FdSc Applied Agriculture Science programme but were hesitant to enrol until the programme was confirmed as running. The Principal had given his personal assurance that this programme would run to encourage students to enrol.</li> </ul> <p>The Coastal Countryside and Conservation programme had received a small number of applications and the Principal suggested that this programme could be combined with another programme to ensure its feasibility if necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee requested that all complaints/compliments were included within the report that was presented to the Committee.</li> <li>• The Committee's attention was drawn to the Access and Participation Plan 2020/21 and the TEF which were two key documents for the Strategic Plan. It was agreed to include actions in the Work Programme 2020/21 which would be considered at the next meeting.</li> <li>• The Principal advised that the current TEF 'Bronze' award was the highest the College could achieve with its current number of students. It was noted that there was debate amongst the university sector around this grading and that a further award process was being reviewed. The Principal advised that there were stringent guidelines for utilising funding and the Deputy Principal (Finance &amp; Corporate Services) was monitoring.</li> <li>• It was agreed that the Corporation would be required to scrutinise HE at the same level as FE and would require further input as guidelines were published.</li> </ul>	<p>LR</p> <p>VG</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal suggested that the current Strategic Plan had been in place for 18 months and at the recent Strategy Day there had been a suggestion that the KPI's should be reviewed. It was agreed that the Q&amp;S KPI's were useful, although the profile of HE within the whole Strategic Plan was low. Following discussion it was agreed that now that the OfS was in place, it would be refreshed. The Principal agreed that once the new Deputy Principal (Learning &amp; Performance) was in place they would review the KPI's in the Autumn Term alongside the SAR and present recommendations to the Committee for Corporation consideration in December, with the inclusion of HE and Apprenticeships so that they featured more explicitly.</li> <li>• The Committee questioned the percentage of applications that converted into enrolments and the Principal agreed to present a paper to the next meeting.</li> <li>• It was agreed that a strategy and vision for college size and course options would be required for the future, especially with the growth at the Dorset Studio School. More students would be progressing onto Level 3 and the College had to be prepared. The Principal acknowledged that it was hard to retain 18 year olds into HE, as they looked for new experiences. The capacity to grow would have to be considered with partnerships being key, and it was agreed that provision would be reviewed to inform the Committee in due course.</li> </ul>	<p>LR</p> <p>LR</p>
7.	<p><b>APPRENTICESHIPS PERFORMANCE REPORT 2018/19</b></p> <p>The Apprenticeship Performance Report 2018/19 was <b>NOTED</b>, with the following points made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal reported that provision had stabilised since the termination of low quality provision, although there would be some legacy issues.</li> <li>• Numbers were starting to increase, including levy provision which was encouraging.</li> <li>• The consequences of the on-going national funding issues had been a £140K deficit against the budget for Apprenticeships. The Principal agreed to check where the loss had been, in 16-18 or Adult apprentices.</li> <li>• The Principal acknowledged that this had been a challenging area but he continued to network with relevant organisations. He had recently met with the Chief Executive of the new Dorset Council who wanted to ensure that funds were spent locally and there may be further growth available in the future.</li> <li>• The Principal advised that SMT was investigating higher level apprenticeships as there were indications that this provision was increasing and the Principal agreed to keep the Corporation informed.</li> <li>• It was noted that Apprenticeships were now being managed within departments which appeared to be working well, with rigour and consistency being in place centrally. It was agreed that whilst external changes were difficult to manage, internal needs could be adapted accordingly.</li> <li>• The Principal confirmed that Apprenticeships continued to be monitored for quality, as well as financially.</li> </ul>	<p>LR</p>
8.	<p><b>SAFEGUARDING</b></p> <p>The Principal reported that Safeguarding continued to be a prime issue with a range of on-going cases. He confirmed that everything was in hand and not of a strategic nature and considered that the increased referrals were due to a</p>	

	<p>more robust reporting system rather than any decline.</p> <p>The Committee questioned the Safeguarding complaint within the Complaints report and the Principal advised members of the nature of the issue. He confirmed that the Policy on Visitors Conduct around the estate was being reviewed. It was noted that schools received statutory guidance on this issue but the College was a private estate with its own wide-ranging issues. Going forward the policy would be referred to as part of the enrolment process to ensure that students were aware of the required standards of behaviour, including the robust action for any misuse of illegal substances. It was noted that this was also fully integrated in the disciplinary process which sent out clear messages to students.</p>	
9.	<p><b>SYSTEMS UPDATE REPORT</b></p> <p>The Committee acknowledged that there had been a comprehensive discussion on this issue at the previous meeting and the Principal advised that the Director of Systems Integration was now receiving an increasing number of further issues to resolve, which was self-financing his role.</p> <p>It was noted that training on the enhanced system was being carried out that day, with timetabling now being line managed by the Director of Systems Integration to ensure full communication.</p> <p>The Committee was encouraged with progress and thanked the Director of Systems Integration for his work.</p>	
10.	<p><b>COMPLAINTS/COMPLIMENTS UPDATE 2018/19</b></p> <p><b>Complaints</b> The Complaints Report was <b>NOTED</b>, and the Principal assured the Committee that complaints were dealt with thoroughly and robustly.</p> <p><b>Compliments</b> The Compliments Report was <b>NOTED</b>, acknowledging that compliments were difficult to capture especially with the increased use of social media.</p>	
11.	<p><b>EQUALITY &amp; DIVERSITY COMMITTEE (E&amp;D)</b></p> <p>The minutes of the E&amp;D Committee of 14 February 2019 were <b>NOTED</b>, and the following points made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal reported that the Gender Pay Gap Report had been completed and would be presented to the next Corporation meeting. He advised that there was an improved position but it was difficult to resolve and was a typical picture of landbased colleges, although some colleges would have some activity outsourced eg catering and cleaning. It was noted that median pay for the College had increased by £2K. The Committee noted that all shortlisting was carried out 'blind' however the College was committed to appointing the best candidate for any job. The Principal advised that he was investigating other ways to assist, for instance flexible working and the recent introduction of a Reservists Policy. He added that the number of applicants for any role was encouraging.</li> <li>• Many E&amp;D events were being introduced.</li> <li>• Members questioned whether there was an increase in stress related absences amongst staff and the Principal advised that the data related</li> </ul>	LR

	to a small number of staff who were being supported in an appropriate way.	
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>RISK MANAGEMENT – ENTRIES FOR THE RISK REGISTER</b></p> <p>The following risks were identified by the Committee for consideration, with all further risks assigned to the Committee being considered as having the appropriate mitigating factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was suggested there was limited mention of HE within the Risk Register and it was agreed to refer to the HE QAA within Risk No 6 and include a measure for the Corporation.</li> <li>• It was also suggested that the Board Assurance Framework be checked for the inclusion of HE.</li> <li>• Risk 12 relating to Mental Health issues – it was agreed to refer to the HE SUA project.</li> </ul>	<b>LR</b>
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>The following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee questioned whether the College was responding to the current Post 16 Review. The Principal advised that he was awaiting a response by Landex, and he would then consider an individual response.</li> <li>• The Principal reported that the Dorset Studio School had received in excess of 100 applications for entry into Years 7 and 8 from September 2019. He suggested there was a risk that such rapid growth would destabilise other provision and he would be watching and managing carefully. There would also be further demands on catering at the top end of the campus which was already stretched. The Principal was keen not to create expectations that could not be met but the progression of these students would be interesting, as the KS3 proposition at the DSS was very different to any other local school. The Principal would also keep the LEP informed of progress should any opportunities occur.</li> </ul>	
<b>14.</b>	<p><b>2018/19 MEETINGS</b></p> <p>The following dates were <b>NOTED</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 June 2019</li> </ul>	
	<i>The meeting closed at 5.00pm with no further business.</i>	

Chair.....Dated.....