

# THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF CURRICULUM PLANNING MEETING – 10.06.2024

**PRESENT:** P Lynn (CG and Chair), J Castor (CG), R Davies (CG), M Lamb (CG), Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Executive), D Still (Staff Governor), S Lane (CG), A Hanif (CO), A Pajura-Jaszczak (Staff Governor), L Woods (CG).

**OFFICERS:** A Adamson (VP), J Barwell (AP), P Blewitt (AP), P Donnelley (AD), Z Foster (Clerk), M Gardiner (AD), R Gray (AP), S Marshall (VP), T Pierce (Group Dir. TLA), B Robinson (DP), O Rodley (VP), P Stone (Dir. of HE), M Telling (Group Business Development Dir), A Waller Amos (Exec. Dir Marketing), P Watt (AP), C Yule (AP).

**IN ATTENDANCE FOR RELEVANT ITEM:** S Beesley (AD), J Cooke (AD), R D'Souza (AD), M Emery (AD), M Griffiths, M Hall (AD), A Jones (AD), F Kempton (AD), D Longmore (AD), N Loughran (AD), T McNicholas (AD), D Payne (AD), R Stainthorpe (AD), A Stevenson (AD), L Summerside (AD), S Tindall (AD), J Tyzack (AD), C Weldon (AD), B Williamson (AD), K Woodland (AD).

**Key:** CG – College Governor, CO – Co-opted Governor, DP – Deputy Principal, VP – Vice Principal, AP – Assistant Principal, AD – Associate Director.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

R Anderson (CG), I Anwar (CG), S Brown (CO), D Budd (CO), C Cannon (CO), M Laidler (CO), D Lusardi (CG), M McClintock (CG), M Russell (VP), S Shepherd (CO), J Tait (CG), I Wright (CG).

2. **Declarations of Interest** – D Still in respect of the Engineering Department update.

### 3. Introduction to Curriculum Setting Process

Z Lewis and B Robinson outlined the agenda and format, which would concentrate on giving a high level sector trend based update from each department. Updates would include an overview of the faculty income and contribution, an explanation of departmental curriculum changes for 2024-25 in response to employers and stakeholders and an analysis/update on how the changes were meeting local and national skills needs.

### 4. Department Presentations

**4.1 A Levels – C Yule and R Stainthorpe** gave background detail to the budget shown including the high staffing costs and overall contribution of 40%.

The make-up of the provision was also outlined (A Level; A Level equivalents, and Extended Diplomas for 16-18 and two Access to HE courses for Adults).

The key areas of focus included: the introduction of employer forums; to grow the relationship further with Teesside University e.g. the use of the Science BIOS super labs; and the continuing path to develop students more widely with a focus on the softer skills required by HE progression and employment (through Thrive and curriculum content).

Key changes for 2024-25 were outlined in respect of curriculum reform changes (Applied Science, Human Biology and Psychology), new Access Awarding Body, and reintroduction of Core Maths. It was noted that T Level Science would not run due to recruitment challenges for a biology specialist.

Future opportunities and challenges included: recruitment, retention and retirement, alternative academic qualifications (and possible pause depending upon election results); the exciting approval of Medical Science for 2025, the possible impact of Eton; and introduction of T Level Food Science in response to the local jobs market.

Governor questions and discussion included: food technology recruitment in the local economy and potential placement issues; impact of curriculum reforms in Mix It Up programme particularly in relation to reduction of student choice and resulting exclusion of some learners due to the higher GCSE expectations for T Levels; the value of the addition of the new Medical Science programme; how the student offer was being articulated for 2025 in the midst of the current landscape; alternative ways of sourcing biology specialists (including 'grow own'); Eton progress; and the College offer in relation to other local providers.

**4.2 Health Care/Business Education/Childcare** – J Barwell gave a general overview of the Department in respect of the budget highlighting the 16-18 income as the largest part of the faculty and of the 40% contribution.

L Summerville detailed the key changes for the **Health and Social Care** department including: curriculum reform impact (depending on election outcomes); the introduction of Foundation T Level programmes; distance learning

for Access to HE; enhanced adult curriculum Level 4 (Diploma in Social Care) and L1 provision for Health and Social Care; and the enhancement of teaching and learning with the new immersive technology and Health and Social Care Academy. The development of the HE curriculum and numbers was a key area of future growth and upskilling of staff (including with the new facilities) being a key development focus area, particularly within a tight recruitment and retention market.

The Health and Social Care Academy (Health Connect) initiative with local employers was also described fully.

**Business and Professional** – A Stevenson detailed the key changes in the curriculum for 2024-5 including: the Introduction to T Level Foundation programme; T Level in Accounting; changes to the second year of the Leadership and Management T Level; digital (Excel specifically) developments in response to the LSIP and employers; and project based learning to further enhance transferable professional communication skills. A number of developments were highlighted including: upskilling staff within Professional Services; further exploration of partnerships (e.g. NHS); development of the Business Hub which included employer led projects and development of softer skills and CPD for staff.

**Childcare and Education** – R D'Souza detailed the key changes in relation to Curriculum reform; Foundation T Level programmes; enhanced skills sessions across the programmes; and developments in the Adult curriculum (in response to government changes). Growth and development opportunities for the forthcoming year included: development of the HE curriculum (internal progression and greater employer engagement); curriculum staff delivery of Maths; develop relationships with LA and Academy Trust Early Years staff; and upskilling of all staff and the Early Years team.

**Apprenticeships** – D Longmore gave an update on key changes including: the new Schools and Marketing and Recruitment consultant who would seek to develop expansion further north in the region with open days and careers events already planned; high end point assessment (EPA) costs for Dental Nursing and Finance Assistant qualifications, specifically the independent assessment of signing off apprenticeships and College involvement with a pilot study (Project S) relating to this; and bespoke offers in relation to standalone accountancy and management units.

Growth and development opportunities included: growth of Dental Nurse programme and opportunities to fill in gaps in dentistry employment (supporting the LSIP in relation to Healthcare); uplift for funding bands for Finance and Dentistry; reintroduction of Level 2 Business Administrator during the course of 2024-25 to fill demand; and the new L3 Early Years Educator Standard (due to government changes in childcare funding).

The costs associated with end point assessments was discussed by Governors.

More widely, governors discussed the monitoring of the effectiveness of GCSE staffing (who would still be part of the GCSE team); and clarification on Social Care unit developments to fit the wider skills set required for the roles.

#### **4.3 Hair and Beauty/Catering and Hospitality/Sport, Travel and Public Services/Visual and Performing Arts/Digital** – P Watt gave an overview of the faculty and its five departments detailing the budgets for each and the cash contribution highlighting the lower weighting of many of the courses which affects the ratios.

**Service Industries** – S Beesley detailed the curriculum changes put in place for 2024-25 which aligned to both megatrends and employer feedback on technical and soft skills. These included: new L2 barbering; specialist units e.g. nail technician; and general customer and reception skills. There would also be likely reforms for hair and beauty coming through.

**Sports, Travel and Public Services** – J Tyzack highlighted the mega trends for the department in relation to technology/AI (sports), travel (Eastern Europe and South Asia market), Public Services (with the PCEP as an alternative to degree for entry into the police), and softer skills required by the travel industry and how the College was responding both in relation to collaborative work with employers (such as Tees Active and Cleveland Police).

She then outlined the changes and challenges for 2024-25 which included: some restructuring of assessment methods which involved some role play activities with employers; some staff retention and increasing employer partnerships.

**Visual and Performing Arts** – B Williamson detailed the megatrends for the department which included: sustainability in fashion, TV and computer games acting and social media. Employer feedback, as from other faculties, involved development of softer skills such as confidence building, in addition to technical skills.

Whilst the department remained stable in relation to courses for this year, there were additions to units to encompass video workshops; outdoor performance, YouTube auditions and the department was also seeking to strengthen employer involvement.

**Digital** – M Griffiths outlined the main mega trends of AI, data science, data management, social media management and immersive technologies within games. Feedback from employers sought general skills of being able to learn,

develop and adapt as central due to the rapidity of change within the sector so the department was developing the research skills of students to accommodate this. In addition, there were some curriculum changes for 2024-25 which included the redevelopment of the Foundation degree and top up (with the OU) on cyber security and digital forensics, T Level Media Broadcast and Production, and Adobe Certification qualifications.

**Digital and Service Industries Apprenticeships** – T McNicholas gave a comprehensive update in relation to key changes to the 2024-25 curriculum including: AV Foundation degree (subject to OU approval); Multichannel Marketer L 3 update; progression pathway development with Senior Production Chef L3; Digital Marketer Bootcamps and the work of the new Marketing and Recruitment consultant. Opportunities which were being developed included: online delivery in digital; increasing digital apprenticeships in the North; and a variety of exhibitions and Tech Live events both local and national.

Governors questions and discussion included: difficulties keeping graduates in the leisure industry and possible reasons why they are leaving; detail of the PCEP programme (post L3); software engineer qualifications including a foundation degree (which would be evening based to fit in with employment); detail of the recent Proto visit and ways students could use the facility; softer skills development for students; and potential ways of developing northern links and difficulties of expanding into some markets.

#### **4.4 Adult and Community Learning** – R Gray gave an overview of the faculty and departments generally and in relation to budget and contribution rates.

Comprehensive detail was given in relation to meeting local needs and of the benefits for the adult provision being in 2QS and in 2026 of the move to Russell Street.

Changes within the faculty for the new academic year included: STEPS for lower level numbers (including NEETs) and STEPS for ESOL learners which included a summer transition course; ESOL for work pilot funded by TVCA ; basic IT skills and BELP/Adult retrain evening provision.

There were also a range of opportunities including bootcamps (Project S/TVCA), distance learning and an increased delivery for Multiply. As the faculty was highly responsive to employers there could also be further in year additions to accommodate local needs.

Z Lewis outlined the early stage discussions in relation to a possible opportunity to provide vocational provision with Middlesbrough Council in relation to 14-16 school refusers/excluded students.

#### **4.5 Construction/Engineering and TTE** – P Blewitt outlined the overall faculty budget headline figures including a significant contribution percentage of 57% (as most courses were highly weighted), variations in pay, and high non pay costs. He then detailed the 5 individual departments income and contribution.

The 2024-25 areas of focus were highlighted including: improvements to health, safety, environment and safeguarding performance; organizational capability development, TTE set up on the new site and facilities development of it and ensuring the maintenance and growth of the strong reputation with industry partners.

**Construction** – M Emery detailed the key changes for the curriculum 2024-25 drawing particular attention to: planning in relation to curriculum reforms and potential removal of some L3 programmes; the introduction of Foundation T Level programmes; increasing T Level numbers; retrofit qualifications (supporting the LSIP); DIY Home Improvement evening class; staff training and community and charity projects. Areas of opportunity included: growing the retrofit offer and a focus on staffing (development, and continuity).

**Engineering** (Mechanical, Mechatronic and Process) – D Payne highlighted the main area of focus – the full integration of TTE staff and courses into the STEM centre. In addition, the redesign of the T Level Foundation course; workshop alteration and the move to all learners being enrolled on a two year programme from September with the end of the Level 3 BTEC qualifications. Of particular note in relation to opportunities was the introduction of 30 Engineering Scholarships.

**TTE Engineering** (Electrical, Instrumentation and Renewable Energy) – J Cooke also drew attention to the integration of staff – STEM teaching staff into the TTE new build. Also highlighted was the introduction of vocational trade training into the first year (previously having only been in the second) and the reasons for this; and the replacement of L2 wind delivery with L2 Renewable Energy. Developments focused on staff integration, succession planning and ensuring the TTE brand remained strong in the community with the shift to the main site. The department was also in the process of further developing industry links for work experience with local businesses.

**Engineering** (Motor Vehicle, Welding and Full Cost) – A Jones drew out some of the key changes from the presentation including: the large number of changes to the curriculum; the addition of a dedicated Thrive tutor for MV and welding; and the development of the workshop for EV over the summer.

**Apprenticeships** – M Hall outlined the new standard for Process Industry Manufacturing Technician and informed governors of the involvement in Project S (as outlined earlier as a pilot to test out simplifying end point assessments) for Carpentry and Joinery. There was also a focus on structure and staffing to improve quality and performance. Opportunities included two intakes for domestic plumbing and heating technician courses with further potential for growth.

D Payne and J Hall outlined how TTE and STEM had delivered L3 up to this point and how this was being developed for September (which had varied between the two previously) which would better meet the needs of employers. There would now be three options for students with the IAG being central to ensuring students made the right options with flexibility to change options within the first six weeks. There would also be tailored CPD for the staff involved with CTLs heavily involved in the process.

Governor questions and discussion included: consideration of the T Level content satisfying the needs of employers and how the College determined which specialisms to offer in light of this whilst still protecting student choice; associated apprenticeship offers which often filled employer need gaps; industry work placements (availability and number completed); the importance of ensuring students and parents understand the IAG and what was available/best for them; discussion on the faculty's ability to flip pathways if appropriate for employers/students (as there was accreditation for every T Level pathway); HE information and figures; and the pressure of end of year assessment.

#### Additional update on **Inclusive Learning**

B Robinson reminded governors that the focus for the Curriculum Planning was based on employer needs therefore Inclusive Learning had not been included in the formal presentations.

A Adamson gave a verbal update and outlined the main focuses for next year for each of the areas which constituted the faculty: ESOL; Preparing for Adulthood; supported Internships and Vocational Steps. The challenges were in relation to safeguarding, welfare, emotional support, and behaviour support due to the often difficult circumstances of the students. She detailed the process of transition into the main College after year one for many of the students and the development of the wraparound care offered. Finally, she highlighted the growth of the numbers and the benefit which has been realized by having a dedicated department.

## 4.6 Summary

Z Lewis and B Robinson sought feedback on the change focused approach used for the session this year. Governors considered the format very good, informative, and helpful with staff being energetic, involved and very positive. It was **agreed** to maintain this format for the 2025 session.

**Action** - R Davies asked for a 10 minute slot at the Strategic Planning Day on 1 October to update Governors on how Engineering/TTE was bedding in.

P Lynn thanked everyone who had contributed to the session and asked Faculty Leads to cascade the thanks through to the Departments.

## 5. Dates of Next Meetings

5.1 Monday 01 July 2024 at 2pm with Governing Body joining from 4.45pm to hear Recommendations

5.2 Thursday 11 July 2024 at 5pm – Governing Body (Ordinary meeting)

## 6. Any other Business

- a) Presentations would be shared after the meeting through Board Intelligence and the Governors' SharePoint site

*The meeting closed at 8pm*