

# THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE UPDATE – 26.05.2020

**PRESENT:** A Coleman-Cooke (CG and Chair), C Cooney (CG), M Gaze (CG), M Laidler (CG), Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Executive), M McClintock (EM), D Still (Staff Governor).

**OFFICERS:** J Chance (VP), G Cumiskey (DP), G Duffy-McGhie (DOP), Z Foster (Clerk).

**Key:** CG – College Governor, SG – Student Governor, EM – External Member, DP – Deputy Principal, VP – Vice Principal, AP – Assistant Principal.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

S Lane (CG), A Stephenson (EM), M Laidler (CG) from 10.15am, C Cooney (CG) after Item 9.

### 2. Unconfirmed Minutes of Previous Meetings – A Coleman Cooke

#### 2.1 9 March 2020

Matters Arising (5.9) - K Burgess had met virtually with the team from Acklam Grange.

#### 2.2 1 May 2020

Both sets of minutes were approved as a correct record.

### 3. General Covid Update and Financial Update from 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – in pack for information

### 4. Student Engagement Update – J Chance

J Chance updated the Committee on how engagement for the last week of the half term which had been in line with previous weeks.

FE	82.6%
FE (Adult)	82.2%
Access to HE	86.8%
English	63.2%
Maths	57.6%
A Levels	90.3%
HE	98.2%
TTE	89.4%
Apprenticeships	93.4%

#### Governors' questions and discussion included: .

- The differences between Maths and English engagement and feedback that rates were good in comparison with others
- engagement and support for the more vulnerable and disadvantaged including the loan of over 300 laptops and very positive engagement and support (albeit remotely)
- detail of the tracking of student engagement and of how this would vary from college to college particularly with no national definition
- staff wellbeing generally and in relation to requirements for online delivery and support

### 5. Assessment Update – J Chance and G Cumiskey

J Chance updated the Committee detailing each directorate:

- HE – very little assessment had been modified and the College had been working closely with the OU and Pearson

- A Levels/GCSE – predicted grades with group ranking in 10s for English and Maths. Predicted grades for all were being finalized over the next week and would be similar to achievement last year
- Vocational – the majority would be assessed through predicted grades with a few examining bodies yet to give detail. The situation with occupational competence was yet to be fully resolved. The timescales were very tight but teams were working well progressing this
- Access – predicted grades
- Apprenticeships – the processes for Standards and Frameworks were outlined. Over 500 construction students would need access to College in the next two weeks in order to complete.

Retention was of upmost concern - 30% of apprentices were furloughed with their future currently unknown. Z Lewis gave additional detail in relation to the service industry and construction and of the difficulties there would be in finding new employers should likely redundancies occur.

Discussion and questioning focused on apprenticeships with consideration of breaks in learning (25); withdrawals and the future of furloughed apprentices including alternative options within College; and possible new government guidance and the likelihood of any future funding in order to support a very different employment market.

## 6. Apprenticeships Update – G Cumiskey

A full update was given including:

- that 59% of college based apprentices were still working and learning; 33% were on furlough and doing off the job training totaling 92% who were still training; 7% were approaching gateway; assessment options and certification with less than 1% having been made redundant/not doing off the job training. It was acknowledged that the figures above could change significantly depending on the furlough scheme changes/cessation
- TTE – 77% were still working/training; 21% were furloughed/accessing off the job training; 2% gateway/awarding bodies. The greater numbers still working was attributed to working with larger employers
- The College were pleased with engagement levels (typically 90%)
- Retention was the largest quality risk with the impact potentially affecting the College for up to 3 years
- M Gardiner was scoping up a visit for K Townsend to assess quality in early July
- Recruitment was starting to pick up

Governors' discussed - Smart Assessor, which was now being used across the board with support from M Gardiner and G Duffy McGhie's teams.

## 7. KPIs Update – J Chance

J Chance updated the Committee including:

- Study Programmes – English and Maths on par with last year; wider study programmes were historically good; some further analysis was being undertaken for BTEC but overall there were few concerns
- There was a live Student questionnaire was out which combined seeking views on the regular College experience and also the online package. Data would come back to the Committee in due course. There were separate surveys for HE and apprenticeships
- Adults – retention was higher than the national rate. Predicted achievement was on par/slightly better than last year (which was at the national rate)
- Apprenticeships – 5% higher retention than last year and achievement outturn 5% higher. It was highlighted that the impact of furlough may change this situation considerably
- HE – no concerns with outturn expected as predicted
- TTE – apprenticeship engagement was good and study programmes were with Stockton this year.

- Appeals process – Ofqual guidance had confirmed that appeals could only come to the centre on process not grades. If students wanted to resit in November they would have to go back to their original centre (i.e. school) which was helpful to College planning of exams
- Students would get their grades on the planned dates in August and in the usual manner
- No national achievement data would be published though the College would be producing its own

Governors' questions and discussion included:

- the different achievement predictions within Adults courses
- Distance Learning increased numbers with furlough (including College based staff)
- the need to encourage a large return for the student survey to best support future options for blended learning across all levels and departments
- HE delivery and content for next year including informing students of the offer
- the complexities of predicting English and Maths grades for staff; ranking submissions and the support for staff from the Heads of Quality
- Awarding bodies grading processes including the possibility of downgrading predictions and the possible backlash on staff on results days
- concern in relation to over-inflation of grades and the possible effect on the College (which has operated a robust system) depending on mechanisms to be used by awarding bodies
- the impact of achievement figures this year of students on 2-3 year courses
- English and Maths resits – the College would operate the autumn series as per earlier years

**The Committee acknowledged the great effort by all staff during this time.**

**8. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update – G Duffy-McGhie**

G Duffie McGhie talked to the report, outlined the key differences between the new and old systems:

- A non graded, two way process which would still allow for development and support of teachers who needed it
- Bigger focus on innovation so as to be able to disseminate the significant areas of outstanding teaching across the College
- Greater control for managers in supporting staff development at the various different stages of teaching
- detail of the IRIS Connect system for observations
- an overview of each of the stages and continuation of the manager's walk through

Questions and discussion included:

- How staff would feel about the video aspect of IRIS Connect. Senior union members had seen the demo and had been impressed; control rested with the member of staff and several sessions could be recorded; it could be perceived as less intrusive than a standard lesson observation
- Appraising staff of the changes – only union reps and mentors were currently aware
- IT skills required and time - mentors would go through the training first and would, in time, act as the digital support for teaching colleagues
- The need for robust guidelines in relation to access; storage and GDPR were discussed and clarification given in terms of cloud storage and access
- Parental/student views of being filmed – anonymization could occur and safeguarding guidelines would be adhered to furthering discussion of those staff who regularly worked with vulnerable students
- The measurable and analytical aspects of the system including recordable dialogue and evidence allowing for richer feedback particularly in the later stages
- Whether the timing was right for such a change – concluding that the encouragement of innovation; development and sharing of good practice would be highly beneficial. Additionally, with the increased use of technology over the recent period teachers were well placed to adapt

Governors expressed an interest in seeing the system in operation in due course.

## 9. Planning for Re-opening of College – Z Lewis

Z Lewis referenced the papers sent out via email on 22 May by way of introduction and added:

- that the DfE had confirmed that a wider return for Year 12 would now take place as of 15 June which would allow for detailed discussions with the unions and time to adapt the College as needed
- the reasoning for a very small number of students (4-5 each day) to come in next week
- the justification for determining the students to come back ahead of the summer
- the letter to students and parents communicating the measures in place offering reassurances
- the system for staff returning ahead of the summer and how this was being managed, through volunteers for June – July with support being given to staff wherever possible
- Timetable complexities for September with three sets of timetables being drafted: i) normal (very unlikely) ii) only those with practical assessments be in College iii) only having half the College community in at one time
- the unknown risk of the numbers of students returning to study programmes or starting full time programmes in September additionally hampered by the inability to see current Y11 students though the College was working well with local LAs
- plans for online enrolment and induction with some group tutorials
- what other local FE institutions were planning

### Governor questions and discussions included:

- the benefits of trialing with a small number of students during June and July
- the possible difficulties encouraging students and staff to return ahead of the summer particularly in relation to public transport concerns; safety and monitoring; toileting and catering; discipline
- how to replicate a College community feeling whilst operating within social distancing parameters – keeping the College's USP relevant
- being mindful of the possible perception from the wider community in relation to the use of the fitness studio. It was acknowledged that the measures proposed for the College purely for the use of practical assessments were entirely appropriate and suitably limited
- the need for positive marketing and social media
- the return of staff and considerations of numbers; group sizes of students and those more vulnerable or with ongoing childcare responsibilities

Governors were extremely impressed by the level of detail in the documents.

## 10. Additional Q&As

The use of Teams was briefly discussed including using chat and mute when not speaking.

## 11. Date and Time of Next Meeting – A Coleman Cooke

- i) The first formal meeting of 2020-2019 would be Monday 10 December 2020 at 2pm.
- ii) It was **agreed** that it would be productive to have another meeting within 4-6 weeks.

Post Meeting Note: A Teams meeting was scheduled for Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June at 9.30 am

## 12. Any other Business – none taken

*The meeting closed at 11.10am*