

# THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING – 08.03.2021

**PRESENT:** A Coleman-Cooke (CG and Chair), C Cooney (CG), R Davies (CG), M Gaze (CG), M Laidler (CG), S Lane, Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Executive), P Lynn (CG designate); M McClintock (CG), A Stephenson (EM), D Still (Staff Governor).

**OFFICERS:** S Ankers (AP), J Chance (VP), J Cairns (DOP), G Cumiskey (DP), G Duffy-McGhie (DOP), Z Foster (Clerk), P Watt (AP), C Yule (DOP).

### **IN ATTENDANCE FOR RELEVANT ITEM:**

K Burgess (English and Maths Manager), M Gardiner (Apprenticeship Improvement Manager), K Knights (RM), D Longmore (RM), T Nicholas (RM), P Stone (DOP).

**Key:** CG – College Governor, EM – External Member, DP – Deputy Principal, VP – Vice Principal, AP – Assistant Principal, DOP – Director of Programme, RM – Regional Manager

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

J Golightly (CG), C Ramsden (AP).

A Coleman Cooke welcomed P Lynn, governor designate, in observer capacity and R Davies (Chair) to the meeting.

### **2. Declarations of Interest – no declarations**

### **3. Unconfirmed Minutes of 14.12.2020 – A Coleman Cooke**

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

### **4. Matters Arising**

There was only one item to carry over.

### **5. Principal/CEO's Update**

Z Lewis set the scene for the meeting outlining progress over a series of years within the four major groups for the College (Study Programmes, Adults, HE and Apprenticeships) with Apprenticeships being the main focus for further improvement.

### **6. Cross College Reports**

#### **6.1 Progress Measures and KPIs update**

J Chance gave an overview of all of the key areas in which progress was positive, excepting Apprenticeships where retention was a concern.

Governors discussed: the plan for grades this year in English and Maths; the tight timeframe for moderation/grades when grade boundaries have not been released; SEND considerations relating to assessments; and how data/feedback will be shared with students and parents.

The Committee were very encouraged by progress.

#### **6.2 College Quality Improvement Plan 2020-2021**

J Chance gave an update on the key areas for development for 2020-21 highlighting the primary focus of Apprenticeships, but also drawing attention to great strides with online learning and delivery and headway with the College IT systems.

When T Level placements could take place was discussed by the Committee.

### **6.3 Student Destinations**

J Chance outlined the new style of reporting on students 6 months after completion of study. Key areas to note included: that two thirds of students stayed on at College, the increase in NEETs and a higher percentage (10%) who were unknown at this stage.

The Committee's questions and discussion included: forthcoming data on destinations on Adults and Apprenticeships (both of which were in progress); the complexities with comparable data both locally and nationally; and further investigation into why HE numbers looked lower when progression to University didn't drop.

### **6.4 Student Withdrawal Report 2020-21**

J Chance outlined that the report detailed students who dropped out within 6 weeks or who did not start a programme, of which the real withdrawal rate (excluding cancelled) had stayed broadly the same as the previous year.

Governors' discussion included: Covid related drop out; the impact of small numbers on percentage differences (e.g. engineering - Adults ); the College work in supporting students further within the first few weeks and of other factors affecting withdrawal.

### **6.5 QDP Learner Induction Survey 2020-21**

J Chance updated the Committee on the survey which had a very good number of respondents despite not being delivered in-College, the results of which showed a similar high outturn to previous years. He detailed the additional questions asked in relation to Covid and online learning. He informed the Committee that the Apprenticeship survey was currently live and Adults (both long and short courses) would also be reported next time.

Governors' discussion included: target setting and student understanding; areas which had dipped, possible reasons and actions; and OCP and support for online learning.

### **6.6 Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update**

G Duffy-McGhie gave a brief overview of the new T&L strategy (September 2020) and it's 4 tiered approach to QA assessment; learning walks and detail of the four additional measures to ensure ongoing and continual quality assessment across all aspects of delivery, including provision for online remote learning.

Discussion and questions included: further detail of the re-observations; innovative ideas for Access; Student Focus Group key themes (for which the data was considered excellent); large online groups and alternatives/adaptations; support and action plans for the small number of staff who didn't meet expectations (with an update to be given at the May meeting); wider discussion on staff resilience within the past year; plans for ensuring competence with digital skills for students; learning walks; greater detail regarding the construction pilot; feedback issues and resulting alterations; and data targeted staff digital cpd programmes.

### **6.7 Apprenticeships**

S Ankers gave a brief overview drawing together earlier reports and briefly referencing the apprenticeship workshop.

Governors' discussed: retention; apprenticeship redundancies and the use of College networks to assist; and had a full debate on the impact on employers and local area with the loss of Administration Level 2 and of alternatives and lobbying options to reverse

#### **6.7.1 Apprenticeship Workshop Outcomes**

G Cumiskey outlined the resulting seven key recommendations from the workshop.

Governors' debate included: Study programme placements; impact of Covid on some areas; alternative routes for employers; persistent difficulties within Catering and Hospitality due to a number of factors and options which could be developed should the apprenticeships be continued (including use of work placements; taster days; revised IAG and tighter recruitment; looking into examples of College based catering models; having a standards based apprenticeship).

The Committee **approved** six of the seven recommendations, the exception being the removal of Catering and Hospitality which it wished to be retained, due to it being a key part of the curriculum intent and course portfolio and that it was important to support the sector post Covid.

At the May meeting the Committee wished to look at ways the College could seek improvements within Catering and Hospitality.

### **6.8 Study Programme Report**

P Watt gave a brief positive account.

Discussion included: areas of improvement; industry placements; and clarification on TTE satisfaction rates.

### **6.9 Adult Provision**

G Cumiskey gave a brief report outlining positive and consistent areas and those to watch.

Governors' areas of discussion included: on-site exams (ESOL); Access; Kickstart update and follow up alternatives for unsuccessful candidates.

### **6.10 Higher Education Update**

P Stone gave a full update on progress and a brief update on the National Student Survey. He also drew attention to meeting the ongoing conditions of registration with the Office for Students (OfS) which was on track, a required and completed audit in respect of Condition C1 (which would be shared via a full report for the full Governing Body), and outlined the situation regarding a reportable event.

Questions and comments included: further detail of the reportable incident which had been resolved and closed; applications; OfS requirements in relation to Governors' knowledge of students consumer rights and associated protection plan; and the reasoning for the 'University Centre' title and the future use of it including wider College branding.

A Stephenson offered his assistance in the OfS required information and plan.

### **6.11 English and Maths**

Governors congratulated K Burgess and the Department on the excellent November re-sit results.

Discussion and questions included: any differentiation between 16-18 and adults results; improving online attendance; impact of inflated grades on future provision; how predicted grades were being determined; staffing update including use of Pastoral Coaches; and wider skills support for students.

### **6.12 Subcontracted Outward Collaborative Provision (OCP)**

J Chance gave a positive account confirming that delivery would be up to contract value. He outlined some possible additional Tees Valley delivery opportunities the College and Greatest Expectations had bid for. Governors also received an update on the Unicorn Centre and support in place for learners.

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

- i) Monday 17 May 2021 at 2pm. A brief discussion on whether this would be in-college or via Teams took place.

## **8. Any other Business – none taken**

## **9. Members Discussion**

Members had a brief discussion on the success of further streamlining reports, ongoing input by Department leads, and the value of combining speakers at meetings.

Post Meeting, the Chair and Vice Chair of Committee agreed that a report on High Needs should be a regular item alongside the other provision areas going forward.

*The meeting closed at 4.40pm*