Minutes of Teaching & Learning Committee

27 February 2024

via Teams

Present:

Gaynor Cheshire (Chair)
Vicki Davies (Governor)
Jane Britton (Governor)
Michelle Dowse (Principal)
Julie Hurlston (Staff Governor)
David Ash (Governor)(Observer)
Donna Gibson (Deputy Clerk)

In attendance:
Simon Kibble
Peter Robinson
Claire Beaman
Julia Breakwell

2.1	**Welcome and Apologies**	
	There were no apologies received. A governor stated that they were the best papers that had been received in a long time; they were succinct and provided clarity. Governors noted that all notes and minutes from any governance meetings would clearly show where challenge and assurance had taken place. Key words would be used to demonstrate these and other areas. Papers were taken as read in advance of the meeting.	
2.2	**Declarations of Interest**	
	There were no interests declared.	
2.3	**Minutes of the previous meeting**	
	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.	
2.4	**Matters Arising**	
	The committee monitored the progress against the actions on the log, noting that the majority were complete. In relation to the KPIs it was noted that the KPIs included in the pack were helpful, going forward it is anticipated that KPIs will involve in line with the new data dashboard.	Action: Deputy Clerk

	It was agreed that the KPI item could be closed.	
2.5	**Determination of any other business**	
	There were no items of business.	
2.6	**Revised Terms of Reference**	
	The committee was advised that all governance terms of reference were being reviewed by an external Governance Adviser who is conducting a mini desktop governance review. This is to ensure compliance with our Standing Orders / Instruments and Articles (which are also subject to review) as part of the governance review.	
2.7	**Curriculum and Quality KPIs**	
	Member received the C&Q KPIs. The Chair asked if there were any questions or challenges regarding the item. *A governor questioned the attendance KPIs RAG rated as red. In response they were advised that the papers refer to a panel being created, the panel will have clear expectations and will challenge attendance. Governors noted that attendance is a sector wide issue.* *A governor stated attendance and retention are important to the college, should we take a hit on our retention or aim to the best in both areas? In response they were advised that there always complexities that accompany funding and we must demonstrate our planned learning. To begin with we will be specific who we target, this will help us to position ourselves in the right place to have any impact.* The Principal reassured members that attendance is being looked at and why students are absent. We also need to ensure that they are catching up. We will be clear on our expectations and when we need to will use the Student Standards to influence and encourage improvement, Governors were advised that a weekly all staff email is sent out on Fridays, so all staff see the position around attendance. The email is in its initial stages so has not yet had an immediate impact but has started to generate discussions amongst staff around attendance. *Governors noted that adult attendance had improved and the ESOL Rapid Improvement Group had been closed down.* *The Staff Governor confirmed that adult students are more likely to participate in catch up post absence. The availability of robust resources helps and students accept the offer of 121 sessions, however, these sessions are not recorded for the purpose of* attendance. Adult learners had shown for example, at the time of the floods that they could easily switch to online learning. *Governors acknowledged that adults are more likely to have experience of managing patterns of attendance.*	

2.8	**Post Inspection Action Plan Update**	
	The Chair referred to a previous outstanding action about a T&L Policy. The PIAP refers to a revised policy being in place. *The response was that there is not a T&L Policy as such it is more of a strategy. Management would like to move to a more robust system of having policies and strategies that are aligned and underpinned by other supporting documents. They would cover a set period of time i.e., five years.* *It was agreed that whilst policies and procedures are operation items, our position now is that we need to demonstrate that our teaching and learning is robust and that we are clear on how we demonstrate that effectively.* *The Deputy Principal provided a brief overview of the HoW Foundation for Teaching and Learning and areas that come under it – observations, learning walks, schemes of work and scrutiny of work.* *Governors noted the intent to observe every lecturer by the end of May, noting that 135 have been observed already.* *The Chair was reassured of the steps being taken and that staff would be clear on expectations, noting that it would be difficult to hold staff to account otherwise.* *It was noted that the criteria will use a combination of the EIF, ETF standards and the FE Handbook.* *A governor asked how will the differing levels of staff be managed, for example part time staff, fractional staff? They were informed that amended versions of documentation will be provided for the different categories of staff, arrangements for fractional staff will be put in place. LSA's are not being included and will be picked up via separate mechanisms. CPD days are being reviewed with a view to utilising them.* *The committee were advised that the FEC Team had been onsite in the previous week to review the PIAP and to undertake their own observations. The PIAP should cover the first 12 months since inspection, if it were to cover the entire 30 months up to the anticipated re-inspection it could be taken that we are not making any progress.* *A governor asked if it would be beneficial for governors to have an understanding of the ESOL Rigorous Improvement Group? Management responded that problems had been identified with achievement, learners were staying on the course but not attending, The group had recognised the challenges and good discussions had taken place. Staff had recognised that conversations around the likelihood of learners not achieving needed to take place much sooner. The chair requested that the minutes from the RIG be made available in the reading room for the next committee meeting.*	Action: SK

	A governor asked why 40% is a benchmark for resits? Management responded that 40% is reflective of the national picture. It can sometimes be difficult for learners to turn things around quickly and the target is both aspirational and sensible. *A governor noted the reference to the Governor Insight Programme. The advised that the programme has been redeveloped and expanded and is reviewed annually. Positive changes had been seen by governors and outward comms to governors were improved.* *A governor asked about Prevent considering the comments made at inspection. Management responded that ESOL had been identified as an area of concern. Advice from the FEC was to think about the long-term plan and something short and effective to address the group's needs.* *Governors noted that steps are underway to redevelop the apprenticeship side and a new personal development framework is being looked at.* *Governors noted that for now the stakeholder breakfasts are on hold but noted the feedback that areas are making more effective use of employers and the engagement with employers is being captured. The principal reiterated that there are excellent examples of engagement taking place, but we need to be robust in capturing them, reporting on them, and monitoring progress. Anecdotal feedback will not suffice.*	
2.9	**Curriculum Planning and Development Process**	
	The committee was provided with an update and noted: • It is useful to see the scorecard visually along with the various sections. • Class size averages • Whether we are meeting local needs and the % by location • The strategic planning day will have a dedicated session on curriculum planning. *Governors agreed that the update provided was useful and were reassured that all governors would receive an update at the planning day. It is helpful to show governors where we are positioned now.* *A governor asked what progress is being made with regards to being innovative with our curriculum offer? The committee noted that finances dictate how we can respond. Management advised that as an example the Management and Professional Team had identified a demand for parts of the HE offer to be online and in responses had produced online modules, this had linked to the national trend of a decline towards class based HE provision.* It was noted that green skills will be pursued, and conversations are taking place.	

	Everyone is aware that it is important that the board understands the direction in which we are travelling.	
2.10	**Apprenticeship Update**	
	Governors noted that this is still an area of poor performance and concern; withdrawals are still high; some of the statements still do not help governors to understand the position. Management responded that we need to get further into the year to see the positives The area is under scrutiny and are doing everything to keep learners on track. A difference is starting to be made. *A governor challenged whether that is the view of everyone involved? Management responded that it is.* *A governor reiterated that this area was an own goal at inspection, we need to be clear with both employers and learners what our expectation are. Management acknowledged that there was a lot still to be done and we must continue what we are doing now. Advice and guidance to employers is to be improved so that they are clear on their responsibilities. The relationships with them needs to be tripartite.*	
2.11	**Accountability Statement and Local Needs Duty**	
	The item was on the agenda so that members were aware of the next steps noting that: • There would be a dedicated session at the strategic planning day for governors. • That there needs to be engagement with stakeholders and employers • The statement looks at our future curriculum. *A governor questioned are we engaging sufficiently with other colleges / governing bodies and noted that we are engaged with Kidderminster College and Warwickshire College Group. There is engagement between the Principal and their counterpart at Halesowen College. In April, the Chair and Principal will meet their counterparts at Hereford, North Ludlow, and Shropshire College.* The committee noted that governors need to be able to consider the document in full, before signing off. There may be a need to hold a special meeting of the Corporation to sign it off and this will be kept under review.	Action: Deputy Clerk
2.12	**Equality and Diversity Action Plan**	
	Members were advised that the plan has been revised and has yet to be seen by the EDI Group. The plan is evolving and developing and is currently in a transition period with an additional third milestone being added. It was noted that the EDI Group meetings in 23/24 have not aligned with meetings in the governance calendar (will be addressed in 24/25 calendar)	

	The revised plan will be presented to the next available meeting of either T&L Committee or Corporation to ensure that some scrutiny and oversight can take place.	Action: VPSESE
2.13	**Safeguarding Annual Report**	
	The committee received the report. *Governors acknowledged the breadth of the work that the team undertakes, noting that there is also supplementary external support available.* *A governor asked if a review of staffing in the area needs to be considered, in light of the increase in workload? In response they were advised that safeguarding is always prioritised, and the team are meeting the safeguarding requirements.* *Governors acknowledged the response but were mindful that under KCSIE they have a responsibility for this area. A governor put the question in another way – does the team have capacity to meet its obligations, taking into account an everchanging landscape? Management confirmed yes at the current time, but the teams are aware of the forthcoming revised Protect Duty, the need for lockdown practices, the position will be reviewed in May.* *A governor asked if we have the capacity to provide the required careers and guidance advice? Management responded that we do, it is a cross college item.* *Governors reiterated that is important that they are assured that the college is delivering in all the statutory areas.* Members received a brief overview of the youth hub being set up at the Peakman Campus.	
2.14	**Meeting Effectiveness**	
	The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the meeting had been effective; there had been a good balance of challenge and assurances, key strategic items had been covered and these would be reflected in the minutes. Management acknowledged that the preparation for the meeting and the distribution of the papers had been timely, and the papers packs were well put together. The meeting was well chaired. A governor observed that it had been one of the most effective meetings they had attended and had achieved the right balance. The meeting had been productive and had finished in its allotted time.	