HEART OF WORCESTERSHIRE COLLEGE

Approved Minutes of Teaching & Learning Committee

Held on Tuesday 5 November 2024 at 5.30pm Via Teams

Present:
Gaynor Cheshire (Chair)
Jane Britton (Governor)
Steve Stanier (Governor)
Donna Gibson (Clerk)

In Attendance:
David Ash (Chair of Corporation) (Observer)
Chris Hallam (Vice Chair of Corporation) (Observer)
Simon Kibble (Deputy Principal)
Matt Gower (Vice Principal, Quality)
Peter Robinson (Vice Principal, HE, Adult &
& Curriculum Development
Mo Horan (Vice Principal, Apprenticeships, Partnerships & Skills)
Julie Breakwell (Vice Principal, Student Experience & Support

Item No	Item	Action
	The Clerk advised all on the call that the meeting was being recorded.	
4.1	**Welcome & Apologies** The Clerk advised that apologies had been received from the Principal and the Staff Governor (Julie Hurlston). The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. *The meeting commenced with the observation from the Chair, that the number of papers received had been overwhelming.* The Clerk confirmed that outside of the meeting discussions would take place about how the volume of papers is managed and whether there are any items that can be shared with Governors in advance that would assist with distilling the volume. The Chair confirmed that item 4.14 – Terms of Reference would be picked up outside of the meeting and discussed between the Committee Chair, Chair of Corporation, and the Clerk. The Chair requested that *Committee Members review the papers in 4.16 and send any comments, observations to the Committee Chair and the Clerk*, so that the focus of the meeting was on key priority areas including actions being taken following the Ofsted Monitoring Visit. The Vice Principal with responsibility for Higher Education confirmed that the HE Strategy and the NSS Survey would be picked up via the HE Academic Board. This was supported by the HE Lead Governor who also attends the Academic Board meetings, and agreed this could alleviate some papers from having to come to the Teaching and Learning Committee. The Chair and Vice Chair had joined the meeting due to the agenda items and the importance of improving teaching and learning.	
4.2	**Declarations of Interest** There were no declarations of interest.	
4.3	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 4 June 2024** It was agreed that The Clerk will make the following revisions:	

	3.6 Governors recognised that there were green shoots developing but also recognised that there was much more work to be done. 3.7 Governors agreed that the PIAP was detailed and captured a lot of what was going on. Hard evidence was required to support this.	
4.4	**Matters Arising** The Clerk advised that all of the matters were complete, clarity was needed as to whether we are continuing to benchmark with other colleges. It was agreed that continued benchmarking with similar organisations is a good practice to maintain.	
4.5	**Determination of Any Other Business** There were no items of business to be covered.	
4.6	**Ofsted** The Deputy Principal advised that the monitoring visit report had been received, it had been shared with the Committee and the wider Corporation. It covers what was discussed at the time of the visit but due to a limited word count focuses on key statements. The Deputy Principal explained that the Principal had decided that the focus for Quality Improvement would be broken down into six week blocks to ensure a focused approach at pace. Between now and May 2026 (or earlier date of the next inspection) improving the quality of our teaching and learning is paramount. We are likely to be inspected under the new framework. Whilst not a lot is known yet about the new framework, a continued focus on learner experience, data and outcomes is anticipated. The Vice Principal for Quality sought to assure Governors that learner progress will be at the heart of the new framework. It is important that we invest the time in coaching teaching staff to be able to support learners in getting to their destinations. *The Committee Chair observed that whilst there may be a focus on outcomes, Governors and ELT must ensure that there is a clear and achievable plan in place to take us to May 2026.* The Deputy Principal reminded all that the endorsement of our direction of travel is pleasing; however, we have not had time to present the evidence to show the impact of this in great detail. Governors agreed that 'Reasonable Progress' is a fair assessment of our current position. Management reminded Governors that progress made to date is in the right direction, but we are still a grade three College and there is much to do. *The Chair of Corporation added that we have to make sure that the pace is maintained, and it will most likely have to be increased to secure a judgement of Good at the next inspection. During their meeting with the Inspector on the monitoring visit, Governors were informed that since the 2023 inspection there had not been enough time to show that changes had made sufficient impact to support an assessment of significant progress. Governors and the Executive Team recognised that only one set of results had been received towards the end of a very significant period of change and there was a need to demonstrate consistency.* The Deputy Principal suggested Governors should be reassured that Ofsted have endorsed what has been achieved so far and this along with the new leadership and changes to governance lays the foundations for the future. Going forward we will need to focus on:	

	• Being relentless in improving the impact for learners • Ensure that teaching and learning relates to learner progress. • Make sure that we are doing everything we can to enable learners to get where they need to be. • Focus on achievements less and more on outcomes in order to support the learner journey. • Continue to use the FEC KPIs but also look beyond those. • Continue to challenge and address those programmes that are not on course.	
4.7	**Quality of Teaching & Learning** The Deputy Principal explained that the basic expectations of teaching and learning are within the Foundation Standards. There has been a focus on prioritising quality processes that endorse teaching and learning such as learning walks, observations etc and these had been submitted to the Committee Chair. *The Committee Chair reiterated that their request for a policy had been made at the very first meeting of the Committee in October 2023. This was so that there could be clarity around teaching and learning, and the expectations. There had been a discussion about a strategy not being the same as a policy, but no policy had been provided to date.* *The Committee Chair challenged whether staff receive a teaching and learning policy and clear expectations on day one of starting their role? The Chair questioned whether there is a "Staff Handbook" setting out the policy and expectations, to ensure a consistent College wide application. There was a concern that Governors could go on learning walks and encounter inconsistencies throughout. How could this be challenged? That is why it is important to understand whether there is a College wide policy that sets out clearly the rules and expectations. The Executive responded that the 6 L's and the Lesson Essentials had been rolled out and were in place.* Management stated that staff are very aware of the student standards, the 6 L's, Lesson Essentials and the Foundation Standards. *The Chair questioned how many times staff have input into grades and target setting. Management responded that staff receive baseline information every term. The Chair challenged the frequency of this.* The Deputy Principal advised that a number of things had not been in place in the previous year. They have now introduced learner outcomes forecasting, an important measure for teaching and learning; previously staff had waited until the end of the year. A Committee Member challenged how much data should be provided on learner progress. The Deputy Principal responded that the quality of teaching and learning is a key metric outcome for the Foundation Standards. The setting of KPIs, based on guidance from the FEC, were under review. Intervention lists will be generated to address areas of concern. For 24/25 the following will be addressed: • Refining the approach to measuring progress against qualification • The skills journey and careers • Learners will be set a main qualification target – Pass, Pass+, Pass++, this would replace the typical pass / fail outcomes – each Pass target would have its own criteria – for example competition activity. *Returning to learner progress, the Committee Chair had independently researched several colleges. Some of whom appear to be conducting reviews at five points across the year, therefore putting us out of sync if we continue with just three checks. The Chair reiterated that outcomes are really important and need to be measured regularly, a review at the end of term two is too late, particularly if learners need to be put back on track. Our current position is about outcomes, is there more work to be done?* The Vice Principal, Quality, responded that academic standards are important. We are	

	looking for more consistency and rigour and a more consistent approach to reviewing needs to be considered. End grades should include distinctions and we should be able to identify what % should be achieving these. *The Committee Chair challenged how are we going to move forward?* They were advised that we can do more frequent achievement forecasting based on five reviews. The first achievements will be seen at the Scrutiny Reviews later in November and we can revisit the times when the student reviews are undertaken, ensuring they are done at times when they will be measurable. It was requested that Corporation receive a report from the Scrutiny Reviews. *The Committee Chair observed that ELT should be holding teams accountable, ELT should not be doing all of the work and the scrutinising of information, the teams should be responsible and should be trained appropriately.* The Deputy Principal reiterated that accountability will be increased, Heads of Faculty will be asked to explain decisions they make and will be required to report to the Leaders of Learning Forum. Sufficient reporting mechanisms will be put in place. Data, information, and decisions will be triangulated. An update will be come to the Term 2 Committee meeting. *A Governor stated that they would like to see more information but presented in a format and language that is clear for Governors to understand. It should provide the assurance that we have got good quality teachers and that we have evidence to back up and support how we know that. The same Governor questioned about any external influences at the staff CPD day, are there any external sense checks that we can make use of? It would also be helpful for Governors to understand the links between CPD and the PDR process.* The Vice Principal, Quality advised that with the introduction of the Leaders of Learning and more accountability within curriculum, Governors should take assurance from those. More managers are now directly engaged in line managing the teacher workforce. With regards to external scrutiny, the Vice Principal, Quality (also a part time OI), and a Consultant working on quality have joined the College since the inspection, the FEC and Ofsted have also provided additional feedback and guidance and the FEC have conducted their own learning walks. Peer reviews with other colleges are being planned. In response to a Governor's point about reporting, it was agreed that more succinct reporting will be provided to Corporation. *The Chair of Corporation requested that before moving on with the agenda that a discussion about any strategic issues that may need to be raised and acted upon before December Corporation take place at a suitable time. The following observations were raised:* *To assist with capacity should we be looking to bring in a number of short-term resources to speed up the processes, conduct deep dives or carry out CPD activities?* The Vice Principal, Quality advised that the expansion of the Quality Team was being looked at. The Chair of Corporation questioned should we prioritise focussing on sustainable improvements that can be made between now and inspection: • *Increased staffing numbers – can we find the money – bearing in mind budgetary restraints?* • *Were there any distractions for leaders and managers that could be removed?* • *Is there any scope for short term appointments, perhaps for one or two years, in addition to the already planned increase in quality?* • *Is there likely to be a capital injection from the sale of Osprey House and how can we use this effectively?* • *Are there any additional funding sources that we can access?* • *Should the Leadership Team be asked to raise an alternative budget to provide additional resources – bearing in mind that Corporation would need to see the rationale along with data and numbers?*	Deputy Principal

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- *If there were any changes in structure these would likely be operational, and the Corporation would expect the Principal to provide an update on those.*
- *Will the ongoing review of the Estates Strategy and the implementation of any changes be a distraction from the focus of teaching and learning? The Corporation would need to be aware of the full financial picture in order to decide any next steps with regards to the Estates Strategy in the short term.*

Governors acknowledged that there may be some difficult decisions ahead. The Leadership Team will need to come back to Corporation with any proposals or responses, or with an outline of either a) changes under consideration will impact adversely on the primary focus on teaching and learning, or b) they are required or desirable because they will impact positively on that primary focus. It was agreed that the Principal would discuss and agree any additional resources that would impact the budget at F&R.

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Curriculum & Quality KPIs

The paper was taken as read. Governors observed that there was a lot of "Green" in the RAG reporting. It was noted that the RIGs are addressing decisions on revisions to targets. Annex B shows where there are increases or decreases.

Governors were being asked to note the final outcomes against the 23/24 Purpose KPIs and recommend for approval the revised targets for 24/25 and 25/26, as proposed in annex B.

The Committee Chair expressed their concern around the English target and how that impacts in terms of aspirations. The starting points are not clear. An assumption can be made that Covid impacted on the results in 2021 and therefore looked poor. The Deputy Principal advised that there is an issue with the national data that is available and advised that the target could either be discussed outside of the meeting or left as they were before the change was suggested.

The Committee Chair suggested there must have been a reason for the proposed reduction. They were advised that it was not anything to do with external factors but was more to do with being a SMART target.

The Committee Chair suggested that targets should be against cohorts, which are all different. In terms of accountability is reducing targets aspirational, the committee needs a clearer understanding as to how targets are being set.

It was pointed out by Management that some have been increased to be more aspirational and there are suggested changes to few targets. The Deputy Principal advised that three of the five changes are internal attendance targets, and there is no risk of losing ambition. Adult achievement could remain at 57%.

The Committee Chair asked who is the College Data Manager? The Chair observed that in terms of capacity ELT should not be spending time preparing data, they should be analysing it. The College needs to have a data person. The Committee were advised that a MIS Director who was interviewed and accepted the position had subsequently withdrawn from the role. There are two data analysts, and a consultant could be commissioned to create a suite of reports that staff members could then utilise.

The Committee agreed to recommend the approval of the amended KPIs to Corporation in December.

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College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) / Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) Year 2 / Quality Improvement Plan

The PIAP has been revised in terms of its format, which has been endorsed by both the FEC and Ofsted. Year 2 is the activity that will be undertaken towards inspection.

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	The Chair expressed concern around the use of the word significant, some items were not significant, and the proposal was that the word should be replaced with strengths. They are items where progress has been made but could not really be considered as significant progress. The Vice Principal, Quality, added some context that the front sheet was intended to be a summary of strengths and areas for improvement. The strengths are the best strengths of the College, but the title can be amended. A Governor confirmed that aside from the wording the document was useful and in a format that is easy to follow. **The Committee agreed to recommend the approval of the PIAP to Corporation in December.**	
4.10	**Curriculum Plan 24/25** Governors had **monitored** the changes to the 24/25 curriculum plan and noted the following. • The single biggest change is the non-adoption of T levels, as a reduced intake along with a decrease in interest around T Levels has been observed. • *A Governor observed that there are more courses ceasing than starting*. They were reminded that the future focus will be looking at growth and mainly around progression for those learners staying with us internally. • The Leadership Team continue to re-evaluate the curriculum offer.	
4.11	**Safeguarding Annual Report 23/24** The Committee were advised that the team has been restructured to be able to respond to the 17% increase and a Co-ordinator post has been created. The Chair commended the report. The Committee were happy that with continuing increases of safeguarding and mental health concerns, year on year, that additional capacity had been put in place. The Lead Governor for Safeguarding had met with the DSL and DDSL and agreed that the additional post was a good decision. From the overview they had received about the team they were assured that we are meeting our safeguarding duties and obligations, as well as providing support learners where needed. *A Governor noted an increase as to when incidents occur as being higher early in the year and wondered if this was because we are just finding out information and getting to know learners, or is it down to something more challenging? They were advised that this had not been considered previously, however, some analysis had been done and it is because learners generally come forward after tutorials on specific topics have taken place, or disclosures have been received*. ELT receive reports every five weeks to keep them updated. Governors agreed to **recommend the report to Corporation for approval.**	
4.12	**Prevent Strategy, Risk Assessment & Action Plan 23/24** Governors noted that this was the yearly review. Improvements have been made to the Action Plan and the College's response to the summer riots has been included. Governors agreed that the Strategy, Risk Assessment and Action Plan should be **recommended for Corporation approval.**	

4.13	**SEND Policy** Minimal changes had been made to the policy. Governors were referred to the changes that have been made to the way the College deliver support. They were also made aware that an EHCP Panel has been introduced for 24/25. The policy was **approved** by the Committee.	
4.14	**Committee Terms of Reference** To be considered outside of the meeting as mentioned earlier in the meeting.	Committee Chair, Corporation Chair, Clerk
4.15	**Committee Effectiveness** The Clerk had noted that the meeting had provided: • Robust and rigorous debate • Good questioning and challenge from Governors • Had demonstrated support from Governors around potential capacity and budget issues, with Governors showing an awareness of the difficulties that may lie ahead. • Agreement that the volume of papers continues to be an area for improvement.	
4.16	**Reading Room** All were asked again to review the items in the Reading Room and feedback any comments, challenges or observations to the Committee Chair and the Clerk by Tuesday 12 November.	All
4.17	**Any Other Business** There were no items of business to be covered and no confidential papers.	
	Date of next meeting: 4 March 2025 via Team at 5.30pm	