



WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held (via Microsoft Teams) on Thursday 1st July 2021 at 5.30pm

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Mary Mamik, Chair
Angela Newton-Soanes, Vice Chair
Andrew Cropley, Principal/CEO
Andrew Spencer
Bev Whitefoot
Kate Truscott

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Director of Governance
Matt Vaughan, Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality
Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement & Student Experience
Di Booth, Assistant Principal: Quality & Standards
Jane Fishwick, Assistant Principal: Academic, Creative, Community, Digital and Professional Studies
Phil Clark, Assistant Principal: Construction
Ian Frear, Assistant Principal: Engineering
Nikki Slack, Assistant Principal: Health, Education & Service Industries

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. No specific declarations were made and standing declarations were noted.

2 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Angela Newton-Soanes was welcomed to her first meeting, and roundtable introductions were made. She advised that she is an assistant principal at Portland College and that her role is very much focused on quality. She is also an ex-WNC learner.

Apologies for absence were received from Spencer Moore and Steve Sutton.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6TH MAY 2021

ACTION by whom	DATE by when

Signed : _____  _____ Chair

Date: 09/09/2021

The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6th May 2021.

There were no matters arising.

4 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

The committee were happy to note the content of the update provided.

5 QIAP – 2020/21 PROGRESS AND DETAILED REVIEW OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT AND TUTORIALS

The vice principal introduced this item and reminded that there are five key weaknesses in the QIAP, with the sixth section being improvements required in relation to leadership and management. He confirmed that he would provide an update on the current position in relation to leadership and management and tutorials.

- 1) Leadership and management – key matters noted were:
 - There is much to demonstrate that leadership and management is good despite not enough teaching and learning being good. This has historically impacted upon the overall judgement for L&M which has been ‘requires improvement’. The question really now is what more could leadership and management have done in the last 18 months that hasn’t been done.
 - A big movement is that the college will now be assessing leadership and management at grade 2. This is from both an operational and strategic point of view as there is not much more that could have been done to improve teaching and learning.
 - So why a grade 2 now? Influencing factors are:
 - Prudent management of finances
 - Rapid cultural change
 - Outstanding feedback in employer surveys
 - SAR process is robust, honest and self-critical
 - Over half of the curriculum areas self-assessed as good or better
 - Significant progress made in relation to those areas of the SAR that were requiring improvement
 - Work on personal development
 - Work on health and welfare
 - Trajectory of growth based on improved grades and high grades
 - Robust IQA process – really dissected performance
 - Exponential improvements in some areas including motor vehicle and sport

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- Growing host of external stakeholders
- Engineering and sports are innovative and trailblazing
- Deep dive process well received
- Much accomplished in a short space of time.

That said, there is still more to be accomplished:

- In terms of apprenticeship provision, overall achievement rates are predicted to be at the national rate, which is a huge move forward. The college has really positive outcomes in relation to EPAs. 27% of learners obtain a promotion or improved opportunities.

Because of this, the trajectory leads the college to believe it is appropriate to self-assess leadership and management at grade 2.

CH A challenge from one member of the committee was to include the organisational change made, as this also demonstrates that leaders and managers are reflective and want to improve (e.g. the external board review undertaken). Business improvement projects (BIPS) have also been part of the organisational development and interventions in place. The committee felt that there was a range of mechanisms to use as examples of organisational change, including learner voice activity and the Rate My Course initiative, Rising Stars, learning companies, BIPs, etc. There is clear evidence that leaders actively listen and that governors challenge both themselves and the executive.

The vice principal indicated that it has been possible to really clearly set out how the grade 2 judgement has been arrived at and that this gives confidence. The committee acknowledged that they have confidence regarding full transparency in relation to the areas that still need to improve.

The committee asked what more they can do to support the college's journey. The vice principal indicated that it is to continue to question and challenge, particularly in relation to the stubborn data. The committee made the observation that senior staff are very open to challenge and feel comfortable to respond, which again is evidence of good leadership and management.

CH A challenge from one member of the committee was to see more peer comparisons, where the data is available. They would like to see benchmark information so that they can then home in on areas requiring focus.

The vice principal expressed the view that it is a fine balance in terms of pushing forward at pace whilst also being aware of staff wellbeing.

Q A question from one member of the committee was that the change in culture is evident but does the college know the usual/likely lag before it

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has the impact, evidence to substantiate the effect, etc. The observation made was that, in some areas, it will take longer than others (e.g. apprenticeship provision). The vice principal indicated that the college does not typically look at a single action and then the impact and that the college does have a culture where time is given to embed initiatives before reflection and other actions. All agreed that staff CPD was really starting to bear fruit, even though the college doesn't exactly know the time lag in relation to this.

2) Tutorials – key matters noted were:

- Quality is improving but there is still more to do to ensure consistent high quality
- The college has done a lot of planning for the 21/22 academic year
- COVID did impact upon the effectiveness of tutorials
- The college is very confident for next year, and it is a matter of monitoring and measuring
- Personal and social development is important
- Progression is a key metric and this is 84.3%.

An observation made by one staff governor is that staff feedback suggests that learner reviews undertaken during tutorials can be challenging when there are other learners in the room and that one-to-one reviews are more effective. It was acknowledged that this is a timetabling and resource issue, but the CEO provided assurance that there is no expectation that learner reviews will be completed during group tutorials for next academic year. The committee were advised that a key issue is to motivate and inspire learners to record their own learning and monitor their progress through the Pro Monitor system. There will be one-to-one tutorials every five to six weeks, as well as group tutorials.

The committee asked how best to measure the quality of tutorials. It was explained that this would be through attendance and impact, the level of engagement, and the deep dive process.

CH

A challenge from the committee was that they, as an assurance committee for the board, would like clarity on how they will know that tutorials are effective. The CEO suggested that governors should ask the students that they meet what they think about the tutorials and they will then get an honest response.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

6 BALANCED SCORECARD ITEMS – 2020/21 YEAREND REPORT

The vice principal gave an update on the matters that currently sit on the balanced scorecard. These are:

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- 1) Aspire curriculum on deep dives – RAG-rated amber. Key matters noted were:
 - 34 deep dives undertaken
 - A greater emphasis on the ASPIRE aims since March deep dives, following committee challenge in this area
 - Not all curriculum areas have fully embraced ASPIRE with the same level of drive and thrust.

- 2) Outcomes of deep dives – RAG-rated amber. Key matters noted were:
 - Not all deep dives were graded because of lockdown
 - 25 were graded and they are a mix of 50/50 ‘good’ and ‘requiring improvement’
 - 55% of areas self-assessed as good or better
 - Everywhere is improving but some not quickly enough
 - Time on site does influence some of the practical aspects.

- 3) Progress against the QIAP – RAG-rated as amber. Key points noted were:
 - A range of variability but improvements in many areas
 - College has to improve the position in relation to English
 - Apprenticeship provision is getting there.

- 4) Upskilling of teachers – RAG-rated as amber. Key points noted were:
 - The range of CPD offered to staff
 - Full CPD week this week
 - Working with Leicester College in relation to maths improvements
 - The committee’s attention was drawn to the statistics provided in section 6.6.

It was explained that this area is still amber because it is not yet the case that enough teaching and learning is good.

- 5) Apprenticeship provision – key matters noted were:
 - Achievement rates are set to be above national
 - Still too many apprentices past their end date
 - Whilst there is more to do, movement has been strong.

CH
CH

A challenge from the committee was that the college has worked in partnership with Leicester College previously but didn’t necessarily see the expected benefit. A challenge from the committee was to carefully consider what hasn’t worked in the past and what will work this time so that the maximum is obtained from staff time given. The vice principal indicated that it is likely that the college will benefit more from the TVTSA and OLIVEE partnerships, as these are an opportunity to learn

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from the schools sector.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

7 TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED LEARNING (TEL) STRATEGY

Jane Fishwick presented this item and key matters noted were:

- There has been considerable staff input in to this development and it is finally ready for presentation.
- It has been written by a team which is made up of both internal and external members.
- It is strategically aligned to the colleges mission and vision.
- Written in a way to be as flexible as it can be.
- Strong focus on upskilling, both for students and staff.
- Clear focus on accessibility, and there is a significant piece of work to do in terms of availability of resources.
- It considers staff wellbeing and health.
- Next steps are to consider the must haves, should haves and could haves – there is work to do as an employer to research what is already in place and available.
- There are really clear KPIs established.

The committee asked whether there is significant investment required. It was confirmed that there is but that the team are not really sure what it looks like at the moment, and there needs to be a trial and test process. This will then be measured against the KPIs. The committee agreed that they would like to see an update at a subsequent meeting to better understand what the college currently has and the gaps that exist to be able to implement the strategy.

CH

Jane
Fishwick

21/22

CH

A challenge from one member of the committee was to receive more information so that governors can know more about how the college supports SEND students. It was agreed that this committee would monitor the rollout process and, therefore, it was agreed to add this into the draft committee work plan for next academic year.

Dir of Gov

July 2021

Q

One member of the committee asked whether or not it would be more effective to run pilots with smaller groups. It was confirmed that it would but that the college also wants to take maximum advantage of staff enthusiasm that exists across college.

CH

The strategy references community support, and the committee asked whether this links to adult provision. It was confirmed that it does. A challenge from the committee was to think more about carers and parents and their needs.

CH

A challenge from the committee was that safeguarding should be considered at every point of the offer and that it is important to be clear

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about the rationale for the devices and platforms chosen. The committee were given assurance that there will be a wholly collaborative approach to any decisions reached.

CH

In relation to safeguarding, the committee were advised that the college is to implement e-Safe from September and that this tracks activity from different devices and platforms. An example given was that the college will be able to see what students are looking at on Facebook. A challenge from the committee was to carefully consider GDPR.

The committee all agreed that the strategy was a well-rounded document, and they asked whether there is any more that governors and staff can do to support. The committee were advised that the college is establishing an accessibility group and members were invited to be a part of this. Andrew Spencer volunteered.

AGREED:

- a) To note the content of the update provided
- b) Recommend that the board approve the TEL Strategy as presented.

8

ANNUAL KPIS AND BALANCED SCORECARD ITEMS – DISCUSSION ON WHAT THESE MAY BE FOR 2021/22

The principal advised that this is an opportunity to build upon the discussions at the strategy day and for the committee to consider how the college might set its KPIs to drive things forward. He reminded that the QIAP has been the focus for setting KPIs and the anticipation is that the same KPIs would be monitored but with higher targets set. In addition to this, there are two new proposed areas:

- Future world of work
- Employer engagement to ensure that the curriculum is current and reflective of needs. Part of this will be how the college is supporting staff to engage with employers in terms of industry experience and what students will need in the future.

The committee were advised that there is an opportunity to work with Weston College through the FE Professional Development Fund and that there needs to be a way of monitoring and measuring these two additional aspects.

CH

A challenge from one member of the committee was to really consider the metrics to be able to monitor and measure equality, diversity and inclusion, and it was acknowledged that this would be monitored through progress against the equality and diversity action plan. The CEO confirmed that the college intends to report on the disadvantaged groups more routinely in every aspect and that any areas of concern will then be flagged to the board.

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CH A challenge from the committee was that monitoring the delivery of the TEL Strategy needs to remain as a strategic objective. The CEO advised that, next year, the focus will be implementation rather than development.

With the additions discussed, the committee were happy to support the proposal made regarding KPIs.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

9 **RISK REPORT**

The vice principal provided an update on the three red RAG-rated items, which are:

- 1) Failure to embed the ASPIRE curriculum. Key matters noted were:
 - There are 12 different ways in which the college tests this
 - The college continues to make progress but it is not yet there; however, it is making good progress.

- 2) Grade 3 Ofsted overall effectiveness judgement – key matters noted were:
 - Over 340 staff have met in 31 self-assessment meetings
 - There is a really thorough review process
 - The college has been able to appoint new heads for the Maths and Health & Social Care departments. Health & Social Care also has three new members of staff, each of which have appropriate industry experience
 - There are a range of actions in place in relation to the weaker areas.

- 3) Teacher assessed grades (TAGs) – key matters noted were:
 - For English and maths, there were over 26,000 individual assessments completed, which was a huge job
 - TAGs do come with a risk, but there is confidence that the college has really strong and robust QA processes in place
 - Awarding organisations will sample the grades awarded; however, there have only been a small number so far, which is a positive sign.

Q The committee asked whether the college expects TAGs to continue to have risks and, if they do, will they grow or shrink. The vice principal expressed the view that TAGs carry a risk at inspection; however, the college is really confident regarding its processes. The college does have a provisional rise in grades in maths and English and some A-Level subjects; the committee were given assurance that these have been checked and rechecked, but it is likely they will be tested at inspection.

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The CEO advised that, with the rise in grades, it will mean that the college has some tough starting points for the years to come and that staff will need to rise to the challenge.

The committee asked whether there is now likely to be a lag in terms of the inspection, given the recent Ofsted publication. The vice principal indicated that East Midlands is one of the smallest Ofsted regions and that they do have a backlog. It is not the case that WNC is top of the list, but it is due an inspection. There is a COVID backlog and, therefore, WNC's inspection may be pushed back into the spring.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

10 **DATA ON A PAGE 2020/21**

The assistant principal introduced this item and explained that the TAGs have not been permitted to go onto the system so that there is no risk that students will see the information. Therefore, at this point in time, it is not possible to show progress data.

The committee's attention was drawn to retention, and key matters noted were:

- For young people, this has declined by 3.6%
- There are no national achievement rates since the pre-COVID position
- Adult retention has declined by 1%
- Apprenticeship information gives an update in relation to off-the-job and reviews completed in the last three months
- Retention is up for subcontracted delivery because of the return to face-to-face activities
- Community provision has declined by 0.9%
- High needs retention has stayed broadly the same, as has the position for those students in receipt of free school meals.

The committee's attention was drawn to the deep dive data. It was acknowledged that this was discussed earlier in the meeting, and the assistant principal confirmed that they are ongoing with partners.

Q

The committee considered the information provided regarding the percentage of off-the-job activity and questioned whether there was a trend in terms of the amber RAG rating. It was explained that there has been a lockdown lag in terms of not being able to show progress and that the focus has been on practical skills development and ability to evidence this. The committee were advised that there are some genuine reasons for the lag and that the college is currently checking all of the 21% in terms of compliance and paperwork. The committee asked whether staff have a line of sight in relation to this and can provide assurance. It was confirmed that they do but it was explained that it will

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take some time to clear the backlog. Examples given were in relation to end point assessments, exams, etc., all of which are the aspects needed to get a learner to gateway.

Q/CH A question and challenge from the committee was in relation to high needs learners in Engineering. The data and metrics were described as concerning and they asked whether there was a reason for this. It was explained that there are only a small number of learners in this category and, therefore, this does skew the data.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

11 **3-YEAR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

The vice principal indicated that all are a work in progress but that there is some really good thinking. Each assistant principal provided an update on their area.

- 1) Nikki Slack – key points noted were:
 - In Health and Social Care, the primary challenge is to ensure that the college has the right people and skills
 - There are 240 FE learners and 60 learners on an A-Level route
 - The directorate has recruited new staff and a head of department, which will improve quality and delivery
 - In 2021/22, there will be a simulated ward on site, which will be a flexible and very interactive space. This will allow students to build skills and confidence and includes working with robotic mannequins. The facility will allow teachers to be able to differentiate tasks. The area mirrors NTU facilities, which will help transition.
 - In 2022/23, the college will develop pathways into sector specialisms. There are great links with the NHS and NTU and, in relation to the latter, activity is starting to accelerate.

Sports

- There are now lots more people engaged to support mental health
- There is demand in the employment market
- The college's aim is to prepare learners well for the working environment
- New level 2 CIMSPA provision
- College will delay the launch until October 2021
- Supports more AEB delivery
- Increases employer engagement
- T-Levels still being considered
- Looking at apprenticeship routes
- The aim is to be a centre of sporting excellence, but the college would need new facilities for this.

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CH

A challenge from one member of the committee was to ensure that the new health and social care space is as flexible as possible so that the different environments for care are available, e.g. hospitals, home, care homes, etc.

2) Phil Clark

The committee were advised that there are a number of opportunities, including those in relation to:

- Civil engineering
- Further BTEC offer
- Modern methods of construction
- Continuing to build industry sponsorship

He indicated that it is all about adding to what is already offered, including working with industry in all areas. The committee were advised that the college now also has a 'building heroes' offer, which is provided through building services.

3) Ian Frear – he drew the committee's attention to his written report, and key points noted were:

- Summary of challenges and the college's response to these
- Specific routes within the offer
- Significant new apprenticeship offer
- College now working with NTU in relation to HE
- Automation and robotics offer
- 2+1 offer, i.e. two A-Levels plus a vocational subject
- Key curriculum opportunities over the next one to three years and key actions
- Capital expenditure requirements
- Growth targets.

4) Jane Fishwick – the committee were advised that her responsibilities cover a broad range of areas, including access and academic studies, creative, and digital business, and that for each there is very much a focus on technology. This will include training on the use of drones, and these will be used across a number of areas, e.g. geography and computer science. The intention is to create an e-sports hub, which should really appeal to learners. The aim is to revisit and refresh plans every half term, and the college will consider the use of AR, VR and IA at every opportunity.

The committee asked whether the facilities and offer will allow students with disabilities to transition more easily. It was confirmed that the college supports all learners, including those with autism. A challenge from the committee was that there needs to be a sharper focus on SEND learners and that it needs to be clear that the college has the same expectations for these individuals as they do for all other learners.

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AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

12 **CEIAG UPDATE**

The vice principal introduced her detailed report. Key matters noted were:

- 409 more career interventions have taken place this year when compared to last.
- The use of Microsoft teams has really improved engagement levels.
- Destinations are the impact evidence and there is a new system in place to capture this information at a number of points rather than just one per year.
- The committee's attention was drawn to the table provided and it was explained that the grey shaded areas are those learners considered to be 'at risk'.
- Going forward, the college is planning careers referral activities much earlier in the academic year.
- The college has been able to secure some really inspirational speakers through virtual mechanisms, with some being individuals who would have been unlikely to participate if required to physically travel.
- The college is immensely proud of what has been achieved in relation to work placements. 78% of level 2 and 79% of level 3 students have completed study programme work placements.
- The college has seen some students who have obtained jobs as a result of their virtual work placements, and all interns have had placements.

The committee took the opportunity to congratulate the team on the individual placements and the level of placements secured.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

13 **LEARNER VOICE UPDATE**

The vice principal advised that the final learner rep meeting took place on 15th June and it was an opportunity to consider a range of matters determined by students. One really interesting and important aspect was their advice to incoming learners, which has been captured. The college intends to continue with learner rep meetings through MS Teams, as this has been really positive in terms of engagement; however, the senior team will drop in on the curriculum face-to-face meetings.

In terms of the learner voice framework, there are no proposed changes for next year and the college will continue with the Rate Your Course initiative.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

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14 **SAFEGUARDING, PREVENT AND E&D**

The vice principal provided an update, and key points noted were:

- 1) Safeguarding
 - The report provides the statistics. Particularly to note are the level of mental health referrals and the level of sexual assault and harassment notifications. In relation to the latter, there were 22 referrals, six of which were referred on externally.
 - The fitness to practice process was instigated for the first time this year. It was explained that this only relates to childcare provision and is invoked when there are concerns that a learner who is about to complete their study should not, or is not ready to, work with children.
 - Ofsted published a review into sexual harassment, and the college is putting in place a number of processes. The college will collect information regarding the lower-level issues more comprehensively, although it was acknowledged that a sensible approach needs to be taken.
 - The college is setting up forums to be able to collect students' views and feedback, i.e. 'what does it feel like to be a student at WNC?'
- 2) Safeguarding development plan
 - The college is sharpening its focus on data so that it can track closely where the more disadvantaged students are when compared to their peers.
 - The intention is to do the same for E&D so that student progress can be tracked.

CH A challenge from the committee was to focus on the progression made/distance travelled rather than just the numbers.

- 3) Equality & diversity
 - The committee's attention was drawn to the statement of intent, which has now been subject to staff consultation.
 - The equality and diversity steering group met for the first time in June. Some minor changes were made to the intent discussed by the board, but these were not significant.
 - The statement of intent also has to go to the Workforce Development Committee before it can be approved by the board.
 - The team have now turned the intent into an action plan, and the intention is to add a further column which sets out the starting point so that the college is able to measure its success.

The committee considered the document and were supportive of the proposal that, subject to comments by the Workforce Development Committee, the board approve as presented.

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The committee were advised that, since the last report, there have been four complaints now made in relation to protected characteristics. Three relate to peer-on-peer racial abuse and the fourth was an allegation that a member of staff purposefully referred to a student by their incorrect pronoun preference. She confirmed that all have been investigated and are resolved.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

15 **COMMITTEE REVIEW**

The director of governance introduced this item and explained that it was an opportunity for the committee to reflect on the year and consider any further aspects that could be improved. It was acknowledged that changes have been made in-year to both membership and agenda planning, which has brought about improvements. The committee were satisfied that the terms of reference and membership remain fit for purpose and, in relation to the work plan, they were happy to approve, with the addition of TEL strategy rollout updates being provided.

AGREED:

- a) To note the content of the update provided
- b) Recommend to the board that the committee terms of reference and membership remain unchanged for 2021/22
- c) To approve the workplan as presented.

16 **AOB**

There were no matters of additional business.

17 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The director of governance confirmed that this is Thursday 9th September 2021 at 5pm.

Meeting closed at 8.05pm.

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