

**ST HELENS COLLEGE**  
**STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

**MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE HELD AT**  
**12.00NOON ON MONDAY 8 MAY 2017**

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**MINUTES**

**MEMBERSHIP:**

- |                                   |                       |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| * Mrs Elaine Brocklehurst (Chair) | * Mr John Middlehurst |
| * Mrs Susan Jee                   | * Mr Nick Gribben     |
| * Mr Phil Round                   | * Dr Jette Burford    |

\* Denotes present

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs Anne Pryer, Principal, Knowsley Community College  
Mrs Victoria Roberts, Vice Principal  
Mrs Claire Picton (minute taker)

**Appointment of Acting Clerk to the Corporation**

Due to the absence of Mrs C Jones, Clerk to the Corporation, **Mr J Middlehurst** was appointed as the Acting Clerk for this Standards Committee.

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were notified.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs P Jervis and Mrs C Jones.

**3. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business. It was noted that feedback from the Ofsted Inspection is to be discussed in a separate feedback meeting to governors.

**4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON THE 21 APRIL 2017**

The minutes of the above meeting were agreed and signed as a correct record.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

Page 2, item 7: Learner Performance Report

It was noted that this action point will be taken under agenda item 9.

## **6. AREA REVIEW/MERGER PROCESS**

### Area Review

The Principal briefed governors on two issues raised by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA):  
The first issue was a concern that General Further Education Colleges within the Liverpool City Region are losing 16-18 students numbers. Mr J Middlehurst queried if the College has an indication as to why we are losing student numbers. The Principal noted that it is attributable to a number of reasons, some of which are; falling rolls with unemployment being the lowest for a decade, strong 6<sup>th</sup> form colleges in the region and many 16-18 year olds prefer to be in employment. It was noted that the SFA is concerned with the scale of the problem. Mr J Middlehurst also questioned if this is a national pattern, to which the Principal noted that she has only been provided with information with regards to Merseyside.

The Chair questioned if this will impact on mergers throughout the region, specifically if Colleges do not engage with process. The Principal noted that if a College decided not to engage with the process then it may result in the insolvency route, should significant financial issues appear.

The second issue noted by the Principal was in relation to Apprenticeship provision. The SFA have noted that they would like to see a collaborative approach, in order to alleviate concerns around the quality and size of provision within the region.

### St Helens College & Knowsley Community College Merger

The Principal noted that the first Restructuring Facility application draft went into the Transaction Unit last week. Copies are available for governors. A meeting is taking place this week with the Transaction Unit, St Helens College and Knowsley Community College, with a deadline to respond with the final version due on Friday 26 May 2017. It was noted that the due diligence is taking place, with the hope that the report can be submitted at the same time as the application. It was noted for governors' information that KMPG has provided support for the process and advised on the submission of the Restructuring Facility application. The Transaction Unit will be distilling the application into a 10/12 page document before it goes to the Committees.

The Chair of Governors noted that governors are welcome to comment on the application, but with a focus on the essential parts that are required. Mr J Middlehurst requested clarification on what the final document will look like. The Principal noted that the application will have an executive summary for each part of the document. The Principal also noted the St Helens College and Knowsley Community College are working closely together, sharing information and expertise, and that was also ongoing throughout the inspection.

The Principal noted a concern with the Transaction Unit timings that may have an impact on with regards to completion in time for the merger in September 2017.

## **7.**

### **a) In-year English & maths progress report**

The Chair noted that the report contains some positive features. Mr N Gribben briefed governors on the following points:

P7: Next steps – Mr N Gribben confirmed that this is a narrative for the purpose of the meeting and focuses on the summary statement and present position. It was not intended to replace the action plan.

The Chair raised a query with regards to students' expected end dates. The Chair also commented that it is good to see that the work continues and some progress is being made. Mr N Gribben confirmed that all the progress data is contained within pro monitor and markbook.

The Principal added that the spreadsheet used is a very good tracking system for recording the progress, and noted that it needs to be accessible. Mr J Middlehurst noted that maths still remains an issue and it was attributable to 8 students. A discussion took place with regards to the cohort size, which appears to be missing from the report, Mr N Gribben to address this issue. The Chair also requested that for ease of governors understanding the data, could a key/summary sheet for governors be provided for the next meeting.

**ACTION: Mr N Gribben – Report to be put into context with cohorts, and to produce a key/summary in the tables to aid governors to fully understand**

The Chair noted that we need to be conscious of the targets being met. Mrs V Roberts noted that CPD and relevant meetings have been taking place over the year to aid staff within English & maths and vocational staff working together on driving English & maths forward.

It was noted that attendance rates for maths are at 82.6% maths, with English being slightly higher at 86.6%. The Principal stated that a push needs to be made to get attendance in line with the College average. Mrs A Pryer added that as vocational courses complete there is a tendency for attendance to drop off, a focus on tracking and driving this through is key. It was noted that this is also being worked on at Knowsley Community College. A discussion took place on incentives to possibly help. Mrs V Roberts noted that Heads of Department have met to discuss the issues. It was noted that this is key leading up to the first set of GCSE exams which will start within the next few weeks. A discussion took place with regards to the importance of integrating English & maths into the students' vocational element. Mr N Gribben confirmed that this does happen across the College but noted that the structure for the GCSE exams is key and the students must perform to pass this exam. It was noted that the GCSE English & maths debate will continue to remain a priority for the government and a high priority for the College.

## **b) In-year A Level progress report**

Mrs V Roberts briefed governors on the following:

- Attendance is currently 92% and has remained steady for the last few weeks, with Retention is 79% for 16/17 leavers and this is below our out-turn for last year.
- There were a number of workshops and revision classes over Easter, and several subjects are running lunchtime/4pm revision classes, with more scheduled for nearer the exams. The first exam is on 15th May.
- Some staff have now had the third and final TLA observation and initial indications are for an improvement on the number of Outstanding grades compared to 2015/16 (50% Outstanding, 42.9% Good)

The Chair requested more clarification with regards to the ALPS scores contained within the report. Mr N Gribben briefed governors that the lower the score the better, with a score of 6 progressing as expected. It was noted that the numbers can change depending on the course. In relation to students numbers for 2015/16 it was queried as to why there is

no information on student numbers for maths and Biology. The Chair of Governors requested further clarification on the sample sizes and the numbers involved and also the option for a flag be put on the information so that governors can view the information in a more understandable way in relation to the learner outcomes.

**ACTION: Mrs V Roberts/Mr N Gribben to provide further information on the sample size to be provided for the next meeting**

### **c) In-year TLA report**

Mr N Gribben briefed governors on the current position to date. Actions that Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) team have carried out this year was noted, along with current staffing grade profile and work with Mark Hodgetts and the team are undertaking moving forward.

The Chair questioned if there are action plans in place for the areas of improvement? The Principal confirmed that each Lecturer will have an action plan on pro observe and are fully aware of actions required to move them forward. It was also noted that this also links into the individual's appraisal and CPD plan that is located on the HR system and monitored through the College's performance management framework.

The Principal noted that Mark Hodgetts is working on progress over time and how to show this in terms of measuring impact and reporting back. It is a new initiative for this academic year and we are still within the first year and results may only be available in the latter end of this academic year. The Chair noted that governors previously asked for further information with regards to progress over time and Teaching and Learning grade profiles of staff. The Principal noted that work was undertaken this year with the Head Teacher of the 14-16 Academy to learn how schools carry out the model and how the College could adopt it as best practice as requested previously by governors. The Principal also briefed on the focus on progress during the recent Ofsted inspection.

Governors raised a query with regards to the three teachers that have been graded inadequate and questioned if actions have been taken. Mr N Gribben confirmed that one member of staff has left the College and other two members of staff are being managed through the TLA and performance management framework.

### **d) In-year WPL report**

Mrs V Roberts briefed governors on the above report. It was noted that there are fewer withdrawals than the same period last year, and currently 93 apprentices still to achieve. Mrs V Roberts is meeting regularly with Heads of Department on a countdown to get students through as quickly as possible. The Chair of Governors questioned if everything is being done to get the learners through in a timely manner. Mrs V Roberts noted that a dedicated member of staff has been allocated the duty of getting in touch with students, and the results are that it has reengaged 7 out of 9. Some issues are historical-and are attributable to breaks in learning or Functional Skills, Mrs V Roberts is pushing to get the data cleansed, and noted that the rigour is there. Assessors are currently going through the whole cohort but with a strong focus on the 93. The Chair of Governors questioned how many students do we expect to get through? Mrs V Roberts added that overall everyone remaining with a 2016/17 end date, not yet withdrawn will achieve but some are at risk of not being timely.

It was noted that CDA have put expected end dates into month by month categories so that data can be focussed. The Chair requested that Mrs V Roberts provide governors with an update on how many out of 93 complete timely. Mr J Middlehurst requested if learners are already on an action plan? It was clarified that a more rigorous action plan is in place for those learners that are a concern. Mrs V Roberts noted that all learners are on RAG rating and a countdown is in place. It was requested that a progress chart be placed in Principalship Office to provide daily updates.

**ACTION: Mrs V Roberts to provide further information and arrange progress chart**

It was noted that an exercise is taking place reviewing framework achievement rates, in conjunction with Knowsley Community College to look at the offer moving forward. Governors discussed the programmes that look like a cause for concern. The Principal and Mrs A Pryer noted that they have gone through the list and are looking at poorly performing courses and support the organisation can put in place to improve the apprenticeship provision. Mr P Round requested if there are any specific causes that come through on poorly performing courses. Mrs V Roberts noted that this is very mixed. The Chair noted that it is not just apprenticeships and stressed that the College needs to be focussed on achieving the best possible outcomes and the governors will support the College in every way possible to achieve this.

Mr J Middlehurst questioned why Waterside apprentices are performing better than the College apprentices? The Principal noted that Waterside employs the apprentices, which could make the difference. Mr J Middlehurst asked Mrs V Roberts/Mr N Gribben why are the apprentices not getting up to the required level? It was suggested that the College should look at another company to look at best practice. Governors requested that a report be put together to explain why this is happening. The Chair of Governors noted that a route cause approach is required.

**ACTION: Mrs V Roberts/Mr N Gribben to produce a report to the next meeting**

#### **8. QIP AND SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS 2016/17**

Mr N Gribben noted that the Self Assessment process and QIP review is currently underway and programme teams will be beginning the process. It was noted that Mr N Gribben is looking for a governor to participate in the process.

#### **9. LEARNER PERFORMANCE REPORT (INCLUDING PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD)**

The Learner Performance Report for March and April 2017 was noted. The headline figures remain on 16-18 retention, with an improved picture including English and maths. 16-18 diplomas remain a concern. The Chair noted that the requested information from the last meeting has not been provided. Unless further information is provided on the destinations then the governors would not be able to move forward on the issue. The Chair of Governors noted that information needs to be slicker and faster.

**ACTION: Mrs V Robert to provide governors with the information before the next meeting takes place**

The Chair requested further clarification on what is meant by all qualifications 91% retention or should it be 90% retention rounded. It was noted that the information needs to be consistent throughout the report and needs to be checked.

**ACTION: Mrs V Roberts to provide clarification**

Mr N Gribben/Mrs V Roberts are currently working with Heads of Department to look into the reasons and trends behind the withdrawals. The Principal requested further analysis at a

higher level than the individual reasons for withdrawal. Discussion took place which referred to help at initial stages such as IAG to identify possible reasons, (i.e. specific sectors/industries).

Mrs A Pryer requested if the information could be broken down into specific groups and specific level of detail to aid in looking at the root cause. The Chair of Governors noted that governors could be more focussed on the issues if appropriate analytical commentary was included. Mr J Middlehurst suggested a possible dummy run of information for the Chair to comment.

**ACTION: Mr J Hays/HR, Staff development to be provided for SLT on this issue.**

**ACTION: Mrs V Roberts to provide data broken down into more specific levels**

Mrs V Roberts briefed on the January start cohort where the withdrawal of three students had contributed to the percentage of withdrawals. Mr N Gribben further briefed on students within Hair & Beauty and the factors that were attributable to the withdrawals. Issues were discussed with regards to English and maths for adults and putting into place appropriate IAG. Mrs A Pryer noted that this is an issue with Knowsley Community College also, with attendance noted as poor and very similar to issues raised by Mr N Gribben.

The Chair of Governors requested clarification on the numbers contained within Appendix 1, first line with a cohort of 225 and total numbers show 3 missing. Governors requested clarification.

**ACTION: Mrs V Roberts to seek clarification on the missing numbers**

## **10. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business.

## **11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Next meeting to be held on 12 June 2017 commencing at 9.00am

Mr P Round noted his apologies for the next meeting.