

**Minutes of the Standards Committee held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 4.30pm via Microsoft Teams**

Members Present: Katharine Clough  
Alison Hodge  
Helen Lawley  
Suhail Rana  
Neil Thomas  
David Whatton (Chair)

In attendance: Andy Comyn (Chief Operating Officer)  
Gill Darwood (Senior Officer Corporate Governance) (SOCG)  
Diana Martin (Vice Principal)  
Helen Morgan (Assistant Principal Curriculum & Standards)  
Dean Price (Standards & Performance Manager)  
Carl Riding (Vice Principal Curriculum & Performance)

**1 Confirmation of quorum and apologies for absence**

1.1 There were no apologies for absence. The SOCG confirmed the meeting was quorate.

**2 Declarations of Interest**

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

**3 Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair for 2020/21**

3.1 **It was resolved** To appoint David Whatton as Chair and Katharine Clough as Vice Chair for the year 2020/21.

**4 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

4.1 The minutes were confirmed as a true record for signature by the Chair.

**5 Matters arising**

5.1 There were no matters arising other than those covered on the agenda.

**6 Terms of reference 2020/21**

6.1 It was considered good practice for Corporation committees to undertake a periodic review of their terms of reference. The SOCG advised that the terms of reference had been reviewed at the Corporation Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November and approved.

6.2 **It was resolved** To note the terms of reference for 2020/21.

**7 Standards Committee's Annual Report for 2019/20**

7.1 The SOCG presented the report summarising the work undertaken by the Standards Committee in 2019/20. Once approved by members the report would be placed in the document library of Convene for access by all Corporation members.

7.2 **It was resolved** To note the standards committee's annual report for 2019/20.

## **8 Data dashboard review for 2019/20 and 2020/21**

- 8.1 The CE&P provided an update on the data dashboard with particular emphasis on the enrolments and attendance of key client groups:-
- *Full time 16-18 learners* - enrolments were up on the previous year by approximately 200 learners, which was partially due to learners who had intended to do apprenticeships but had not been able to find jobs and so had enrolled on full time programmes. Attendance was up on the previous year possibly partly due to the compressed timetable.
  - *A level learners* - enrolments were increased compared to the previous year and attendance was in line with last year.
  - *Apprentices and work based learning* – there was a shortfall compared to the previous year as had been expected but attendance was very high this year.
  - *Full and part time adults* – enrolments were slightly behind the same point last year which was expected. The CE&P advised that the expanded adult offer would be promoted strongly in the new year. Attendance was in line with previous years.
  - *Higher skills* – enrolments were down slightly on HNC/HND compared to the previous year but more HE learners had enrolled on higher apprenticeships. Attendance was high in keeping with previous years.
- 8.2 The CE&P noted that all other areas of the dashboard had been updated and would be fully reviewed at the Corporation meeting in December.
- 8.3 **It was resolved** To note the data dashboard review.

## **9 Review of Operational Development Plans**

- 9.1 D Martin reminded members that the college's operational development plans were paused between April and October as focus moved to responding and planning delivery during the Coronavirus pandemic. Members of the Senior Leadership Group each led on a Task and Finish Group:-
- Develop Online Enrolment - Debbie Goode
  - Design a 6 week transition programme - Diana Martin
  - Keep Warm Activities - Karl Veltman
  - HE programme - Helen Morgan
  - Completion of CAGs - Lisa Stevenson
  - Technical completion timetable - Matt Laws
  - Ambitious adult offer- Claire Millard
  - Apprenticeship completions - Carl Riding
  - Apprenticeships Breaks in learning - Lynn Glazzard and Rachel Corns
  - Transition for Aspire Learners - Andrew Sylvester
  - Building Capacity for online learning - Shaun Hunt
  - Supporting our staff - Kathryn Jones and Neil Thomas
  - Building operations - Steve Johnson
  - Waltham Forrest ATECC - Sanjeev Ohri
- 9.2 The work of the task and finish groups had been critical in supporting existing and new students, and a successful start to the new academic year and that limited focus on other matters in the operational development plans had been appropriate.
- 9.3 In response to a point raised by K Clough, D Martin noted that the work undertaken during this period by staff would be recorded and acknowledged via the performance

management process and the CE&P explained that this would also be recognised through the revised approach to the Annual Strategic Impact Assessment which would be considered under item 10.

- 9.4 In response to a question from the Chair, D Martin agreed to investigate the issue in relation to attendance on English and mathematics programmes by A level learners, which related to a small cohort of learners but it was not clear whether this was a system glitch or an ongoing issue.
- 9.5 The Chair requested that milestone notes were updated to indicate if delays in completion were solely due to Covid or whether there were other factors. D Martin agreed to ensure that this was noted within the progress update.
- 9.6 The CE&P confirmed that any outstanding actions at the year end would be reviewed and rolled into next year where still relevant.
- 9.7 **It was resolved** To note the review of operational development plans.

## **10 Annual Strategic Impact Assessment 2019/20 Proposal**

- 10.1 The CE&P noted that, following submission of the finalised Individual Learner Record at the end of October, the College would now turn to the production of its Annual Strategic Impact Assessment (ASIA). For academic year 2019-20 however, this was likely to be quite a different document and he explained that some colleges had called into question the merit of producing any sort of self assessment report given the national picture and the lack of publication of any national performance data.
- 10.2 He presented, for consideration, a table of contents proposed for an amended version of the ASIA for 2019/20. Whilst it would still report on some performance data for each key client group, it acknowledged that national comparators would not be included and that this meant that reporting on such items as 'value added' would not be possible. It also noted that destination data would not be included in the first draft due to a new process for gathering destination data across the West Midlands being implemented in the new year.
- 10.3 Instead of the usual narrative against each key client group about its strategic inputs and activity in line with Ofsted inspection framework, for this year each section would have a narrative around the exceptional work undertaken in 2019/20. Under the headings of supporting students, employers, community and staff, this would be an opportunity to share the work undertaken during lockdown and over the summer. It would also be supported by a timeline ('A year with Coronavirus') which would be a more pictorial representation of the year including key milestones before lockdown (such as Queen's Anniversary Prize Award) and following lockdown.
- 10.4 The draft ASIA would be brought to the Corporation meeting in December for approval.
- 10.5 Members endorsed this approach and felt it would be a good reflection of the efforts which had been undertaken to support learners and the community and would be important recognition for staff and for wider stakeholders. They also noted the value of reporting the achievement data albeit without national comparisons so that these were compared year on year and so that trend lines could be seen for historic comparisons. The Chair noted the need to capture the change in grade assessment in

terms of the impact on results and flag them for future reference as well as highlighting those that had not been impacted by the change. The CE&P felt that this could be effectively highlighted in the narrative within the report.

10.6 **It was resolved** To endorse the approach to the Annual Strategic Impact Assessment 2019/20.

## **11 Sector specific strategic developments**

### **11.1 College Collaboration Fund update**

11.1.1 C Riding presented a report detailing Dudley College's application for College Collaboration Fund (CCF) for NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and Digital Skills.

#### *11.1.2 NEETS Project*

C Riding explained that the aim of the project was to support the reduction in NEETS in the West Midlands region. Dudley College was leading on this collaborative project alongside seven other colleges in the West Midlands and so far the project had identified inconsistencies of NEET tracking in the region and this was hoped to be streamlined to capture those young people and get them engaged in learning with intervention activities. Data sharing activities were underway and the first intervention activities had been submitted to the DfE for approval. A mid project review would be submitted in the new year with the findings presented to DfE at the conclusion of the project.

11.1.3 The CE&P noted that he had raised the issue of potential additional funding in year for NEET learners with ESFA as the aim was to give them the opportunity to enrol on programmes starting in January/February and funding would be needed to support this.

11.1.4 It was noted that the project timescales were tight with completion by the end of March 2021 and the achievement of set target numbers would be challenging in the current circumstances. The Chair noted the need to maintain integrity in the data as the learning from this project would have a longer term impact than that over the initial few months. The CE&P noted that an effective data sharing agreement would lay the foundation for future years and ensure that the project resulted in sustainable activity.

#### *11.1.5 Digital Skills Project*

D Price explained that the aim of the project was to develop a high quality model for on-line remote synchronous (real time) lessons for teachers and produce a toolkit, exemplar videos and lesson guidance for FE teachers to be shared across the country. There were nine colleges in the West Midlands involved in this initiative with Walsall College as lead. Together the colleges had identified areas of good practice in synchronous learning however there were areas for further improvement and together the colleges were working to develop resources to increase the engagement of learners by enhancing the training of staff, who delivered to all levels from level 1 to 6 provision. This would be done by the sharing of identified best practice and CPD training.

11.1.6 **It was resolved** To note the update on College Collaboration Fund projects.

## **12 Teaching and Learning Matters**

### **12.1 Teaching and learning update - first half term under Coronavirus**

12.1.1 D Price presented a report which provided a summary of teaching and learning activity. The report identified how the College had adapted its strategies and had continued to deliver high standards of educational delivery, with the up-skilling of staff and learners in digital skills due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on education.

12.1.2 The report highlighted:

- The digital delivery and how the learning experience was maintained.
- Supporting its most vulnerable learners who could not attend the college and enabling them to feel included in the curriculum.
- Adapting the induction process to prepare learners for the new teaching and learning methods in place and providing activities to reassure and support them with the changes.
- The intervention measures in place to ensure learners were engaged and remained on programme and, due to the new on-line admissions process, ensuring each learner was fully supported if they found the chosen programme was not for them.
- Ensuring actions from the previous Ofsted 2017 continued to be addressed in terms of High Needs.
- Ongoing quality assurance health checks.

12.1.3 D Price further outlined the heightened focus on CPD to support staff with digital delivery and the introduction of 'Digiweek' activity where staff were required to record a lesson and send it to their outstanding practitioner to enable additional support to be targeted at those staff where it was needed. This had been highly successful with whole areas delivering their curriculum digitally due to Covid closures, for example when Dudley Sixth and CAT Centre had needed to move to fully online delivery.

12.1.4 Learner surveys had been undertaken to check on learners' digital ability and access to resources and this had identified 211 learners who had no access to home IT facilities and had therefore been provided with alternative measures. It had also enabled tutors to identify any learners who would not be able to access on line learning in the event of them needing to self isolate and prepare home study packs for them.

12.1.5 He advised that two of the outstanding practitioner roles had been refocused as digital innovation leads across the College.

12.1.6 The Chair highlighted the importance of capturing the impact of digital learning so that post Covid the College would have an understanding of what areas had worked well as digital delivery and those which were more successful as face to face delivery. D Price explained that all learner progress was being tracked and the CE&P noted that student feedback on this would be gathered through the student satisfaction induction survey. The immediate aim was to enhance delivery and ensure the College was resilient through Covid when individuals needed to be learning from home whilst ensuring that evidence was gathered to see lessons to be learned for the future. A Hodge noted that it was likely that digital delivery was not a cheaper solution compared to classroom delivery. D Martin noted feedback from English and mathematics tutors who felt this had been very time consuming and this would be one area of delivery where it would be possible to directly compare this year's progress to last year's for the first term.

12.1.7 **It was resolved** To note the Teaching and Learning report.

### **13 Safeguarding and Student Conduct Matters**

#### **13.1 Safeguarding and Learner Conduct Report**

13.1.1 D Martin presented a report which provided a summary of safeguarding arrangements in the College as well as updates in developments across the College.

##### 13.1.2 *Staffing*

- 192 staff had completed online safeguarding update training
- 178 staff had completed online Prevent update
- Safeguarding Administrator - maternity cover arrangements in place for this post holder.

##### 13.1.3 *Safeguarding*

- 261 safeguarding concerns logged.
- 53 learners were Children in Care.
- 11 learners were Children in Need.
- 12 learners were on a Child Protection Plans.
- 8 learners identified as "at risk" of exploitation.
- 4 learners involved or "at risk" of criminal exploitation.

##### 13.1.4 *Discipline - Code of Conduct*

- 16 suspensions for this period.
- 2 exclusions - 1 linked to safeguarding and 1 following their return to College.

##### 13.1.5 *Counselling*

- 121 referrals.

##### 13.1.6 She further reported that:

- The Covid-19 pandemic was not the main source of anxiety but had brought added problems and difficulties to students.
- During the Coronavirus pandemic small adjustments to the service had been made this academic year.
- Safespace was operating on a one in one out basis.
- Virtual counselling and safeguarding support had continued where this was a student's preferred option.
- Many multi-agency meetings were conducted via Teams or Zoom with good attendance by all agencies.
- Counsellors were offering two drop-in sessions per day.

13.1.7 D Martin noted that the UK threat level had been raised to high following recent terrorist attacks in Europe, but that the College's safeguarding and Prevent arrangements remained effective.

13.1.8 **It was resolved** To note the safeguarding and student conduct report.

#### **13.2 Confidential - Compliments and complaints analysis 2019/20**

*This matter is the subject of a separate and confidential minute.*

### **14 Office for Students update**

14.1 H Morgan reminded members that Office for Students (OfS) registration was necessary for the delivery of Higher programmes of study within Dudley College of Technology.

There were a series of conditions of registration which must be maintained in order for registration to remain in place. Breach of these conditions could result in withdrawal of registration and substantial financial penalties and therefore close attention must be paid to adherence of key dates and data submissions as well as ensuring that any changes to the delivery of Higher Education or the College itself were reported in a timely manner.

14.2 The report provided updates to the Office for Students registration requirements in terms of the reduced bureaucratic burden on providers, a proposed 10% reduction in registration fees and a revised timetable for data submissions. These changes were welcomed by members.

14.3 **It was resolved** To note the update on Office for Students requirements.

**15 Date of Next Meeting**

15.1 Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 4.30pm

**16 Any Other Business**

16.1 There were no items of any other business.

The meeting closed at 17.55.



David Whatton, Chair

9<sup>th</sup> February 2021