



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE**  
held on  
**MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2017**  
in the **BOARD ROOM**  
at the **OSWESTRY CAMPUS**

|                 |                       |            |   |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------------|---|
| <b>Present:</b> | <b>Mrs G Richards</b> | <b>GPR</b> | <b>Chair, Health &amp; Safety Lead Governor</b> |
|                 | <b>Mr I Clinton</b>   | <b>IC</b>  | <b>Principal &amp; Chief Executive</b>          |
|                 | <b>Mrs V Cox</b>      | <b>HVC</b> |   |
|                 | <b>Mrs W Dakin</b>    | <b>JWD</b> | <b>Equality &amp; Diversity Lead Governor</b>   |
|                 | <b>Mrs F Flack</b>    | <b>FF</b>  | <b>Academic-Staff Governor</b>                  |
|                 | <b>Mr J Nicholls</b>  | <b>JN</b>  | <b>Lead Governor – Quality (part)</b>           |

*Attendance: 85.7%*

|                       |                       |            |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|--|
| <b>In attendance:</b> | <b>Mr P Nangle</b>    | <b>PN</b>  | <b>Deputy Principal</b>  |
|                       | <b>Ms K Roberts</b>   | <b>KR</b>  | <b>Assistant Principal Curriculum (APC)</b>                        |
|                       | <b>Ms S Shelston</b>  | <b>SS</b>  | <b>Assistance Principal Quality &amp; Student Services (APQSS)</b> |
|                       | <b>Mrs C Thompson</b> | <b>CDT</b> | <b>Governance Advisor</b>  |
|                       | <b>Mr A Anderson</b>  | <b>AA</b>  |  |
|                       | <b>Mrs C Bird</b>     | <b>CB</b>  | <b>Assessor – Business Administration (part)</b>                   |

*The meeting opened at 5.31 pm.*

*The Chair welcomed everyone to the newly re-formed Committee. The Post-Inspection Working Group, which had continued to monitor quality previously, had now been disbanded. She welcomed Andrew Anderson as an observer. He had been selected as a new governor and as a member of the Committee, and his appointment was expected to be ratified at the Board meeting on 22 November.*

| <b>Item</b>                                      | <b>Action</b> |
|--|---------------|
| <b>1. Apologies for absence</b><br>Ms E McQueen. |               |
| <b>2. Declarations of interest</b><br>None.      |               |

### **3. Post Inspection Working Group action notes & Matters Arising**

#### **3.1 Action notes**

The action notes of the meeting held on 2 October 2017 were noted.

#### **3.2 Matters Arising**

There were no Matters Arising.

*Chloe Bird joined the meeting.*

### **4. Apprenticeships**

#### **4.1 Presentation on Smart Assessor**

*JN joined the meeting.*

Ms Bird gave a presentation on Smart Assessor (SA) and how it worked for learners, assessors, managers and quality-assessors. Governors asked a range of questions including: action taken to assist learners without access to a computer; how work was assessed and marked, to secure improvement for learners; if all learners were now on SA, and if not, when this would be achieved; how assessors and employers found the system; how much support was provided to these groups to ensure they could use the system effectively; and whether employers actually used the system. The Deputy Principal said work had been ongoing to ensure all learners were on SA: an audit would be carried out that week, and it was planned to achieve target by the end of the month. Users all found SA to be very useful: training given the previous week ensured their confidence, which would be passed to employers. Governors asked how long Ms Bird considered it would take to bring her learners back on track on SA. She thought this would take a month to get them back on track.

Governors noted that the use of SA by learners, assessors and employers was the key to improving the apprenticeship area as it allowed, at all levels, close tracking and monitoring of progress. Governors asked if the system automatically flagged learners at risk. The APC confirmed that there was a report which could be run to show learners approaching end-date and those beyond end-date. Governors asked who would be taking the overall management responsibility for monitoring: there was a new Apprenticeship Manager (interim). Ms Bird was also an Internal Quality Assessor: SA was a powerful tool to facilitate this work.

Governors asked if all staff were complying with the requirement to use SA. The APC confirmed it was part of the performance management of the team running the department. Governors asked that, given its importance, apprenticeships should be a standing item on the agenda for the Committee.

#### **ACTION**

- 1. Make apprenticeships a standing agenda item.***

**CDT -  
ongoing**

*Ms Bird left the meeting.*

#### **4.2 Apprenticeships Improvement Plan – update**

##### **Apprenticeships Post-Inspection Action Plan (APIAP)**

The Deputy Principal presented his paper. He identified the issues that had led to the College being in a difficult and unclear position at the beginning of October:

- Intelligence and data had been lost as the merger with Reaseheath College had failed to materialise
- Middle and operational management had left the organisation

This had resulted in senior management being left without either data, or personnel to identify and manage the challenges. The outcome 2016/17 had been very poor at 36% timely and 37% overall. In October a new team had been put in place to address the immediate operational issues. The team had created a recovery plan to turn around the situation at pace.

As of that day apprenticeship numbers were 130 2017/18 finishers, 47 2018/19 finishers plus 29 rolled over from 16/17. The results of the last group would be added to those of 16/17 not the year in which they actually finished. The focus would be on the learners that could finish timely. Of the 130, 80 needed to finish timely for the 62% minimum achievement target. Governors asked if this was a challenging target to achieve: management confirmed it was. Governors asked why there had been 20 withdrawals since 1 October. This was part of the data cleansing.

As the results had fallen below minimum standards in the frameworks a Notice of Concern would be received imminently from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). There would be formal intervention. In addition, Ofsted looked for consistency in the quality of provision which evidently had not been in place for apprenticeships. As management had been predicting 66% overall rates when Ofsted had carried out its inspection in May, Ofsted would want to investigate what had happened.

The Deputy Principal talked in detail through the October action plan. He and the project team had gone completely back to basics, to get to the root of the issues, and had corrected faults so that there was complete transparency, and also confidence in the data. Governors thanked management for this work, so that they also could take confidence in the reports presented in future.

Governors asked when the assessor appraisals would be done if not by 18 November. The Deputy Principal said they would be completed by 30 November. Every assessor would then have an action plan. All assessors were having developmental observations, rather than lesson observations, so their skills were developed, for the benefit of learners.

Governors said that it would be important to re-establish contact with employers as the College's reputation had been negatively impacted by the issues in apprenticeships. The Business Development Manager was working on this with the new interim Apprenticeships Manager: they would

**PN –  
30.11.17**

not promise anything that could not be delivered. Now that the management had identified and were resolving the issues, the Principal would also work on developing relationships with local business, e.g. through Rotary, Chamber of Commerce.

## **5. Performance & review**

### **5.1 Outcomes 2016/17**

The APQSS talked through her report in detail, picking out key figures. Headline results had improved compared to 15/16. Achievement was up by 2.1% at 82.1%, above all-institutions and GFE Colleges' (GFEC) national rates. Pass rate was 89%, up 1.3 percentage points, and above all-institutions and in line with GFEC rate. Retention was up by 0.2%, at 92%, above the comparator levels.

#### *Achievement gaps*

16-18 learners, both male and female, underperformed compared to the headline, as did those who self-identified as LLDD (Learning Difficulty or Disability) learners. Core programmes (excluding maths and English) headline achievement rates were: L1 below all-institution and GFEC; L2 above all-institutions, below GFEC; L3 above all-institutions and GFEC.

#### **Maths and English**

GCSE English and Maths: headline achievement rates were above all-institutions and GFEC. A\* to C PASS rates in English were 48%, in line with NSC 15/16 outturn and higher than 271 AoC college outturns. In maths, it was at 26%, nearly 5% above the NSC 15/16 outturn and higher than 271 AoC college outturns.

Functional Skills English headline results for all levels were above NSC 15/16 outcomes by 3.2 percentage points, but were under national and GFEC rates by approximately 8%. Entry level achievement rate was above all-institutions and GFEC rate, but L1 and L2 were below.

Functional Skills Maths headline results for all levels were above NSC 15/16 outcomes by 1.2 percentage points, but were under national and GFEC rates by approximately 9%. Entry level achievement rate was above all-institutions but below GFEC rate. Again, L1 and L2 were below

Governors asked what actions management were taking to address the poor-performing areas, and to close the achievement gaps. The Deputy Principal had set up a project group, similar to the apprenticeships group, to target maths and English. The first focus would be on attendance. Teaching hours had been doubled from 1 to 2 per week, and workshops were being run. Governors agreed it was critical to address this area. There were 160 learners on L1 Functional Skills in the current year. All staff were involved in tackling the issue, not just Maths and English staff. Attendance had gone up 4-5% in classes in the previous two weeks. Governors asked about attendance at revision classes. No register was taken for these. Governors asked if some curriculum areas needed more attention and focus than others. There were. Attendance at maths and/or English classes would be made the responsibility of the core study programme staff, rather than the maths and English staff. Governors

asked for an update at the next Committee meeting.

**ACTION**

***Bring an update on the work of the maths and English project group to the next meeting.***

**PN –  
23.1.18**

**5.2 Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2016/17**

The APQSS had taken the lead from the Ofsted outcomes from May 2017, to assess the position as at 31 July however, owing to the very poor outcomes in Apprenticeships, this had been reduced to grade 4.

Governors asked about the overall grade 3, and whether this could be justified given the grade 4 for apprenticeships. Management considered that it could, because education and training statistics had improved overall and there were some good grade 2s.

**5.3 Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) 2016/17 and 2017/18**

Governors asked if the items from 2016/17 that were not green would be carried forward. The APQSS confirmed they would. The Courses for Concern had changed as a number from the previous plan had improved whilst other had gone onto the list.

The themes of the QIPs were subdivided in line with the Common Inspection Framework. There were ten items of focus for 2017/18. 50% were amber, 50% red. There was now more data to populate the document. The Committee agreed the areas of focus that had been included and noted there would be a progress report at the next meeting.

**5.4 Post-Inspection Action Plan (PIAP)**

The PIAP had a narrower focus than the QIP, targeting teaching, learning and assessment, and maths and English. It was agreed that a cover sheet be drafted, laying out the purpose and focus of the QIP, the PIAP and the APIAP to ensure clarity for all staff.

**ACTION**

***Draft a cover sheet explain the purpose and aim of the QIP, PIAP and the APIAP.***

**SS - Nov**

**5.5 Complaints Report**

Official, formal complaints had reduced although unofficial concerns were not included in the document. The recording system had been changed to a more useable system on an Excel spreadsheet. Now staff were recording compliments as well. Governors agreed this was a positive move.

**5.6 Enrolments 2017/18**

The APC said that although the report showed learners on each course, some classes had been merged to make efficiencies. There were 799 full-time learners. In addition there were other learners, e.g. part-time, HE. Governors asked how the high-needs learner-numbers compared to the national average. There was no figure available however numbers within NSC had doubled from the previous year. Governors asked what

percentage of the 309 Walford learners had high needs. This was high. There was a Hub on both sites which would support vulnerable learners and more Learning Support Assistants were based at Walford to support them also.

Governors noted the £450k of sub-contractor delivery and asked if management were confident they could manage the quality of this provision, given previous difficulties. The APC said she was: they had done due diligence on the supplier before signing a service level agreement and contract with them. She would be closely monitoring the performance.

Work had started on the 2018/19 provision and prospectus. Curriculum Area Managers would be undertaking more management training, including business and curriculum planning for the following year. This would include ensuring that provision met local needs, including those identified by the Local Enterprise Partnership. Class sizes were still too small and would remain a focus.

Governors agreed that the failure of the planned Reaseheath merger had damaged numbers, and agreed that a quick decision about any other potential merger would be beneficial to enrolments. 396 students had come to Taster Days, up from 318 that had been expected the week prior to the event. Now the focus was on converting them into enrollers. Governors asked how much marketing would be done to attract students. Management explained what was being done.

## **6. Annual reports 2016/17 & action plans 2017/18**

### **6.1 Safeguarding & Prevent**

The APC talked through the report highlighting key points. Management had graded the report "Green". All 2016/17 actions had been completed. The S11 safeguarding audit was mandatory to complete for the Local Authority. Management had self-graded again for the first time since January and had found that they had judged that the College had improved further.

Governors congratulated the team on all that they had achieved in the year. A great deal of work had been done to reach a high standard. The Principal agreed. He added that it was vital to ensure safeguarding was robust for residential students. This was a potential growth area for the College.

#### **ACTION**

***Governors agreed to recommend the report and action plan to the Board for approval.***

**CDT –  
22.11.17**

### **6.2 Equality & Diversity (E&D)**

The APQSS talked through the report, highlighting key points. The action plan 2017/18 was included within the QIP, the target being to reduce gaps in performance between different groups. The College profile showed a

