



THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP CORPORATION **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE QUALITY & CURRICULUM COMMITTEE **HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH 2022 VIA ZOOM**

			<u>Meetings Attendance</u>
PRESENT:	Tina Coates	(Chair from item 6)	(3 out of 3)
	Tom Wainwright	(Chair to item 6)	(3 out of 3)
	Gillian May	(Group Principal & Chief Executive)	(3 out of 3)
	Angela Wellings		(2 out of 3)
	Rob Lewis		(3 out of 3)
	Peter Tyndale		(3 out of 3)
	Natalie Viola		(3 out of 3)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Lynn Payne	(Clerk)	(3 out of 3)
	Amanda Down	(Principal, Sixth Form)	
	Gina Moore	(Vice Principal - FE)	
	Naomi Bailey	(Assistant Principal, Student Services)	

PART I

The meeting started at 5pm.

<u>MINUTE</u> <u>No</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
1.	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies had been received from Alison Wheatley, Iqra Abbas, George Shewell and Jake Smith.</p> <p>At the start of the meeting the Chair of the Committee, Tina Coates, was experiencing IT difficulties, accordingly the Vice Chair Tom Wainwright, opened the meeting.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u> No member declared a conflict of interest with the agenda.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 November 2021</u> The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 November 2021, having been previously sent to members, were agreed as a true record and the Chair's electronic signature would be applied. All Members were agreed.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting Held on 10 November 2021</u> It was noted that all matters arising had been actioned.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Curriculum Risk Register</u> This item was presented by the Group Principal. Members were particularly updated on the four red RAG rated risks on the Curriculum Assurance Framework & Risk Register 2021/22, which were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing recruitment and retention of key staff in priority areas. Members were informed that there were regular staffing updates from HR, and an ongoing engagement with a wider agency database in order to access a larger pool of 	

potential staff. In addition, in February this year, a curriculum leadership development programme had commenced at Langley College, feedback from delegates was overwhelmingly positive. The College will seek to expand this programme across the Group.

2. Additional Learning Support (ALS) funding and student recruitment & retention.
Members were advised that the review of the ALS process had been completed at the end of December 2021, but the process had not reached the point when the College could work with the Local Authorities to review the funding for 22/23. A new process of staff targets and student targets would be embedded by March 2022, and there would be a full contract review for staff in April 2022. The costing for ALS support was going well and would be completed in March 2022. In terms of the quality cycle for ALS, this had been initiated and ongoing monitoring had been established. The Principal, Sixth Form informed members that a key benefit in this area from the College's perspective, was around funding.
3. Non financially viable curriculum areas.
The Group Principal spoke about the viability of the curriculum and the need to keep group sizes under review. The College now has an accurate weekly applications report that is shared with all managers at a detailed level and with all staff at headline level on a weekly basis.
4. Timetabling at Langley does not yet provide sufficient enrichment opportunities.
It was acknowledged that completing the timetabling process at Langley was critical, and important that the structures were confirmed as soon as possible.

In relation to the forthcoming merger, the Group Principal spoke about the plans relating to the curriculum. Members were advised that these would be raised at the Joint Steering Group next week, with a view to agreeing curriculum appointments for the merged College. There was a discussion about student industry placements and the need to ensure that these were worked out carefully. It was noted planning for next year was already underway.

There was a discussion about remote working as it was noted as not only a challenge for the College, but a significant challenge for businesses in the arena of Apprentices. The Principal, Sixth Form spoke about the need to show students how to work in both arenas.

Members discussed the low participation of the current Student Governors on the Board this year, and acknowledged how they might be finding it difficult to come 'on screen' in virtual meetings. Ways to enhance the student governor experience in their roles needed to be improved with more encouragement and support available for meetings on virtual platforms. Peter Tyndale spoke about how main employment work was changing, with staff enjoying the new remote way of working, and accordingly how the likelihood of some staff going back to full in-house working seemed unlikely.

With regard to industry placements, the Principal Sixth Form spoke about the difficulties in the arena of, particularly science, as those placements would not accept students until they were over 18.

The Vice Principal FE informed members that there would be a report at the next meeting on 'student placements' to enable members to have a better understanding of the current situation.

The Group Principal advised members that the HE Strategy would come to the next meeting.

Members noted the curriculum risk register.

Tina Coates took over chairing the meeting.

VPFE

**Group
Principal**

6. Monitoring 2021/22 Performance Targets

a) Group Principal's Update

Members received an update on the strategic and operational activities of the College Group. It was noted mid-year retention rates were improved for the 16-19 Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funded programmes at all Colleges within the Group. At Langley College, mid-year retention was noted as 95%, at Strode's College 95% and at Windsor College 97%.

The total applications for ESFA funded 16-19 study programmes had increased by 19% for the Group, versus the prior year. The Group Principal spoke about the number of interviews that were currently taking place at the College and would provide a full update, in this area, at the next meeting. It was noted accepted applications (ESFA funded), had increased by 8% for the Group against the previous year. The interest in Windsor College continued to grow in line with the strategy to position Windsor College as the Sixth Form College for Windsor & Maidenhead.

The Group Principal advised members the College had received an invitation to attend the Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA) open day on Saturday 5 March to promote the 16-19 programmes, Higher Education and Apprenticeships. In relation to Higher Education applications, members were advised that interest was growing in the College's programmes. There were currently 43 new applications, versus 20 at the same time last year.

Members were informed that the College continued to receive high numbers of referrals for study support.

It was noted that, in relation to Apprentices, there were 280 on roll. The Group Principal informed members, the College were planning for an additional cohort of starters in April 2022, to accommodate the increase in demand from employers.

The Chair thanked members for their positive interactive discussion on the key areas of this report.

Members noted the report.

b) TWFCG Quality Improvement Plan

Members were advised of the actions taken and progress made, with key priorities for improvement and development identified in TWFCG Quality Improvement Plan. The Principal Sixth Form summarised what the College Group had been working on:

- Improved in-year retention, particularly at Langley, which is expected to secure improved end of year achievement.
- Improved consistency of assessment supported by appropriate staff training activity.
- Robust quality assurance processes in place to identify and respond to areas of concern and further development have secured improvements in the majority of areas.
- Robust actions taken to address post lockdown challenges ahead of summer exam series in line with JCQ and Ofqual requirements to secure outcomes for learners.
- Clear identification of apprenticeship timely achievement to secure the correct intervention programmes for individuals. to maximise achievement.
- Improved student satisfaction and quality of delivery in Foundation Learning, which was identified as an area of concern in 2020/21.
- Growth in applications to HE as a result of a new strategy and action plan: 43 (14 pending) compared to 20 in 2021.
- Growth in adult and community learners seen with new provision established across the College group.
- Increased application numbers for 16-8 Study Programmes across all colleges.
- Good progress in ensuring all students complete training on Prevent and online safety.
- Good progress in securing meaningful industry placements for the majority of learners in 2021/22.

MINUTE
No

ACTION

The Principal Sixth Form informed members about staff recruitment which remained a key priority, to ensure quality was maintained. She detailed the issues faced across the sector, in relation to it being hard to recruit to some positions and that this remained a key risk for TWFCG. It was noted that staffing difficulties continued to hinder progress in relation to some curriculum areas, particularly English and maths at Langley College, and although interventions were in place, this remained a key area of concern.

The Principal Sixth Form spoke about the outcomes from the summer exams series, which remained unpredictable giving a lack of clarity on grade boundaries, and the experiences of the cohort with Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) and missed learning. She detailed the support in place for students to mitigate this, but that the results were nevertheless identified as a potential risk.

In relation to safeguarding, it was noted that Safeguarding training had been undertaken by staff and students, and the Prevent training was to be provided online. There was a cycle of training ongoing within the three Colleges, with them all sharing their expertise and good practice and supporting each other.

Tom Wainwright asked whether there should be a deep dive and discussion with students on why they were not attending College as well as they should be. The potential issues were discussed which mainly related to transport, timetabling issues and opportunities for work. It was agreed that the timetable now needed careful consideration as it did not suit all students where they chose to try and work in the week as well. There was a focus on trying to understand how best to timetable classes to better suit students' needs in the current climate.

Members noted the report.

c) Student Services Improvement Plan

Members were advised of the plan for improvement within the Student Services department at Langley College. In the areas of additional learning support (ALS), members noted the issues relating to the lack of ALS support in vocational, theory and practical sessions. In addition, staff contract/contact hours and staff utilisation were also noted as issues. Members were advised that eight new ALS posts had been approved and were being advertised and that there were currently two new staff in post.

The AP Student Services informed members that once the new posts had been filled, all theory and practical sessions for Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) students would have support which would benefit other learners with special educational needs (SEND).

In relation to Pastoral Support Officers (PSO) and Student Development Officers (SDO), issues related to a lack of clarity in the role and the redeployment of staff required training in all aspects.

Safeguarding training had been identified as a priority and delivered to all PSOs and SDOs. With regard to careers, the issues related to the achievement of Matrix, and the achievement of Gatsby Benchmarks. The Matrix assessment was now in place and collaborative working was ongoing with Admissions to identify training needs and set up a planned training day.

It was noted there was a need to identify a lead Governor for Careers and Employability and this would be actioned.

Clerk

On financial support for students, members were advised there was a lack of fully trained and experienced financial support officers at the Langley College site, and the loss of the previous Deputy Head of Learner Services and experienced staff members at Strode's College, had left a gap in this knowledge. The policies and processes around financial support were being streamlined and reviewed.

Members asked for a glossary to be included with this report at the next meeting, as there was some confusion with the 'initials only' terms referred to.

**AP Student
Services**

MINUTE
No

ACTION

There was a discussion on the learner voice, student parliaments and student liaison committees, in particular whether there were too many student groups for students to engage with and achieve good attendance.

Rob Lewis spoke about a need for a clear system by which to choose student governors for the merged College. There was a mixed picture on what worked well in the student liaison groups and what did not.

There was a request for a tracking of the 'student voice' on the level of performance and a report to the committee at its next meeting on how it all worked together.

**AP Student
Services**

The AP Student Services informed members that students were tracked in the interactions they had with various student groups. The overall aim was to have a cross section of students, so that vocally active students could join the student union, and those who preferred a different forum could join different student groups. Rob Lewis felt there was a job of work to do to understand how student governors fitted into the various student groups. In relation to student and staff governors being given a regular slot to present at board meetings, in the future, it would be important to ensure they understood their role on the board as opposed to representing staff and students.

Rob Lewis agreed to join the AP Student Services and consider how best to assist students in the future.

The Chair thanked everyone for the interactive input on this agenda item.

The report was noted.

7. Evaluation of Meeting
Members had added value and made appropriate challenge in the meeting. The reports had been clear, there had been good interactive discussion and helpful suggestions made. The quality of the reports was considered good, although there was a request for a glossary on acronyms, for the next meeting, as some 'initials only' terms referred to had been not clear in the reports.
8. Dates and Times of Future Meetings
Dates and times of future meetings were noted as:

Scheduled for 6.00pm via Zoom on Wednesday 15 June 2022
9. Any Urgent Business
There were no items of other business raised.

**AP Student
Services**

The meeting ended at 6.05pm



Chair:

Date: 8 June 2022