

LONGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

MINUTES of the meeting of the CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE held on **29 SEPTEMBER 2010** at 5.00pm at the College, Horninglow Road, Sheffield S5 6SG

Present: Nick Duggan (Chair)
Jeremy Lonsdale
Mo Nisbet (Principal)
Carmel Page
Karen Squires

In attendance: Sue Jackson (Student Services Manager)
Sharon Langridge (Clerk to the Corporation)
Donald McLean (Vice-Principal (Student Engagement))
Alison Megahy (Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Quality))

Apologies for absence were received from Steve Robinson.

Action by
Who When

1 **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

The Clerk to the Corporation sought nominations for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair. Nick Duggan was proposed as Chair and Karen Squires was proposed as Vice-Chair. Both nominations were unanimously supported. The Committee **approved** the appointment of Nick Duggan as Chair of the Committee and Karen Squires as Vice-Chair of the Committee.

2 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 APRIL 2010**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th April 2010 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3 **MATTERS ARISING**

Development Plan (Minute 4(a))

The Committee noted that the Principal had circulated copies of the correspondence with Skills Funding Agency regarding the College's 19+ funding. Members were advised that she had subsequently written to Ministers and would circulate copies of these letters.

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4 **EXAM RESULTS**

The Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Quality) gave a presentation on success rates by broad programme areas. She highlighted the upward trend for AS and said that this was a credit to the College's staff for the strategies adopted to improve Teaching & Learning. BTEC results were equally pleasing and were above national success rates.

Members questioned why A2 success rates were not increasing in line with those for AS. The Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Quality) explained that

some students would have withdrawn and others would have changed course, which had an impact on the overall outcome.

The Committee reviewed the ALPS headline figures. 42% of the College's learners achieved the A2 target grade. They were advised that the three year T score was likely to dip in the next year or two. The College's overarching Value Added ALPS grading was good. Some further interrogation of the data would be undertaken to establish the actual position, but it was already clear that the Y Scheme had had a positive impact.

The Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Quality) said that it would be useful to be able to benchmark locally as well as nationally if data sharing protocols would allow this. There was a question about who paid for ALPS analysis, as there appeared to be payments from both the City Council and providers.

The Chair said that it was useful to receive such timely information as it enabled staff to be able to drill down and review performance in particular areas. Members acknowledged that the increasing number of learners achieving 5 A*-Cs would have an impact on the College in the future.

The Committee thanked the Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Quality) for her report.

5 **SAFEGUARDING ACTIVITY UPDATE**

The Student Services Manager circulated copies of her report and apologised for having to table it. She explained that the situation had already changed since the report had been written with three major disclosures already that week.

Members noted that the receipt of files from schools had proved to be extremely useful. They acknowledged the importance of following up on any issues as intervention was essential for some young people.

The Student Services Manager informed the Committee of the plans for the forthcoming Celebration of Equality & Diversity (4th-7th October) and SAFE week (1st-5th November).

Members were informed about the challenges facing the College as a result of the changing remit of the Connexions Service, who would no longer cover vulnerability issues. The College would need to pick this up and identify other agencies with whom to work for the benefit of vulnerable learners. In addition, the raised awareness of safeguarding issues had generated an increase in activity and this had had an impact on capacity. Members recognised the level of activity, which was positive, and the impact of cuts on capacity.

The Principal informed the Committee that a team of officers from the City Council were coming into College in early October for the Longley Park total immersion experience.

6 **LEARNING SUPPORT**

The Vice-Principal (Student Engagement) presented his report. He outlined the work that was being undertaken and said that consideration had been given to how best to utilise the Learning Development Team to support the College's most vulnerable young people.

Members noted that each Learning Mentor would have eight learners in their care. This service had been requested by parents. Members queried if the focus on the most vulnerable would impact on the level of support available to other learners. The Vice-Principal (Student Engagement) explained that a variety of means were employed to meet different needs, so that there would be no adverse impact. This would be achieved by introducing a broader support function across the College, including raising awareness and providing training for staff and looking at the use of language to ensure it was appropriate for different groups of learners.

7 **ANNUAL REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS**

The Committee considered the list of questions provided by the Clerk along with copies of its terms of reference. Members agreed that safeguarding needed to be included under point one of the terms of reference. They also questioned whether charter marks were still in existence and therefore if the reference to them in point ten was relevant.

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Members discussed approaching the two Governors from partner schools about representation on the Committee. They considered co-opting the curriculum heads from partner schools as members of the Committee or inviting them to give a presentation to the Committee on a two-yearly cycle on curriculum developments. The Principal agreed to consult the partner schools on these options.

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Members were satisfied with the number of meetings, cycle of business, timeliness of information and the chairing and clerking of meetings.

8 **ENROLMENT**

The Principal presented her report. She informed Members that the first record date was 1st November and not 1st October as stated in the report.

Members noted that enrolment had been buoyant. Officers were confident that the College would achieve its learner number targets despite the fact that the conversion rate from applications to enrolments was down on previous years. The Principal explained that further resources would need to be devoted to recruitment in the future to try and improve the conversion rate.

The Principal outlined the changes to 16-18 funding and the move to a 'lagged' model, whereby funding would be based upon the actual student numbers from the previous year. Members recognised that this would have implications for the College's widening participation mission, if its 19+ students were not included in the funding calculation, and that this could

mean that the Corporation would need to take some difficult strategic decisions.

The Committee was informed that the Assistant Principal (Resources) was conducting some analysis of the Year 11 cohort by GCSE results.

9 **CURRICULUM CHANGES**

The Principal presented her report on the curriculum changes which had had an impact on the courses offered by the College. She added that there had also been reports during the day that the two local universities had decided not to give credit for the Extended Project Qualification, which was a cause for concern.

The Principal confirmed that some time would be allocated at the November Strategic Planning Event to look at the changes to BTEC.

Members asked if there were any courses that were likely to be withdrawn. The Principal explained that the main issue for the College was 'Skills for Life' as the functional skills provision did not meet the required level. Members agreed that this would need to be kept under review.

10 **HE PROGRESSION**

The Committee received the Principal's report on progression to Higher Education. Members noted that the College had done better than average on clearing, but that the situation had been a logistical nightmare.

Members acknowledged that 50% of learners progressing to HE had stayed locally. The Principal explained that this might change as the compact with the two local universities no longer accepted cultural reasons for staying locally. The news on the Extended Project Qualification would also have an impact.

The Chair reported that the position regarding the future of Aim Higher should be clearer by the time of the next meeting and asked that this be included on the agenda.

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Jeremy Lonsdale informed Members that A2 tutors were now more aware of the requirements for UCAS applications and were able to assist learners in their tutor groups.

11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 17th November 2010 at 5.00pm.

The meeting ended at 6.25pm.

Signed: (Chair)

Date: