

CORPORATION OF KIDDERMINSTER COLLEGE
Minutes of the Standards Committee held on
Thursday 3rd February 2011 at 17.30 hours

ST 454 Present Sonia Farnaby, Chair
 Annie Conway Petr
 David Cory
 Andy Dobson
 Harry Grove
 Kerry Houghton
 Carol Warren

ST 455 Quorum 2

ST 456 In Attendance Angharad Hale, Clerk to the Corporation
 Anna Place, Director of Learning
 Adrian Ward, Director of Curriculum &
 Performance

ST 457 Apologies Kevin Sant

ST 458 Declaration of Members' Conflict of Interests

Kerry Houghton declared a potential interest in item ST 646. It was confirmed that no individual tutors were to be discussed, therefore there was not deemed to be a conflict of interest.

ST 459 Minutes of Meeting Held on 11th November 2010

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2010, having been circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

ST 460 Matters Arising

i) Involvement of governors in SAR process

It was confirmed that the Corporation Chair and one of the student governors were involved in the validation exercise that took place on 7th January 2011, as discussed at the last meeting.

ii) Notice to Improve & Minimum Levels of Performance

Further to the figures reported at the last meeting summarising performance below MLP, i.e. 8.8% for long courses, records were analysed on 14th December and there was a discrepancy with the figures recorded by the Data Service, i.e. 15.6% for long courses. The cause relates to the software duplicating records for certain Year 2 learners studying 2 year programmes where start dates are not the same for consecutive academic years. This an issue that needs to be resolved internally and measures have been put in place to ensure that staff input data correctly.

The Data Service have been contacted but at this stage are not willing to change the figures they hold. However, due to their published guidance changing a number of times, many colleges are in a similar position. AoC are in talks with SFA who have confirmed that they will not use duplicate records for MLP calculations.

ST 461 Cross College Standards & Targets 2010/11 – Autumn Term Monitoring Report

Details having been circulated, it was noted that there has been a slight change to previous years reports, with the introduction of blue to the colour coding for performance above target.

It was noted that staff absence and weather were factors in many of the managers' comments. Attention was drawn to the Personnel section and it was noted that the interim HR manager has taken a fresh view and feels that amber is more realistic across the board at this point in time.

A query was raised regarding the comment in the report that the HR software is 'not fit for purpose'. The Principal confirmed that this relates to the fact there has not been investment in up to date systems for HR over a number of years. Plans are in place to purchase a new system once a permanent HR manager has been recruited. The post is currently being advertised.

Queries were also raised regarding the ICT system and problems identified in the report. Concern was raised regarding the effect of this on student satisfaction. It was noted that in response to previous student surveys, investment has been made in computers but not to the same extent in network capacity. It was confirmed that Graham Mason, Head of ICT/ILT, is preparing a report to review the whole infrastructure. Demand has changed since the college relocated, e.g. with the introduction of wi-fi. The review will investigate whether the current system can cope with demand.

In response to queries regarding staffing issues in this area, it was confirmed that the member of staff mentioned in a previous Principal's report has returned from sickness and the vacant VLE post will be reviewed once the team has been restructured.

It was noted that weather caused an effective loss of one week from the first term in terms of staff hours. There was not a huge impact on learners due to this timing of college closures being at the end of term.

Governors noted that overall there were 22 green areas and 18 amber areas, equating to the college falling between satisfactory and good. It is anticipated that there will be less ambers next term.

ST 462 Success Rates 2009/10

Details having been circulated, it was noted that whilst percentages have improved from 2008/09, the glitch year with data, they are not as high as in 2007/08.

The college is around national average for long courses with the exception of Level 1, where they are marginally below. Females 19+ are above national average at Level 3. The college is performing well under Key Skills and Functional Skills despite challenges to get learners to participate. Employer Responsive Provision is achieving very high success rates. Following a number of interventions to improve performance, Apprenticeship success rates are now 83% overall.

The main challenge identified relates to 16-18 year old females who are not performing at national average. A student led piece of research has been carried out regarding females in the Wyre Forest and showed a lack of aspiration. It was noted that issues go back to achievement of females while at school and the college needs to continue working with schools to address this issue. A discussion took place regarding the role of college tutors in motivating and raising aspirations. The student governor gave positive feedback regarding tutors input. The college is also looking at focus groups to build self esteem and ways to build confidence at the start of a course, and will continue to find strategies for raising aspirations.

ST 463 Value Added Report 2009/10

Details having been circulated, it was noted that the analysis focuses on Level 3 qualifications. The college is marginally below the national average but has improved on performance from 2008/09 and reduced the average underachievement from around half a grade to less than quarter of a grade per learner. It was noted that whilst this is a positive step the college is still not where it would like to be.

The analysis for National Diplomas, showed Business and Health Studies courses to be significantly below target and affecting the overall score for the college. Reasons for poor performance were discussed. Staff instability has affected Health Studies in previous years. An experienced co-ordinator has been appointed with the intention of strengthening the staff team and adding an increased focus on value added performance. It was confirmed that teaching is good on Business courses but these courses may be attracting learners who find it difficult to achieve high grades. No further queries were raised.

ST 464 Teaching & Learning Observations 2010/11 – Autumn Term Monitoring Report

An amended version of the report was tabled and the previous document withdrawn.

It was noted that the lesson observations have been refocused on the learner journey and improved quality assurance arrangements have been put in place, including joint observations. The college will be working with Nick Sanders, an LSIS Advisor and Ofsted inspector on 16th February to carry out joint observations of staff in one of the areas with Minimum Levels of Performance issues.

Designated observers have 'followed the learner' for the day and this has provided useful information, for e.g. issues have been identified relating to lengths of breaks and variability in teaching styles during the day.

It was noted that this year's grades show a more realistic position as observations are now followed up by moderation meetings. Observations are more systematic and thorough. Teachers are encouraged to self assess.

Good practice emerging from the process may be used in future staff development days.

Governors noted their support of the new initiatives and felt that a positive approach is being taken.

Harry Grove left the meeting at this point.

ST 465 Student Induction Survey 2010/11

Details having been circulated, a summary report was tabled. It was noted that the survey was outsourced to QDP which has enabled it to be conducted on-line and ensures anonymity of students. The quality of the data is far higher and allows the college to benchmark results against other colleges. The survey showed the college to be in the top half of results for colleges nationally.

Issues identified from the report include 16-19 year old learners being less satisfied with pre course enrolment than 20+ learners. Also, it appears that non-white learners are expressing lower satisfaction across the board. The college is meeting with a group of non-white learners to discuss and identify issues.

It was noted that 100% of learners should be satisfied with the information provided in case of fire, rather than the 89% in report. It was noted that new fire notices have been placed in every room.

ST 466 Learner Withdrawal Analysis – Autumn Term Figures

Details having been circulated, it was noted that figures are marginally better for both leaving courses and leaving college than at this point last year. Courses with 100+ learners have all shown significant improvement, in particular Hair & Beauty and Stourport IT Centre. No queries were raised.

ST 467 Any Other Business

It was noted that cyber bullying appears to be an issue for colleges nationally. The Principal assured governors that the college is pro active in dealing with the issue. In addition to filtering out social networking sites, it publicises the dangers on posters around the college and is developing Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity sites which will have sections on dealing with bullying / cyber bullying.

The student governors noted ideas for promoting the role to students for next year. There is a willingness to be contacted by future student governors once they finish in the role and a willingness to assist in promotion. It was suggested that they could join the Principal as part of the welcome to new students. The Principal agreed to follow up this idea and felt there may be a need to promote the role at the end of this academic year.

ST 468 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 9th June 2011 at 17.30pm

The meeting closed at 19.15 hours

Chair _____ Date _____