

CORPORATION OF KIDDERMINSTER COLLEGE
Minutes of the Standards Committee held on
Thursday 10th November 2011 at 17.30 hours

ST 484 Present	Sonia Farnaby (Chair) Fern Carey (Student Governor) Andy Dobson Sandra Hickman Matthew Terry Carol Warren
ST 485 Quorum	2
ST 486 In Attendance	Angharad Hale, Clerk to the Corporation Anna Place, Director of Learning Adrian Ward, Director of Curriculum & Performance
ST 487 Apologies	David Chipp

ST 488 Declaration of Members' Conflict of Interests
No declarations made.

The Chair welcomed new members to the Committee.

ST 489 Minutes of Meeting Held on 9th June 2011

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2011, having been circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

ST 490 Matters Arising

i) Involvement of governors in SAR (Self Assessment Report)

It was reported that governors had been involved in the following meetings; 13th October – Business Support Validation meeting and 20th October – Curriculum Area SAR Validation meeting.

It was noted that staff had appreciated seeing governors at the above events and it was confirmed that some grades were modified as a result of the validation meetings. No objections had been raised by managers regarding the changes in grades.

It had been planned to involve the Corporation Chair and student governors in a further validation meeting with external parties, however this had been superseded by the forthcoming Ofsted inspection (14th – 18th November). The process of validating the SAR at the December Corporation meeting will still take place, however it was necessary to send an unapproved version of the SAR to Ofsted prior to the inspection.

ii) ICT provision – SMT update

A further matter arising was raised, regarding the ICT provision at the College.

The Principal reported that investigations into the problems have taken place and that the network manager left in the summer under voluntary redundancy. A consultant has since been in to review the system and as a preparatory exercise the College is putting the network support out to tender.

It was confirmed that there have been on-going issues this term, for example with internet access.

It was agreed that this needs to be an on-going matter arising.

ST 491 Cross College Service Standards - Final Report 2010/11

Background to the traffic light reporting system was explained for the benefit of new members.

It was agreed to have a discussion at the next meeting as to whether to continue with the current format for 2012-13.

It was noted that out of 40 objectives, there has been an improvement from 72.5% green to 80% green, amber areas have moved from 11% to 7% and there is one remaining red area, regarding the external catering service. The Estates Manager has classified this area as red due to ongoing issues with the management of the service. However, students have been involved in discussions regarding new ideas for the service at the Learner Council and proposals will be put forward to Mitie management.

It was noted that following the departure of several members of HR staff as part of the organisational review, new staff are in post and the department is now in the position to look into installing new HR software.

Governors queried the green rating for ICT in the report in light of the earlier discussion, under matters arising. It was noted that there had been an improvement from Term 2 to Term 3.

The Principal agreed to query the green rating with the ICT manager and report back at the next meeting.

ST 492 Teaching & Learning Observations 2010/11

Following circulation of the End of Year report 2010/11, data spreadsheet information was tabled.

It was noted that the new system of observations has, as anticipated, resulted in lower grades. However, whilst the issue of over grading has now been resolved, the moderation process has highlighted the fact that some lessons may have been worse than graded.

Key messages from the data were that practical skills are an area of strength, lessons with mixed activity of theory / practical received the highest grades and that improvements have been made in recognising opportunities for Equality & Diversity.

It was noted that out of the 5 grade 4 (unsatisfactory) lessons, 4 members of staff had since left the college. The 1 remaining member of staff has since been re-observed and re-graded. It was confirmed that the process for re-observing grade 3 and 4 lessons is normally within 6 weeks. However, it is a flexible approach which takes account of the most applicable course of action.

Programme Leaders will be joining the observation team and will need some training. However as they are already experts in their field they will bring specialist knowledge to the observations.

Governors felt that the data spreadsheet was a useful tool to highlight issues.

It was also noted that the exercise of following the learner had highlighted several practical issues.

ST 493 Support for Students – End of Year Questionnaire Results 2010/11

Details having been circulated, a commentary on the data was tabled.

It was confirmed that findings are cascaded to managers and discussed at performance review meetings.

The graphical results highlighted the following issues; catering, cleanliness of toilets and clarity of signage, all of which need improvement.

It was noted that respondents may have felt disaffected by a problem with the IT system that occurred during the week of the on-line survey. This may have had a negative impact on responses, which were disappointing overall.

It was noted that this was the first year of trialling the QDP system and that the questions may need refining. It is possible to revise the questions used in future years to ensure the most helpful information is gained from the survey. It was also noted that if information is taken down to course level, there is a correlation between some negative responses and courses that have known issues.

Governors noted that it is crucial for students to be able to see what action is taken as a result of the survey. A query was raised as to how feedback is given to students and it was confirmed that a range of communication methods are used including notice boards, personal tutors, Learner Council and newsletters.

Next steps will be to discuss the outcomes at performance review meetings with Heads of Department, which will be fed down to teams. Results will also be taken to the Learner Council and fed back to student representatives.

It was confirmed that there is also a staff survey carried out periodically.

ST 494 Quality Improvement Plan

Details having been circulated, it was noted that there are no red areas.

It was also noted that the diversity of the Board had received a green rating following the recent recruitment of new members which has ensured an even gender split.

Governors queried whether the College had considered the possibility of including a member on the Board to represent the group of learners at the college with a disability.

It was agreed that it would be beneficial to the diversity of the Board to consider whether, with support, a member with a disability could be included on the Board.

Governors queried item C3.1 relating to the fact that not all appointments took place in accordance with the College CRB procedures. It was noted that new procedures are in place and confirmed that they are being followed.

It was agreed that the wording of item C3.1 needs to be strengthened to specifically record the fact that new CRB procedures are being followed.

ST 495 Success Rates 2010/11

Details of the success rate extract from the College's Self Assessment report 2010/11 (unapproved version) had been circulated. Key statistics were highlighted by the SMT members in attendance and discussed in detail.

It was noted that overall, long courses are 1% above national average and there is some good in year data available, particularly on Level 1 courses.

Performance on short courses is good at all levels and there has been significant improvement at Stourport IT Centre.

No issues relating to age or gender have been highlighted from the tables. However, functional skills are an area of weakness and there has been a drop in results from 2009/10. In response to this, the College is reforming the way this area is offered to allow learners to develop skills and this will include fewer external assessments. It was noted that personal tutors need to take more responsibility for supporting students on functional skills.

It was noted that employer responsive is an area of strength and that learners with disabilities achieve well. High grades have not been analysed before, but there is sufficient evidence for good achievement in this area to be noted.

Retention rates are 10% higher than at this point last year but sustaining this improvement is important.

ST 496 Notice to Improve & Minimum Levels of Performance Update

Details having been circulated, it was noted that all appears on track for the Notice to Improve to be lifted in January 2012.

ST 497 Any Other Business - None raised.

ST 498 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 2nd February 2012 at 17.30pm
The meeting closed at 19.35 hours

Chair_____Date_____