

## MEETING OF CURRICULUM AND STUDENT MATTERS COMMITTEE

TIME/DATE 5.00pm, Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018

VENUE Gateway Conference Room, Parson's Walk, Wigan Campus

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| Committee Members   | Frank Costello (Chair)<br>Gai Murphy<br>Jenny Bullen<br><i>Janet Minto</i><br>Andrea Ferguson<br>Anna Dawe<br>Catherine Langstreth (Staff Governor)<br>Rachael D'Arcy (Student Governor) |
| Co-opted advisor  | Jen Walters  |
| Clerk   | Robert Smith   |
| Vice Principal, Curriculum<br>Vice Principal, Corporate Services<br>Assistant Principal, IT, MIS and<br>Sub-Contracting<br>Assistant Principal, Curriculum<br>Head of Apprenticeships | Claire Foreman<br>Louise Brown<br>Dave Harrison<br><br>Sam Stevens<br>Andrea Leech   |

*Italics denotes absence***MINUTES**

| Item                     | The meeting opened at 5.25pm and was quorate with at least 3 members being present.   |
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| <b>1</b><br>CSM/18/11/41 | <b>APOLOGIES AND CHAIR'S WELCOME</b><br><br>Apologies were received from Janet Minto.<br><br>The Chair welcomed the Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Head of Apprenticeships who would be making a presentation to the committee.  |
| <b>2</b><br>CSM/18/11/42 | <b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b><br><br>There were no declarations of interest.  |
| <b>3</b><br>CSM/18/11/43 | <b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2018</b><br><br>The minutes of the meeting on the 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2018 were approved as a correct record and authorised for signature by the Chair.  |
| <b>4</b><br>CSM/18/11/44 | <b>MATTERS ARISING</b><br><br>The Clerk advised that all matters on the committee's Action Sheet were complete.   |
| <b>5</b><br>CSM/18/11/45 | <b>DEPARTMENTAL PRESENTATION: APPRENTICESHIPS</b><br><br>The Vice Principal, Curriculum explained that apprenticeships had been identified as the key area for improvement in terms of curriculum activity. Members acknowledged that the challenges in this area had been reported in detail to the Board and welcomed the presentation in terms of being able to gain a wider understanding of the actions being taken to bring about improvements. |

The Head of Apprenticeships provided a brief summary of the challenges that had led to apprenticeships becoming an area of concern in terms of delivering overall and timely completion. She explained that the area had several challenges, which included some legacy issues, delivering on a reduction of out of funding learners and ensuring that staff skills shortage areas were responded to, to ensure that caseloads were effectively managed.

Members were pleased to hear about the improvement activity taking place in the area, including significant improvements in the recording and understanding of data, improved tracking of progress for individual learners and new automated email systems to keep employers up to date with progress and well-informed about their own role in progressing apprentices to completion. Members were also pleased to learn that new approaches had been introduced to delivering functional skills for apprentices and that the clearer staffing structure recently introduced was helping to make responsibilities clearer for everyone working within the Apprenticeships Team. The Head of Apprenticeships reported that plans were in place to quickly complete all out of funding learners and members noted that this would deliver a significant improvement to timely completion rates, although it would take some time for the reporting data to demonstrate this. The Head of Apprenticeships also reported that staff turnover in the area had reduced substantially, which was helping to bring more stability to the area. She advised that Teaching, Learning and Assessment observations indicated that most staff were performing at a good level, with some outstanding. Members were pleased to learn that only a limited number of staff now showed in observations that they needed significant further support.

Members discussed the areas for improvement identified for the area and noted that this included an increased focus on delivering overall and timely success, which would be supported by a revised view of the 90-day grace period at the end of the apprenticeship period. It was acknowledged that this had previously been viewed as part of the completion period, but would now be viewed only as a short time window to resolve final minor issues. It was noted that areas for improvement also included improved embedding of checks on End Point Assessment requirements throughout apprenticeship programmes, and new targets to complete all functional skills requirements within the first year, irrespective of the overall length of the relevant apprenticeship programme. The Assistant Principal, Curriculum also highlighted recent improvements in terms of recruitment, where specialist electrical assessors had been recruited after a period of difficulty in filling the relevant vacancies.

The Principal reminded members that apprenticeship delivery was subject to minimal levels of performance requirements both as an overall area and in relation to individual programmes. It was noted that failure to meet the minimal level of performance could impact on funding. The Principal confirmed that the apprenticeship provision was not below minimum levels of performance.

The Vice Principal commented that it may seem to members that positive staff observations did not align to performance in the area in terms of overall and timely success rates. She explained that this was largely down to the processes and tools available to assessors to be able to clearly see the level of progress made by their apprentices. Members were encouraged to hear that the improvements in data management and progress tracking were expected to impact significantly and

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|  | <p>positively on success rates in the area. Members commented that it was also important for assessors to understand the funding implications of delayed completion, missed appointments and failures to secure the right levels of commitment from apprentices and their employers.</p> <p>Members highlighted an apparent issue with Maths success rates compared to English success rates and asked how they could be reassured that progress was being made. The Principal outlined that the issues around Functional Skills completion and achievement were related to organisational issues rather than any one subject. She advised that improvements had been made with the rotation system/timetabling and that the careful management of caseloads and absence reporting as highlighted in the presentation were having an effect and this would lead to improvements.</p> <p>The Chair commented that it was vital that the college overcame the challenges it has faced in delivering good outcomes for apprenticeships. He also stressed the importance of achieving timely completion to improve success rate data. He asked when the committee would receive a further update on progress and the Vice Principal confirmed that her report to the March meeting of the committee would provide a detailed update on apprenticeship provision, including best case outcomes and predicted outcomes for both timely and overall success rates.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action: Vice Principal, Curriculum</b></p> <p>Members thanked the Head of Apprenticeships and Assistant Principal for their presentation and acknowledged the positive progress being made in dealing with the challenges in this area of activity. <b>They left the meeting at 5.50pm.</b></p>  |
| <p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>CSM/18/11/46</b></p> | <p><b>CURRICULUM REPORT</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum outlined student outcomes for 2017/18 and drew members' attention to key highlights within the data. Members were pleased see that classroom provision now showed a three-year positive trend in terms of improvement of success rates. They were also pleased to see that achievement gaps for different groups of learners had narrowed. The Vice Principal also highlighted a target for 2017/18 to improve higher grade passes and commented that her report showed there were clear signs that progress was being made in achieving this. Members discussed outcomes for Study Programme GCSE in Maths and English and were pleased to note that the college continued to perform above national averages. The also noted positive outcomes for A' Levels, including in high grade results.</p> <p>The Vice Principal outlined student satisfaction rates and was pleased to confirm that these had increased further during 2017/18. She commented that high levels of satisfaction had contributed towards an increase in internal progression for the third consecutive year. It was noted that there was also positive progression data in relation to students going onto HE courses, although not always to the college's own HE provision. Members commented that 16-18 study programmes continued to show further improvements and that outcomes for adult provision were also encouraging. They also recalled discussion under the previous agenda item relating to apprenticeships and acknowledged that this area still required improvement. The Co-opted Advisor asked whether timely completion issues were worse in some areas of apprenticeship provision than others. The Vice Principal responded that some areas were more challenging than others but that the college now had a much better</p> |

understanding of the challenges in each area and how to resolve them.

The Chair commented that, with the exception of apprenticeships, the report was extremely positive and represented a significant transformation from the college's position only a few years earlier.

The Principal explained that a report would be presented to the next meeting of the Governing Board in relation to changes in the position regarding ESFA 16-18 Apprenticeships Funding. Whilst the matter was referenced within the Curriculum Report, the Principal suggested that the committee may benefit from a summary of the issues surrounding this matter in advance of the Board meeting.

The Principal reported that the college had recruited high numbers of 16-18 apprentices in the early part of the year and that the number took the college beyond its advised funding levels. However, members noted that the ESFA had for a number of years always funded over-recruitment of apprentices in this age range owing to its commitment to fund 16-18 activity and the college had submitted growth requests for the previous three years and had always been successful. Further, the decision to continue to recruit was also supported as there was a scheduled performance point in November as published by the ESFA and it was intended that a growth request would be made at this time. The Principal explained that the ESFA had advised colleges in mid-October that they would not be undertaking the November performance point and would not be funding over-recruitment in 2018/19, despite the practice in previous years. It was noted that the college now had the equivalent of 60 unfunded apprentices, representing a value of around £350K. It was also noted that the college had now stopped recruitment of new 16-18 apprentices completely and was turning away potential apprentices and employers on a regular basis.

Members expressed their disappointment that this position had been reached and commented that the unavailability of funding would let down young people in the Borough and potentially damage relationships with existing employer partners who had previously relied upon the college to secure their apprenticeship provision. The Principal advised that she had raised these issues with the ESFA but that there appeared to be no potential for movement in their stated position. Members asked whether the college was aware of how employers were responding to the unavailability of funding. The Principal explained that there was a mixed picture in responses, with some waiting to see if the college could secure additional funding and others simply choosing not to go ahead with the planned employment of the affected young persons.

The Principal highlighted a particular concern going forward in relation to progression plans for existing apprentices going from one level of training to the next. It was noted that there would be an existing expectation that this would be facilitated and that failure to do so could put people's jobs at risk. Members noted that this would be a matter for the Board to consider in terms of balancing the existing expectations of current learners with the financial risks of continuing to deliver those expectations. The Chair commented that the funding issue was contrary to what the college stood for in terms of supporting young people into employment.

It was noted that this funding position was likely to become a national issue, although many colleges would not need to address the problem as quickly as Wigan & Leigh College, due to the high demand for apprenticeship provision at the college. The Co-opted Advisor commented that she had heard other colleges raise this issue already. The Principal confirmed that the College was working with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Wigan Council and the Association of Colleges to try and find a solution. She advised that an update would be brought to the Board where recommendations would be made as to how the college approaches the concerns relating to progression of apprentices currently enrolled.

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| <p>7</p> <p>CSM/18/11/47</p> | <p><b>QUALITY &amp; CURRICULUM KPI DASHBOARD</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum outlined the data within the Quality &amp; Curriculum KPI Dashboard and explained the report showed 2017/18 outturns, national averages and the targets for 2018/19. Members discussed the data and noted that all measures under apprenticeships were highlighted as amber under the RAG rating system, which was in line with discussions earlier in the meeting. Members commented that the dashboard clearly showed that the college had a clear understanding of where it stood in terms of progress and outcomes and the actions required to address any concerns.</p>  |
| <p>8</p> <p>CSM/18/11/48</p> | <p><b>SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR) &amp; QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP)</b></p> <p>The Chair explained that he and the Co-Vice Chair had met with the Principal, the Vice Principal, Curriculum and the Head of Quality to review the SAR and QIP in detail in advance of this meeting and commented that the documents provided a clear and compelling summary of the college's position in terms of curriculum and quality and the actions required to bring about further improvement.</p> <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum provided a summary of the SAR outcomes and highlighted the fact that, whilst many areas had improved since the previous year, the college had not increased judgment grades for these areas. She explained that the Grade 2 (good) judgment represented a wide band in terms of performance levels and it had been determined in these cases that the areas concerned had improved from the lower part of that band to the higher part. Members acknowledged that this meant a number of areas were now close to achieving a Grade 1 judgment and, with further improvement, may reach this level by the end of 2018/19. The Chair commented that a simple review of judgment data could give the impression that the college had not progressed during 2017/18, but that it was clear in the text of the report that significant progress had been made. The Vice Principal also highlighted those areas of performance where the Governing Board and the committee were likely to require further scrutiny during 2018/19 in order to monitor required improvements. Members concurred with the Vice Principal's conclusions in terms of ongoing monitoring and scrutiny by the committee.</p> <p>Members noted that Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework was due to be amended and was expected to focus more on a holistic view of the learner experience, rather than a more rudimentary review of student outcome data. The Vice Principal explained that this would include greater focus on distance travelled and activity targeted at improving student employability. The Co-opted Advisor advised that the new framework would bring leadership and management to the front of the report and would pay particular attention to personal development. She added that inspectors were also likely to review the college's approaches to supporting students' mental health, particularly for those students based in the workplace, such as apprentices.</p> <p>Members discussed overall student outcome data and it was noted that the college now performed at around 5% above national averages. They acknowledged that this was now likely to mean that there would not be further significant leaps forward in performance and any further progress was likely to be incremental. The Principal commented that the college always looked to improve but that such improvement may be marginal and that the focus now needed to be on maintaining the level of student outcomes, whilst also focusing on value added activity and further improving the student experience.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Board be recommended to approve the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2017/18 and the Quality Improvement Plan for 2018/19.</p> |

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| <p>9</p> <p>CSM/18/11/49</p>  | <p><b>ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2017/18</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum provided a summary of complaints received by the college during 2017/18 and highlighted variances from the previous year's report. It was noted that the number of complaints had increased slightly but still represented a low overall number in the context of the total number of students at the college. Members reviewed the types of complaints received and the approach to complaint resolution. The Chair commented that it was encouraging to see how many complaints were resolved at an early stage.</p> <p>It was noted that the Head of Quality regularly reported to the Executive Team and that complaints were reviewed in detail and recommendations for further action were determined. It was also noted that the Complaints Procedure would be reviewed in 2018/19 and would need to be amended to clarify the role of UCLAN for complaints from Higher Education students at Stage 3 of the procedure.</p>  |
| <p>10</p> <p>CSM/18/11/50</p> | <p><b>ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT &amp; POLICIES</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal, Corporate Services reported that there had been a smooth transition in relation to a change of manager in the Protection Officer role. She also outlined the nature of safeguarding concerns dealt with during 2017/18. It was noted that the main increase in numbers related to mental health concerns. The Vice Principal advised that the Wellbeing Team and the college Chaplaincy had helped to provide support to students and to prevent escalation of issues. She also highlighted the role of the college's Counselling Service in providing in-depth support in relation to mental health concerns. A number of specific matters were discussed, including the retention rates for Looked After Children which members noted remained positive.</p> <p>The Vice Principal reported that the activities of the Safeguarding Team had been audited by the Internal Auditor and that this would be reported to the Audit Committee in March 2019. She advised that the auditor's report concluded that the college's safeguarding systems and controls provided substantial assurance both in terms of their design and their effectiveness.</p> <p>Members discussed proposed revisions to the Safeguarding Policy and Prevent Strategy and noted that both had been updated to account for revised 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance from the Department for Education. The Vice Principal summarised each of the proposed revisions, including those relating to honour based violence, peer on peer abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment between children and homelessness.</p> <p>The Chair asked the Student Governor to comment on student experience of the college's safeguarding services. She responded that, whilst she had no direct experience of using the services, she knew students who had needed support and they had been aware of how to access these services and had found the college to be very supportive. This was supported by another members' recent experience of meeting a number of vulnerable learners from the college at an external event, where feedback on the college's support had been extremely positive.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Board be recommended to approve the proposed revisions to the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy.</p> |

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| <p>11</p> <p><b>CSM/18/11/51</b></p> | <p><b>CURRICULUM &amp; STUDENT MATTERS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE</b></p> <p>The Clerk explained that a number of changes were proposed to the Curriculum &amp; Student Matters Committee terms of reference and he drew members' attention to the suggested amendments. He advised that the changes were to reflect Internal Auditor recommendations or to clarify actual governance practice at the college. It was also noted that a proposed change enabling committees to elect their Chair related to recommendations to be contained within a report on a Scheme of Delegation to be presented to the Board in December 2018. The Clerk explained that this change would remain subject to the relevant parts of the Scheme of Delegation being approved.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Board be recommended to approved the proposed changes to the committee's terms of reference, subject to the approval of relevant provisions within the proposed Scheme of Delegation.</p> |
| <p>12</p> <p><b>CSM/18/11/52</b></p> | <p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>There was no further business.</p>   |
| <p>13</p>                            | <p><b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:</b> 5.00pm Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019</p>   |
|                                      | <p><b>The meeting closed at 7.00pm</b></p>   |