

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON COLLEGE CORPORATION

**MINUTES OF STANDARDS & PERFORMANCE MONITORING COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 12 MARCH 2009**

PRESENT:	Jenny Andrews	Committee Chair
	Phil Krstic	Student Governor
	Julia Morris	Governor
	Martin Penny	Principal
	Lauren Wilcock	Student Governor
In attendance :	Charles Anderson	Deputy Principal
	Tim Astbury	Assistant Principal Curriculum
	David Jackson	Clerk to the Corporation
	Hazel Skwirzynska	Director of Learner Services

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Jayne Longfield and Andy Tyers.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare any interest in business to be discussed at the meeting, following which Julia Morris reminded members that she was Head of Kineton High School.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

It was resolved **THAT:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2008 be regarded as correct and signed by the Committee Chair.

4. PRESENTATION BY DIRECTOR OF FACULTY

Simon Rouch, Director of the Faculty of Skills Development, referring to a paper circulated with the agenda, outlined the work of the Faculty and responded to questions from members. During the course of the presentation Simon referred to enrolment patterns, the high level of retention within his Faculty and the success rates. He went on to indicate that the Faculty was preparing the changes to functional skills and the work being undertaken to ensure that students are placed on the right course at the outset of their contact with the College. He finished the presentation by talking about the active involvement in links with community groups across South Warwickshire and the work being undertaken to grow adult provision back to previous levels following changes to the funding regime.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Simon was thanked for an informative session.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Item 5.3, Maths Up-date – see item 7.

Item 8, Student Recruitment Against Target

The Deputy Principal presented a report on Student Recruitment Against Target for 2008/09 generated by LSC software and which had been submitted to the Learning and Skills Council on 3 March 2009.

He indicated that, although the student number target of 1,722 for 16-18 learners was unlikely to be achieved, the College would be close to achieving the financial target. There would be no risk of claw-back in the current year but it was possible that target numbers could impact upon figures for the following year. Discussions with the LSC have so far indicated that this is not likely. The 19+ learner responsive targets was currently short of target and strategies had been put in place to recruit more learners by targeted marketing, fee adjustment, new provision, staff courses, and funding maximisation. There was a risk of claw-back in the current year if the College did not reach 97% of its funding target. Strenuous efforts were, therefore, being made to ensure that this did not happen.

Recruitment on to 16-18 Apprenticeships was currently running below target when compared with previous years at this point in time and this was thought to be mainly due to redundancies in local businesses and staff recruitment cuts caused by the recession.

In terms of Train To Gain, the College was close to the original target of 425 but there was a possibility that the revised target of 529 may not be hit.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The Committee note the current levels of recruitment and the effort being made by the College to hit the targets in the difficult economic climate.

6. COLLEGE STRUCTURE - CURRICULUM

The Principal introduced a paper prepared by the Deputy Principal reminding Committee members that all qualifications would change over the next two years which will have a huge impact on the curriculum. By 2013, all students must have access to new diplomas, the first of which will be introduced at Stratford-upon-Avon College in September in respect of Social Health and Development. This would eventually lead to the demise of all BTEC qualifications. In addition, minimum levels of performance will be enforced with the implication that funding will be withdrawn if targets are not met.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The report be noted.

7. SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORTS FOR GRADE 3 SUBJECTS

The Assistant Principal Curriculum introduced his document on Self-Assessment Reports and Action Plans for sector subject areas that are Grade 3 and those viewed by College Management to be on the cusp, which was requested at the last meeting. He reported that at the last round of review meetings it was confirmed that, for Mathematics, the actions agreed had been implemented and appeared to be having a positive impact upon retention.

In terms of Science, the specifications had been changed and the retention and attendance was much improved.

Turning to IT, he indicated that specifications had also been changed and the early indications were that students were responding better to the new curriculum.

In terms of Engineering, he reported that the main issues were around Key Skills which was now more practical based and additional resources had been introduced.

He concluded by saying that extensive training had now been given to the Construction staff and the progress was being monitored.

The Committee asked a number of questions during the course of the presentation and the Principal commented that the 2009 Self-Assessment Report was likely to be used for the next Inspection and, therefore, there was a need for all areas to be Grade 2 by the end of this academic year.

It was resolved **THAT:**

- a) The report be noted; and
- b) The Grade 3 curriculum areas be closely monitored for the remainder of the academic year with a further report being made to the next meeting.

8. VALUE ADDED FOR 2007/08

The Deputy Principal presented a report on Value Added which indicated that overall, despite improving overall pass rates and an increase in the average points score, the value added performance has declined. Under Framework for Excellence, the value added key indicators are calculated by the LSC which, when compared to ALIS data, do not agree. The College is currently doing further work to understand the LSC data. If the data provided by the LSC is accurate, the College should be getting more As and Bs indicating that the 'high flyers' require more support and encouragement.

This issue is currently being looked at as part of the lesson observation scheme. It was recognised that value added was a challenge for all secondary schools. Following further discussion,

It was resolved **THAT:**

- a) The academic curriculum managers work with staff and students to ensure that the students get the best grade and that the College should continue to resolve difficulties around the possible inaccuracies in the data;
- b) A further report be made to the next meeting.

9. RETENTION 2008/09

The Committee considered the analysis of Withdrawals for 2008/09 compared with the previous year. The report showed current high levels of retention and no particular issues were identified. Retention for each course was monitored termly at the Management Review meetings.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The report be noted.

10. ATTENDANCE REPORT 2008/09

The Committee considered the analysis of Attendance for 2008/09 compared to the previous year which showed a slight improvement. The Deputy Principal reminded the meeting that, although there was no published benchmark for attendance, Ofsted Inspectors wish to see attendance at a minimum of 90%.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The report be noted.

11. INDUCTION SURVEY (SPOC)

The Induction Student Perception of College survey was considered by the Committee. The survey had been conducted by an external organisation, the results of which were generally pleasing. Work was currently being carried out on the College website which would, hopefully, make it more responsive and user friendly.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The report be noted.

12. PROGRESSION/DESTINATION DATA 2007/08

The report on Student Progression/Destination Data for 2007/08 was reviewed by the Committee. The Director of Learner Services reminded the Committee that the categories indicating destination routes was set in accordance with Framework for Excellence requirements and there would be a gradual build up to provide comparison data for future years. Ultimately, it was believed that data on destinations would be required three years out and this would put an enormous administrative burden on colleges trying to track down and obtain the necessary data. After discussion,

It was resolved **THAT:**

The report be noted and the College congratulated on the work undertaken to capture the data.

13. EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORTS

The Deputy Principal introduced the Charter Mark Standard Assessment Report that had been undertaken in December 2008. Whilst the report was positive, the College questioned the value of the Charter Mark particularly as it was not permitted to provide the information electronically. Discussions with stakeholders had indicated that Charter Mark accreditation made little difference to their decision whether or not to work with the College. In view of the forthcoming changes and the research undertaken, the College did not propose to seek Charter Mark accreditation in 2009/10.

The Deputy Principal went on to highlight the areas of concern arising from the Ofsted Desktop Monitoring report which was around value added and success rates, matters of which the College was already aware and working to improve, as discussed earlier in the meeting.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The reports be noted.

14. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The current Standards and Performance Monitoring Committee Terms of Reference were reviewed by the Committee, following which,

It was resolved **THAT:**

The Committees Terms of Reference be amended to include:

- in section 2, Value Added;
- in section 11, replacing the word 'learner' with 'student';
- in section 10, inserting the words 'annual review'; and
- adding an additional section to indicate that the Committee would receive and review reports from external agencies relating to quality and curriculum matters.

15. IDENTIFICATION OF REPORTS TO FUTURE MEETINGS

It was resolved **THAT:**

No specific reports to future meetings were identified by the Committee.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair queried whether issues around EMAs had been resolved, to which the Director of Learner Services indicated that, in general, they had been and the system was now much improved.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was resolved **THAT:**

For the time being, the Committee meet again on **Thursday 18 June 2009 at 8.30am** but the Clerk to the Corporation would canvass members to see if an alternative date for the meeting could be found to accommodate all members.

Signed :Committee Chair