

## CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COLLEGE

**Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee of the Board of Governors  
held on Monday 28 June 2010 at 5.00pm in the Conference Centre, Paget Rd**

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### **PRESENT**

Dr M Hardacre (Chair)    Mr I Millard  
Ms R Bansal                Mr G Peebles  
Mr J Crockett

Ms S Meddings (Clerk)

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Ms S Prince  
Mr J Stretton  
Ms R Urkovskis (for item 4)

In welcoming everyone to the meeting the Chair extended a particular welcome to the group of five College staff apprentices who were in attendance to present the pre-meeting Briefing.

The Chair also welcomed Ms Gail Burton, Apprenticeship Development Manager, in attendance for the pre-meeting Briefing and Ms Rose Urkovskis, Teaching and Learning Service Leader, in attendance for agenda item 4.

The meeting was preceded by a Briefing on the College's Staff Apprenticeship Programme.

Following an introduction and overview of the Programme from Ms S Prince, the five College staff apprentices introduced themselves and talked about their experiences and achievements on the Programme.

The Chair thanked and congratulated the apprentices on their presentation and requested that thanks be recorded and conveyed to the staff who have supervised the apprentices throughout their programmes.

*Mr B Dhir, Ms G Burton and the staff apprentices left the meeting room.*

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr J Rowley.

### **15/10 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 7 JUNE 2010**

#### **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 June 2010 be approved as a correct record.

## **16/10 MATTERS ARISING**

### **Employer Responsive Performance**

Arising on Minute No 11/10, the Principal informed the Committee that another area of College provision, Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy had been successful in gaining unconditional recognition under the Training Quality Standard.

## **17/10 OBSERVATION OF TEACHING & LEARNING 2009/10**

Governors considered a report on the outcome of the College's internal Teaching and Learning Observations for 2009/10 and noted the following:

- A total of 340 staff were observed compared with 364 for the previous year. All qualified permanent teaching staff and Visiting Teachers who had taught during the current academic year were included in the lesson observation process. (The College uses the Ofsted four point scale to grade observed teaching).
- The overall outcome was an increase of good or better teaching to 89% compared with 88% in 2008/09, 82% in 2007/08 and 76% in 2006/07. The College target for 2009/10 was set at 90% for good or better grades and was therefore not quite met.
- Satisfactory teaching has reduced to 10% compared to 12% in 2008/09, 17% in 2007/08 and 22% in 2006/07. The percentage of inadequate teaching had increased to 1% (representing two observation outcomes) compared to 0% in 2008/09, 1% in 2007/08 and 2% in 2006/07.
- The percentage of grade one (outstanding) observations increased to 34% compared with 30% in 2008/09 and 17% in 2007/08 representing an improved profile in outstanding lessons.
- A focus on training for Visiting Teachers has continued during 2009/10 through curriculum and College-wide training events. In 2009/10 the figure for Visiting Teachers was 82% good or better which shows a significant improvement compared to the outcome for 2008/09 of 77%. The figure of 82%, whilst an improvement, is below the College target of 90% for 2009/10. It is however in line with sector benchmarks which indicate a lower grade profile for Visiting Teachers compared with permanent staff.
- In respect of the "good or better" observation grades at subject sector level, it was reported that 6 Subject Sector Areas (SSAs) have shown improvement with 3 areas sustaining a 100% outcome. The continued improvement in SSA14 – Preparation for Life and Work – (74% 2007/08, 85% 2008/09, 90% 2009/10) was of particular note, especially as this SSA covers all College Faculties. 6 SSA's exceeded the College target of 90% good or better by more than 5%.
- Three subject sector areas did not get to within 5% of the College target of 90% good or better teaching – SSA1, SSA8 and SSA 10/11/12 - and were therefore areas of concern. It was reported that SSAs 1 and 8 were of

concern last year and additional focus had been placed on these areas during 2009/10 but had not led to any identifiable improvement. It was emphasised that during 2010/11 these areas would therefore need to be a particular focus for improvement with development focusing on both individual performance and team performance.

- The Committee further noted an analysis of strengths and areas for improvement identified across the College from the observation reports. One notable strength was the improved use of ILT which was a key focus of the Teaching and Learning Service during 2009/10. It was reported that areas for improvement identified in the observation reports would form the focus for CPD activity for 2010/11.
- In respect of the progress made against the areas for improvement identified in the previous year's report (i.e. 2008/09) Ms R Urkovskis drew attention to the role of the Teaching and Learning Service as a key driver for improvement and presented the Service's report on projects for 2009/10. A key focus for the Service during 2009/10 was the College's ILT Strategic Plan and it was reported that the College had bid for 7 ILT projects and been successful in all 7 bids.
- Key areas for improvement during 2010/11 were identified as:
  - Consistency across the curriculum in the use of ILT by all teachers
  - Inclusion of equality and diversity and safeguarding in the curriculum in line with Ofsted expectations
  - Classroom management including a range of techniques for dealing with challenging learners
  - Extension of the range of strategies for differentiation including approaches towards assessment
  - Key focus on individual staff needs especially where observation outcome is satisfactory or inadequate
  - Sharing good practice including integration of functional skills.

In considering the report, the Committee discussed the following:

- The correlation between observation grades and success rates. The Committee requested that this be reported to Committee at the November meeting.
- It was suggested that 5 year trends for subject sector areas would be useful data to collate.
- The Principal endorsed the strategy for focusing on individual staff needs where observation outcome was satisfactory or inadequate. It was suggested that the CPD required should form part of the individual's performance management meeting.
- The Committee discussed the future of Licence to Practise and agreed that it was essential to keep up the momentum within the College and endorsed the College target to have all teaching staff with or working towards Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) by September 2010.

*Ms R Urkovskis left the meeting.*

## **18/10 LEARNER VOICE REVIEW 2009/10**

The Committee considered a report informing of the feedback received via "Learner Voice" strategies employed during 2009/10 and outlining the arrangements for 2010/11.

To give context it was reported that the revised Common Inspection Framework places an increased emphasis on the Learner Voice - gathering information from students, at all levels and at all ages, and demonstrating how their views have been acted upon to improve their experience of the college and the courses they are studying. This evidence is considered both at a curriculum level but is also reviewed as part of the Leadership and Management gradings.

The College has received feedback from the following areas throughout the 2009/10 academic year.

- the cross college learner survey, carried out post induction and during the spring term
- the use of Focus Groups across the college
- the use of Early Leaver Questionnaires to probe reasons for leaving the college prior to the completion of their chosen qualification.

In respect of the learner surveys it was reported that the College continues to use the services of a professional survey and data collection company to analyse and report on the feedback received from students when completing the surveys. This facility provides the College with reports at all levels from College, Faculty, School and Course. It also provides a benchmarking service comparing the College results to those from over 97 general FE and tertiary colleges with a total of nearly half a million students.

In reviewing the outcomes of the Induction questionnaire it was noted that:

- more work is needed on supporting the application and enrolment process
- there is inconsistency in the way that lecturer absence is covered
- the support functions of the college need to be more clearly signposted for students to ensure that all are aware of how support can be accessed
- the quality assurance questions
- show a consistently high response from students who feel they are on the right course, would recommend the course to a friend and feel that the college gives them a good chance to learn.

Outcomes from the On Programme questionnaire included the following points of noted:

- Female students tend to be more positive than males and those with a disability are consistently higher in their rating of the college.
- 16-18 year olds are generally less positive about their time at college, often varying by three points or more from the college average. They were significantly weaker in their response to the question "I am kept interested throughout the teaching sessions".
- Lower ratings overall were received from Black Caribbean students, with Indian students the highest scoring of the BME groups. Bangladeshi students were especially critical of the buildings, the facilities and the cleanliness of buildings.

- Cleanliness of buildings at Paget Road remains an issue, reflecting the difficulties with maintaining an increasingly ageing and busy teaching environment.
- In terms of curriculum areas causing concern, Sports and Leisure were significantly below the college average, with concerns also expressed by Creative Art students.

It was reported that disaggregated and detailed information on the feedback from questionnaires is fed through at course level and is incorporated into the course review system. As part of the quality function, course level and school level questionnaire results are scrutinised to identify areas of concern. The results are used to inform the setting up of student focus groups with representatives from the areas causing concern to allow a more detailed exploration of the issues involved.

During 2009/10 two particular areas were scrutinised in detail and the findings were subjected to action planning and progress updates;

- Given the very low level of satisfaction evident in the Sport and Leisure area, all courses were involved in Focus Group work.

- Another area selected for in-depth review via Focus Group was the Motor Vehicle curriculum area. Student feedback here was outstanding and so consistent that it was felt good practice may be available for dissemination across the college.

In respect of the "Early Leaver Review" it was reported that a sample of 16-18 year old students who leave the college before completing their programme of study are contacted and asked to complete a short postal questionnaire. The feedback received to date from the questionnaires has indicated that financial difficulty has been a dominant factor in a student's decision to withdraw, and this includes trying to juggle part-time work with a full-time college course. It was noted that at the end of the academic year, a full review will be done on retention and broken down by gender, ethnicity, age and curriculum area to help inform improvements for the next academic year.

The Committee further noted an outline of arrangements for engaging with the Learner Voice for 2010/11, namely:

- The College would continue to use whole college surveys, but work is being done with the Student Union on the type of questions that should be asked. In discussion with the Student Union, the four areas they feel in need of most attention are the effectiveness of the induction process, the usefulness of tutorials, the effectiveness of one to one reviews and target setting and finally linked to safeguarding, how safe and secure learners feel whilst in the college environment.
- Student Focus Groups would continue to be a major strand to the Learner Voice, with all college managers encouraged to attend at least one during the academic year. The target is for in excess of fifty groups to be used, some picking up issues from questionnaires or one question snap shots, others addressing cross college issues that emerge from student council meetings or the work of the student liaison officers.

- The Learner Voice Strategy and the feedback obtained from it will form part of a separate section of the Self-Assessment report.

In receiving the report, and in focusing specifically on the outcomes of the Student On Programme questionnaire, the Chair expressed concern that 15 responses were in the lower quartile when benchmarked against all colleges in the sample.

The Chair therefore charged officers with scrutinising these areas and reporting back to the Committee on the actions taken to address the issues.

Governors further requested that the full analysis of Early Leavers should be reported to the Committee in the autumn term.