

MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Date	Wednesday 21st June 2023
Time	16.00 to 18.40
Location	Via MS Teams
Present (Governors):	Chair: Jackie Pearson Mary Hughes Prof Craig Mahoney (Designate Chair of Corporation) Dr Barbara Spittle (Acting Chair of Corporation) Judy Peck (Staff Governor) Christine Ricketts (Principal and Chief Executive)
Officers and advisers in attendance	Graeme Baker – Executive Director Curriculum (EDC) Sarah Clancey – Executive Director of Education Andrew Russell – Executive Director, Student Support (EDSSSR) Melissa Drayson - Director of Governance (DG) Susan Pattison – (ESOL) pre-meeting briefing Patrick Smyth - (14-16 provision) pre-meeting briefing Lance Finn (Head of Teaching and Learning) – item 3 Meisha Harding (Head of SEND) – item 7 Ricquelle Williams (Head of Marketing) – item 10
Apologies for absence	Joshua Gregory (Student Governor) Louise Salmon (Governor designate)
Quorum (3)	The meeting was quorate throughout

Item		Action lead
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Pre-meeting briefing – alternative provision

The Committee received an insight into two areas of alternative provision offered by the college: ESOL and 14-16. A summary of each is provided as an appendix to these minutes.

1. Preliminary items

1.1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Committee members introduced themselves for the benefit of staff in attendance. Craig Mahoney was welcomed to his first meeting as Designate Chair of the Corporation.

1.2 Declarations of interest

There were no new declarations of interests relating to matters on the agenda. Previously declared interests were carried forward.

1.3 Urgent other business notified in advance

No urgent matters of other business had been notified in advance.

2. Minutes

2.1 Minutes of previous meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting on 15th March 2023 be APPROVED as a correct record.

2.2 Matters Arising

The Committee was satisfied that all actions from previous meetings had been completed or were on the agenda.

3. Committee Deep Dive on Quality of Teaching and Learning (strategic project)

Presentation by the Head of Teaching and Learning

The slides had been circulated in advance. Questions and comments were taken from governors.

It was noted that, following FE Commissioner advice, a shift in focus regarding the implementation of the Teaching and Learning Toolkit had taken place in-year. Although this represented a significant change, it had been well-received by staff.

Governors reflected that ensuring consistency in quality of teaching and learning was a key priority. There was concern that the toolkit contained a lot of jargon and that staff might not understand the terminology. Management assured governors that the toolkit had allowed the creation of a shared language around what 'good' looked like. This also helped to support non-specialists teaching outside their subject area. The July Staff Development Week would focus on building foundations to maximise student learning.

The Head of Teaching and Learning was thanked for an informative update.

4. Curriculum and local skills

4.1 Draft Curriculum Plan 2023-24

Presented by the Executive Director Curriculum

Governors noted the key features of the new curriculum plan. This included:

- The consolidation of new provision introduced in 2022-23
- Accessing funding, including the Local Skills improvement Fund, to enable the college to directly meet local skills needs. The Accountability Statement set out the college's intentions in this regard.
- Strengthening the work-readiness aspect of the curriculum, through a focus on personal development, behaviour and attitudes.
- Working with all Heads of Learning to introduce a consistent cross college timetable. A key objective was to improve the attendance

differential between English and Maths and the main study programme.

- Consolidation and simplification at Level 3, with discontinuation or combining of some courses, clearer pathways and a reduced burden on teachers.
- Introduction of three out of the four planned T Levels. Digital Support would now be introduced in 2024-25.
- Extending alternative provision (14-16, SEND and ESOL), increasing groups sizes where possible

Governors noted that the curriculum planning process had been closely aligned to the outcomes of the Curriculum Efficiencies and Financial Sustainability Support review by the FE Commissioner, and supported by London South East College (LSEC). This included:

- Fewer, larger groups across all provision. SEND and 14-16 provision would be targeted 10 and 12 respectively.
- Maximising efficiencies linked to 580 study programme hours
- Developing the Heads of Learning understanding of funding, contribution rates and staff utilisation to plan secure and sustainable provision

Governors asked if retention had been factored into group size numbers. Management responded that a retention factor had been included, based on historic trends, but that more work was needed to calculate this at a course level.

A further question was raised on whether the facilities had the capacity for increased class sizes, in particular Construction. SLT gave assurances that plans were in place to cope with increased numbers. Monitoring student numbers and class sizes would be important for CPR in 2023-24.

The Committee thanked the Executive Director Curriculum and Lorne Richardson for an impressive piece of work.

AGREED: That the Curriculum Plan 2023-24 would be recommended to the Corporation FOR APPROVAL.

4.2 Accountability Statement

Supporting paper by the Principal and Chief Executive

The Committee received the final draft of the Accountability Statement. This had first been discussed in detail at the Strategy Day in April. The final version would be presented to the Corporation for approval on 12th July and submitted to the ESFA by the extended deadline of 31st July.

The Accountability Statement set the out context of the college and its ambitions, set out in the strategic plan, and aligned these with local skills needs. It highlighted areas where Brooklands College was different to other local providers in the area served, especially in terms of breadth of offer.

Governors discussed the inclusion of a statement relating to curriculum areas where it was hard to recruit staff.

A summary version would be produced for the website.

The Principal and Chief Executive was thanked for a significant piece of work, that set the college's ambitions out clearly.

AGREED: That the Accountability Statement would be recommended to the Corporation for APPROVAL.

45. Quality of Education – 2022-23 improvement plan
Supporting papers presented by the Executive Director, Education.

4.1 Position against KPIs

The Chair and Chair of Corporation had met previously to discuss progress against KPIs. Headlines were:

- Attendance had dipped slightly to just under 80%
- Overall achievement was currently forecast at 82%, which was less than the college target. This was, however, an improvement on the previous year and compared reasonably with national rates.
- Heads of Learning were working hard to support learners to the ends of their courses to maximise achievement.
- 19+ achievement was currently predicting an improvement
- Apprenticeship timely achievement was forecast at 50% which was an improvement on the previous year.
- Staff were working very hard to ensure that industry and work placement targets were met.

A further update would be brought to the Corporation meeting on 12th July.

5.2 Quality Improvement Plan 2022-23 update

The Committee was reminded that management had focussed on three areas of the QIP following the FE Commissioner visit in March, as part of the Strategic Project. Good progress had been made with the introduction of the Teaching and Learning Toolkit. Two members of the FE Commissioner team had recently undertaken a further cross-college deep dive into Teaching and Learning. Whilst there were still some inconsistencies, positive progress had been made since the last visit.

5.3 Performance Sub-group report

The Chair reported that the sub-group had met once since the last meeting to review KPIs and data.

6. Safeguarding Termly Report
Supporting paper by the EDSSSR

Headlines from the report were:

- Overall numbers of students with safeguarding referrals continued to increase, due to an increase in staff referrals and closer monitoring of programmes such as Headstart.
- The high incidence of Mental Health issues continued to be an area of concern
- There had been a worrying increase in suicidal thoughts, attempted suicide and, sadly, the suicide of a former student. The Safeguarding

Teams had received training in suicide prevention. The college was recruiting Mental Health ambassadors to widen the network of people that students can talk to.

- The Community Security Officer post was currently vacant. College boundaries remained a potential risk in terms of security.
- Several Prevent referrals had been dealt with. One remained under review. Of the remainder, none met the threshold. Several cases had been picked up through the new IT filters.
- The recent internal audit of safeguarding had given an overall opinion of reasonable assurance. Half of the recommendations had been implemented already.
- The college was looking at a 'blended' approach to safeguarding training, rather than relying mainly on online modules.
- In the latest student survey, 94.5% of learners feel safe. Any individuals who responded negatively to this question had been contacted by the safeguarding team.

The Safeguarding Governor raised the following points:

- There seemed to be a slow response to some issues, with some actions remaining 'in progress' for too long. Management accepted that there had been a delay on the student counsellor initiative, but that this was due to be approved by SLT at their next meeting
- Addressing the achievement and progression gap for safeguarded learners remained a priority. The pattern of the previous year seemed to be similar for this year. It was suggested that a similar table should be produced for this cohort as in the SEND report. Management responded that the gap had closed by 7% in some areas, but accepted that the key issue was for staff to know how learners' achievement might be at risk.

AGREED: That the Safeguarding Report would be provided to the full Corporation for information

7. SEND Annual Report

Supporting paper by the Head of SEND

Governors noted the range of pathways offered for learners with SEND needs and the plans to expand provision to meet future growth, in partnership with Surrey County Council. The courses met student programme funding conditions.

Student attendance and achievement was strong and students were highly motivated to learn. Supporting learners into employment was a key goal. Nineteen learners had gained part time employment and a dedicated work experience co-ordinator worked with local employers.

A key risk for the areas was staff recruitment.

The refurbishment of Vickers to create the new SEND area from September. was starting at the end of June.

The Committee was delighted that Mary Hughes had put herself forward to be the SEND Link Governor. She would continue in her role as Safeguarding lead governor until a replacement was found.

The Committee received the SEND Annual Report with thanks.

8. Personal Development of Students

Supporting paper by the EDSSSR

The Committee received the detailed paper, highlights of which were:

- Progress continued to be made on Gatsby benchmarking
- Good progress was being made on developing employer contacts
- Levels of enrichment had improved significantly this year, especially in Engineering and Motor Vehicle.
- The Youth Hub continued to offer a range of activities
- Careers week had resulted in good levels of engagement.
- Work placements remained a challenge but the college expected to achieve its 60% target for the year.

9. Student behaviour and attitudes report

Supporting paper by the EDSSSR

Attendance would continue to be a key area of focus. It was anticipated that the new common timetable would assist with addressing attendance issues.

A higher level of intervention had been required to address pockets of challenging behaviour among some student groups. This was a continuing legacy of the pandemic. Work would continue on setting out clear expectations, whilst providing sufficient support in through student counsellors and progress coaches.

Governors asked about the cost of providing additional non-teaching student support staff. Management responded that costs would be offset by savings from reduced sessional and agency expenditure. Staff structures at other colleges had been researched and assurance was provided that this would be the right balance of staffing to meet student needs in forthcoming years.

10. Student Recruitment and marketing report

Supporting paper presented by the Head of Marketing

Headlines were:

- There was a general increase in engagement across all social media and web-based platforms
- Student applications were healthy, and currently stood 11.4% above the previous year. The increase in Engineering, Construction and Hair and Beauty had been expected, but increases in other areas was gratifying as this was linked to the increased marketing focus.
- Engagement in open events had increased by over 100%. Feedback had been positive, especially when current students had been involved

In response to governors' questions, detail was provided about the various means by which applicants were 'kept warm', to ensure high conversion

levels, ensure that any support needs were identified early and to address any other anxieties or pressures related to starting college. Governors were assured that plans were in place to maximise recruitment over the summer holidays, and especially from GCSE results days, to grow the numbers of students starting in September.

A campaign was underway to retarget people who had shown an interest but didn't apply to the college.

The Committee discussed Higher Education recruitment. It was agreed that a clearer strategy was needed that identified areas for growth, consolidation and potential collaboration with other institutions.

AGREED: That a Higher Education strategy would be brought to the Committee as a key focus of a future meeting

11. Committee risk assurance

The Committee assured itself that all areas of strategic risk under its remit had been covered during the course of its meeting.

12. Governor engagement reports: performance reviews, link governor visits and Teaching and Learning Day

The Committee Chair, Mary Hughes and staff governors had attended the Student Awards afternoon. It had been an excellent afternoon. More governors should be encouraged to attend future events.

The academic staff governor had attended a dinner, hosted by the college, to launch the Weybridge Arts Festival. The students had been a credit to the college. The event had provided an opportunity to meet a wide variety of people from local organisations and to enhance the college profile in the local community.

13. Review of business and other business

The Committee chair commented that the pre-meeting curriculum briefings had been informative, but that extra time should be added to the agenda to receive such reports in the future.

The Committee acknowledged that this was Graeme Baker's last meeting. Governors were sorry that he was leaving but understood that circumstances had changed with regard to his health. Heartfelt thanks were expressed to Graeme for his hard work and the difference he had made in a short space of time.

13. Date of next meeting

It was noted that there would be two meetings in the autumn term, with the first focussed on the previous year's achievement data. Dates would be confirmed as soon as possible.

Signed

(Chair)

Date

APPENDIX 1

Pre-meeting briefing – alternative provision

The Committee received an insight into two areas of alternative provision offered by the college: ESOL and 14-16. A summary of each is provided as an appendix to these minutes.

a. ESOL

Presentation by Susan Pattison

The Committee noted the following highlights from the presentation:

It was World Refugee Week: the college currently had a high number of refugee students on ESOL courses.

Student numbers had been affected by the government stance on au pairs, Other opportunities outside of the immediate geographical area were being researched.

Headstart provision had been set up to fill the gap for 16-19 ESOL learners who were not able to access school education. Numbers and reputation were growing for this provision.

The adult offer attracted many students who had been affected by the wars in Ukraine and Afghanistan. This included a strong pastoral syllabus to support these learners, as well as employability training to help learners into the workplace. Classes had increased from once to twice a week to meet learner need. Numbers were, however, affected by government policy and some students returning to their home country. Links with the Job Centre and other local organisations had strengthened to help students to find job opportunities. The national careers offer had enabled many learners to find high quality work opportunities.

A successful collaboration with Surrey University had been developed, providing opportunities for both Headstart and Adult ESOL learners. This was an area with scope for development.

The quality of teaching in ESOL was good, with plenty of evidence of good practice. The area was fortunate to have a competent and capable teaching department. Learning support was offered in all classes as learners often had undiagnosed learning differences.

Areas for improvement included behaviour management. Some Headstart learners were dealing with trauma. Termly meetings with host families and social workers took place to ensure a team approach to meeting leads. These included a translator in attendance where necessary.

Attendance stood at 87%, which was above the college average.

Safeguarding training was augmented with courses on significant trauma, to ensure a strong pastoral, trauma-informed approach was delivered

A more streamlined approach to admissions had been developed to enable individuals to join the course at any point of the year.

Predicted achievement was on target, although some Headstart achievement was slightly lower, mainly due to learners moving to another area. Progression from the Headstart programme into main study programme areas was strong.

Other successful collaborations included Surrey County Council, which enabled outreach classes to be held; Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum, working with a Nepalese cohort in Camberley and working; and FEDCAP, support people with higher needs seeking work. The college was also working with the policy to develop an ESOL offer for learners in, or at risk of being, in the criminal justice system.

Governors thanked ESOL for an informative report and commented that, when they had last visited the college, ESOL was one of the best classes that they observed.

The question was raised whether safeguarding risk assessments were undertaken with information about support provided. This might be a useful document to provide to future colleges or workplaces.

b. 14-16 provision

Presentation by Patrick Smyth

The department had been operating since August 2022, so was in its first year of development. There had been 54 learners at the start of the year, attending 2 days a week. There had been 20 withdrawals during the year for a variety of reasons including anxiety, inability to cope with college environment, and disciplinary issues, mainly relating to attendance. Due to the age of the students, absence was treated as a safeguarding issue. The curriculum area most affected was construction and engineering.

There had been a significant rise in applications for September 2023 across all curriculum areas, including catering and arts where there were no students in the current year. The admissions process had been strict in order to reduce the number of potential withdrawals. The college was planning to offer 100 places, plus a waiting list.

Due to high levels of additional need among this cohort, designation LSAs would be provided in each standalone classes. It was anticipated that schools and colleges would be seeing the impact of the pandemic on young people for another eight years. Many of them were home educated because they were unable to cope with the school environment.

In response to questions it was confirmed that the college received £4800 for each student.

Good to have presentations but **probably** needs 2.5 hours - schedule with meeting for next year