

# THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER

## MINUTES OF THE QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2010 at 4.10 p.m.

Present: Professor C Behagg, Ms K Brown, Mr C P Clementi, Mr S A Martell, Mr S P Nicholls, Mr J R Nunns, Mrs M J Russell, Mr H Underwood, Mr A Vourexakis

Apologies: Mr S van der Borgh, Mr A W Mudie

In attendance: Ms N Whitehead

In the Chair: Prof. C Behagg

### 1. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interests.

2. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010 were approved.

### 3. Matters arising

Item 6: Cross- College Staff and Student Surveys: The Vice Principal explained that he and the Director of Learning Resource had met with the IT Manager to ensure that the staff and student surveys would be more consistent and effective as discussed by the Committee.

### 4. College Performance Report 2008/09

*Paper: College Performance Report 2008/09*

The Vice Principal (VP) highlighted the validated nature of the data covering 2008/09 and its usefulness as a base for considering the more recent performance in 2009/10. Success rates were positive across all 16-18 curriculum areas with the one exception of Level 1 long courses where retention on the Text Processing course was more the issue than achievement. There had been an improvement in Levels 1 and most notably level 2 of Adult Education whilst Level 3 remained problematical by comparison with national averages. Overall however 95% of the College's offer performed above the national average.

### 5. Achievement Review 2009/10

*Paper: Total Combined Scorecards 2009/10*

The VP explained his analysis of the College's results and that the 'scorecard' model enabled him to produce an accurate ranking of subjects according both to exam success and value-added in the key areas of AS and A2. A significant majority (and more subjects than previously) were showing a positive value-added score with a handful requiring more concerted action. The Chair welcomed this opportunity for greater clarity on each individual subject area and to hone in on value added prior to consideration of the College Self Assessment Report (SAR). Previous action on priority areas was seen to be having an impact and it was hoped would feed through further into the A2 results in the coming year.

*[Mrs K Brown left the meeting]*

### 6. College SAR 2009/10

*Paper: College Self-Assessment Report 2009/10*

The Chair noted the increase in the five main cross-college grades from '2' last year to '1's and the VP commented that this did not however suggest that there was no room for further improvement nor appropriate differentiation at subject level. In examining the SAR in detail the following points were noted:

- i) The action taken to-date on value added and performance in ‘a significant minority of subjects’ in response to the Ofsted ‘desktop-monitoring exercise’ in March 2009. The improvement in faculty grades in Maths and Liberal Arts (including English), was particularly noted as well as the main focus on priorities now having shifted to other subject areas;
- ii) the other key area identified for improvement was on assessment for learning where the college was keen to continue to motivate students to maximise their potential. From a student perspective the PEARS process was effective but the best way to bring about a further improvement in performance and motivation might be to start sooner on identifying students’ university and career aspirations;
- iii) the importance of maintaining a national perspective on grades whilst continually seeking further improvements on high college performance;
- iv) Achieving ALPS value added of 3 in both AS and A2 was a significant improvement on the previous year and the position at the last inspection. This was reflected in achievement of the college’s target of 55% A\*-B grades where attention to detail and judicious use of retakes had helped raise performance but where the constant turnover of students left no room for complacency;
- v) The considerable efforts in the past year to ensure students remained safe and the efforts to monitor that they felt so. Commenting on the recent bullying survey, Mr Vourexakis considered it almost unnecessary given the maturity of Collyer’s students and the presence of the (‘fantastic’) Security Officer;
- vi) In advance of the QIP, governors sought reassurance on the action being taken to address the priority areas and asked that, where appropriate, a brief to that effect might be included in future years (in addition to the information provided at Planning Day QIP discussions);
- vii) The success of WBL with all students now in employment and the efforts in Adult Education to meet learner needs through more Access courses;
- viii) The progress on Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity and the wider support for students.

**Recommendation: The Governing Body should approve the College SAR at its next meeting.**

## **7. Student Progress – Management Report**

*Papers: Student Progress – Management Report October 2010*

The Assistant Principal (Progress) reported that the last report in July had proved to be a good indicator of the exam results which provided assurance of the effectiveness of the Student Progress Management Reports. Student SLN targets had been met and consolidated on growth the previous year. Whilst retention figures were 0.5% down on the previous year, they were still high in spite of an increase in student numbers and no movement in student options might suggest an unwelcome rigidity. In terms of churn, figures were broadly comparable across the faculties. It was particularly encouraging to see performance in Music and Music Technology A2 more than ½ grade above target as the new Head of Subject got to grips with this area. Attendance overall was similar to this time last year but it had yet to be seen whether there would be similar disruption ahead because of snow. In summary it appeared to be a positive healthcheck on the start of the year.

## **8. Governance SAR 2009/10**

*Paper: Governance Self-Assessment Report 2009/10*

The Clerk commented on the key challenge for governance for the year having been a considerable time of uncertainty following MOG changes and the election against the background of economic uncertainty. Whilst a recent individual survey showed governors might be feeling a lack of confidence in their ability to influence strategy in such uncertain times, evidence also suggested that governors had been as well-informed as possible and had sought to take these factors into account in discussing the strategic direction of the college, for example in monitoring the excellent financial health of the college. External pressures on

governors had led to a slight drop in Governing Body attendance but this was compensated for by very high attendance at Committee meetings and continued strong support for selection and appeals panels. In terms of agreeing a grade for the governance SAR, the Committee considered whether governors had maintained their outstanding performance from the previous year. It was suggested that whilst it was important for there to be appropriate separation between governance and management, governor knowledge of the measures being taken to address the, albeit relatively small areas, weaker college performance might be a key factor.

**Recommendation: The Governing Body should approve the content of the report and be the final arbiter of the grade awarded.**

**9. Framework for Excellence**

*Paper: Framework for Excellence Summary*

The VP commented that it was understood that the delayed information on College performance as measured within the Framework for Excellence (FfE) would be published in mid-December although the range of information was expected to be smaller and it was not yet clear how relative college performance would be addressed. In so far as comparisons were possible the college appeared to have generally performed even better than in the previous year and was once more outstanding in its financial health. In the learner survey the overall grade for the quality of the College as a provider was 8.6 out of 10. It was noted that in future Sixth Form Colleges (SFCs) would no longer need to conduct the FfE learner survey although Collyer’s would continue to gather extensive feedback from students internally. It was noted that whilst the recent White Paper had announced greater parity of funding between SFCs and school sixth forms, there remained, at least for the present, a lack of parity in the methodology addressing performance.

**10. Governance Quality Framework**

Members felt that the meeting had been clearly directed towards ensuring that the learner experience continued to improve through rigorous self-assessment by the College. The curriculum offer was under constant review to ensure it met the needs of the increased number of students enrolled at the college during the day as well as the Adult Ed and WBL students. Equality and Diversity had been appropriately addressed in the SAR. All members had contributed and felt suitably equipped to make decisions.

**11. Date of next meeting: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2011, at 4.10pm**

The meeting ended at 6.07 p.m.

Chairman.....

Date.....

NCW 30/11/10