

Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held in the Conference Room on Tuesday 27th September 2022 at 3pm

Present: Christine Bampton (Interim Committee Chair)
 Heather Austin (Student Governor)
 Mark Aberdein (Independent Governor)
 Michelle Brabner (Principal)
 Catherine Durr (Staff Governor)
 Anita Holt (Associate Governor)
 Susannah Porter (Independent Governor)
 Katy Robinson (Independent Governor)

In Attendance: Paris Bonwick (AP Apprenticeships and MIS) (from item 7)
 Maura Cummins (Deputy Principal)
 Lisa Farnhill (Clerk to the Corporation)
 Paul Hamnett (Prospective Governor as an observer)
 Stephen Musa (Asst. Principal Student Experience and Welfare)

Apologies: Victoria Wickington (Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Quality)

Absent: None

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
S.23.01	<p>OPEN AND WELCOME The Committee Chair opened the meeting, welcoming staff and attendees, with observer Paul Hamnett given a warm welcome.</p>	
S.23.02	<p>ITEM 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE No member apologies were received, and the meeting was confirmed as quorate. Apologies were received from the Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Quality, with the Deputy Principal confirming she would present her reports and take any questions. Members advised the Assistant Principal MIS and Apprenticeships would be joining the meeting later.</p> <p><u>Item 1 – Resolved:</u> <i>Members accepted the apologies as provided above.</i></p>	
S.23.03	<p>ITEM 2: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST No declarations were made.</p> <p><u>Item 2 – Noted:</u> <i>The Committee resolved to note the position.</i></p>	
S.23.04	<p>ITEM 3: APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR</p>	

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	<p>The Committee Chair confirmed that in line with the TOR and Corporation Standing Orders, the Committee was seeking to appoint a Vice Chair, either in an active capacity, considered as succession planning or remain as supportive role. With no nominations received, the Chair urged any interested party to contact herself or the Clerk. Members were also reminded of the vacancy for the position of Committee Chair, with an external recruitment agency now supporting with filling the vacancy.</p> <p><u>Item 3 Deferred:</u> <i>The appointment of a Committee Vice Chair was deferred.</i></p>	
S.23.05	<p>ITEM 4: MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 22nd JUNE 2022 The Clerk was thanked for minutes which were approved as an accurate record of the meeting held.</p> <p><u>Item 4 - Approved:</u> <i>The Committee resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2022.</i></p>	
S.23.06	<p>ITEM 5: MATTERS ARISING / ACTIONS SUMMARY The Clerk summarised the report, highlighting the importance of the action summary in demonstrating the impact of the Committee. The Principal was asked to provide an update on progress relating to the revision of targets. It was confirmed the DfE had agreed enrolment targets and KPI's could be adjusted, however, financial targets and timing of returns would not be amended. The Principal confirmed it was hoped this would be referred to someone more senior within the ESFA or DfE and addressed by now, however, the changes in accountability within the DfE/ESFA had caused delays, with this now to be discussed again at the next Strategic Conversation.</p>	AP T, L & Q/ Clerk
	<p>The Clerk asked members to consider how and when they wanted to have training in relation to Alps, with it confirmed this could take place after the next meeting, giving more opportunity for non-committee members to attend as this would be after 5pm.</p> <p><u>Item 5 - Resolved:</u> <i>The Committee resolved to accept the report and continue to highlight impact through impact statements and ongoing assessment of its own performance.</i></p>	
S.23.07	<p>ITEM 6: CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS No items within the minutes or on the agenda were considered to be confidential.</p> <p><u>Item 6 – Resolved:</u> <i>The Committee resolved to approve the minutes for publication. The Committee confirmed they did not need any items on the agenda to be reviewed confidentially.</i></p>	
S.23.08	<p>ITEM 7 DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S REPORT The Deputy Principal summarised the information, highlighting the actions and activities since the last report. Members were advised of the continued need for the Deputy Principal to have more operational input than would normally be expected, to ensure consistency in the course reviews and effectiveness of action plans.</p>	

The SAR process was outlined, reminding members they were able to attend for individual sessions or whole days, with an external consultant supporting the validation process.

Members interrogated the marketing summary, confirming that targets were internal and reiterating the importance of retention, underpinned by a positive student experience. Members were assured of strategies for early intervention, supported by accurate and timely data, preventing shifts in enrolment figures as seen in previous years.

Progress in relation to apprenticeships centred around the use of OneFile and improved interaction and information flow with assessors and employers, as well as additional support and oversight from the AP Teaching, Learning and Quality and Deputy Principal.

Members were reminded of the restructure and given a summary of new courses and those that had been combined or withdrawn, along with monitoring activities for those that had underperformed, including a monthly review process. Members interrogated the application information for the withdrawn courses, with assurances given that all students had been provided with suitable alternatives in keeping with their academic achievements and aspirations. Activities to increase interest in performing arts and catering were outlined, with it proposed that reduced uptake in high schools resulted in reduced interest within further education. Members were advised of a national decline in the uptake of hospitality courses, noting that Southport numbers had stabilised rather than declined, although this remained at a low level. Anecdotal evidence was discussed related to staffing issues locally, resulting in companies recruiting and offering in house training rather than waiting for students to complete courses.

A Sefton Bid initiatives to engage customer service employers with ESOL students was outlined along with the English and Maths strategy, with both received positively by members. Members clarified the availability of staff and rooms for the department and were assured it was well resourced with extended opening hours.

Item 7 – Resolved: *The Committee resolved to accept the report.*

S.23.09**ITEM 8: OUTCOMES FOR 2020/21****Item 8.1 – FE Outcomes and Targets**

The Deputy Principal apologised for a spreadsheet error that resulted in members receiving full details of the results rather than the original one page summary confirming this would be corrected ahead of presentation to the Board.

Members expressed their disappointment, asking if the results, which fell considerably below the best-case scenario as discussed in June, had been a surprise to the senior team. The Deputy Principal confirmed they had been a surprise, as the interventions in place were expected to deliver better outcomes.

Details of specific examples of support and intervention were outlined, with members discussing at length the impact on students of the lower-than-expected results. Members focused on engineering, and were told that failing one of the three external exams resulted in an overall fail which had prevented progression for the students concerned.

Members were assured by immediate analysis of the issues and areas for improvement, with failure to prepare for exams considered a key factor, particularly as the students were those who had not sat any formal exams, compounded by the change in BTEC's from continual assessment to exams, which was a step change for some staff.

Members expressed disappointment over the lack of foresight, reiterating the impact for the students concerned. Members highlighted the need to wait until January for a resit led to lost time for the students and prevented taking up a place at university in September for those who had intended to go. It was suggested the course should be structured to allow a first attempt of the exams in January, therefore allowing a further attempt in June should the students not succeed in January. Members were advised that this had not been possible in all cases due to the content not having been delivered by January, with assurances that the curriculum would be structured in this way where possible. Members again reiterated the need for mock exams to highlight issues and ensure early. Members were advised of the limited availability of external support and guidance for BTEC staff in relation to training and exemplar mock exams ahead of the newly introduced examination series, compared to a wealth of resources and support for those preparing students for T Levels. intervention.

Issues impacting delivery were outlined to the Committee, who accepted that they were factors affecting the outcomes, with some beyond the control of the college, however, some were controllable and could not be considered acceptable as the students had been let down. Members highlighted how new teachers, staff changes, illness and new specifications and assessment methods needed to be mitigated through management support and intervention. Examples were provided by members of areas that had been in receipt of intervention, had improved but were starting to slip as focus moved to new area. The Committee insisted high standards must be maintained without the need for intervention, through robust and consistent application of the approved monitoring processes.

Members acknowledged areas of progress and accepted that results had been nationally adjusted to align with impact of the Pandemic, with A levels looking comparable to the available sixth form data. Members highlighted how competitors were not including the pass rate data on their websites as they usually would, with this expected to be due to a drop.

The Deputy Principal also explained that TAGs and CAGs were in place over the last two years, most students have not sat an exam for over three years. This is the first year post pandemic, where learners have had to sit A-Level, BTEC L3s and GCSEs external exams.

The item concluded with the senior team informing the Committee of how disappointed staff had been with the BTEC results, with everyone working at pace to ensure outstanding classroom experiences resulted in improved results.

S.23.10

Item 8.1 – Resolved: *The Committee resolved to accept the report and assurances of the senior team that action plans were in place to address areas for improvement. The Committee resolved to recommend the outcomes paper to the Corporation as essential information.*

Item 8.2 – GCSE outcomes and Targets

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
S.23.11	<p>The information was summarised to the Committee, highlighting the impact of staffing issues on outcomes for maths.</p> <p>Members noted that departments had been moved to a central location to improve attendance. Other actions outlined included consistent tracking and monitoring of all students, noting there had been a focus on 16-18 students in the previous year. Members were assured there would be training for staff to improve consistency, particularly around monitoring, with standardised tracking now compulsory. Areas of improved performance were acknowledged, with an insistence this needed to be built upon. Members challenged accountability, with assurances that underperformance and non-conformity would be dealt with as a capability and performance issue. Members noted the lower cohort due to increased pass rates under CAGs and TAGs could present favourable outcomes when national statistics become available.</p> <p>The item concluded with governors outlining their need for evidence that processes and interventions are having an impact, highlighting that was their role and responsibility in relation to holding leaders and managers to account, whilst accepting this was difficult with a delay in receiving benchmarking information.</p> <p><u>Item 8.2 – Resolved:</u> <i>The Committee resolved to recommend the outcomes paper to the Corporation as essential information.</i></p> <p>Item 8.3: HE Outcomes and Targets The Deputy Principal, on behalf of the AP Quality and Performance offered to take any questions in relation to the HE outcomes and targets report. Clarity was given around the need for validation from partner universities.</p> <p>Members asked for an update on the curriculum planning, with the Committee advised planning would be after half term with an update on the offer to be presented at the March meeting, due to the need to focus on the SAR in December.</p> <p><u>Item 8.3 – Resolved:</u> <i>The Committee resolved to recommend the outcomes paper to the Corporation as essential information.</i></p>	AP T, L & Q
S.23.12	<p>Item 8.4: Apprenticeships Outcomes and Targets The Assistant Principal Apprenticeships and MIS summarised the information, with outcomes described as average, drawing attention to 26 withdrawals from the previous year which had been included in the results due to data cleansing. Members were given detailed information on the impact of lower recruitment and target achievement rates.</p> <p>Members interrogated the information, including functional skills pass rates and retention, with discussions around post Pandemic employment market buoyancy impacting retention due to an increase in students changing career path. Members concluded this would only be considered a reasonable explanation for those early in their apprenticeship, with assurances over robust interview processes to mitigate this.</p> <p>Members were advised that all framework apprenticeships would conclude in the next 6 months, with it being anticipated funding will come to an end as it becomes inevitable that students will have reached their academic capability in relation to the functional skills examinations. Members discussed the</p>	

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	<p>impact of this, including risks around timely achievement. and were assured the data cleansing had ensured that there won't be a large withdrawal in this academic year, with data now accurate.</p> <p>Members discussed accountability measures relating to timeliness, and were advised the DfE would initially ask for an explanation and action plan. Members were advised of the DfE's focus on flexible provision tailored to meet the needs of individuals and businesses. Start point and initial assessments were highlighted as key in identifying skills gaps and training needs, with the college embedding this into their offer.</p> <p><i>Item 8.4 – Resolved:</i> <i>The Committee resolved to accept the report and resolved to recommend the outcomes paper to the Corporation as essential information.</i></p>	
S.23.13	<p>Item 9: Enrolment Report</p> <p>The Assistant Principal Student Experience and Welfare summarised the report, outlining enrolment data for the two sites. Members were informed of progress made in improving the accuracy and timeliness of data to ensure comparisons in future years can be 'like for like'. It was explained that due to TU targeting and reporting requirements, previously courses at one site were included in enrolments at the other, with this now mitigated by reporting head count to the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee congratulated the team for the improvement in enrolment at KGV, however, expressed concern over progression rates at Southport. Further clarity was given, highlighting how some data had previously been incorrect, along with the number that had failed to progress, however, the exact number that had not failed but did not progress was not available.</p> <p>Whilst highlighting the disappointment in relation to the impact on targets, members expressed concern over the failure to monitor and intervene ahead of students failing. Members asked for actions to focus on controllables, with identification and intervention in relation to underperformance expected to be a fundamental aspect of the college's processes. The accountability and missed opportunities were reviewed in detail, including the role of the progress tutors and need for accurate, timely data. Members asked to receive a copy of the progress tutor's role and structure including how this fits with the curriculum tutor and manager positions.</p> <p>Members proposed teaching and learning was an issue in addition to the availability of data, with discussions held around the culture of high expectations, with it being unacceptable to accept a level one pass as acceptable when studying a level 2 course.</p> <p>Members were assured the requirement to use the single central tracking system, updated structure and role of the progress tutors would ensure tighter monitoring and earlier intervention, particularly where failure becomes a risk.</p> <p>Members interrogated the data, focusing on cohort percentages to ensure increased demographics were not masking or inflating new enrolment data. Members were advised access to more detailed insights would be available soon following the purchase of additional market data.</p> <p>The item concluded with members expressing their concern over the impact of the failed progression, which had detracted from improved enrolment. Members highlighted the college would be close to missing the census targets as a result of the progression data, asking that activities to support</p>	<p>AP Stud. Exp & Welfare</p>

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	<p>retention are robust and that recruitment work continues. These activities were outlined to provide assurance to the Committee, with a focus on the integrity of enrolment, to ensure students access the right courses at the right level.</p> <p><u>Item 9 – Resolved:</u> <i>The Committee resolved to accept the update subject to reassurances that marketing continues and retention activities ensure limited churn ahead of the census date.</i></p>	
S.23.14	<p>ITEM 10: SAFEGUARDING</p> <p>Item 10.1 - Annual Safeguarding Report</p> <p>The AP Student Experience and Welfare was thanked for the report, described as informative and concise. The safeguarding officers having areas of responsibility and focus was described as a successful highlight of the year, whilst compliance with training was described as an area for improvement in 2022/23.</p> <p>Members suggested that as a compliance requirement, this should be done ahead of issuing a contract for new starters, whilst for existing staff, it needed to be built into the annual appraisal process and managed as a compliance issue through HR for non-completion. The AP Student Experience and Welfare assured the Committee that this had been done.</p> <p>Members discussed the need to safeguard staff as well as students, with assurances this was built into the annual training. Exclusion data was discussed, noting higher rates for the Southport site due to the greater diversity of need within that cohort.</p> <p>In concluding the review of the report, the Committee asked for their gratitude to be passed onto the safeguarding team for their hard work and diligence throughout the year.</p> <p><u>Item 10.1 – Resolved:</u> <i>The Committee resolved to recommend the annual safeguarding report to the Corporation as essential information.</i></p>	<p>A P Student Exp. & Welf.</p>
S.23.15	<p>Item 10.2: Safeguarding Policy and Procedure</p> <p>The Committee commended the AP Student Experience and Welfare for the thorough revision of the policy, now considered to be more coherent with improved flow.</p> <p>Members suggested that as a key policy and responsibility of the Corporation, all Corporation members should be asked to confirm they have read the updated policy as they are with the updated KCSIE guidance. The Clerk suggested it could be added to the SmartLog training so that it can be viewed alongside the mandatory training, as this provides the option within the system to confirm KCSIE and all associated policies have been read and will capture compliance in one place.</p> <p>The AP Student Experience and Welfare confirmed they had already initiated this process, however, it would not be launched until the policy is approved, with the module having not yet been released to staff.</p> <p>Members offered their support of the policy subject to the updating of the safeguarding link governor, agreeing to recommend it to the Corporation for approval.</p>	

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
	<p><u>Item 10.2 – Resolved:</u> <i>The Committee resolved to recommend the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure to the Corporation for approval subject to updating of the safeguarding link.</i></p>	
S.23.16	<p>ITEM 11: ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT</p> <p>Members felt they were unable to effectively execute their responsibilities in relation to complaints based on the report presented.</p> <p>The lack of detail prevented effective questioning or challenge of the issues or resolutions and the absence of comparative information prevented analysis of trends. Governors therefore felt uncomfortable endorsing this to the Corporation as they could not ascertain whether this was an improving or declining picture.</p> <p>Members asked for this to be presented with the required detail, including qualifying complaints at the next meeting of the Committee, alongside learner voice reporting to highlight correlation between course dissatisfaction, feedback, and complaints.</p> <p>Members asked for an update in relation to improving student survey responses, with the Committee informed this had been embedded into the induction program and was in progress. Members were given details of the additional activities undertaken by senior staff, to speak with 25 students each month. This was intended to provide immediate feedback and initiate swift responses to improve areas of dissatisfaction, clarifying this was in addition to student focus group activities.</p> <p>Members were assured of consistent communication with staff around expectations, with the staff governor confirming that all of the information discussed had been cascaded.</p> <p><u>Item 11 – Deferred:</u> <i>The Committee deferred the review of the complaints report. Asking for additional detail and comparative information to support members understanding of the position.</i></p>	<p>AP Teaching Learning & Qual.</p>
S.23.17	<p>ITEM 12: STANDING ITEMS</p> <p>Item 12.1 Risks Relating to Standards</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the review had not taken place when the reports were being circulated, therefore this would be reported at the next meeting of the Committee, being permissible as there were two meetings this term.</p> <p><u>Item 12.1 – Deferred:</u> <i>The Committee deferred the review of the risks related to Standards.</i></p>	
S.23.18	<p>Item 12.2 Strategic Objectives</p> <p>SO1 - To provide excellent teaching, learning and support</p> <p>Members challenged the move from monthly to weekly good practice sessions based on the low attendance when sessions were less frequent. The Committee was assured by a new structure that would ensure attendance, with the sessions within the remit if the new quality improvement practitioners, to ensure sessions are meaningful and valuable.</p> <p>Members asked if part time staff were included, and were told the block system simplified timetabling and ensured where possible, they could participate. In response to a question about whether the project plan was</p>	

taken from the quality improvement plan, members were advised it wasn't, but there was overlap.

Members challenged the lack of actions to make learning more innovating and engaging under 1.5, the key approach for developing the technology enhanced learning strategy. The Deputy Principal agreeing to feed this back to the AP Teaching, Learning and Quality, informing the Committee that the quality improvement practitioners had differing strengths and areas of focus, with one promoting digital skills across the college, therefore this would be addressed, however, it had not been included in the plan.

**Deputy
Principal/
AP
Teaching,
Learning
and Qual.**

Members confirmed completion dates would be added and progress updates included at the next presentation of the action plan.

SO2 - To meet the needs of the community and contribute to the local and national economy by offering a carefully considered diverse range of professional, technical, and academic programmes

The Deputy Principal summarised activities to date and those planned, confirming a detailed summary of progress would be presented to the next meeting, with members clarifying this would be March to ensure the December meeting focused on the SAR.

SO3 - To facilitate students and apprentices achieving the highest possible outcomes to progress on to ambitious destinations

The AP Student Experience and Welfare summarised the action plan, with members discussing at length how best to report progress.

Item 12.2 - Resolved: The Committee resolved to accept the updated action plans subject to addressing areas of concern over improving the technology enhanced learning strategy through more engaging and innovate ideas.

S.23.19

ITEM 13: COMMITTEE SELF-EVALUATION

The Clerk summarised the report, asking the Committee if there were any amendments required ahead of approval. Members discussed the challenges in relation to external validation and triangulation of data, agreeing that the process for including relevant internal audits and reports for any consultants used were as much as could be done in the absence of any formal inspections.

Members agreed that the implementation of data dashboards would support the contextualisation of information, ensuring timely at a glance information to support questioning and challenging in the areas most in need of further improvement, which could be further supported by link governor visits.

Item 13 - Approved: The Committee resolved to approve the self-evaluation as drafted by the Clerk, committing to undertaking the actions to maintain improvements in the oversight of quality.

S.23.20

ITEM 14: MEETING IMPACT

The Clerk reminded the Committee of the purpose of this item, for immediate reflection on how their actions would impact the improvement of quality within the College, and giving staff the opportunity to clarify any actions requested of them.

Members highlighted the depth of discussions relating to the outcomes data and underlying processes to ensure impact and consistent improvements for the benefit of students.

Members reiterated the benefit of continuous feedback in relation to the quality of the information received, enabling governors to challenge effectively and hold leaders to account, resulting in accurate monitoring of improvements, again for the betterment of the students.

The final comments were in relation to safeguarding, with the Committee's ongoing oversight having ensured a positive outcome during the audit and a policy recommended for approval that was clear and succinct, requesting all members acknowledge reading this to reiterate the importance of the Boards responsibility in this area.

Item 14 – Resolved: *The Committee resolved to acknowledge the continued impact of their actions on improving the quality of education.*

S.23.21 ITEM 15: ITEMS TO BE REPORTED TO THE CORPORATION

The Clerk summarised the resolutions and recommendations to be presented to the Corporation as follows:

- All outcomes papers should be recommended to the Corporation as essential information
- Enrolment information would be provided, however, to minimise reports. would be delivered as part of the Principal's report
- Safeguarding Policy would be presented for approval, with a request that members confirm that this has been read
- Safeguarding Annual Report, presented as essential information
- The Committee Self-Evaluation would be reported to and monitored by the Governance Committee.

It was agreed that in addition to circulating the reports as outlined above, the Committee should also provide a verbal update to the Corporation on:

- Complaints, advising the Corporation that on their behalf, the Committee had requested additional detail and comparative data.

S.22.23 ITEM 16: ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair thanked staff for their efforts in presenting reports and for having taken on board the feedback of the Committee and Corporation to deliver detailed yet concise information.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as December 6th.

The meeting ended at 5pm.