

Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held via MS Teams on Wednesday 10th March 2021 at 3pm

Present: Christine Bampton (Committee Chair)
 Michelle Brabner (Principal)
 Anita Holt (Associate Governor)
 Suzanne Knowles
 Kathy Passant (Chair of the Corporation)
 Susannah Porter
 Carol Reid (Staff Governor)

In Attendance: Lisa Farnhill (Clerk to the Governors)
 Anne-Marie Francis (Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality)
 Jesamine Kelly (Assistant Principal Curriculum & Quality – for items 7, 8, 9 and 10)
 Nicola Hurst (Director of Teaching & Learning – for item 7.3)
 Maura Cummins (Deputy Principal)

Apologies: Katy Robinson
 Dyese Bruce (Student Governor)

Absent: Loange De Silva (Student Governor)
 Victoria Fenner (Student Governor)

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
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	The Committee Chair opened the meeting by thanking members and attendees for giving up their time. The Chair noted that this would be the last Standards meeting attended by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality, expressing her sincere gratitude for all that she had done for the Committee during her time at the College.	
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S.21.31 Item 1: Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Katy Robinson and Dyese Bruce.

The Clerk to the Governors confirmed the meeting was quorate.

Item 1 - Noted

S.21.32 Item 2: Declarations of Interest

The Clerk declared an interest in relation to her employment at St Mary's College, where the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality is a member of the Governing Board.

Item 1 - Noted

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
S.21.33	<p>Item 3: Minutes of the Previous Meeting of 25th November 2020</p> <p>The minutes were reviewed from a point of view of accuracy, with a member raising concern that an action was omitted from minute S.21.20 in relation to the standardised use of mock exams, with the conversation evident in the minutes but not in the subsequent actions.</p> <p>The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality confirmed that the action had been completed with the policy amended and details of the action conveyed to the former Director of Governance. The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality was thanked for the update. With no further corrections, the minutes of the meeting of 25th November 2020 were accepted as an accurate record subject to the addition of the action relating to minute S.21.20.</p> <p><i><u>Item 3 - Approved:</u> The Committee resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25th November 2020 subject to the detailed amendment.</i></p>	Clerk
S.21.34	<p>Item 4: Matters Arising / Actions Summary</p> <p>The Clerk presented the Actions Summary and confirmed that both items recorded from previous meetings on 8th September 2020 and 25th November 2020 were included within the agenda. The Clerk asked if there were any additional matters arising from the minutes that had not already been included for discussion. It was confirmed that the summary should be amended to reflect the discussions and subsequent action as noted in Item 3. The clerk noted as a matter arising that the minutes referred to intended discussions between the Principal and a member of the Governing Body with extensive marketing expertise, asking if this had been undertaken. The Principal confirmed that the member was unable to attend the task group meetings, therefore she had met with him separately and recommendations had been fed into the strategy day and worked through into the marketing strategy.</p> <p><i><u>Item 4 - Noted:</u> The Committee resolved to accept the report.</i></p>	
S.21.35	<p>Item 5: Confidential Business</p> <p>No items within the minutes were considered to be confidential.</p> <p><i><u>Item 5 - Noted</u></i></p>	
S.21.36	<p>Item 6: Presentation on the Exceptional Framework</p> <p>Comprehensive training was provided on the exceptional framework, including the consultation, national guidance and the preparations and strategy for Southport College.</p>	

Issues caused in 2020 by the confusion, delayed university offers and subsequent government U-turn were summarised, noting the earlier approach for setting out the process for exams for summer 2021 had been welcomed.

It was noted that the College had responded to the consultation in January that invited opinions on how to award grades that accurately reflected performance whilst recognising the disruption to studies. With guidance now published, there was a further consultation with the College drafting a response to be issued.

It was noted that the underlying policy was not part of the consultation with views sought on:

- rules around the judgements colleges can make, to ensure they are not biased
- rules by which awarding organisations award qualifications to give consistency

It was highlighted that the grades would be teacher assessed grades and algorithms would not be utilised.

It was noted that for general qualifications, including GCSE's, A Levels and BTEC's with similar assessment types, work to be assessed was the work already completed and what was currently being taught with a variety of permissible types of evidence. The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality highlighted the need to share with learners what was being used as evidence towards their grades, however, stipulating that the grades could not be disclosed.

It was noted that the College was currently still consulting on what evidence should be utilised, with it being likely to include mocks, tests, work already done and work being completed and ready to be submitted along with none examined assessments, noted as similar to coursework. It was explained that incomplete work could be used to provide a partial grade.

Detail was provided of the additional non-compulsory option available to utilise question banks, similar to exams, with an associated mark scheme, which teachers can use in an assessment window to provide further evidence. It was highlighted how these should not be completed in exam conditions, would be marked by the teacher rather than submitted, and considered a helpful addition to the current evidence base and would only be used to assess content of the curriculum that had been covered.

The Committee were advised that the students could appeal to the College against the evidence used up to the 18th June, with this date highlighted as the final deadline for submission of grades, with results being released for A Level's on 10th August and 12th August for GCSE's.

The Committee were advised that the College was consulting on the evidence to be used for vocational and technical qualifications which was following a different process this year. It was noted that those similar to A Levels would follow a similar evidence base, however functional skills should continue to assess where possible.

Technical qualifications that required technical competency assessment would either be adjusted or delayed, with some needing to be deferred into the next academic year.

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality then detailed the timeframe and process outlined by the College. This had begun with a scan of existing evidence to identify gaps for learners. Following on from this would be an 'intervention window' where learners considered to be underperforming against their potential would be supported to work towards their expected grade with time built in to allow for the option of utilising the adjusted assessment exam papers from the question bank.

The Committee were informed that once grades are awarded, these would be quality assured with meetings held for every subject and area, with the TAG's moderated, agreed and signed off by the Head of centre by 15th June. The VP Curriculum and Quality expressed the need for the process to be fair and robust, resulting in minimal appeals. To support this, teachers would be provided with a checklist to follow and samples from every grading meeting including the rationale for awarding grades would be checked.

Students would be consulted ahead of grading meetings so that any objections could be managed outside of the appeals process. It was noted that some students would have been disproportionately affected by their personal circumstances during the lockdown and will need the opportunity to discuss reasonable adjustments and ensure that no unconscious bias feeds into the grading.

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum highlighted the need to securely store the work used as evidence for the grades awarded, with the grade profiles from 2017-2019 used to check against the awarded grades ahead of submission. The Committee were advised that grade profiles could differ from those from previous years, but this would need to be supported by evidence and positional statements to justify and differences in grade profiles.

In concluding, the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality advised that the framework would be released at the end of March, with an expectation that awarding bodies will then adjust their guidance, with the college continuing to work towards gathering evidence, identifying gaps and highlighting any potential underachievement, noting that there was considerable work to be done by the deadlines outlined.

Questions and Comments

A member noted that A Level students would undertake a minimum of 3 subjects and was concerned that they would be expected to produce a large amount of work in a short timeframe, impeding their ability to demonstrate their full potential. They **asked** if this was a consideration taken into account when requesting and grading the work to be used as evidence.

The VP Curriculum and Quality advised that evidence would be gathered from work already undertaken and only where gaps or underperformance was evident would additional work considered, with the option to take advantage of the question papers. It was further explained that the additional weight of work would be on the staff, gathering the evidence, and working through the quality assurance process.

It was noted that for Vocational subjects there were concerns because of the front loading of theory, which had been done by Christmas with the expectation that class work and practical application would be from January onwards which could not happen due to the national lockdown, noting the adjusted assessment opportunity was welcomed.

A member asked where assessments already undertaken were being relied upon, how confident were staff that the work assessed had been saved and would still be available to utilise as evidence.

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality advised that older work was less relevant, with a focus on the most recent work which would be available.

A member asked about the impact of the earlier release of results, particularly on staff who were noted to have had a difficult year and deserving of their leave.

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality advised that there would be a significant impact on enrolment due to the early release of year 11 grades.

The online process utilised in the previous year was considered to have worked well with this being easily amended to take account of the earlier release of the results. It was agreed that this would impact on staff plans and decisions relating to staffing had not yet been made, with it considered likely that some may have leave booked but the College would work around it.

A member added that this could be considered an opportunity for extended and additional recruitment, to which the Principal agreed, whilst noting that there were also risks associated with the early release. The Principal added that although not formally discussed, some staff had voluntarily amended their leave to account for the early release of the results, including staff in MIS.

The Principal advised the Committee that the online enrolment had been more effective than expected, whilst acknowledging the value in face to face contact and support. The Principal added that the recruitment group were looking at maintaining some use of the online recruitment with inbuilt face to face guidance to ensure high quality support and advice is embedded into the enrolment process.

Details of differing approaches to recruitment from the sector were provided with the Principal stating it was essential to be mindful of the activities and approaches locally whilst balancing this with the needs of staff, noting that the approach to date of the College had been well received by local schools.

A member highlighted the risk in students changing their minds when enrolling too early, agreeing that staff wellbeing was also a key consideration in deciding the best approach. **Another member added** that striking a non-aggressive marketing approach would be difficult, noting the need to ensure students were aware that they could still enrol at Southport if they had enrolled elsewhere whilst not indicating any desperation.

The Principal agreed, adding that other College's had been asked by schools to change their approach with school Head Teacher's delivering positive feedback regarding the approach of Southport College, which involved offering a place whilst encouraging students to improve their grades to support their transition to College. The Principal informed the Committee that external agencies had been asked to provide guidance on expectations for enrolment, with it considered that some had enrolled too early in the previous year.

A member commented that an approach well received by Head's and teachers, whilst building strong relationships and improving the reputation of the College may not resonate as well with students who just want to finalise their options. The Principal confirmed that upon the publication of results, every College, irrespective of when they enrolled, would review the courses the students had been enrolled onto. The Principal agreed that the approach

was well received by parents as well as Head's, who had felt unconditional offers demotivated students, but the balanced approach had also been well received by the young people. Additional activities to maintain engagement were outlined, with positive feedback being fed directly to College by parents regarding this.

Item 6 - Noted: The Committee resolved to note the information presented.

S.21.37 Item 7.1: Destinations Report

The Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Performance (AP C&P) summarised the key points from the report.

It was noted that in line with expectations, the Pandemic had a significant impact on progression to employment, with industries, in particular hairdressing, remaining closed due to the national lockdown.

Attention was drawn to the number of 2 year programmes in 19/20 resulting in a lower number of leavers for this academic year, with the reverse to be expected in the following year.

Progression of Level 3 learners was noted to be high although 5% lower than the previous year, with more students opting to take a gap year due to the pandemic

It was noted that those assessed ahead of the summer had more opportunity to go into employment, however, delays in assessment by the awarding bodies, meant many were not assessed until the autumn, reducing the opportunity to find employment, with the local lockdown ahead of the national lockdown impeding the opportunities locally.

Details of the forthcoming MATRIX assessment were provided, with it expected that this would be achieved by May.

The AP C&P highlighted the impact of the Pandemic on three year trends overall, with a disproportionate impact on the destinations of lower level students.

The AP C&P was thanked for her summary, with a **member raising concern** over the worrying level recorded as not known. It was noted by the member that this had been raised in the previous year, yet the rate had increased. The **member** then indicated that it would be useful to know what impact the information had, wanting to know what would change as a result of the data. The AP C&P advised the committee that this category included those not employed but not registered as unemployed, with a number waiting until the end of the lockdown to seek employment. It was also noted that a number of students were critically vulnerable, having left and are not progressing due to health concerns for them or their family.

The AP C&P explained that the fields used were those from the ILR data, with a recommendation made to breakdown the additional known information beneath this.

AP C&P

In reflecting on how the data is used, the AP C&P advised that progression issues would be analysed, reflecting on whether Level 1 students are able to progress onto the next level or employment, which was an important part of curriculum planning..

The member indicated that the report needed to encapsulate that level of additional information along with details of any follow up actions and impact assessment. **Another member** clarified that the use of the term unknown where contact had been made and information provided was a statutory use of the term, with the VP C&P advising that it was. An explanation of the categories was provided, with the unknown being those who had not entered employment whilst having not registered as unemployed.

AP C&P

The AP C&P advised the Committee that due to the town centre location, a number of students would normally progress into low level retail opportunities which were impacted by the Pandemic, with future curriculum planning incorporating local need and reflective of the national impact of the Pandemic.

A member asked if there was scope for opportunity for developing additional provision for the unknown students, in particular those not working and not registered as unemployed. Adding that the College needed to be seen to be taking action where the numbers were undesirably high. The VP C&P advised that work was done around NEET young people with next steps and the re-launch of traineeships. It was added that there was some scope, whilst working within the GDPR guidelines, to reach out to some of them and offer additional opportunities, although it was noted that some have gone as far as they can academically.

A member asked if they were invited in for an interview to look at what else the College can do to support them or opportunities within College that can be offered to them. The VP C&P informed the Committee that this should have been included within the report, adding that careers interviews and guidance had been offered including referrals to other programmes including the Prince's Trust.

A member advised that the training funding as part of the successful bid to regenerate the town would create opportunities, indicating that although it may be 5 years until it all comes to fruition, programmes should be created with that in mind, with the Welcome Host qualification being included.

The VP C&P advised that they had already worked with some groups including construction and travel and this had been a valuable experience for the young people. The Principal added that training opportunities had already been discussed; highlighting the need to ensure the College provides full training opportunities for long term sustainable employment, avoiding bespoke and niche opportunities. It was noted that the College is keen to be the preferred partner working with the Bid, and expects that there will be a tendering process. It was added that the location at the heart of the town made the College a strong contender to support the regeneration and be the provider of choice, indicating that there would be a sense of disappointment if the contract is awarded to an independent provider.

The Principal highlighted the need to ensure that for both the students and the town, any training is transferable and transportable. **A member** added that in addition to the customer service opportunities, there would be opportunities for electricians and engineers with the AP C&P advising that the College has apprentices in those areas. The Principal indicated positivity and optimism at the forthcoming opportunities, noting the mutual benefit of being involved in the discussions from the outset.

The item was concluded with the AP C&P noting how hard it had been for the young people who had completed their training and were then unable to secure a role that they had trained towards. The Committee Chair thanked

the AP C&P for the update, noting the information feeds into curriculum planning with a focus on long term sustainability for the College, town and learners, asking that note is taken of the action to include additional detail in future reports.

Item 7.1 - Noted: The Committee noted the content of the report:

S.21.38 Item 7.2: 2020-21 Quality Development Plan Update – Including Curriculum and Marketing Update

The Deputy Principal (DP) advised that she was delivering the paper written by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality (VP C&Q).

An overview was provided of the report which included several elements, with the first being an update on the quality development plan.

Attention was drawn to the significant reduction in attendance for maths and English since the commencement of the national lockdown. It was hoped that a return to onsite learning would see this improve, with reengagement activities scheduled to include a one to one progress meeting to identify gaps in learning to include their main course of study and maths and English. This would generate an individual action plan for each student under the blended learning model, noting how this linked to the on-going focus on retention rates to maximise pass rates and achievement continued.

The DP provided an update to the Committee on recruitment, noting the increased number of applications to KGV, offset by the reduction at Southport. Details of continued marketing activity included online open days and other virtual events. It was noted that discussions with schools indicated that the closure of schools had impacted participation in careers activities with lower level learners less engaged and less willing to complete applications. The plans for school liaison teams to undertake work with schools to address this were outlined. The AP C&P advised that there had been significantly higher applications from some schools.

The DP drew attention to the positive rates of high retention for A Level's, which were above target and higher than at the same point in the previous year, noting feedback from Departmental Head's that students were enthusiastic about returning to the college environment.

A member indicated that the Committee previously requested information to be presented about deep dives, thanking the DP for providing this, however, noting they were inconsistent, in content and quality.

The **member asked** what the plans were to feed this into the QDP and how actions following on from them would move forward; **asking** what would be done about the concerns raised, in particular where staff had not been present and learners appeared disengaged.

The DP advised the Committee that she had already met with the AP C&P to discuss the need for an action plan that enables them to assess the final impact including learner achievement, with progress hindered by the lockdown. The DP outlined the next steps which included further deep dives after Easter, which would involve two staff per team going into the same subject and class to see what if anything has changed, with focused energy towards triangulation with other sources of data. Following this a full review of the starting position, actions undertaken and impact would be collated to

detail impact on the student experience to ensure that this is meaningful and not just a paper exercise.

Another member reiterated the same point regarding inconsistency. The member urged for a consistent approach to feedback outlining specific measures for improvement, adding that the actions needed to be focused and focused, with too many risking demotivation and diffusing the effort, suggesting 3 key actions would be optimal.

**Deputy
Principal**

A member drew attention to worrying comments relating to a dislike of the lockdown. The member highlighted the limited control and influence over national directives for closure, noting feedback from some groups indicated blended learning worked better for them. **The member recognised** that it was likely that a blended approach would continue and the College was unable to rule out further lockdowns and a return to full remote learning, therefore **asked** if training actions would be undertaken to support those struggling with online delivery.

The DP responded to inform the Committee that the activity had helped with shaping CPD, including the identification and sharing of good practice. It was noted that the adult learners had indicated a preference for blended learning, with the intention to develop this further for a more positive experience for those learners.

A member asked if the dip in recruitment was reflected across the North West and nationally. The DP indicated that the data was not available with the school liaison teams now proactively working with schools now they had reopened. The AP C&P added that anecdotal evidence from schools indicated it was the lower level learners that had been reluctant to progress with their applications. The Director of Teaching and Learning (DTL) added that this had been reflected in conversations from local forums, with the College working with Hugh Baird in a working group to target and engage the cohort of young people that have not yet applied for their next step.

It was noted that reduced applications at Southport were focused in the south of the borough, with those traditionally applying for foundation level courses. MC concluded that many students find it difficult to engage without face to face support and encouragement, noting that this had been a difficult period for them. The VP C&Q added that another consideration could be that the TAG's would take a positive position on the likely outcomes for learners, providing the opportunity for more young people to apply for A Levels that would have traditionally been limited to vocational options.

It was noted that this could account for the increased applications at KGV and this trend influenced by non-assessed exam work could last for around 4 years. The VP Curriculum and Quality noted that the dual strategy of Southport with KGV ensured that overall the College and young people benefitted, however it was essential to understand where the students had applied, whilst acknowledging the overall global figure for applications.

The DP highlighted a final point from annex 4 that departmental performance against targets including forecasts were based on the information currently available, with achievement rates lined to current retention. The Committee was advised that over the next 3 weeks, the retention figure would be refined, to take account for students that have not returned or those that need time to readjust and reengage, noting the high number coded as red or amber. This would be addressed through the reengagement work and progress one to ones to maximise achievements to ensure pass rate targets are met.

A member asked if there resources for this were sufficient, with the DP advising that Heads of Department were engaged with the process.

Item 7.2 - Noted: The Committee resolved to note and accept the report.

S.21.39 **Item 7.3.1: Learner Feedback Report – Semester 1**

The report was summarised with the DTL noting that engagement was considerably lower due to the impact of the Pandemic and the need to conduct the forums online with students reluctant to engage in this format. This was also considered to have impacted satisfaction in some areas.

Strengths were outlined, including the overall satisfaction at KGV, reflecting how well students had adjusted to online learning, with lessons described as well-planned and interesting. The Committee were notified that having the course that the student wanted to study was the main reason they chose the College whether studying at Southport or KGV, with the information, advice and guidance available on the website and in the College the main factor that helped them in choosing their next step.

The focus groups identified knowledgeable, supportive staff as a key strength across all departments, with it noted as a recurring theme each year that the College is not complacent around.

Areas for improvement were summarised, highlighting lower response rates and reduced satisfaction overall. Concerns were raised including difficulty in adjusting to blended learning and frustrations over time table changes.

The attendance at focus groups was considered to be significantly lower with students put off from attending due to meetings being held over Microsoft Teams. To improve the quality of the feedback, an additional remote learning survey was launched with an extended opening to ensure maximum opportunity to gather responses.

Follow up actions were outlined, including specific deep dives and bespoke meetings in the areas with lowers levels of satisfaction and plans to hold future focus groups face to face wherever possible.

Members commented on common themes that relate to areas outside of teaching and learning including the refractory, demonstrating what was important and relevant to the learners was not always the detail being sought through the surveys. **Another member added** that whilst the response rate was low, the feedback provided was both interesting and valuable, **asking for more focus** on what will be done with the responses **asking** what the impact of the surveys would be, noting concerns over teaching and learning at KGV. The DTL responded to advise that ordinarily the focus groups would drill into the concerns which had not been effective on Teams. **The member added** that the report needed to indicate key actions, with the DTL advising that actions had been undertaken including a teaching and learning day based on the feedback with teachers informed of the outcomes, including sessions on good practice.

A member added that marketing the outcomes with 'You Said, We Did' posters worked well in demonstrating to the students the value of their feedback, with the DTL informing the committee that this normally took place

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
	<p>via 'Unity' the all student group and that actions from the feedback was promoted to the students.</p> <p>The Committee Chair concluded the item by thanking the DTL for the update, noting that valuable work had been undertaken that had not been evident from the report.</p>	Dir. T&L
	<p><u>Item 7.3.1 - Noted:</u> The Committee noted the report.</p>	
S.21.40	<p>Item 7.3.2: Performance Measures</p>	
	<p>The DTL informed the Committee that under normal circumstances the performance measures would be presented following the publication of DfE data, however, this was not published due to changes in assessment due to the Pandemic; therefore internal software had been used to calculate performance measures data.</p>	
	<p>Strengths were noted as improvements across all areas, with significant improvements in Value Added scores, reflecting positive progress, however, it was noted that this was based on the internal software, and there was no national benchmark to inform judgements as to where Southport was positioned against other Colleges. It was noted by members that they felt reassured by the College's on-going commitment to monitoring outcomes and striving for improvements.</p>	
	<p><u>Item 7.3.2 - Noted:</u> The Committee resolved to note and accept the report.</p>	
S.21.41	<p>Item 7.4: Employer Engagement Report</p>	
	<p>The AP C&P informed the Committee that this information, formally included within learner voice had been separated to ensure dedicated focus on the feedback from apprentices and employers.</p> <p>It was noted that the FE Choices Employer Satisfaction Survey had been replaced with surveys throughout the year alongside DfE surveys, with results showing responses were good or better for all employers, with the College dedicated to maintaining this.</p> <p>It was noted that there was no course level information available at this time. The AP C&P highlighted comments made by 4 employers regarding communication which had been followed up to gain a deeper understanding of the concerns.</p> <p>It was noted from the limited responses that the apprentices were happy and making good progress, with actions outlined to build intelligence through focus groups and telephone surveys.</p>	
	<p>A member asked how the feedback would be used, noting that there had been 21 responses, asking what percentage of employers this represented. The AP C&P advised that this was a low take up from 250 employers, adding that high satisfaction was a priority, with consideration made for ways to amend the survey enabling follow up contact, however, it was felt that this would risk an even lower response rate. The AP C&P added that sectors were being targeted for telephone surveys with apprentices also being contacted for verbal feedback.</p>	
	<p>A member asked if the low uptake from employers was common across the sector, with the AP C&P advising that the FE Choices Survey had a similarly</p>	

low uptake with 55 despite a considerable push to gain responses. It was noted that another survey would be issued in 3 months with it hoped that a different set of responses would be received.

A member highlighted the importance of meaningful feedback that had an impact, asking if there was a need to revisit the way in which the surveys were constructed and communicated to employers. **Another member added** that those with an existing relationship with the employer may have more success at initiating a response, asking if assessors could be asked to deliver the surveys, with the AP C&P advising that where possible digital formats were used, however, they could promote the completion.

The DP added that it was good practice to regularly contact employers and apprentices by phone to ensure immediate remedial action could be initiated when issues arise. The AP C&P added that this was beginning to be embedded, with scripts being written to be more systematic and ensure consistency.

A member commented that in starting again and refreshing the process good practice could be established.

Item 7.4 - Noted: The Committee resolved to note the report.

S.21.42 Item 8.1: Work Experience 2019/20 - Report

The Committee were informed that the Pandemic had impacted the ability to carry out work experience with concern and nervousness in business, retail and the Health and Social Care sector prior to lockdown which prevented work experience from going ahead, with lower level groups not able to go out. It was noted that the ESFA had confirmed that they are satisfied with steps taken, with placements carried forward where possible.

The AP C&P advised the Committee that a charter needs to be developed and agreed ahead of going out, with Health and Social Care in particular needing to focus on how to enable placements in Covid safe way.

The AP C&P advised that there had been a target to increase placements in readiness for T Level implementation; however, this had been slowed down due to the Pandemic. It was noted that some areas, including construction had been able to complete a project, however, other areas, including engineering did not have this option available to them.

The Committee were advised that staff had been diverted to other activities including training on T Level competencies and assessments and creating and reviewing banks of resources available.

A member commented on the effective utilisation of staff time.

Item 8 - Noted: The Committee resolved to note the details of the report.

S.21.43 Item 9: Higher Education Item 9.1: HE Quality Development Plan (QDP) 2020-21 Update

It was highlighted that the QDP had been colour coded for ease of review, noting that green represented areas where progress had been made, amber

where actions were underway with some work still to do and red noting work was still to be done.

Recruitment was highlighted as having improved from the previous year, whilst acknowledging the low starting point. The increase in applications for travel was considered to be related to the Southport Bid.

Other improvements were noted in relation to retention and attendance, which improved during lockdown, with students stating they enjoyed the blended learning approach, which the college will look to build upon for continued improvements.

It was noted that the start of year survey found students were satisfied and felt COVID secure on campus. The NSS survey was being promoted but it was noted that this was not representative of the cohort.

It was noted that momentum and consistency in the deep dives needed to be maintained and the partnership reviews also identified areas for improvement which were being addressed.

A member commented on the benefit of the colour coding, thanking the AP C&P for the update.

Item 9.1 - Noted: The Committee resolved to note and accept the report.

S.21.44 **Item 9.2: OfS Conditions of Funding Update**

The AP C&P advised the Committee that in accordance with the consumer credit act, students had been communicated with regularly from September onwards and throughout the lockdown. Group emails were facilitated by the HE Officer and the system was working well. This had been confirmed with university and awarding partners, with students kept up to date of any changes. It was noted that PGSE students were provided with home testing kits to facilitate their return to class.

Item 9.2 - Noted: The Committee resolved to note and accept the report.

Item 10: Safeguarding Update 2020/21

The Committee were notified of the significant increase in safeguarding concerns, with particular rises noted in mental health issues and domestic abuse. It was advised that Interventions increased considerably during the period of lockdown, with more students suffering with anxiety and needing support from external agencies. Plans to counteract this included alignment with the emotional and mental wellbeing campaign from the Sefton local authority, with support embedded into a revised tutorial programme.

The number of students needing complex referrals increased in line with nationally noted increases publicised around domestic abuse, poverty and food-bank use.

The committee were advised that following the visit from Ofsted, Prevent was embedded into the induction programme which had been well received and prompted student discussions, with further improvements planned to make the programme more engaging for Level 1 and Level 2 learners.

A member commented on the extensive work undertaken, having been present for safeguarding meetings, and **asked** if the deep dives had tested

AP C&P

the work done on prevent? The AP C&P advised that the safeguarding officer planned to drop in and could include prevent.

A member asked how well staff had coped as they too had been impacted by the lockdown with increased work load, a shift to online delivery and additional personal pressures in their own homes, in addition to dealing with the increased volumes of safeguarding incidents. In addition, **they asked** how effectively external agencies had operated during the period of lockdown, **asking** if the team was getting the support needed. The AP C&P informed the Committee that online multiagency meetings had reduced travel, therefore were less demanding on staff time. This had also resulted in increased parental and carer engagement. The resources and capacity of the team was constantly reviewed, with the team widened and processes reviewed to ensure simplification and consistency. To support staff, meetings were held weekly with additional support offered to staff, with regular communication maintained as a priority.

The Committee were advised of the reduced engagement of LAC during the lockdown period, with it noted they were keen to return to onsite learning, with many being on the 'risk' list for attendance but had returned to class as soon as the onsite learning resumed.

Item - Noted: The Committee noted the details of the report.

S.21.45

Item 11: Items To be Reported to the Corporation

The Chair summarised the actions from the meeting and noted that whilst nothing needed to be recommended to the Board for approval, identified the following items as relevant for reporting to the Corporation at its meeting on 11th March 2021:

- Minutes of the meeting
- Details of the training presentation on the Exceptional Framework
- Confirmation of the continued compliance with the OfS regulatory requirements including the consumer credit act and student communications

S.21.46 **Item 12: Any other business**

The Chair extended her gratitude to all the staff who had supported the collation of the reports provided to the Committee, thanking all attendees for their contributions. It was noted that the collation of the papers into one binder had been helpful with thanks to the new Clerk for having produced the papers in this way.

The VP C&Q was again thanked on behalf of the Committee for all she had done throughout her time at the College and wished every success in her future role.

S.21.47 **Item 12: Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 9th June 2021 at 3pm

The meeting ended at 16.40pm.