

THE CORPORATION OF THE COLLEGE OF NORTH EAST LONDON

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held 10.00am Wednesday 10 December 2008 in the Committee Room at the Tottenham Centre of the College.

Present: Cllr D Goddard (Chair)
Mrs J Bax
Dr. M. Wing
Mr F Ellis

Apologies: Ms G Ortanca

In Attendance: Ms J O'Neill (Vice Principal Curriculum & Learner Experience)
Ms P Gowan (Director of Work Based Learning)
Mr J Hans (Quality assurance and Improvement Manager)
Ms S Emerson (Head of Transforming Learning)
Derek Mathieson (Secretary to the Corporation)
Mr H Jeffrey (Director of Learner Support)

Apologies: Ms D Stylianou (Director Skills for Life)

347 Urgent Business and Announcements

The Committee AGREED to:

- i) Approve an additional report Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults to be considered at item 11.**

348 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

349 Minutes of the Meeting held 8 October 2008 (SO237)

The Committee AGREED to:

- ii) Approve the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.**

350 Matters Arising

Minute 344 Assessment of Governance

The Chair clarified his request advising that the views of managers who attend the Standards Committee should contribute to the self assessment of the Committee. It was felt that their perceptions of the operation of the committee and the performance of members would be useful in ensuring effectiveness.

Minute 342 Enrolment and Admissions

Ms O'Neill updated the meeting advising that the shortfall in 16-18 year old recruitment was unchanged but that it was anticipated that January 2009 enrolments would reduce the gap. The Chair requested that a brief summary on overall enrolment outcomes be put to the Corporation meeting.

351 Minutes from Committees (SO238)

Equality and Diversity 21 November 2008

The Chair reminded managers that if internal committees wished to draw attention to any specific issues they should indicate this in the report summary. Regarding learner feedback and results, the Chair stressed the importance of capturing this data and requested a report of the next meeting.

In response to a question Ms O'Neill clarified the Single Equality Scheme and advised on progress.

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There were no issues from this item.

The Committee AGREED to;

- i) Note the report.**

352 Reporting on Strategic Objectives (SO239)

a) Overall Success Rates 2007-08

Ms O'Neill advised on the success rates for 2007-08 that showed that benchmarks had been exceeded overall by 11.54% with the best performances in adults however 16-18s still showed 3.5% above benchmark. She stressed the importance of high success rates in the context of Framework for Excellence (FFE). In response to a question from the Chair Ms O'Neill clarified how 'expected' data was gathered

advising that the data was stable and unlikely to change much when results from some of the more complex areas had been finalised. The data is monitored on a weekly basis by the SMT and has shown week on week improvement over time. While success rates have generally been maintained across the sectors, there are a number of issues in some smaller areas of provision that are being addressed. Management is drilling down to course level to ensure a full understanding of the issues and this informs action planning. Where there are staffing issues e.g. long term sickness, the college seeks to bring in external re-enforcements early on to ensure continuity in the short and longer terms. The cost associated with this strategy can be high and is partly funded through the vacancy factor. The meeting then considered results and issues for the vocational sectors noting the overall sound outcomes, and action being taken to address weaknesses. Improvements are expected in the science area following changes towards a more appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of CONEL learners. The Chair proposed that opportunities for governors to spend time looking at specific curriculum areas to improve their understanding of issues be arranged. Ms O'Neil agreed to look into this. In response to questions regarding pathways into the college for young learners Ms Gowan advised that most come from schools rather than through other initiatives. She went on to report on progress made with CONEL's Young People's college.

The Committee AGREED to;

- i) Note the report.**
- b) SAR 2007-08**

Mr Hans presented the report advising that this years report had strongly reflected the judgments made by OFSTED during the inspection of May 2008. He highlighted key strengths identified by the inspectors and described action planning against identified weaknesses. The Chair stressed the need for more in depth analysis in addressing the issue of increasing the amount of 'good' teaching following the concerns that the teaching had plateaued at 'satisfactory'. It was considered important to know whether proposed actions will be sufficiently robust to produce a significant impact. Ms Emmerson described developments in ILT and related training and the impact that this would have on teaching and learning. The Chair asked whether the ILT strategy proceeding quickly enough to be effective. Ms O'Neil spoke of the importance of prioritising action in the short term but highlighted the importance of a 3-year strategy that would ensure a basic level of IT competence for all staff to enable them to have the tools to deliver interesting and effective learning. An update report on the ILT strategy was requested for the next meeting. In response to a question Mr Hans advised that there was no standard

template for the SAR, and is a matter for individual colleges to determine. The current template is being reviewed taking account of the revised inspection handbook and LSC requirements. The format must be fit for purpose and demonstrate where the college is in terms of progress. Regarding attendance and punctuality, the Director of Learner Support responded to questions highlighting the impact of social and economic factors on many learners. He drew attention to the positive results associated with high level of support through early intervention with 'at risk' learners. He reported on a range of learner incentives under consideration to improve attendance and punctuality.

The Committee AGREED to;

ii) Note the report.

c) Quality Improvement Plan – Quality Strategy

Mr Hans presented the report summarising the key actions and targets for the year. In response to questions he clarified staffing data, and Intended Learner Destination data. The Chair spoke of importance of sound destination data and was advised that the results of an ongoing survey would be reported to the next meeting. Regarding the recording of prior qualifications, he requested that the data be broken down into 'pre' and 'post' 19.

The Committee AGREED to;

iii) Note the report.

d) Strategies to Improve Learning

Ms Emerson presented an update report part of which (ILT) had been addressed in an earlier item. She described the effective use of the staff development budget in a range of activities designed to stimulate improvements in teaching. The considerable range of expertise within the college including advanced practitioners had been drawn upon to support these activities. In response to questions she clarified some of the initiatives used to stimulate learning, and described how CONEL staff have access to industrial updating. The Chair remarked that in terms of pedagogy CONEL is ahead of the game and acknowledged for its expertise. The college contributes expertise to the QIA Gateway, and is becoming known by other colleges for being involved in 'Transforming Learning' initiatives'. The importance of raising the profile of CONEL outside was stressed.

The Committee AGREED to;

iv) Note the report.

e) Learner Satisfaction

The discussion focussed around strategies engaging with learners, and the development of those who charged with managing learner issues. Ms O'Neill described how learner issues are considered and fed back at different levels throughout the college. In response to a question Mr Jeffrey described the role and work of the Enrichment Team.

The Committee AGREED to;

vi) Note the report.

f) Learner Exclusions

Mr Jeffrey reported good news in terms disciplinary matters advising that early interventions this term had resulted in a very low number of disciplinaries. The Chair on behalf of the committee congratulated staff involved on the excellent progress made.

The Committee AGREED to;

vii) Note the report.

g) Standards Committee Work Plan

Ms O'Neill advised that the current work plan needed to be revised to take account of changes in the inspection framework, LSC initiatives, and framework for excellence. These issues would be worked up by management and reported to the next meeting.

The Committee AGREED to;

viii) Note the report.

353 Key Policies and Reviews (SO241)

The range of policies was considered and the committee requested that a further report be put to the next meeting identifying the key policies, where they fit within the policy framework, and how they are monitored and updated.

The Committee AGREED to;

- i) Note the report.**

354 Compliance with and Review of Terms of Reference (SO242)

The Secretary advised that terms of reference for the corporation and its committees were being drafted in preparation for the merged college. In the mean time committees are being asked to review their current terms of reference for compliance and continuing relevance. The outcomes of the inspection and record of meetings would indicate that the committee is effective in carrying out its functions however it was suggested that number of minor changes be made.

The Committee AGREED that;

- i) Minor amendments being made to the terms of reference and reported to the Corporation.**
- ii) The committee is operating in compliance with its terms of reference.**

355 Date of Next Meeting

The Committee AGREED to;

- i) Reschedule the meeting at a date to be determined.**

356 Urgent Business

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

Mr Jeffrey presented a report that updated CONEL's current policy, and a new policy that addresses the position of vulnerable adults. Both will be subject to further work during the course of the year.

The Committee AGREED to;

- i) Note the report.**

**Signed:.....
(Chair)**

Date: TBA