MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LEICESTER COLLEGE CORPORATION:

MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM STRATEGY AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 FEBRUARY 2022 VIA TEAMS

Present:	John Allen (Chair)	Verity Hancock
	Zoe Allman	Harmeet Kaur
	Lisa Armitage	Akith Maluge
	Shaun Curtis	Jai Sharda
	Danielle Gillett	

In Attendance:	Louise Hazel	Director of Governance and Policy
	Debi Donnarumma	Vice Principal Study Programmes and Apprenticeships
	Kully Sandhu	Vice Principal Adult and HE
	Lee Barrett	Head of Personal Development (item 6)
	Sharon Drury	Student Support Co-ordinator (item 5)
	Rachel Hall	Director of Apprenticeships (item 7)
	Jody Kerrod	Quality Development Manager (item 8)
	Marco Salotti	HE Manager (item 7)
	Claire Willis	Director of Quality Improvement (item 9)

1   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1.1   Zoe Allman declared an interest in item 7 as an employee of De Montfort University.

2   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1   Apologies for absence were received from Anne Frost.

3   MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

3.1   **The minutes of the meeting on 10 November 2021 were <u>agreed</u> as an accurate record and <u>approved</u>.**

3.2   **The minutes of the special meeting on 24 January 2022 were <u>agreed</u> as an accurate record and <u>approved</u>.**

4   CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN/CARE LEAVERS 2020/21

4.1   The Student Support Co-ordinator presented a report on care experienced children/care leavers in 2020/21. the following points were highlighted:

4.1.1   2020/21 had been a particularly challenging year because of the pandemic. Support and curriculum areas had worked hard to retain

young people in learning.

4.1.2   The College had a designated person for care experienced children/care leavers. In 2020/21 there were 102 students within these categories. 85 were either Looked after Children or living in hostels independently and aged 16-18 including one apprentice. Seventeen were care leavers (post 19).

4.1.3   The College's approach to support these young people was described. Good links existed with external agencies. A range of strategies were used to allow the young people to access support and enable them to stay in learning.

4.1.4   The College was successful in retaining the young people. Achievement data showed that 83% of the cohort completed their course and achieved their qualification.

4.1.5   Examples of some of the students supported by the team were given; the majority had had positive outcomes.

4.2   **Governors asked a number of questions including:**

4.2.1   **How 102 students compared to the previous year's numbers.** This was fewer than the previous year but there were already 140 students in the current year.

4.2.2   **What had been the biggest challenge over the year?** There had been a lot of unaccompanied young people including Afghan students, many of whom were experiencing bereavement or separation from families. There were more students with EHCPs and virtually all students had some kind of mental health difficulty which had been exacerbated by the pandemic.

4.2.3   **Only half of these students progressed internally. What were the reasons for that and what more could the College do to encourage progression?** Some students, particularly unaccompanied young people seeking asylum might not meet the entry requirements required to progress. This required detailed work with curriculum areas to find ways to enable them to progress. Every young person who left the College would have a final review meeting including their social worker to make sure they had a plan and did not end up NEET.

4.2.4   **Were the retention and achievement rates acceptable?** There was always room for improvement. It was difficult to benchmark how the College compared with other institutions but there was close work with local authorities to try and support every young person to succeed.

4.2.5   **Was there a limit to the number of young people that the College could take?** The College would not want to turn anyone away but in some areas such as ESOL and because of the extent of mental health issues of the young people, the resources needed were an issue.

4.3   **Governors thanked the Student Support Co-ordinator and noted the report.**

5   **STUDENT BEHAVIOUR AND ATTENDANCE 2020/21**

5.1   The Vice Principal presented a report on student behaviour and attendance during 2020/21. The following points were highlighted.

5.1.1 There was a combined behaviour management policy and process for student behaviour and attendance.

5.1.2 In 2020/21, there were 1,191 Stage 1 disciplinaries. The curriculum areas with the highest disciplinaries were CHHS (31%), BECT (28%) and ENGI (22%). Overall, 305 were behaviour related and 886 were due to attendance issues.

5.1.3 The 2020/21 academic year included periods of lockdown when students were not in or around the College premises and so data could not be compared to previous years.

5.1.4 Further work was in hand to develop a more centralised approach for recording behaviour. It was also being discussed whether a Fitness to Study policy would be more effective in addressing attendance issues rather than automatically moving students into the disciplinary process.

5.2 **Governors asked a number of questions including:**

5.2.1 **When would the Fitness to Study Policy be available?** This was being considered by the group looking at personal development and behaviour and would be presented to SLT with any other options by the end of term. The aim was then to roll out staff training and set expectations for the start of the new academic year.

5.2.2 **What did the student governors think of the disciplinary process; were they aware of it**? Student governors reported that they had no experience of it.

5.2.3 **Should this not be part of the induction process?** It should and it would be important to have this reinforced particularly during the first six weeks of students' programmes.

5.3 **Governors <u>noted</u> the report.**

6 **<u>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</u>**

6.1 The Head of Personal Development gave a presentation on the College's plans for personal development. The following points were highlighted.

6.1.1 The College working to develop a common language and understanding around cultural capital and personal development.

6.1.2 The EIF placed an emphasis on the development of knowledge and skills beyond the purely academic, technical or vocational. Ofsted would evaluate the provider's intent to provide for the personal development of students and would look at what they knew rather than the impact on their lives. Descriptors for outstanding personal development were highlighted.

6.1.3 The College was working on an eight-point best practice plan including selling cultural capital at the point of application; creating personal development plans; tracking distance travelled; and gathering feedback at the end of programmes.

6.1.4 Expectations around behaviour and attitudes were a priority, including how leaders and staff created a safe, disciplined and positive environment; the setting of clear expectations for behaviour for students; and a strong focus on attendance and punctuality.

6.1.5 Developments to take forward the work on personal development

included a personal development strategy and the development of a careers strategy/group looking at ways to record wider knowledge skills and behaviour and target setting and tracking.

6.2 **Governors asked a number of questions including:**

6.2.1 **Was the Personal Development graded 2 or 3 in the SAR; it was not clear.** It was graded 3.

6.2.2 **How fast could the College improve on that?** There was a lot of good practice already but there was a recognition that this needed better co-ordination. By the end of the academic year, there would be good practice to roll out to help move the College to Good and then Outstanding.

6.2.3 **In response to a question about what outstanding personal development practice Ofsted had seen, it was explained that Ofsted would not look at impact and so this made grading good and outstanding provision more difficult. It was also hard to demonstrate good practice when it came to students who were not on-site, including apprentices. It was unusual to see a PD grading of 3 when all other grades were 2; that might need revisiting.** The PD offer for apprentices was being developed and there was already some good practice.

6.2.4 **Was there any cultural difference between campuses?** Not noticeably.

6.3 **Governors <u>thanked</u> the Head of Personal Development and <u>noted</u> the presentation.**

7 <u>CURRICULUM AREA FOCUS</u>

7.1 The HE Manager gave a presentation on the work of the HE office. The following points were highlighted.

7.1.1 There were 444 HE students; 331 were College-based, of which, 253 were with DMU.

7.1.2 In 2021/22 HE income was £2.17 million; tuition fees accounted for £1.8m. The OfS recurrent teaching grant allocation was £275k; this had reduced because of the reduction in HE partner delivery.

7.1.3 The College had been successful in bidding for £237k of capital funding for Creative and Performing Arts.

7.1.4 The College's compliance with quality standards was described and included compliance with OfS ongoing conditions, TEF Gold, a successful DMU collaborative review and successful AMRs for both partners. A Pearson APMR had been submitted in January 2022.

7.1.5 One reportable event had been accepted by the OfS with no further action needed.

7.1.6 In 2020/21, the College had a retention rate of 92%, a pass rate of 87%, and an achievement Rate of 80%. All performance data was well above OfS thresholds and above the proposed new performance measures.

7.1.7 Responses to the student survey showed a decline in satisfaction levels to 69%, a 12% drop; this appeared to be a sector wide issue.

7.1.8 Strengths included the successful Ofsted inspection of initial teacher

education, plans to develop and grow the curriculum offer and the recent capital investment.

7.1.9   Opportunities included improving demographics and an increased growth in level 3 student numbers, progression from T levels and the development of new higher technical qualifications.

7.2   **Governors asked a number of questions including:**

7.2.1   **In the OfS consultation, there was a proposal for 60% employment in professional and managerial careers as a performance measure; was this a concern?** The metrics around continuation and completion were not concerning but this type of measure would be more of a worry given that comparisons did not appear to distinguish between Level 4 and Level 6 progression.

7.2.2   **The Secretary of State was insisting that HEIs return to on-site teaching; was the College's teaching now on site?** The College had followed guidance as it related to FE and teaching had been back onsite for some time. Some courses were offering a blended approach where this was found to work well.

7.3   **Governors <u>thanked</u> the HE Manager for his presentation and <u>noted</u> the information.**

7.4   The Director of Apprenticeships gave a presentation on the work of curriculum area. The following points were highlighted.

7.4.1   The offer was described. It included a wide range of apprenticeships across six sectors. Two apprenticeships in digital had not run this year because of low demand.

7.4.2   The College's offer addressed six out the top 10 skills shortage areas in Leicestershire including carpentry and joinery, engineering, motor vehicle and hairdressing barbering. There had been a decrease in numbers in engineering over the past year because of the pandemic but these were now picking up. The College also had an offer in those sectors with the largest number of employees. Feedback from employers as well as LMI and LLEP intelligence informed the offer.

7.4.3   Income was at £1.3m; starts were down against the plan but there was confidence that new starts were continuing to come through. Construction was particularly popular; there was a waiting list because it was not possible to accommodate all of the growth.

7.4.4   Achievement was 56.7% for 2020/21. There continued to be an impact on achievement because of disruption caused by the pandemic and the duration of programmes. 130 apprentices were unable to take their EPAs during the year and so had to continue into 2021/22.   Based on an EPA pass rate of 87.5%, had the130 sat EPAs in 2020/21, achievement would have been around 76.1%.

7.4.5   Developments included a new apprentice onboarding process; a new sales approach maximising the use of social media; robust skills scans and ensuring apprentices were on the right course at the start; all staff being subject specialists; and a focus on the setting of high expectations to be a gold standard apprenticeship training provider.

7.4.6   Entry and employer surveys both showed positive results. The least

positive responses were around wellbeing and online learning, both of which were a factor of the enforced College closures.

7.4.7 Challenges included staff recruitment; the complexity of the onboarding process; the legacy of the pandemic; and physical resources restricting growth.

7.5 **Governors asked a number of questions including:**

7.5.1 **Apprenticeships were graded as 2 in the SAR; what was the Director's view on that?** The grading reflected a lot of improvement that had happened over the past year but there were still challenges and a way to go.

7.5.2 **Whether recruitment of staff particularly in Construction was affected by salary?** There were issues around pay but also just a shortage of high-quality candidates.

7.5.3 **The presentation seemed to have a much more positive feel and a more solid base from which to develop.** Agreed; it had taken a while to steady apprenticeships and the pandemic had not helped. If felt like a much more positive position to work from.

7.6 **Governors <u>thanked</u> the Director for her presentation and <u>noted</u> the information.**

8 DESTINATIONS AND PROGRESSION

8.1 The Quality Development Manager gave a presentation on destinations and progression. The following points were highlighted.

8.1.1 Destination data was captured from various sources for all students who completed and achieved their main qualification in 2019/20. It did not yet provide a student's vocational area of employment.

8.1.2 19% of students that completed and achieved had an actual destination recorded. 88% of students had a positive destination; 53% continued in education and 35% gained employment.

8.1.3 By ethnicity, all but Asian students had a positive destination above the College overall; by support types, students on free school meals, and LAC had a positive destination above the College overall and students with an EHCP were below. Poor employment outcomes for students with SEN were a national concern and would be a focus going forward.

8.1.4 The levels of qualifications with positive destinations at or above the overall College figure of 88% were level 5 (100%), level 4 (100%), level 3 (93%) and level 2 (88%). The levels below were pre-entry (61%), entry level (82%) and level 1 (83%).

8.1.5 The response rate was currently too low to draw conclusions. Destination data would be a focus for 2020/21 leavers and beyond and would be captured through a survey sent to students after they had completed and achieved their main qualification. The survey would provide more detail including their employment sector, if employment was new or continuing and the social impact of the course undertaken.

8.1.6 In terms of internal progression, 3,281 students (31% of 10,495) progressed internally. 1,707 full-time students (45%), 1,371 part-time students (23%) and 203 apprentices (26%) progressed internally.

8.1.7   There were 415 High Needs/SEN students recorded as completed and achieved in 2020/21; of these students 231 (56%) progressed internally.

8.1.8   1,593 16-19-year-old students (45%) and 1,671 adults (24%) internally progressed.

8.1.9   MiDES reports showed that 353 adults (21%) internally progressed to a higher qualification, compared to 8% in other colleges. There was a higher proportion of progression to the same or lower level than other colleges although it was hard to draw conclusions from this because of the different ways in which courses might be structured.

8.1.10 Most students progressed to a higher level from level 1 (71%) and level 2 (51%) courses; there was very limited internal progression from level 3 to level 4 which matched the national picture.

8.1.11 Vice Principals and Curriculum Directors would use this data to support their planning and targeting for next year with the aim of increasing the numbers of level 2 students progressing to level 3 and those level 3 students moving into higher level, HE provision.

8.2   **Governors asked a number of questions including:**

8.2.1   **Progression from Level 2 to 3 was surely the most important progression for any college?** Agreed, the data would be looked at by curriculum areas to see what could be done in terms of the offer and encouraging more students to progress.

8.2.2   **Were there any obvious barriers to progression and what could be done to help staff in overcoming any barriers?** A dashboard would be developed and training made available to staff to help them interpret the data.

8.3   **Governors noted the destination and progression data.**

9   KPI MONITORING

9.1   The Director of Quality Improvement gave an update on KPIs. The following points were highlighted.

9.1.1   Attendance was showing as 87.5% overall, 88.3% for 16-18 and 85.8% for adults. A recent AoC survey suggested that the College was performing well in terms of attendance.

9.1.2   Retention was high at 98.5% which was the same as last year; this was not a concern.

9.1.3   The second progress point had taken place. This showed that 7,734 enrolments had been graded, 195 were above target and 4,324 on target. However the target setting process was being reviewed as it was essentially the ALPS system which not felt to be appropriate for the College's students.

9.2   **Governors asked a number of questions including:**

9.2.1   **What would Ofsted's view of attendance be?** Ofsted would not look specifically at attendance data but would be more interested in how attendance reflected on attitudes to learning.

9.2.2 **There looked to be quite a jump in the number of students currently predicted to fail; how did this compare with the previous year?** This would be checked. Directors were reporting that there was still an impact from students having to self-isolate and high levels of anxiety and mental health issues. The tutorial funding was being used to help students catch up.

9.3 **Governors <u>noted</u> the update on KPIs.**

10   <u>TLA VIEWINGS OUTCOMES</u>

10.1 **Governors <u>received</u> and <u>noted</u> the paper and <u>requested</u> an update at the June meeting.**

11   <u>FINAL SAR</u>

11.1 **Governors <u>received</u> and <u>noted</u> the paper.**

12   <u>QIP UPDATE</u>

12.1 **Governors <u>received</u> and <u>noted</u> the paper.**

13   <u>DIGITAL FRAMEWORK SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT</u>

13.1 **Governors <u>received</u> and <u>noted</u> the paper.**

14   <u>DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS</u>

- 9 March – special
- 27 April 2022
- 15 June 2022

15   <u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u>

15.1 There was no other business.