

Minutes of the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee meeting held (by Microsoft Teams) on Thursday 17th September 2020 at 3.00pm

Governors Present:	Stephen Sawbridge, Chair Denise Brown, Principal and CEO Jason Lancaster Sue Blake Jo Mountney Sigbha Amin Shannon Mansfield (from 3 until 3.30pm) Donna Hazeldean Julie Obada (from 3.55pm)		
In Attendance:	Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation Nicky Birch, Executive Director of Adults, HE and Curriculum Support Heather Marks, Executive Director of Quality of Education Anth Brannen, Director of Campus Caudon Ryan Johnson, Director of Campus Burslem Pete Sherry, Commercial Director		
Min. No.		Action Whom	By Action By When
1	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST		
	The Chair reminded those present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted and the employed position for Jason Lancaster was specifically recorded.		
2	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
	Apologies were received from Julie Obada who would be joining the meeting late.		
3	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19TH AUGUST 2020		
	The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions. AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19th August 2020.		

Signed : _____ Chair Date: _____
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	There were no matters arising.		
4	ACTION PROGRESS REPORT		
	<p>The Committee considered the update provided and it was agreed to delete line 3. Sue Blake confirmed that she would be able to facilitate T Level trainings through the ETF at the point that it is needed.</p> <p>The Committee asked for an update in relation to the relationship with Sandwell College, external contacts and the Luminate group. The CEO indicated that, in the absence of CCF funding, the arrangement with Sandwell remains informal. She indicated that it was possible to formalise the position but did not feel that it was necessary. She confirmed that the College does have formal opportunities with Luminate and, through her regular meetings with the Principal, she would be happy to pick up any items for discussion as requested by the Committee.</p> <p>The Executive Director Quality of Education indicated that Sandwell has now employed a retired Ofsted inspector and he has been approached with a request to act as a critical friend as part of the SOTC SAR validation process. The Committee were assured that external links are live and active and therefore did not feel that anything more formal was required.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
5	START OF THE YEAR UPDATE		
	<p>The Executive Director Quality of Education and the Executive Director of Adults, HE and Curriculum Support drew the Committees attention to the detailed written report and key matters noted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A much smoother start to the year • The improved position was as a result of leadership and management collaboration • There were lessons learned from FEC and Ofsted feedback • Social media was used to support planning • Improved communication via campus updates through the Heads of Learning • Greater use of the Canvas platform • The College has been able to get ahead in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Learning walks to review standards b) Data intelligence c) Site reviews d) Social distancing compliance 		

	<p>e) Room utilisation f) Face covering compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is input and disseminated through the Microsoft system which gives a very quick update • The College has already started to undertake learning walks with a particular focus thus far on High Needs learners. What the learning walks are showing are that all students are engaged and that staff are very clear in terms of expectations. • English and Maths timetabling has taken a priority which is a positive. • 154 courses have been benchmarked. • Good practice has been seen, particularly in relation to Business, Travel, Public Services, Creative, Science and IT • Where there are gaps these are being addressed through performance boards • There is evidence that learners are recording their aims and dreams • Pulse meetings have commenced. This involves every Head of Learning in the same meeting. • Areas are colour coded and tracked with bespoke action and support agreed • Learner work scrutiny is already taking place • Any gaps identified are being responded to by training, this will allow performance to be addressed and improved at pace • 'Swap not Drop' has been built in to the quality calendar with broad promotion in place. Some learners are individually targeted and contacted • Quality calendar gives real clarity to staff • First deep dive planned is in relation to English and Maths • The College is relentless regarding quality improvements required • The College is still seeing a lot of walk ins, with students applying late. Assurance was given that all late applicants are given the support they required. • 80 pieces of equipment have been issued to students, in the main these are progressing students. The College is now looking at the needs of new students. • LRC is prioritised for vulnerable learners • There are less than 20 students who want to sit November exams • A focus for the College is learners arriving with a grade 4 in English and Maths but where there is uncertainty regarding how secure the grade 4 is, particularly in motor vehicle. • Students are organised and a lot calmer this year. They are turning up at the right place and at the right time which shows that timetabling has been a 		
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	<p>success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are now 1803 learners on study programmes against a target of 1832. 1608 is the number of 16-18 year olds. • The College is very close to target and there are still several hundred more students anticipated in year e.g. Princes Trust. • Some courses have proved to be very popular and, if late applicants cannot have their first choice, then they are moving to second choice or Traineeships. • Student numbers on Sport, Travel and Public Services are 428 which is approximately 100 learners short, mainly in relation to Sport. It was explained that numbers in this area were predicated on partner activity but they have not been able to recruit to plan as staff have been furloughed. • Student numbers in Childcare and Health and Social Care are very high • Positive numbers in relation to Brick and Motor Vehicle and the College is having to put on extra classes in these areas. • Engineering recruitment is on target • There is a recruitment concern regarding IT and Science with numbers currently standing at 97 against a target of 177. The College will revisit the curriculum content and assess whether or not it is attractive to 16-18 year olds. • The executive team is really pleased with the alignment between enrolment and the curriculum plan. • The Committee were reminded that the College introduced a GCSE resit opportunity for science, however target numbers have not been achieved as resits were not required because of the assessed rather than exam grades this summer. • A really good match with the curriculum plan which gives confidence regarding its accuracy • In terms of profiles the College is carefully considering all Level 1 students to ensure that they are on the right level. Currently looks like provision was planned correctly in terms of the cohort split. <p>One member of the Committee asked whether the split between week A and B has worked. The Committee were reminded that this was introduced to ensure social distancing in classrooms and communal areas. Groups were split in to two halves and the College is currently in the second week now. So far it appears to have worked well. Students are compliant with expectations and there is no overcrowding. Smaller class sizes have led to better behaviour and an improved ability for students to get through the work set.</p>		
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	<p>A challenge from the Committee was to be mindful of the level of engagement in the 'virtual week'. Assurance was given that there are processes in place to ensure that work is set, is completed and is being monitored. It was confirmed that work set is meaningful and expectations are clear regarding feedback. The Committee were advised that, in the virtual week there are scheduled Teams meetings and also work completed on Canvas is tracked.</p> <p>The position regarding Maths and English still seems to be working well and the Committee were given assurance that the position will continue to be monitored, particularly the level of engagement. The Committee all agreed that continuity of learning is critical and they therefore asked for assurance regarding schemes of work, individual learning plans etc. and they asked whether these give confidence. The Committee were advised that compliance audits have been completed in relation to schemes of work in every area and that the College has now started a series of quality audits. Schemes of work now include a sequencing front sheet and, sit alongside the delivery plan sequencing sheets, for all remote learning as well. It was explained that this involves a lot of upfront planning, however each week is repeated and therefore staff have sufficient capacity.</p> <p>A challenge from the Committee was in terms of the impact on students and whether they are learning at the same levels remotely. It was confirmed that the College has a broad range of mechanisms in place to obtain learner feedback and a key focus of this will be to assess the success of remote learning and respond as necessary.</p> <p>The Committee were advised that learning walks and talks are already taking place and that part of this process includes capturing student feedback which gives quick data intelligence. Journals will be monitored to confirm progress. The Committee were advised that one of the strengths of the monitoring arrangements is the ability to quickly identify any gaps, ensure consistency and put in place any extra support required.</p> <p>The Committee then asked for an update on student behaviour and it was confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners are responding well and are compliant regarding COVID expectations. It is clear that the effort put in is working, with corridors clear for the vast majority of the time. • Main issue seems to be wearing face coverings as students simply forget. The number of masks distributed by the College has been significant and the College will have to consider how to manage this 		
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	<p>going forward. Exception cards work really well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students all appear to really understanding and know how serious the situation is • Staff are happy with how the circumstances are being managed <p>One member of the Committee asked whether there were any issues regarding travel to and from College. It was confirmed that there have been no concerns raised with the College and staff continue to remind students of expectations.</p> <p>Taking the report as a whole the Committee all agreed that staff should be congratulated and that there was assurance regarding the areas of focus and evidence of staff really working well together.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
6	INITIAL REVIEW OF 2019/20 DELIVERY		
	<p>The detailed written report was presented and key matters brought to the Committees attention included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a planning handbook in place and staff are starting to work through this • A review meeting is taking place tomorrow regarding the yearend position for the QIP for 2019/20 • Some clear and detailed position statements created for the FEC visit and these will form the basis of the SAR • The College is intending to continue with the SAR and validation process, including external support as critical friends • The College focus is on Teaching and Learning • SAR to be completed by the end of September 2020 and it will then be reviewed by the validation panel and peers • Some positive stories to tell in the SAR. Draft data shows some improvements over the last 3 years, for example English and Maths high grades. • In terms of high grades 18/19 position for English for 16-18 year olds was 16.2% and the 19/20 best case is 25%. For 19+ the position has moved from 55% to 70%. • High grades for Maths 16-18 year olds was 11% in 18/19 and the 19/20 best case is 26%. For 19+ the position has improved from 47% to 62%. • Some positive trends in relation to retention and achievement, however there are some dips in Functional Skills • Self-assessment flow chart is now in place 		

	<p>(Julie Obada joined the meeting at 3.55pm)</p> <p>The Committee asked when the final validated data would be available. It was confirmed that this would be the end of September/beginning of October. It was agreed that headline figures would be shared with the Committee as soon as they are available.</p> <p>The Committee were advised that, whilst the College does have some initial indications in terms of results and trends, there are some awarding organisations who have not yet given final results. A challenge from the Committee was that the focus really needs to be on the impact on learning and lessons learned. Key focus needs to be the planning of learning and continuity.</p> <p>Staff expressed the view that remote learning did negatively impact upon Functional Skills performance and, as a consequence, the College is reviewing planning and sequencing to avoid a disproportionate impact. This will feed in to the 2020/21 model.</p> <p>A question and challenge from the Committee was whether or not the College missed an opportunity to claim some achievements under the arrangements. It was acknowledged that this may be the case, particularly for Functional Skills English.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>	<p>ED Q of E</p>	<p>Oct. 2020</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>TLA STRATEGY</p>		
	<p>The detailed written report was presented and it was confirmed that the TLA strategy includes a lot of targets to ensure that it aligns with the Stoke Fit model. It includes aspects covering growth mindset, emotional intelligence and wellbeing. J20 continues to be used and picks up on key aspects including Star Practitioners and the Licence to Practice. The Elevate programme is in place which supports both staff and students.</p> <p>The Committee, in considering the strategy documents presented, all agreed that there was a 'lot in there' and it was explained that the College is developing a practitioner support group with the aim of building a community of professional practitioners. Staff expressed the view that there are a lot of exciting initiatives with a focus on TLA, pastoral care and support. It was confirmed that the College has been able to benchmark all 154 Canvas courses and is also using blended learning consortium resources.</p>		

<p>A challenge from the Committee was how the College will ensure that all staff are engaged and are compliant. The Executive Director Quality of Education indicated that the College is really fortunate in that it had been able to complete reviews early. There is a teaching and learning working group in place which reports directly to the executive. It has a role to play in regularly monitoring statistics and all staff are assessed through the teacher on a page data. This gives very clear information and allows the College to put support in place quickly.</p> <p>The Committee were advised that the Stoke Fit model will be broken down in to 'bite size chunks' and each area will be progressed throughout the year.</p> <p>In terms of the Maths and English strategy a challenge from the Committee was to make sure it goes beyond the qualifications and is contextualised. An observation made from one member of the Committee was that the TLA strategy could be stronger in terms of its reference to the whole person. The Committee were given assurance that the College is very mindful now regarding the wellbeing of students and there are a number of ways in place to draw information from students so that they feel comfortable to share details regarding their own circumstances. It was confirmed that the College is taking a holistic approach and is carefully assessing starting points for Maths and English and vocational courses and, sitting alongside this, staff will be specifically asking how students feel.</p> <p>It was noted that the document referred to on one drive as the 'English and Maths strategy' is actually the 'Stoke fit' document it was therefore agreed that a copy of the English and Maths strategy would be circulated outside the meeting.</p> <p>The Committee asked how the QIP and Quality Assurance processes fit together with the TLA strategies. It was explained that, what are presented today are the strategies and the QIP will monitor how these are embedded and give assurance. The Committee felt that it was important for Governors to have clarity regarding how the documents fit together so that there was an agreed position regarding the Committee and Boards role in seeking assurance. They indicated that, in the documents presented today it was not easy to see how progress will be measured and impact tested. A challenge from the Committee was that the pace of change is very quick and therefore they need assurance that staff all understand and or onboard with the changes. An observation made by the Committee was that there appeared to be a 'lot of words' but that it was not easy to see the layers and how documents interact. They felt it was important not to overwhelm staff and there was need to</p>	<p>ED Q of E</p>	<p>Sept. 2020</p>
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	<p>focus on key measures, and part and parcel of this is stakeholder feedback including students, staff, employers etc. The CEO confirmed that she would work to visually create a map which shows the levels and interaction</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>	CEO	Oct 2020
8	APPRENTICESHIPS, EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT AND SUBCONTRACTED DELIVERY		
	<p>Staff presented the detailed report and key matters noted and discussed were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A really good solid start to the year in terms of apprenticeship numbers • Local employer engagement is good • Excellent curriculum alignment with local demand • Additional government initiatives have been helpful • Carry in value is £1.4 million against a 2020/21 target of £2.1 million • 97 enrolled learners (50 with MIS) • Value to 16th September is £410k. Gap therefore for the remainder of the year is £300k but there is lots of activity planned in relation to engineering and BT, including ICT. • 565 apprentices placed and there is a need to safeguard all including assessors. B2C team are obtaining employer risk assessments. Process fully in place to ensure safety. • Nursery is now up and running and is busy • Gym has been risk assessed and is due to open next week • Government incentive increase to £3k has helped to raise the profile of apprenticeships • The Colleges dedicated call centre means that support is available to learners regarding online applications and staff have been able to quickly answer any questions. The call centre has a process in place for follow up calls and this is helping to build a positive perception of the College from the first point of contact. • Staff will be looking at swap don't drop over the next few weeks • In terms of marketing, there has been a really joined up approach regarding progressing learners. In addition there has been reverse marketing to all 16-18 apprentice applications to match them with employers. • There has been great use of social media • There is confidence in the Colleges COVID plans and arrangements in place. Next step is to continue to build on internal and external confidence. • Internal progression for apprentices is a success and, 		

<p>two really interesting challenges, these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move from Frameworks to Standards and • Structure of apprentice provision and management. <p>It was confirmed that the College has aligned the full time curriculum to the prescribed qualifications within Standards. If there are no prescribed qualifications then the College is working with employers regarding end point assessment.</p> <p>The Committee were advised that there are 35 new programmes and the two models will build around a number of aspects, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standardised approach to delivery structure • End point assessments to be identified before a course goes live and enrolment takes place • Culture shift to EPA and meeting the criteria • Use of a standard induction programme which will commence next week • Focus on the Aspire programme • All apprentices have ID badges • Registers are in place <p>In terms of the changes made, it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This had led to added value to the wider curriculum e.g. master classes • 28% reduction in out of funded learners • 43 learners have progressed to completion in the last 4 weeks • Reduction in numbers who are on a break in learning • All employers have been risk assessed and assessors are now going out to sites • In terms of staffing, there are a number of positions out to advert and it believed that this is a short term issue. <p>A question and challenge from the Committee was in terms of the measures in place to ensure consistency for all. It was explained that consistency is ensured by Heads of Learning in a number of ways, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular one to ones • Standard documents utilised through share point • Good communication in place <p>A challenge from the Committee was to carefully cost the delivery model before any programmes are rolled out.</p> <p>The Committee were advised that there is an Apprenticeship Improvement Board in place and that the College is also appointing to a cross College position to ensure standardisation.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
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9	CEIAG		
	<p>The detailed written report was considered and it was explained that the working group is meeting again this year to pick up any actions outstanding from the 19/20 plan. The College is seeing increased engagement with the employer engagement team which is a positive. Committee were advised that staff training is still being monitored and that there has been a recent flurry of activity, however there are more staff that need to complete. The Committee were reminded that the College was successful in securing the Matrix IAG award.</p> <p>Committees' attention was then drawn to the compass analysis and it was explained that departments have been asked to assess themselves against the benchmarks. The assessment tool used clearly shows the actions required in each area. Committee agreed that the statistics/information provided were interesting and it was agreed that the percentages would be unpicked in more detail at a future meeting.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>	ED A,HE & CS	Jan. 2021
10	SAFEGUARDING, PREVENT AND E&D – EXCEPTIONS REPORT		
	<p>The detailed written report was noted and the Committee were given assurance that the COVID working group has been proactive in terms of completing weekly reviews and taking on board all internal and external feedback.</p> <p>In terms of mandatory training the College is now fully compliant.</p> <p>In terms of the statistics it was noted that there are only a few low level safeguarding referrals and a challenge from the Committee was for the College to be confident regarding the safety of online learning.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
11	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AND AGREED ACTIONS		
	<p>These were noted as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headline data tables to be provided as soon as available • Copy of the English and Maths strategy to be circulated • TLA – a map to be created to show how the strategies, quality assurance, QIP etc. and the role of 		

	<p>Governors all fit together. To provide a framework that allows the impact to be assessed. A professional guide for Governors – i.e an implementation plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeships – call centre project regarding smaller employers to be established and reported on at a future meeting • Apprenticeship/commercial – report linking activity to financial position/income • Compass faculty assessments – unpick the percentages at a future meeting. 		
12	AOB		
	There were no items of additional business.		
13	DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING		
	<p>This was confirmed as 22nd October 2020 at 3pm.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 5.05pm.</p>		