

## East Coast College Corporation

### MINUTES of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee held at 9am on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 Lowestoft Sixth Form College Board Room

<b>Present:</b>	Kirk Lower (Chair KL) Tina Ellis (TE) Rachel Kirk (RK) Tia Beresford (Student Governor TB) Paul Padda (Interim Principal and CEO PP) Graham Evans (GE) and Vicki Paterson (VP)
<b>In attendance:</b>	Wendy Stanger (Director of Governance WS) Paula Ottaway (Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND PO) Ruth Harrison (Interim Deputy Principal RH) and Tom Roberts (Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality TR)
<b>S/24/3/1</b>	<b>Apologies and Membership</b>
Graham Evans and Vicki Paterson were welcomed to their first meeting of the Committee.	
Apologies were received from Associate Governors Amy Rust (AR) and Sue Willgoss (SW)	
<b>S/24/3/2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>
Declarations of interest were received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kirk Lower re BPP University (consultancy).</li> </ul>	
The Committee agreed that this didn't preclude full participation in the meeting.	
<b>S/24/3/3</b>	<b>Students discussion – Motor Vehicle Level One</b>
The Committee were joined by Motor Vehicle students and a question and answer session was held.	
The students advised that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They were all studying level one and had been at the College since September 2023</li> <li>They had settled in well and felt happy at the College.</li> <li>All were from different schools and that Careers Advice at school could have been better in helping them decide what to do next.</li> <li>Chose the College as had heard positive things about it.</li> <li>The Course was good and they enjoyed the practical work.</li> <li>The teacher's industry knowledge was up to date.</li> <li>The next step would be an apprenticeship or level 2. The College had provided careers advice, mock interviews had been held and a City and Guilds Employability module completed.</li> <li>College was better than school as there was more freedom and the course was more interesting and practical.</li> <li>Electrical vehicles covered in the course including the health and safety requirements. They commented that the infrastructure was not yet in place for electric vehicles to be financially accessible for all.</li> <li>The course participants were all male but that they commented that there would be no barrier to females.</li> <li>For those needing to re-sit maths or English this was timetabled well.</li> <li>British values covered as part of Personal and Social Development and included what makes society function.</li> <li>Feel safe at College and know who to go if there is an issue and this was covered as part of induction.</li> <li>Computers could be improved as take a long time to load.</li> </ul>	
The Committee thanks the Students and they left the meeting.	

<p>The Interim Principal and CEO advised that the Level One motor vehicle course had 100% retention with a really good team. There was a need though to ensure that facilities were equal across the campuses. The team was being supported by the College to progress to outstanding.</p> <p>Governors challenged the attendance levels. The Interim Principal and CEO advised these were circa 87/88% which was about average and if this was improved would help the provisions move to outstanding. Additional support for the cohort was being considered and the College was working with the Schools and Counties to improve transition. Added value also needed to be considered as the cohort included those with poor school attendance or who did not attend.</p> <p>Governors discussed the demand for the programme. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that it was not oversubscribed and there was a need to raise students' interest in the area through working with schools and promoting what the College offers.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality advised that there was a need for students and employers to also consider transferable skills as for instance the skills learnt on the motor vehicle course could transfer to motors on other industries such as wind farms.</p>	
<b>S/24/3/4</b>	<b>To approve the minutes of the last meeting 12 12 23 and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the Agenda</b>
The minutes of the meeting of 12 12 23 were approved as a true record	
<b>S/24/3/5</b>	<b>Rolling Action Log</b>
<p>The Action Log was reviewed.</p> <p>12 12 23 S/23/12/11 College and National Benchmark data to be added to survey result reporting – The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND advised that national data was not yet available. The College had adapted some questions on the survey and national data would not therefore be available for those.</p>	
<b>S/24/3/6</b>	<b>Quality Update</b>
<b>S/24/3/6.1</b>	<b>Deep Dive Summary Report St. Edmunds Society/ East Coast College</b>
<b>S/24/3/6.2</b>	<b>Deep Dive Summary Report level 3 apprenticeship programmes: Motor Vehicle and Metal Fabricator</b>
<b>S/24/3/6.3</b>	<b>Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)</b>
<p>The Interim Principal and CEO presented the update.</p> <p>Governors discussed attendance and the actions that were being taken to address and improve this. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that attendance and the attitude to attendance had changed since Covid, and this was being seen across the education sector with more learners at risk of becoming NEET. Poor attendance can have a detrimental effect on outcomes and Managers and teachers have been working to improve attendance and examples of good practice are included in the report. There was a need to ensure that after a break that exciting curriculum and trips were planned to re-motivate students. Staff workload was also being reviewed, and additional training, such as trauma informed practises, was being provided so that they had a better understanding of what affected student behaviour. In budgeting additional resources were being considered for student pastoral and wrap round support. This was identified as a particular need in the level one Connect courses.</p> <p>Governors challenged how AI was being used to support teachers. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that following a successful LSIF bid TeacherMatic had been brought for the College. This was being used for lesson planning and creating teaching content. The Advanced Teacher Practitioners were providing training on it to staff.</p>	

Governors challenged if retention was still an issue this late in the year. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that in the previous academic year students had left late in the year and the College was putting intervention in place to try and ensure that this did not happen. There was a focus on what the individual student was going to achieve, their progression and support for exam anxiety. The College needed to support students to pass well and to move to positive destinations.

Governors challenged progress with apprenticeships and how timely achievements were to be improved. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that improvements had been made with the current judgements showing nearly all provision as good. There was work still to do and actions such as the progress boards were ongoing. Staffing and communications with employers had improved in engineering but improvement was still needed. The apprenticeship cohort was small and therefore a few learners not achieving would reduce the overall outcomes and this could put the College in the ESFA at risk category.

Governors commented that in the deep dive it had been identified that workshop practise was good but theory needed developing and challenged how this was being addressed. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that intensive CPD including sharing of best practise had taken place and improvements had been made with evidence of impact.

Governors queried how the College was to address the Government changes in maths and English teaching hours. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that the College had in this academic year increased to three hours for both maths and English. The extra hour in maths from the next academic year will have implications in terms of staffing and time tabling. The pay gap between schools and FE staff will mean that the College will struggle to recruit maths teachers and the College will need to look at how this is addressed. Attendance would also need to be considered with attendance at maths and English already an issue which requires intervention.

Governors discussed the work and support the Advanced Teacher Practitioners provided. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that as well as supporting new staff a key part of their role was supporting the RED scheme which they had been working to enhance. The RED triangles this year are department based and across all curriculum. The theme chosen was driven by individual interests or from a steer through appraisal. Sharing took place across the College including in an end of year showcase.

Governors challenged the support and quality assurance for the College's subcontracting offer. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that the College's quality assurance was applicable to all its provision, including subcontracting. A deep dive had been carried out on the College's newest sub-contractor, the St. Edmunds Society and additional support was being provided to them. The College had taken this subcontractor on at the request of the ESFA and it provided provision for NEET and hard to engage students. It was based in Norwich but drew learners from a wide geographical area. The Director of Governance advised that Governor visits to subcontractors were included within the governor engagement.

The Interim Principal and CEO presented the QIP and advised that good progress was being made. Work was still needed in some areas and these were included in the support to improve process with actions detailed on the relevant area's QIP. ESOL retention has been affected by people being moved and this was a national issue.

#### **Governors agreed the following action**

- **In order for context against performance to be reviewed comparative data of colleges in areas with similar student and societal deprivation to be included in reports.**

**PP**

<b>S/24/3/7</b>	<b>College Research</b>	
<p>The Interim Principal and CEO presented the College Research Project article and Research Proposal on 'Why do learners drop out early?' and advised that other research projects were also being considered.</p> <p>Governors commented that the College's approach to research was really positive and discussed how the results could be shared across the sector. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that the College was looking to hold another research conference.</p>		
<b>S/24/3/8</b>	<b>Governor Engagement</b>	
<p>The Director of Governance presented the report. The schedule of Governor Engagement opportunities developed with the Senior Leadership had improved governor engagement and will continue to be developed with opportunities advertised in the weekly Governance Update. The governor visit reports have been shared with the College Team and any areas that need addressing followed up.</p> <p>The Interim Principal and CEO thanked the governor team for the visits and commented that the visits had helped to raise the profile of the Board which had been welcomed by the College Team.</p>		
<b>S/24/3/9</b>	<b>Termly Safeguarding and Wellbeing Update</b>	
<b>S/24/3/9.1</b>	<b>Safeguarding Link Governor Reports</b>	
<p>The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND presented the report and updated the Committee on reporting changes. As was discussed at the last meeting the reporting had been split between safeguarding and wellbeing. This enables the College to have a clearer and more accurate picture and helps focus support. The reporting was still to be further developed including reducing replication of referrals so that the College better understood the number of incidences and individuals.</p> <p>Governors commented that the split reporting was a better way to report and that it would be useful if there was a national standard reporting so that benchmarked data could be sourced. There was a need to understand whether increased referrals were due to wider societal changes and whether the support the College provided had an impact. The Interim Deputy Principal commented that it would be useful to link the support to student data on areas such as retention so that the supports impact and effectiveness could be assessed and help identify where resources should be allocated. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that the Quality Improvement Group had been looking at this type of reporting and research was taking place in conjunction with the College of West Anglia.</p> <p>Governors challenged what the College's main areas of concern were. The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND advised that for safeguarding substance misuse and suicidal ideation remain the highest referrals, whereas for wellbeing emotional wellbeing and mental health are the highest areas. The College had good relationships with the relevant external agencies such as social care and health to help support but waiting lists were an issue, with counselling waiting lists in the region of 6/10 months. Substance abuse also covered where a person in the home's substance abuse was impacting the student. The College covered substance abuse as part of the Personal Development Curriculum and in the Wellbeing Fairs.</p> <p>Governors commented that the Safeguarding and Wellbeing team was a small one and challenged what other support was available to students and staff. The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND advised that the College was looking at ways to build students resilience, including managing social media, providing support through the Success Coaches and developing clubs to help with wellbeing. Staff were being provided with additional training such as Trauma Informed Practices, work was ongoing on what should be referred and what should be managed by the curriculum area and following feedback from the Staff Survey after</p>		

<p>the referral is triaged an automatic response was sent to the member of staff making the referral.</p> <p>The Committee noted the Safeguarding Link Governor Reports and thanked the Safeguarding Lead for their ongoing commitment.</p> <p><b>Governors agreed the following action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Referrals by Gender to be included in the Safeguarding and Wellbeing reporting.</b></li> </ul>		
<p><b>S/24/3/10</b></p>	<p><b>Careers Update</b></p>	
<p>The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND presented the report and updated the Committee on progress. Recruitment of careers advisors remains an issue and the current structure is being reviewed with an Information Advice and Guidance Advisor as well as Careers Advisors being considered. This would enable the college to be more competitive in regard to salary.</p> <p>Governors noted that UCAS numbers were down and discussed how this could be improved. The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND advised that the College worked to support UCAS applications and that an HE fair was to be held at Lowestoft which 27 Universities were attending. Transport was being offered to Great Yarmouth students. This was targeting those students that wouldn't normally consider Higher Education.</p> <p>Governors discussed Career Advisor recruitment and the different levels of careers advice provided. The Interim Deputy Principal commented that unfortunately the College could not compete with salaries paid by the Counties.</p> <p>Governors commented that the report demonstrated that the College's careers offer continued to develop despite the staffing issues.</p> <p>A governor raised about the need to inspire students at an early age and suggested that the Institution of Engineering and Technology could produce a film about the day in the life of an engineer at the College.</p> <p><b>Governors agreed the following action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Institution of Engineering and Technology film to be developed.</b></li> </ul>		
<p><b>S/24/3/11</b></p>	<p><b>Student Voice Update</b></p>	<p><b>PP</b></p>
<p>The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND presented the report which covered the On-Course Survey and other student voice feedback. Participation still needed to be improved, with some areas of the College seeing a very low rate of return. The Apprentice survey had been kept open to try and increase the return rate.</p> <p>Governors challenged why the survey results were poor in specific areas. The Interim Principal and CEO advised that there have been historical issues in apprenticeships which has meant that the learners have not had a positive year but that improvements were now being seen.</p> <p>Governors commented that the Student Union 'Student Voice Boards' were a good idea for collecting student feedback. The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND advised that the Student President had met with the Catering Manager to discuss the food offer.</p>		
<p><b>S/24/3/12</b></p>	<p><b>Unloc Leadership Academy, Conferences and AOC Charter</b></p>	
<p>The Director of Governance presented the Unloc Leadership Academy report. The February Leadership Academy saw 9 learners from across the provision attend. This was disappointing but those that did take part had a really positive experience as demonstrated in the feedback from attendees. The Student Conference format was changed due to poor attendance and feedback was sought from learners in the social spaces at Lowestoft and at Great Yarmouth. This had provided useful feedback which the Senior Team were reviewing.</p>		

<p>The Interim Principal and CEO advised that there was a real apathy with engagement with extra-curricular activities and the Senior Team were looking at building the Unloc programme into the timetable for year 2 to help improve engagement. The College was also looking at raising aspirations by encouraging entry into competitions.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the feedback and how engagement with the Leadership Academy could be improved. It was important that the student voice continued to be developed and that the College adopted the AOC's Charter for Student Engagement.</p> <p><b>The Committee agreed with the adoption of the AoC Charter for Student Engagement</b></p>		
<b>S/24/3/13</b>	<b>Risk Register</b>	
<p>The Interim Principal and CEO advised that at the review it was determined that there should be no change in the post mitigation risk scores.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the risk register been reviewed Yes, Match 2024.</li> <li>Is the Committee content that the risks are relevant and are being updated Yes, and discussed as part of the agenda items.</li> <li>Is the Committee content that the risks are being mitigated? Yes, and discussed as part of the agenda items.</li> <li>Where a red risk, is the Committee assured that appropriate action is being taken Apprentices do not complete their apprenticeship qualification in a timely manner was red for variance from risk appetite. There is an action plan in place that is being worked through but this continues to be a risk until all the legacy apprenticeships are completed.</li> <li>Where does the Committee have significant concerns. Apprentices do not complete their apprenticeship qualification in a timely manner continues to be a significant concern.</li> </ol> <p><b>Governors agreed the following action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Risk to be added related to Awarding Bodies and how their work and actions impact student success.</b></li> </ul>		<b>PP</b>
<b>S/24/3/14</b>	<b>Agenda planning</b>	
None		
<b>S/24/3/15</b>	<b>Review of Meeting</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confidential Items: None</li> <li>Were Learners prominent in discussions: a focus of the Committee Yes throughout the agenda.</li> <li>Risk Management: any issues discussed which may require an additional Assessment Additional action noted</li> <li>Equality &amp; Diversity: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment: Reporting of this to be developed.</li> <li>Health &amp; Safety: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment: Safeguarding and wellbeing discussion.</li> <li>Sustainability: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment – None</li> <li>Media: any issues discussed to inform local media – Importance of good news stories discussed, Unloc, student success, competitions, HE Centre opening</li> <li>How did the meeting go: Detailed discussion with positive discussion with students.</li> </ol>		