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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 2nd November 2022 at 6.00pm in Skills Park and via MS Teams

Present: Angela Cross-Durrant (Chair), Julie Kapsalis (Acting CEO / Principal), Felicity Fletcher, James Knowles, Lynn Reddick, Nick Vaughan-Barratt.

In Attendance: David Walrond (Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality), Dario Stevens (Deputy Principal Planning & Information), Nicki Adams (Director of HE), Rob Greening (Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare), Susanne Wicks (Head of Governance).

1.22	Apologies for Absence
	No apologies for absence were received.
2.22	Declarations of Interest
	No declarations of interests were made in relation to items on the agenda
3.22	Minutes of the previous meeting and Matters Arising
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2022 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair. Those matters arising not covered by items on the agenda are detailed below.</p> <p><u>Work Experience</u>: The Deputy Principal Planning & Information advised that the work experience numbers rose to 1114 by year-end, equating to 73% of the target. He confirmed that the new software mentioned at the last meeting was now in place and should streamline the process.</p> <p><u>Assessors</u>: The Deputy Principal Planning & Information confirmed that more assessors had been recruited which enabled the offer of two further groups of Electrical apprentices.</p> <p><u>T Levels</u>: The Chair asked if Nescot could learn anything from colleges that have made progress with T Levels. The Acting CEO confirmed that a T Level Implementation Group has been established and that colleagues have made contact with counterparts in Crawley College who were part of the pilot project.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to contact the Director of Professional & Service Industries to arrange a briefing session for Governors.</p> <p>Action: NV-B and FF to share any useful resources from the training session scheduled for 3rd November 2022, led by the AoC.</p>
4.22	Student Recruitment 2022-23
	The Deputy Principal Planning & Information presented his report. Matters discussed are detailed below.

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	<p>The Committee noted that recruitment to HE courses remains challenging and that it can be tricky to establish the reasons for that. The Director of HE referred to the discussion held at the HE Sub-Committee on 19th October about the impact of the current economic climate on mature learners, which has led to some, particularly in Teacher Training, to defer in the hope that the situation will improve. She reassured Governors that the two new programmes starting in the spring term should enable the college to meet its target. Governors acknowledged that HE learners may be harder to reach than their FE counterparts but there is a niche market here for part-time mature students. The Acting CEO/Principal noted that this year was challenging across the HE sector, with many universities over-recruiting. The Director of HE advised that feedback from decliners is largely anecdotal, obtained from Course Teams' discussions with individuals. She reassured the Committee that marketing features large in the QIP. The Acting CEO/Principal added that there remains work to be done to encourage people to think about attending a non-university provision and to raise aspiration. She suggested that family members of those attending the Saturday Academy courses could be a potential target market.</p> <p>In terms of identifying Nescot as an HE provider, the Deputy Principal Planning & Information suggested that there should be a focus on what sets Nescot apart from universities, particularly with so many providers within easy commuting distance, and reminded the Committee that developing the USP is part of the current strategy.</p> <p>Governors were pleased to note the very positive feedback received via the enrolment survey. The Deputy Principal Planning & Information described how smoothly the on-site enrolment process went this year, which was noticed by staff, students and families alike.</p> <p>Governors asked about available benchmarking data that would show Nescot's year on year improvement in the context of others in the sector. The Deputy Principal Planning & Information advised that whilst all available benchmarking data is sought, it tends to relate to outcomes, which is not currently useful due to the impact of the pandemic. The Acting CEO/Principal suggested that there may be some best practice around participation and marketing emerging from the Institute of Technology project which can be shared. The Chair suggested that the Committee could receive trend data as part of the qualitative evaluation which may inform internal benchmarking, and the Deputy Principal Planning & Information confirmed that could be provided.</p>
5.22	College Performance Reports
	(i) <u>Performance Update Report</u>
	The Deputy Principal Planning & Information presented his report. Matters discussed are detailed below.

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	<p>The Committee noted the continued impact of the pandemic, particularly on Level 3 learners, many of whom have struggled and require support from teachers. The need for support continues, especially for those preparing to sit exams, and to ensure their English and Maths skills are at appropriate levels. The Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality described Nescot's efforts to support learners' ambitions, but noted that this is likely to fall within Ofsted's scrutiny when an inspection takes place, so staff need to be prepared for that. He added that those subjects which are largely assessment-based will achieve better outcomes.</p> <p>Governors asked how Nescot's GCSE results compare with provisions with a similar profile and cohort. The Deputy Principal Planning & Information explained that information on levels of deprivation is not shared. However, some institution data will be collected and shared by AoC in April which will present the opportunity to make contact and collaborate with colleges with similar cohorts.</p> <p>In response to questions about the decrease in achievement rates for ABA learners, the Acting CEO/Principal reassured Governors that a robust management arrangement with ABA is in place.</p>
	<p>(ii) <u>Draft Self-Assessment Report (SAR)</u></p>
	<p>The Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality updated the Committee on the progress of the draft SAR and explained that it is largely data-led and the most recent data set will be compared with internal benchmarks from 2019. He expressed the view that Nescot can confidently evidence a Good grade and that the skills provision is a real strength so could be graded as Strong. Given how new that element of the Ofsted framework is, colleagues are networking with others in the sector to gather all available information to help prepare for the forthcoming inspection.</p> <p>Governors agreed to receive the draft SAR during the week commencing 14th November, and to meet online on Thursday 24th November to discuss the document prior to recommending it to the Corporation for approval on 9th December 2022.</p>
<p>6.22</p>	<p>Higher Education Matters</p>
	<p>The Chair noted that the membership of the HE Sub-Committee is identical to the membership of this Committee, and reminded them of the very thorough report delivered by the Director of HE to the meeting on 19th October. She noted that there was some discussion around the Intensive Care Programme, and in particular the participation of Governors and the timing of it, which had led some to question the impact of their involvement.</p> <p>Action: The Chair of this Committee would discuss this with the Chair of the Board.</p>

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	<p>In addition, the Sub-Committee had sought further information about the 6% of students who did not respond that they feel safe when asked as part of the induction survey, and were reassured by the further detail provided by the Director of HE.</p> <p>The Director of HE gave a brief verbal report on the priorities contained within the QIP and advised that it would be a standing item on future meetings of the HE Sub-Committee.</p>
<p>7.22</p>	<p>Safeguarding Update</p>
	<p>The Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare presented his report and welcomed comments and questions. Matters discussed are detailed below.</p> <p>The Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare confirmed that the Safeguarding Policy had been updated to reflect changes in the September 2022 version of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and would be presented to the Corporation for their approval on 9th December 2022. However, he emphasised that the changes were minimal and largely confined to changes in terminology.</p> <p>Referring to paragraph 102 of the guidance which states "<i>where reasonably possible, schools and colleges hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil or student. This goes beyond the legal minimum</i>", the Chair asked if that is the policy at Nescot. The Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare described the challenge in obtaining just one number in some cases and the impact this has on resources. He also pointed out that some students may not have an appropriate second emergency contact.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to recommend the updated policy to the Corporation.</p> <p>The Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare described the additional functionality offered by CPOMS, particularly in terms of reporting and data. He advised that his Team would be looking at areas with high reporting rates to check if support or training is required.</p> <p>The Committee welcomed the update on additional activities set out in the report and sought reassurance that external speakers are subject to the same safeguarding measures as other visitors. The Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare confirmed that was the case and that all external speakers are accompanied by a staff member whilst on site. Furthermore, they are given a very clear brief in advance of speaking, and if necessary, will be informed if they say something which is not appropriate to the particular audience.</p> <p>At the request of the Committee, the Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare and Acting CEO/Principal gave details of the</p>

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	<p>service provided by Catch 22 who support and advise young people and work with staff.</p>
<p>8.22</p>	<p>Learner Voice Update</p>
	<p>The Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare presented his report and welcomed comments and questions. Matters discussed are detailed below.</p> <p>Governors were pleased to hear that two FE students (one from Media and one from Animal Care) have volunteered to join the Corporation.</p> <p>The Acting CEO/Principal outlined her intention to share her Ofsted presentation with students in order to obtain their feedback.</p> <p>The Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare reported that, further to feedback arising from one student focus group, a meeting with the catering provider has taken place, and feedback since has been much more positive.</p> <p>The Deputy Principal Planning & Information reported back on the meeting he attended alongside the Chief Finance Officer and a group of Level Three second year students. He was pleased to report that students were very forthcoming and their comments were largely positive, with their highest praise reserved for staff. They also spoke highly of the support they receive and the college's facilities. Negative comments made were related mainly to catering provision and personal development lessons.</p> <p>The Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality advised that, in the critical friend's report, there were some very positive observations made about the respectful atmosphere around the college and the polite and upbeat attitude of most students.</p> <p>The Committee encouraged colleagues to ensure that students were offered the opportunity to give their views on the format and questions included in surveys and the Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare reassured Governors that surveys would be sense checked with learners to ensure they understand the questions and that all relevant subjects are covered.</p> <p>Governors sought reassurance that views are canvassed from all students, not just those who are more confident in speaking up. The Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare advised that surveys can be completed online in tutor time and that the completion rate has been 80% or higher in recent years. The Chair suggested that the responses made by those completing one-year courses may differ from those of their counterparts on two-year courses, and the Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare undertook to reflect at that point, and look back on previous years' results to identify any differences in responses. The Director of HE added that efforts are made to capture</p>

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	the voice of all students, including speaking to them directly and capturing informal feedback.
9.22	Ofsted Inspection Preparations Update
	<p>The Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality updated the Committee on a recent critical friend visit from a practising Ofsted inspector, carried out as part of the preparations for the College's inspection. He confirmed that feedback was largely positive and the exercise was worthwhile, and undertook to share the report with the Committee.</p> <p>Action: DW to share Critical Friend report with Committee.</p> <p>The Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality advised that the SAR will demonstrate to Ofsted that self-assessment in Nescot is being carried out robustly and to a high quality, with involvement from colleagues across the college. The Acting CEO/Principal added that her Ofsted presentation will demonstrate the actual experience of a learner at Nescot, which is really important.</p> <p>The Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality advised that the Director of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare would share information with Governors to help them prepare for questions that Ofsted may ask around safeguarding, not only in terms of their strategic role but also to demonstrate that they know what action to take should they need to, for example if they witness something that causes concern. He also set out the work that has been done to help staff prepare for an inspection and expressed confidence that the college is moving towards greater readiness. The Acting CEO/Principal confirmed that she is the Skills Nominee and would be writing to external partners this week to warn them of the imminent inspection.</p>
10.22	September KPI
	<p>The Deputy Principal Planning & Information presented the KPI for term one and emphasised that the data set presented was reduced due to the timing of this meeting, with retention figures not available until after the census date. He undertook to share proposed targets for the 2022-23 KPI by email for review, comment and approval.</p> <p>Governors noted the attendance rate of 87% and that English and Maths attendance had improved. The Interim Deputy Principal Quality and Standards pointed out that Ofsted are very focussed on attendance and retention rates.</p> <p>The Chair sought further information about the forecast year-end figure of new courses delivered against those that were planned (27%). The Deputy Principal Planning & Information explained that lots of new courses had been introduced in previous years, and three HE courses had closed. He undertook to check targets against strategic objectives to ensure they remain relevant.</p>

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11.22	Annual Complaints and Compliments Report 2021-22
	<p>The Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality welcomed comments and questions on the report.</p> <p>The Interim Deputy Principal Quality & Curriculum observed that the balance of complaints and compliments was encouraging, given people's tendency to complain more readily than they submit a compliment.</p> <p>The Committee noted that the downward trend in numbers of complaints was partly due to the pandemic, and whilst welcoming the systematic approach taken to complaints handling, also acknowledged that this could mean that complaints were dealt with more formally than they might need to be. For example, a quick apology by the right staff member could have resolved the issue.</p> <p>The Committee asked if any trends had been observed, such as complaints being made about the same issue.</p> <p>Action: The Interim Deputy Principal Quality & Curriculum to report back on the Committee on any repeated complaints or other trends identified in the data.</p>
12.22	Annual Cycle of Business
	<p>The Committee agreed that the Chair should discuss the cycle of business with the Chair of the Corporation and come back with a proposal for the next academic year. In particular, she undertook to ensure that the meetings of this Committee take place at the appropriate time, to fit in with data drops and that all relevant matters were included in the workplan.</p>
13.22	Terms of Reference
	<p>The Committee agreed that the Chair should discuss the terms of reference with the Chair of the Corporation and come back with a revised version for consideration.</p>
14.22	Any Other Business
	<p>No matters were raised.</p>
15.22	Date and Time of the Next Meeting
	<p>Wednesday 1st March 2023 at 6.00pm</p>

7.45 pm end

Decisions:

- Governors agreed to receive the draft SAR during the week commencing 14th November, and to meet online on Thursday 24th November to discuss the

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document prior to recommending it to the Corporation for approval on 9th December 2022.

- The Committee agreed to recommend the updated Safeguarding Policy to the Corporation, for approval on 9th December 2022.
- The Committee agreed that the Chair should discuss the participation of Governors in the Intensive Care Programme, the annual cycle of business and the Committee terms of reference with the Chair of the Corporation.

Actions:

Clerk to contact the Director of Professional & Service Industries to arrange a briefing session on T Levels for Governors.

NV-B and FF to share any useful resources from the T Level training session scheduled for 3rd November 2022, led by the AoC.

Clerk to ensure that the QIP is a standing item on future HE Sub-Committee meetings.

The Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality to share the critical friend report with the Committee.

Deputy Principal Planning & Information to share proposed targets for the 2022-23 KPI by email for review, comment and approval.

Interim Deputy Principal Quality & Curriculum to report back to the Committee on any repeated complaints or trends identified in the data.