

**Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held via Videoconferencing facilities (MS Teams) on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 3pm**

**Present:** Roderic Gillespie (Committee Chair)  
Michelle Brabner (Principal)  
Kevin Burke (Independent Governor)  
Catherine Durr (Staff Governor)  
Anita Holt (Associate Governor)  
Kash Kalim (Independent Governor) (from item 6.1)  
Katy Robinson (Associate Governor)  
Susannah Porter (Independent Governor) (to item 6.5)  
Elaine Small (Independent Governor)  
PJ Mcgregor (Student Governor)  
Tracey Wood (Independent Governor)

**In Attendance:** Paris Bonwick (Vice Principal Business Services)  
Mark Burrows (Deputy Principal)  
Lisa Farnhill (Clerk to the Corporation)  
Vickie Hayes (Head Of Learning Support and Inclusion)  
Stephen Musa (Vice Principal Curriculum and Support)  
Jane Rowley (Curriculum Dir (KGV))  
Carl Davies (Curriculum Dir. (Apprenticeships & Skills))

**Apologies:** Teresa Catterall (Curriculum Dir (Southport))

**Absent:**

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
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**S.24.71 ITEM 1: WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was confirmed there were no apologies for absence from members, with some still trying to access the meeting, with quoracy confirmed and agreement from members the meeting would commence whilst the Clerk supported members trying to access the virtual platform by dialling them in and resending the joining link.

**Item 1 – Resolved:** Members resolved to accept apologies for any members unable to access the meeting due to connectivity issues.

**S.24.72 ITEM 2: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members confirmed that standing interests were unchanged, with none relating to items on the agenda.

**Item 2 – Noted:**

**S.24.73 ITEM 3: MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 5<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024**

Members were given the opportunity to raise any points of inaccuracy from minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March.

The Chair reminded members of the issues raised and discussed under each item at the previous meeting, with it clarified all matters were either detailed under item four or included in the agenda. With nothing additional raised, the minutes were approved.

***Item 3 - Approved: The Committee resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024.***

**S.24.74 ITEM 4: FOLLOW UP OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - ACTIONS AND IMPACT SUMMARY**

The Clerk summarised the report, confirming all actions were either complete or in progress, with the Deputy Principal providing a further update on progress with the Digital Strategy, which was now in draft and circulated to member, Anita Holt for review and advice.

The Committee Chair highlighted progress made towards having an integrated and comprehensive quality strategy, with the introduction of the Quality Manual, as a living document and evidence of a commitment to ongoing improvements and innovation.

***Item 4 - Resolved: The Committee noted the update and approved the impact statements.***

**S.24.75 ITEM 5: CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

No items within the minutes or on the agenda were considered to be confidential, however, the Clerk highlighted that although anonymised, the detail in the HE outcomes report may make the individuals identifiable should anyone know anyone on the course, therefore that information should be treated with additional care.

***Item 5 – Resolved: The Committee resolved to approve the minutes for publication. The Committee confirmed they did not need any items on the agenda to be reviewed confidentially.***

**ITEM 6 QUALITY ISSUES**

**S.24.76 Item 6.1: Risks Relating to the Standards Committee**

The Committee Chair reminded the Committee of the cyclical nature of many of the risks within the remit of the Committee, asking members to be mindful of the current risk profile when receiving updates throughout the meeting. It was agreed there would be the opportunity to reflect at the end on whether consideration needs to be given to increasing or reducing any of the scores.

Members were advised by the Deputy Principal that there had not been any updates to the risks associated with the Committee since the last meeting,

with continual improvements mitigating risks relating to some of the higher risk areas, particularly in relation to apprenticeships.

Members indicated they had expected updates to the register reflecting the release of the Ofsted Inspection report, asking about the review process and decisions taken, agreeing to reflect back on this at the end of the meeting.

**Item 6.1 – Resolved:** *The Committee resolved to accept the update.*

#### **S.24.77 Item 6.2: Quality of Education Report**

The Deputy Principal advised the Committee that he had prepared a presentation to support with drawing attention to the key aspects of the report for the online format of the meeting.

Members were given a comprehensive update on:

- predicated achievement for 2023/24
- quality improvements, developments and actions to improve apprenticeships
- the business case review of the apprenticeship offer
- progress against 23/24 KPI's
- details and rationale for the proposed KPI's for 2024/25
- progress in improving maths & English
- an outline of the proactive efforts to ensure sufficient provision for the expected number of GCSE resists for the 2024/25 cohort
- the positive impact of the learning walk day for Governors

The presentation outlined progress, areas of concern, achievements, action plans and innovation, celebrating individual and team successes, whilst detailing plans to support areas where further progress was required.

Members reiterated how valuable the learning walk days had been in triangulating the information presented, particularly in providing firsthand experience of the culture, behaviours and staff/student interactions, which had all been positive.

Assurances over the accuracy of predicted grades were given, with the Committee endorsing for Corporation approval the KPI's for 2024/2025, commending the expected improvement in outcomes. Members were advised there was an 11% rise in predicted achievement at KGV, 2% at Southport, which was 6% overall. Attention was drawn to areas that had made significant improvements, highlighting the challenges overcome, particularly in ESOL to deliver a quality experience and positive outcomes for their learners.

Members attention was drawn to areas where expected achievement had dropped, not improved or fallen, with explanations given as to the reasons and actions taken.

Members discussed the importance of the strength of relationship between staff and students, indicating it was fundamental to support them in fulfilling their potential and achieving their aspirations, suggesting this was evident from the accurate predictions the previous year, asking if confidence remained in the accuracy for this academic year, with reassurances the evidence base used for the predicted outcomes for 2023/24 results was even stronger.

Members interrogated the reasons for the drop in predicted achievement for gas and plumbing foundation learning, asking if this related to the ability to

achieve a gas safe qualification ahead of completion, with members advised that had been an issue with apprenticeships, but had not affected this course. Members noted the small cohort impacted the percentages, with some work placements withdrawn and some students having withdrawn due to being offered full time work.

Concern was expressed over retention rates in counselling, asking if this was in line with previous years or had decreased. Members were advised of a variety of reasons, which included difficulties in securing placements, caring and work responsibilities associated with all adult courses, as well as issues relating to triggers during supervision. Members were informed of steps to overcome the controllable issues, including better preparation for placements, discussing regional variations in achievement and retention in counselling courses. The Committee was informed of the positive perception of a member who had personal experience of the provision in the past, adding that placements had caused issues for their cohort. The Committee noted that even when secured, the placement could be impacted by the day chosen, highlighting the number of bank holidays on a Monday, as well as issues when chosen days are also assigned for staff training at their placement, delaying completion. The Committee endorsed the improvements made to prepare students and employers for the placements, with a member offering to support with drafting or reviewing documentation for placements.

In response to a question about previous achievement in Uniformed Public Services, members were informed of staffing issues, with close monitoring and support provided through the performance board process, with examples of improved practice outlined. Members were informed of intensive support work with students since the writing and circulation of the report, which was expected to improve the predicted outcomes.

Members discussed the impact of attendance on achievement, noting improvements made as a result of the college-wide focus and a suite of individualised strategies, asking how attendance was defined, and whether online attendance to lessons was permitted. The statistics were reviewed and contextualised, and members reflected on the difficulties in drawing comparisons without a standardised sector wide approach, and were assured by continued efforts to strive for the ambitious target of 93%.

Members asked about the student experience where attendance rates were lower, with the Committee advised there was correlation, however, other factors had also influenced attendance rates. Members were assured accountability was key, with action plans and clear targets in place where improvements were necessary, with a focus on sharing best practice whilst continuing to take an evidence based, individualised approach to ensure that the right strategies were being deployed to every course and class.

Members noted the general focus on positivity and celebrating successes across all areas of quality improvement, receiving data relating to improved observations following the implementation of the Rosenshine Principles and positive feedback on the good practice hours.

Following a detailed update on apprenticeships, including information about staffing and action plans and withdrawals for out of funded learners, members acknowledged the impact on the QAR data, which would trigger a DfE letter, with this having been anticipated and communicated with the relevant DfE teams.

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
	<p>Reflecting on the review of the offer, supported by the steering group, members were in support of the evidence-based approach, asking about the difference between withdrawing and pausing, as well as establishing how this was communicated with employers and learners, confirming introductions were made to other providers.</p> <p>Members questioned the impact on local skills needs, with details of the discussions held within the steering group outlined, reassuring the Committee that the College remains committed to meeting local skills needs, however, conceding this would only be possible with a quality offer that ensures success for students, strong relationships with employers and committed, effective staff.</p> <p>A member detailed an example of an area of need and demand, with Level 2 hairdressing students unable to progress to Level 3 due to having no available provision within the region, with the Deputy Principal agreeing to review this further, reiterating the commitment to only provide provision that meets local need through quality delivery.</p> <p>The item concluded with an update relating to the political landscape and potential impact of the election and a further review of the KPI's and targets for 2024/2025, which were endorsed for Corporation approval.</p> <p><b><u>Item 6.2 – Resolved:</u></b> <i>The Committee resolved to accept the update.</i></p>	<p><b>Deputy Principal/ SP</b></p>
S.24.78	<p><b>Item 6.3: Strategic Action Plan Update</b></p> <p>The Deputy Principal summarised key actions which had led to the achievement of a number of QIP outcomes, with plans to incorporate any carry forward actions into the 2024/2025 improvement plan.</p> <p>The Chair highlighted how the detailed overview provided by the Deputy Principal under the Quality of Education report had ensured members were suitably assured by the progress made and areas for continued improvement.</p> <p><b><u>Item 6.3 – Resolved:</u></b> <i>The Committee resolved to accept the update.</i></p>	
S.24.79	<p><b>Item 6.4: Destinations 2022/2023</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal Curriculum and Support explained why there had been a delay in providing the data, due to issues with an external provider, reassuring the Committee of the internal progress made to reduce the number of unknown destinations since the failure of the external provider to obtain the information they were contracted to.</p> <p>The Committee members noted a full refund had been provided, with reassurances that there would be a return to in-house data collation for 2023/2024 destinations. Members questioned the appointment of the contractor, asking if they were a credible provider, and if references had been provided, suggesting the final outcome should be viewed positively as a learning experience, with examples of companies that support other colleges provided.</p> <p><b><u>Item 6.4 – Resolved:</u></b> <i>The Committee resolved to note the update.</i></p>	
S.24.80	<p><b>Item 6.5: Learner Perspectives, Feedback and Personal Development Behaviour and Attitudes</b></p>	

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
	<p>The Vice Principal Curriculum and Support provided an outline of the in-depth Matrix assessment, which had assessed every aspect of the student journey. Members indicated the positive feedback following the detailed review provided reassurances, welcoming the encouraging external insight following the difficult period after the Ofsted inspection. Members noted the recommendation and subsequent actions to improve careers for adult and apprentices.</p> <p>An overview of all other sections of the report was provided, including attendance, complaints and student survey outcomes.</p> <p>Members asked what actions had been taken when students had responded to the survey to indicate they don't feel safe. Members noted the confidentiality of the survey, with wider work completed, including training, student sessions, promoting support, and a member reflecting on the training where an example of gang associated activity being intercepted had been given. Further reassurances were provided, along with good news stories and positive feedback from parents to triangulate the impact of the actions.</p> <p>Members highlighted the contradiction in some feedback in the survey, including the college's response to learner views, as well as the quality of teaching and learning, both being noted as a strength and area for improvement. This was contextualised and triangulated with the observations completed.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Item 6.5 – Resolved:</u></b> <i>The Committee resolved to use the update to support their understanding of student perspectives.</i></p>	
<b>S.24.81</b>	<p><b>Item 6.6: Quality Strategy &amp; Manual 2024/2025</b></p> <p>The Committee Chair introduced the item, reflecting positively on how this incorporates Committee feedback relating to linking policies and processes to the strategies and strategic aims of the college.</p> <p>Members received an overview of the process for drafting and collating the manual, with members expressing how this echoed earlier discussions on targeting underperformance through a culture of positivity and sharing of good practice, setting high aspirations to ensure continuous reflection and improvement.</p> <p>Members were assured that the document would be a living document, to be reviewed and improved annually to reflect current practice.</p> <p><b><u>Item 6.6 – Resolved:</u></b> <i>The Committee resolved to recommend the Corporation approve the Quality Manual.</i></p>	
<b>S.24.82</b>	<p><b>ITEM 7: SAFEGUARDING</b></p> <p><b>7.1: Safeguarding Update</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal Curriculum and Support highlighted the data and activity as included in the report, drawing attention to the continued upward trend in interventions, particularly around low mood and mental health concerns.</p> <p>Members noted the positive shift in retention data for LAC and previously LAC students, with collaborative caring agreements in place to support the achievement of local young people in and previously in care.</p>	

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	<p>Members indicated this was a significant area of challenge, thanking the staff for continued focus and innovative strategies for individualised support, commending the improved outcomes.</p> <p>Members discussed training and support for staff, asking how safeguarding training was provided and for assurances in relation to the completion of statutory training, with it clarified why this was not at 100% due to start dates, illness, and parental leave.</p> <p><b><u>Item 7.1 – Resolved:</u></b> <i>The Committee resolved to accept the report.</i></p>	
S.24.83	<p><b>ITEM 7.1: Safeguarding Policy</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal Curriculum and Support summarised the updates and explained why they were able to bring the policy earlier this academic year, with members acknowledging there may need to be further minor amendments if the final KCSIE varies from the draft, with this being preferable to not updating the policy until the new academic year.</p> <p>The Committee endorsed the policy, recommending it for Corporation approval in July and implementation in September.</p> <p><b><u>Item 7.2 – Resolved:</u></b> <i>The Committee resolved to accept the report.</i></p>	
S.24.84	<p><b>ITEM 8: EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b></p> <p><b>Item 8.1: Termly update</b></p> <p><b>Item 8.2: Annual overview including link to PSED reporting requirements</b></p> <p><b>Item 8.3: Targets for 24/25 in line with meeting the milestones of the long-term objectives</b></p> <p>Members attention was drawn to the annual targets, actions and milestones as requested when previously approving the long-term objectives. Members were informed of the expectation that some long-term objectives would be met ahead of the 2028 target, with plans for this to be reflected in the annual reviews, replaced with new targets and long-term goals.</p> <p>Examples of activities and initiatives to support inclusive practice were outlined, including the rationale for the different areas of focus, and the impact on the cohesive culture within college.</p> <p>The Committee was reminded that the student hub had moved at the start of this academic year, with this considered to have been a huge success, evidenced by increased awareness of support, more students accessing services and a greater variety of activities and initiatives led from the hub due to its central location.</p> <p>Members noted the number of complaints that had featured EDI issues, and how these had been addressed.</p> <p>Members were informed of the compliant publication of the Public Sector Equality Duty information, with a member highlighting how this was an area of focus critical to evidencing the positive culture of the college, as well as being a matter of compliance.</p> <p>The item concluded with details of the success of the curriculum for life programme, benefits of having a trained speech and language specialist and</p>	

data from the student survey that indicated the college culture was inclusive and supportive of difference, as well as evidencing inclusivity in different ways not considered before, such as through the provision of travel passes, quiet spaces and free sanitary products.

**Item 8 – Resolved:** *The Committee resolved to accept the report, endorsing the annual targets and recommending them for Corporation approval.*

#### ITEM 9: POLICIES

##### S.24.85 **Managing Student Responsibilities (To be renamed Positive Behaviour Policy)**

Members were advised of the review process for the policy, which had adapted and evolved, having previously been two policies, one for behaviour and one for conduct, which had merged, with a further review now done in line with the teaching and learning strategies, and reflecting on the culture piece, with a decision made to remove the procedural elements.

Members commended the outcome of the rewrite and rename, which embedded the trauma informed approach and was described as clear and succinct.

**Item 9 – Resolved:** *The Committee resolved to recommend the Corporation approve the Positive Behaviour Policy (formally known as the Managing Student Responsibility Policy).*

##### S.24.86 **ITEM 10: HIGHER EDUCATION**

###### **Item10.1: HE Expected Outcomes 2023/24**

The Deputy Principal reminded the Committee that they were in the process of teaching out the HE provision, with destination information detailed, as previously requested by the Committee to support the OfS withdrawal process.

Members were informed the Deputy Principal had visited the group to ensure the group were happy with the provision, and a smooth transition was in place for their next steps.

**Item 10.1 – Resolved:** *The Committee resolved to accept the update.*

##### S.24.87 **Item 10.2: OfS De-Registration Update**

The Deputy Principal advised the Committee that ahead of the election announcement, the OfS had circulated information confirming they would be regulating lifelong learning entitlement provision, with more information to follow relating to a new tier of registration for providers of this provision type.

Members were informed this impacted the college's intention to de-register, as no further information or guidance as to the level of registration required had since been released due to the election, therefore the college was taking a prudent 'watch and wait' approach, as opposed to withdrawing, as this may lead to having to reapply in the coming year. The Committee was advised a full update would be provided when more information was available.

**Deputy  
Principal**



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**Item 10.2 – Resolved:** *The Committee resolved to accept the update, and recommend the Corporation receive this as essential information.*

**S.24.88 ITEM 11: PLANNING AND REFLECTING**

**Item 11.1 2024/2025 Planning**

The Clerk confirmed the updates were minimal in terms of accountability, and mainly centred around clarity of wording and membership updates. The Committee endorsed the changes.

In terms of reporting to the Committee in 2024/2025, members were asked to actively consider what information supported their work, thinking about the level of detail, quality and quantity, and to feedback regularly, reminding members of the feedback provided during the external review, asking governors to consider what can be removed when asking for more information or data, to reduce the burden on staff and not impact paper length.

Members highlighted the progress made in consistency and continuity of reporting, agreeing to continue to reflect and improve throughout the year.

**Item 11.1 – Resolved:** *The Committee agreed the annual workplan and resolved to recommend the updated Terms of Reference to the Corporation for approval.*

**S.24.89 ITEM 11.2: REFLECTING ON RISKS**

The Committee members were asked by the Committee Chair to consider if any risk scores, mitigations or actions needed updating as a result of what they had seen and discussed.

Members reflected on reputational impact following the downgrading from Ofsted, asking for more information around the process of reviewing risks. Discussions from the review meeting were outlined, with members advised the impact would likely be higher at KGV than at Southport, with assurances mitigations were in place, with early indications that this year’s applications are unaffected. A member asked how many people had viewed the report via the college website, with the Vice Principal Curriculum and Support agreeing to obtain this information.

**Vice  
Principal  
Curriculum  
& Support**

Members involved in local education fed back that the report had not adversely affected local opinion, with further member reflections on the general opinion of Ofsted, with it considered Ofsted inspections and gradings were not as valued as they once were.

In concluding the review of risks, particularly the impact of Ofsted, it was agreed the rating did not need amending from a quality perspective, however, there was potentially a heightened risk in relation to recruitment, noting this was being considered and overseen by the Resources Committee, with an annual review of all risks completed by the full Corporation in July.

**Item 11.2 – Resolved:** *The Committee resolved to endorse the risk ratings as recommended by the SLT.*

**S.24.90 ITEM 12: ITEMS TO BE REPORTED TO THE CORPORATION**

The Committee Chair reminded members of the updated process for providing information and reassurance to the Corporation of their work, focusing on three key points. The Committee Chair suggested progress made in improving the accuracy of predicted grades and the business case review of the apprenticeship provision should be included. In response to a suggestion, members agreed the Corporation should be informed of the positive outcome of the Matrix assessment, reflecting on how comprehensive the assessment process had been.

The Clerk summarised the resolutions and recommendations to be presented to the Corporation as follows:

For approval:

- Updated KPI's
- The Quality Manual
- EDI Annual Targets
- Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy

For assurance

- the EDI report to include PSED reporting requirements
- Quality of education report
- OfS withdrawal update

#### **S.24.91 ITEM 13 CLOSING COMMENTS AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk asked members to flag any key dates/days that would cause issues in terms of meetings in the following year.

The Chair thanked everyone for their time and attention.

**Item 13 – Noted:**

**The meeting ended at 5.10**