**Corporation of Sir George Monoux College**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Quality & Performance Committee**

**held on 1 December 2020**

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| **Present** | Alastair Owens (Chair), Stephen Jones, Jagdev Kenth, David Vasse. |
| **In Attendance** | Holly Bembridge (Vice-Principal: Curriculum), Nehendra Jonas (Student Member of the Corporation Designate), Anisa Khadija (Student Member of the Corporation Designate), Robert Smith (Clerk to the Corporation). |

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| **1** | **Apologies for Absence and Quoracy**    The student members of the Corporation designate were welcomed on the occasion of their first attendance at a meeting of the Committee. It was noted that they will be formally appointed to office at the Corporation meeting being held on 15 December 2020, and be appointed thereafter to membership of the present Committee.  The meeting was quorate. |
| **2** | **Declarations of Interest**  None. |
| **3** | **Minutes of the Previous Meeting (22 September 2020)**  It was noted that the draft minutes had been approved by the Chair of the Committee for circulation.  They were approved as a correct record of the business transacted and *prima facie* evidence of the proceedings to which they relate. |
| **4** | **Matters Arising from the Minutes (22 September 2020)**  *Minute 5:* updates on the College’s risk assessments attending the public health emergency had been made available to members as appropriate, and had been discussed at the Corporation meeting held in October 2020 and in committee meetings held during the term.  There were no other matters arising except as provided for within the meeting agenda. |
| **5** | **Board Level Risks**  It was noted that board level risks pertaining to the Committee’s remit relate to agenda 6 and 7 below.  No other risks requiring the Audit Committee’s attention were identified in the course of the meeting. |
| **6** | **College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2019-20 and Key Performance Indicators (KPI) 2019-20 & 2020-21**  The College SAR and KPIs for 2019-20 and 2020-21 were received and considered. It was noted that the Report relates to the 2019-20 academic year.  Members noted the overall statement: *we judge the College good because our students get a good experience, supported by keen and able staff who are ambitious for their success. This helps the great majority to achieve at and above Sixth Form College benchmarks, to make excellent progress, and to go on to meaningful destinations which are closely related to their programmes of study. In a year where classroom-based learning was brought to a rapid halt due to the pandemic, teachers and support staff rose to the occasion brilliantly, adapting their routines and practice to ensure that students continued to attend, learn and receive valuable support for wellbeing.*  The following key strengths were noted: |

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|  | **.** | leaders and staff have developed a positive and solutions-focused culture, such that, when the pandemic hit, staff were able to work together quickly to transform the work of the college, with the great majority of students participating in education throughout the shutdown and relatively little loss in learning; |
|  | **.** | leaders and teachers set high expectations for behaviour and participation in the classroom and across the college: as a result of which students behave well, engage in study and other worthwhile activities on campus, and make good progress; |
|  | **.** | teachers benefit from a co-ordinated and tailored programme of support to improve their craft, with plenty of opportunities to share, watch and discuss practice with colleagues; |
|  | **.** | teachers have developed good routines to help students organise themselves and reflect on their learning, enabling them to have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve and move towards their goals; |
|  | **.** | teachers and staff have made good links with employers, and work with them in designing challenges and assessments for students, such that most students are able to develop their professional knowledge and skills; |
|  | **.** | teachers plan and sequence the curriculum so that students attain well, develop a depth of understanding in their subjects and move on to positive destinations related to their programme of study; |
|  | **.** | teachers and staff understand students’ needs and support them very well, adapting lessons, affording opportunities to deepen learning or go beyond the curriculum, and providing drop-in sessions, with the result that students develop their confidence and appreciate the good relationships they build - disadvantaged students achieve and progress very well, out-performing their peers; *and* |
|  | **.** | support staff and teachers work well together to provide early help and individual support where students have high needs or particular disabilities or vulnerabilities, enabling them to achieve well and make exceptionally good progress, moving on to positive destinations. |

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|  | The following areas for improvement were also reported: |

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|  | **.** | leaders have not done enough to strengthen the culture of numeracy and literacy and therefore students do not place enough value on these skills, and do not attend additional English and maths at the same rate as their other lessons; |
|  | **.** | teachers in Media and Mathematics do not assess students’ broad knowledge and skills frequently enough, and as a result tend to over-estimate the progress that students are making; |
|  | **.** | some teachers do not set high enough academic expectations for students, for example by insisting that students produce good work to deadline, with the result that some lessons are insufficiently challenging and homework may be uneven in quality; *and* |
|  | **.** | in some areas, such as in GCSEs or on the Performing Arts programme, teachers do not co-ordinate sufficiently to share course planning, and as a result workload is higher than it might otherwise be and the student experience can lack consistency. |

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|  | **The Quality of Education** was assessed as **Good**, with the following supporting rationale:  *The quality of education is good because the great majority of teachers plan and structure their courses effectively, deploy expert knowledge so that students learn well, and use a wide range of assessment techniques to adapt teaching and help students to build long term recall. They encourage students to research and participate in activities which take them beyond the assessed curriculum, and prepare them well for their next steps. Students receive feedback on their work which helps them understand what they need to do to improve. As a result, the large majority of students enjoy their learning, develop valuable knowledge and skills, achieve well, and meet challenging learning aims. Students on vocational courses routinely make exceptional progress.*  **Behaviour and Attitudes** were assessed as **Good**, with the following rationale:  *Behaviour and attitudes are good because students benefit from an ambitious and caring culture that values hard work, motivating them to take their studies seriously and to aim to progress to good destinations. Through online assemblies, individual reflective tasks and classroom discussions, they gain an appropriate understanding of life in modern Britain and the potential risks to their safety, including risks relating to radicalisation, extremism and gangs.*  **Personal Development** was assessed as Good, with the following rationale:  *Personal Development is good because students are challenged to develop their personal effectiveness, community commitment and future readiness through regular reflection and learning in the curriculum, on Passport days, in workshops and assemblies.*  With reference to **Safeguarding**, the College is assessed as being **safe both on site and online**, helping students to focus on their learning and development, whether studying on campus or at home. This is achieved through the constant vigilance of well-trained staff, visible leadership of senior managers who intervene promptly and a range of awareness raising initiatives. 94% of students consider themselves safe at College (December 2020 QDP), and 96% safe in the College’s online environment (June 2020 QDP): this continues a strong trend of improvement from 74% in February 2016 and 88% over the last two years. This also compares favourably with students across London schools, where the figure is 84%. It is thought that the remaining 6% of students feel unsafe owing to perceptions around gangs and youth violence.  **Leadership and Management** were assessed as **Good**, with the following rationale:  *Leadership and management are good because expectations have been progressively raised across all aspects of college life with the result that students are committed to their learning and the great majority of teachers are ambitious in the classroom. Leaders have established a culture in which good behaviour and self-discipline are the norm.*  The Report was welcomed as a thorough self-analysis of a difficult year, open and honest about the challenges faced and the extent to which they had been successfully addressed.  In response to a question from Stephen Jones regarding those pathways assessed as still requiring improvement, confidence was expressed by the College management that, if they were not already achieving Good performance, they would do so by the academic year-end as a result of targeted initiatives under new leadership.  In response to a question from Jagdev Kenth regarding the degree of viability attending work experience placements, which are overseen in detail by the External Relations Committee, it was reported that, although the demand for them is likely to always outstrip their supply, existing links are reasonably secure and new employers had been engaging with the process during the current year in the context of the College’s improved reputation. It was acknowledged, however, that meaningful activities cannot realistically re-start until the public health emergency is abated.  In response to a question from the Committee Chair, it was confirmed that there is now little difference between the attainment of male and female students, with the former having improved. The preponderance of women students reflects the nature of the courses which the College is presently able to offer. For example, there is a large Health and Social Care provision to which female students are disproportionately attracted.  In relation to attainment by gender, it was observed that the 2019-20 year, which had lacked the normal discipline of external examinations, may of itself be an unreliable guide to future trends whether with regard to gender or ethnicity, a better guide to the health of the College’s learning environment being provided for the present by factors such as retention, which had improved irrespective of student backgrounds, and the generally positive tenor of student feedback by comparison with earlier years.  It was noted that teacher retention had improved, and that teacher feedback about working at the College is generally positive.  The Committee Chair noted the ways in which the College provision differs from national reference data. In part, this reflects where the College’s strengths lie, and also the course preferences of those students who are attracted to the College. For example, to expand science provision may require new investment in laboratory facilities.  It was observed that College leadership is slightly ahead of the overall curve, which reflects the ambition of College leaders, but also the difficulties which may be encountered in realising those ambitions.  A particular priority for the College leadership is to improve “behaviours for learning”, whereby students become self-directed to positively engage with the opportunities afforded them.  In reviewing the key performance outcomes for 2019-20, it was noted that centre-assessed grades had exemplified an unusual year and that any conclusions should be mediated through that observation. The outcomes for 2018-19 might therefore afford a better, or at least an alternative, baseline for judging College performance in 2020-21.  With that in mind, it was noted that many targets for 2020-21 had been reduced relative to 2019-20 outcomes, and that 2018-19 outcomes and national benchmarks provide a more realistic context.  It was however observed that student retention and punctuality had slightly exceeded the target set for the year, though attendance had narrowly missed the target. Courses rated as better than Grade 3 had also slightly exceeded the target set for the year.  Student perceptions of the quality of teaching and teacher feedback had significantly exceeded the target set for the year.  The proposed key performance targets falling within the Committee’s remit set for the 2020-21 year were regarded as appropriately challenging in the context of an anticipated return to normal examinations in the summer of 2021 and, on behalf of the Corporation, were approved by the Committee.  The Committee recommended that the Corporation approve the College Self-Assessment Report at the meeting to be held on 15 December 2020.  It was also recommended that the KPIs for 2020-21 be circulated to all members of the Corporation as part of the papers for the meeting to be held on 15 December 2020, with an additional column showing the 2018-19 outcomes. |

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| **7** | **College Improvement and Development Plan 2020-21**  The College Improvement and Development Plan updated by the Principal was received and considered.  Measures were noted in relation to four development themes for the College, namely: |

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|  | **.** | how students demonstrate engagement with the College’s mission through their values and behaviours; |
|  | **.** | how teams and individual staff develop skills, make progress and take on challenges; |
|  | **.** | optimal use of all spaces with clear routines: *and* |
|  | **.** | enrolment of 1820 students through marketing and liaison that responds successfully to the challenges of Covid19. |

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|  | It was noted that the Plan no longer has a post-inspection, remedial emphasis, but is focused on promoting visible elements of outstanding practice. It had also been re-designed to reflect more adequately the new inspection criteria.  The column, reiterated across all sections of the Plan, “What will this look like when fully effective”, was observed to include measurable data linked to KPIs where appropriate, as well as providing a robust template by which to judge the success of the measures implemented.  It was recognised that the current restrictions imposed by the public health emergency would act as a restraint on aspects of the Plan in the short term.  The future role of online learning was discussed, and it was agreed that, where this is apt and pedagogically desirable, quality virtual spaces need to be created under appropriate supervision. It was stated that the next iteration of the Strategic Plan would address the issue. |

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| **8** | **Dates and Times of Remaining Meetings 2020-21**  The approved dates and times of meetings of the Committee were noted, as shown below:  ***Tuesday 9 February 2021 (6.30pm)***  ***Tuesday 8 June 2021 (6.30pm)***  It was agreed that, for the protection of members and the College, the 9 February 2021 meeting will be held online.  Whether subsequent meetings are held physically or online will be determined by the public health situation as it affects participants at the time. |
| **9** | **Any Other Competent Business**  None. |

**List of Actions**

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| ***Minute*** | ***Person Responsible*** | ***Action*** |
| 6 | Vice-Principal: Curriculum | Add 2018-19 outcome column to the KPIs 2020-21 for comparative purposes prior to circulation to the Corporation for the meeting to be held on 15 December 2020. |