

COLCHESTER INSTITUTE CORPORATION

CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

held on Thursday 27 June at 4.30pm

Present:

Caroline Williams – Committee chair
Peter Cook - Governor
Thomas Empson – Governor
Marco Iciek - Governor
Sally Messenger - Governor
Angela O'Donoghue – Co-opted Governor
Dawn Swainson – Staff Governor
Alison Andreas – Principal/ CEO

In attendance:

Ali Davies- Deputy Principal

MINUTES

Part I

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Maeve Borges.

*** 2. Declaration of any conflicts of interest**

No Governor declared any financial or other interests in the business to be discussed.

*** 3. Agreement to Starred Agenda Items**

Members agreed to only the starred items being discussed at the meeting; all other items would be deemed noted and/or approved by the Committee as appropriate.

*** 4. Minutes of meeting held on 16th April 2024**

The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the 16 April 2024 (CIC/CQ/24/3/1) as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. Action Sheet and Matters Arising from the Minutes

The action sheet (CIC/CQ/24/3/2) provided an update of all outstanding actions.

*** 6. Curriculum and Quality Update Report**

The Curriculum and Quality Update report (CIC/CQ/24/3/3) had been provided to Committee members ahead of the meeting. The Deputy Principal drew members' attention to the 16-18 learners' attendance and explained that the figures in the report differ due to the DfE data they also including 19-year-olds on study programmes. The College continues to focus on attendance of learners on Free School Meals (FSM) and Care leavers whose attendance is below the average.

It is expected that apprenticeships will achieve the enrolment target.

It was explained that beneath the headline figures the majority of areas are performing as well as or better than last year, however there are some areas which are not performing as well.

Governors **COMMENTED** on the variable length of the apprenticeships and how this can affect the retention data. Governors **QUESTIONED** whether the achievement data in the report was

timely or overall. The Deputy Principal confirmed that it was overall. Governors **COMMENTED** that the work carried out since this time last year had had an impact as the predicted achievement rates show a significant improvement. Governors **ASKED** how many apprentices there are in HE. The principal confirmed that it is in excess of 100. Governors **QUESTIONED** the retention rates- The Deputy Principal replied that the figure of 96% was for March 2023 when there were withdrawals that had not been processed which resulted in a bulge of withdrawals. Processes have now been tightened up and all withdrawals will now be processed timely. The Deputy Principal went on to say that some learners fail to attend their End Point Assessment (EPA) if they feel they have everything that they and their employer requires. Timely completion for construction is affected by not being able to get the EPA carried out as the course finishes. Governors **COMMENTED** on the costs to the college of supporting apprentices who fail to complete by their end date.

Governors **REQUESTED** that data on retention of apprentices is made clear within reports, so that governors know exactly what is being reported.

Action -review presentation of retention data for apprenticeships.

Governors **ASKED** why attendance rates for English and Maths are excluded from the overall figures provided and commented that if they were included it would bring the overall figure down. The principal replied that it would be an overall reduction but due to it being one session per week (out of typically six to ten registered sessions each week) it wouldn't be a big reduction.

Governors **NOTED** that there are significantly more learners for English and Maths this year and **QUESTIONED** why. One explanation could be that this year's first and second year students had their education interrupted at a critical time by the pandemic but they also sat exams in year 11 rather than receiving teacher-assessed grades, resulting in more students who failed to achieve a Grade 4, than in the recent past

Governors asked about outcomes for Young Adult Carers. Deputy Principal stated that Young Adult Carers are not currently a field on the ILR which makes it difficult to use standard systems to report on this. This is being investigated, and if added as a field, data will be captured and reported. Governors were assured that Area Managers can identify their young adult carers.

Teaching and Learning policy. Deputy Principal stated that there will be a working strategy put in place underneath the policy. Governors **ASKED** whether the teacher education staff are involved in observations. The Deputy Principal replied that this was planned.

Governors recognised the impact the College Executive have had on the improvement to apprenticeship outcomes over the past year.

* 7. **Update on Progress against Quality Improvement Plan**

Update on Progress against Quality Improvement Plan (CIC/CQ/24/3/4) document had been circulated ahead of the meeting and questions were welcomed from Governors. It was noted that there is good progress against most aspects of the Quality Improvement Plan, although impact for some actions and performance against the Final Targets will not be seen until later in the year.

Governors **ASKED** whether the Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan has influenced the provision. The Principal replied that a consultative meeting took place which enabled some information to be drawn and included in the plan. The document didn't produce any surprises and therefore hasn't influenced the provision very much; however it has reassured the College that they are on the right track when investing and developing curricula in certain areas.

Governors **COMMENTED** that Goal 3 makes no mention of work placements. It was agreed that this would be included in future Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs)

ACTION: Work Placements to be included in forthcoming QIPs along with a target to work towards.

Governors reference the £50,000 Industry Updating fund and **ASKED** whether it is captured. It was confirmed that it is captured however also need to capture the impact and experience.

* **8. Update on Self-Assessment 2023-24**

The Self-Assessment 2023-24 (CIC/CQ/24/3/5) had been circulated ahead of the meeting which provided an update on the current position. The Deputy Principal explained that the process used has changed and training has been carried out with Area Heads and other team leaders.

* **9. Update on Strategic Plan One Year Action Plan**

(CIC/CQ/24/3/6) Good progress has been made in most areas. Governors suggested that the document is updated with which areas have been achieved and which are still being worked towards. It was agreed that this will be updated ahead of the July Board meeting.

ACTION: Strategic Plan One Year Action Plan to be updated to show which areas have been achieved and which areas are still being worked towards ahead of the July Board meeting.

Governors **ASKED** whether Curriculum Advisory Boards include external stakeholders. The Principal replied that that they do but their make up is very variable depending on the profile of destinations in various subjects and groups. For example from some areas learners almost exclusively go into work, whereas in others, Higher Education is a far more common destination.

It was agreed that the way in which governors are updated on progress against the new Strategic Plan would be reviewed.

ACTION: Method for Governor update to be reviewed for new Strategic Plan document

Governors thanked the College Executive for the work that has been done on this.

* **10. Safeguarding Report**

The report (CIC/CQ/24/3/7) had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The Deputy Principal updated the meeting on Run, Hide, Tell and said that the first drill will take place in the first half term of the new academic year once the new intake has had their induction as that will include information on it. The Safeguarding Governor confirmed that he was happy with this as it is the next available opportunity and therefore is compliant. The Deputy Principal told Governors that she is confident that the College has a good safeguarding process in place but recognised that there are always areas that can be improved. The transfer of records continues to be a slow process and full compliance around the wearing of lanyards will be prioritised next term.

Governors **NOTED** and **THANKED** the work of the safeguarding team to support the students and the work they do in the light of the increasing numbers of safeguarding concerns.

Governors **ASKED** what support there is available for College staff who are dealing with safeguarding issues. It was confirmed that there is in house support, the team can talk to each other and senior management as well as external supervision which is available monthly.

Governors **ASKED** if there is an Employee Assistance Programme. It was confirmed that there is.

The Deputy Principal is working with the Director of HR to ensure that the Single Central Record (SCR) is fully up to date and that the College is fully compliant with KCSIE 2024 first draft and once the final document is released a testing process will take place for assurance.

Governors **ASKED** how the College will disseminate the new Prevent updates. All staff will receive a PowerPoint with the updates and new terminology and induction materials will be updated ahead of September.

Discussion took place around the need to have suitable safeguarding reporting systems which provide useful analysis.

Governors **COMMENTED** that the safeguarding issues for students engaged with external agencies have increased and whilst the assumption is that the increase is due to Covid, the size of the increase needs to be reviewed.

11. Update on Personal Development

Report (CIC/CQ/24/3/8) had been circulated ahead of the meeting and Governors thanked the new co-ordinator for the promotion taking place across the organisation.

12. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2022/23

It was explained that the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Annual report 2022/23 (CIC/CQ/24/3/9) had been approved by Finance and Resources Committee at their meeting on 22 May where it was agreed that being both a staff and student report it is therefore the business of both committees and as such should be approved at both. Governors **COMMENTED** on the timing of the document in relation to the self-assessment report and the two linking up going forward.

DECISION: The Committee **APPROVED** the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Annual Report 2022/23 for publication on the College website.

*** 13. FE, HE and Apprenticeships Academic Targets 2024-25**

CIC/CQ/24/3/10 - Governors **QUESTIONED** what the approach will be for areas that are not reaching their targets. It was agreed that there needs to be some level of sophistication in the targets to ensure they are realistic, however they must also be aspirational.

Governors **ASKED** how the target figures are reached. It was explained that robust conversations take place to ensure the figures are achievable, but not easily achievable in an attempt to be more ambitious and prevent areas from being complacent. Governors **ASKED** whether there are departmental targets that sit below the overall targets. Deputy Principal confirmed that there will be, and these will be confirmed in Area Management Meetings in the first half term of the new academic year. Governors **ASKED** how it is perceived by staff on high-performing programmes that they are 'carrying the load' to achieve the targets if some areas are not reaching them. The Deputy Principal replied that departments who are achieving high achievement rates are proud to be doing so and don't express such concerns.

Governors **ASKED** how confident the Executive are that the predicted outcomes will be achieved. The Deputy Principal replied that work has been done to try and establish how robust the predictions are which has identified a mixed picture.

Target 5 – Governors **NOTED** that the predicted figure is 78% with a target of 82% which doesn't align closely enough with the target for students aged 16-24 which is 86% and **ASKED** that this is reconsidered.

Apprentice withdrawal rates – Governors **ASKED** that this be looked at in terms of retention rather than withdrawal rates. It was replied this is due to the data available and shared regularly with Colleges by ESFA.

HE Targets – the committee was made aware that the numbers have changed and been brought more into line with national measures.

DECISION: Governors **APPROVED** the FE, HE and Apprenticeships Academic Targets 2024-25 for recommendation to the Board as the initial set of targets subject to outcomes for summer 2024.

* **14. 2024/2025 Applications**

A report on applications 2024-25 (CIC/CQ/24/3/11) was circulated ahead of the meeting. It was explained that no two years are the same in terms of applications which means that predictive data cannot be fully relied on. In terms of expected enrolment numbers, applying average conversion rates from past few years, it does look like there will be an increase in numbers for September 2024. Governors **NOTED** that some areas have raised concern about staffing due to the high numbers of applications.

Governors **QUESTIONED** whether there was any underlying reason for the higher-than-normal number of applicant withdrawals in application from Early Years. The Principal replied that it was potentially due to the only offer being T Levels and there are number of apprenticeships available within the area.

Pg 83 – refers to increase in number of applications to the Braintree campus and Governors **ASKED** if there could be a comparison between the two sites to provide an overview of how the college is perceived as a brand. The Principal stated that the College had seen a 150% increase in attendance at Open Events in Braintree over the past year which was a positive sign.

15. Policy Review

14.1 Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy (FE) (CIC/CQ/24/3/12)

Governors commented that the policy does not refer compliments despite it being in the title. It was agreed this would be added.

ACTION: Compliments to be included in the policy

DECISION: Governors **APPROVED** the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy (FE) subject to the addition of the compliments section.

16. Governor Link Scheme

17.1 Link visit reports 2023-24

Governors received a link scheme visit report for Public Services & Sport (CIC/CQ/24/3/13a) carried out on 8 February 2024.

17.2 Governor Link Scheme 2024-25

CIC/CQ/24/3/13 - Governors were asked to approve the proposed link areas for 2024/25 and/or suggest alternative links. It was noted that there are two areas that have vacancies, and it was agreed that these could be allocated to the two new Governors who have not yet taken on a link area.

DECISION: Governors **APPROVED** the Governor Link Scheme 2024/25 subject to discussions with new governors around link areas.

Governors were asked to feedback on whether the objectives of the scheme were met during the 2023/24 year. The Head of Governance explained that it is hard to assess this as there is little evidence of how the scheme is being used due to visit report forms not being provided post visit. The Head of Governance suggested that going forward she be copied into emails

arranging visits so that she is aware when they are due to take place and can then ensure visit reports are completed and provided to Governors for information in a timely way.

* **17. Review of Meeting**

The Committee was asked to:

- Agree the items/papers to be reported to the next Board meeting.
 - Academic targets
 - Governor Link scheme

- Consider whether any matters discussed should be treated confidentially.
 - None

- Review effectiveness of meeting and potential areas for improvement
The committee considered the meeting has been effective.

18. Any Other Urgent Business

None

19. Date of next meeting

- To be confirmed