

**Tuesday 13th October 2020, 5.30pm
Remote Online Meeting via ZOOM**

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Ms P Rowe, Co-opted governor, Chair
Mr G Thompson, Principal
Ms K Foan, Associate Principal
Mr C Garvey, Foundation Governor
Mr S Ebele, Foundation Governor
Mrs K Taylor, Foundation Governor
Mr R Vianello, Foundation Governor
Mrs B Meier, Foundation Governor, Vice Chair

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs E Lewis, Clerk to the Governors
Mr M Belfour, Foundation Governor

The Agenda had been circulated to all governors and all governors, with the exception of staff and students had been invited to attend.

The meeting was opened at 5.32pm by Ms Rowe and was quorate throughout. All participants could see and hear each other and were able to speak.

1. **Opening Prayer:** led by Mr Thompson
2. **Welcome:** Ms Karen Foan, Associate Principal, Curriculum & Quality was welcomed as a member of the committee.
3. **Apologies:** None had been sent in advance of the meeting but were received from Ms S Jones retrospectively.
4. **Election of Chair and Vice Chair of Committee:** Ms P Rowe was duly re-elected unopposed to a two-year term as Chair commencing from this meeting.
Ms Rowe proposed Mrs Meier as vice-chair, seconded by Mrs Taylor, and this was unanimously carried. Mrs Meier was duly elected to a two-year term as Vice Chair commencing from this meeting.
Mr Garvey was warmly thanked for his service as Vice Chair and formerly founding Chair and Co-Chair of the committee. Mr Garvey would be retiring as a foundation governor at the end of the academic term and, therefore, stepping down from this committee.
5. **Declarations of Interests:** There were none.
6. **Membership:** The committee was sorry to note that Fr Gerry O'Shaughnessy had stepped down as a Foundation Governor and acknowledged with thanks his membership of the CSQ committee. There remained sufficient members to meet the terms of reference of the committee, but newly appointed foundation governors would be expected to join.

7. **Minutes of previous meeting, 20th May 2020:** included in the papers for the meeting and previously circulated 16th June 2020, were agreed to be a true and accurate record that would be signed in due course.

7.1. **Matters Arising** for this meeting not on the agenda:

- 7.1.1. The committee noted that the Student Complaints Procedure, approved February 2020, had been updated with the names of current post holders and re-published on the college website.

7.2. **Actions to be reviewed:** there were none outstanding

8. **Quality Improvement and Outcomes:** Mr Thompson / Ms Foan

- 8.1. **Outcomes 2020:** Ms Rowe reflected on how this was a very different meeting to that originally envisaged and planned.

Ms Foan introduced the “Headline Data Report 2020” and the “Results Analysis 2020” commentary which had been included in the papers for the meeting. She noted that the Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) results for the year had produced good data and affirmed they were the best interpretation of what the students could achieve. She reviewed the *A-level data* table; the *A-Level Value Added* graph and the *A-Level ALPS Report* data which placed the college in the top 10% of national results for the first time.

The *Level 3 Vocational (Applied General) Data* showed an increase in pass rate from 95% to 97%. *Level 2 Data* showed a slight increase in high grades.

The *DFE English and Maths progress* data showed an increase in the number of students without a GCSE grade 4 who had progressed their exam result with a one grade improvement.

Mr Ebele noted an increase from 4% to 7% in level 2 non-completers in 2019 – 2020 (in 2018 it had been 14%). Ms Foan explained how the circumstances of lockdown and reduction in face to face support had affected the level of engagement of this small cohort on three courses. She said this would be monitored

Ms Foan reviewed the *Qualification Achievement Rate (QAR)* which showed an increase in the rate over three years to 89.1% for 2019 – 2020 - the comparative table illustrated that, overall, this was above the national rate and the provider group rate for 2017 - 2018. Mrs Meier commended that outcome.

Ms Foan explained a slight dip in achievement on level 3. She gave examples of causes for this and strategies that were being applied to counter it. Mrs Meier asked what flexibility there was for students to change their chosen courses following enrolment. Ms Foan explained there was a period of 42 days at the beginning of the year and described under what circumstances students could move without affecting the data.

Data by age, gender, ethnicity group, difficulty or disability and learning difficulty was analysed – Ms Foan noted a drop in the achievement of Asian students which she would be looking to find reasons for.

The Six Dimensions Report Data A level exam performance report and retention analysis was explained and the positive 0.37 VA score for A levels noted. Ms Foan commented that the retention score confirmed this was an area to be looked into. In the absence of government performance tables being published this year, the college’s own unvalidated data had been included and was noted.

Mr Garvey asked how the usual departmental targets could be set for 2021 given the uncertainty about exams / assessments. Mr Thompson said there was no option but

to continue as normal until anything to the contrary was announced. He said it was already known that the date of the summer 2021 exams was being pushed back to after the half term holiday to provide more teaching time. Ms Foan said that it was important to track the actions of departments against targets.

Mr Thompson commented that there was the possibility of all work, including coursework and assessments, counting towards a final grade which could be a useful incentive to students. This would map against the four KAPP¹ dates already established in the calendar.

Mr Vianello asked whether the college had found that the latest intake of students had bigger gaps in their learning requiring remedial work. Mr Thompson explained that diagnostic tests were used to identify gaps in their subject knowledge. He said that the college had opted in to the tuition fund designed to support students in that situation.

The commentary paper on provisional raw results had previously been circulated to all governors and had been included again for this meeting to inform the headline report.

8.2. College Quality Improvement Plan: Mr Thompson introduced the abridged 2019 – 2020 (updated 5th October 2020) report which had been included in the papers for the meeting. The risks within each of the four key priority areas of the Education Inspection Framework, and progress against those risks, had been RAG² rated in the report.

He reviewed progress against each improvement area reporting the updates which had been added since the committee previously received the plan and highlighting the impact of the outcomes of the summer CAGs. All governors had access to a Google Classroom for Governors which had been set up for the focus morning.

Ms Rowe was concerned to see that the achievement rate for A level computer science, which had been targeted for improvement, was 50%. Mr Thompson put this into context and explained that three of the six students who started the course had finished it and had done very well.

Under Leadership and Management, Mr Thompson reported that student enrolment had exceeded target which, with lagged funding, would earn additional funding in 2021 – 2022 if confirmed at the census date at the end of the week. He announced that the November open day for 2021 entry would be a professionally produced virtual (online) event on 19th November and outlined the features which would include a live Q&A with the senior leadership team and talking heads with teachers. He hoped that it would be possible for a live event, scheduled for 27th February 2021, to go ahead. A virtual tour was already posted on the website. Mr Thompson said that most colleges would be holding virtual recruitment events during the current pandemic situation.

Mr Thompson advised that not as much progress as intended had been achieved with the re-imagining of the learner voice strategy and the strategy would be kept under review.

The update, finalising the improvement plan for 2019 – 2020 was accepted by the committee.

¹ Key Assessment and Progress Points

² Red, Amber, Green

Ms Foan introduced the Emerging Issues Report which had been included in the papers for the meeting. She explained that it presented an overview of the current emerging issues within the curriculum and the steps being taken to overcome them:

COVID-19 impact on Learning and Teaching: Ms Foan outlined from the report the overall framework of strategies for dealing with the issues emerging from the ongoing covid pandemic. She stressed that it was a moving picture requiring frequent adjustment to planning. A recovery education plan had been developed which included the appointment of two new Attendance & Achievement Officers funded from the 16 – 19 Tuition Fund on fixed term contracts to the end of the academic year.

Ms Foan discussed each of the strategies being applied to the emerging issues of:

Retention and Value Added Results in some subjects

Destinations Data

Introduction of RQF Applied General BTECs/UAL/CTEC

Mr Garvey offered thanks on behalf of the committee for the excellent results overall and the successful recruitment of students.

Mr Ebele asked how the recruitment campaign was being analysed to identify what had caused the success. Mr Thompson explained how the application level had been regularly monitored but the uncertainty had remained up to the point of enrolment. He reviewed the elements that had contributed to the increase in numbers including the predicted climb out of the demographic dip. Mr Ebele stressed that it would be good to have an understanding of how the marketing strategies and move to digital media platforms had impacted on the outcome in order to emulate them in the future.

Mr Thompson explained how the Tuition Fund (£127k) linked with the Recovery Education strategy to plug gaps in learning and which students would be supported in small groups of five or less by the two Attendance & Achievement Officers. He also advised the appointment of an additional support Teacher to support students with other learning needs and a fourth appointment of an ESOL Teacher. Initially the recovery curriculum would focus on students without GCSE English or maths and later would target A level students, using additional funds, to support undergraduates in small groups.

Mr Thompson said he had summarised the plan that was in place which would be published, as required, on the college website as the recovery curriculum and statement of how the tuition fund monies would be used.

8.3. London Sixth Form Partnership: Mr Thompson advised that the partnership was currently dormant. A decision was awaited about the appointment of a Partnership Director and a meeting was pending with other Principals to determine future collaboration. Mr Thompson emphasised his commitment to the partnership and would seek to engage other London sixth form college Principals in continuing it. He was confident that Leyton SFC and SFX would continue to work closely together regardless. All agreed it was a valuable collaborative network and resource for sharing and developing good practice.

8.4. Quality Day 2020: Mr Thompson affirmed that the valued quality review event would be held on Friday 27th November 2020 - he described the plan taking shape for a

remote online morning session (3 hours, 9am to 12noon). Ms Rowe and Mrs Meier endorsed the opportunity it provided for governors to interact and discuss the delivery of the curriculum and quality of teaching & learning with Heads of Faculty and Departments.

ACTION: Mr Thompson and Ms Foan would draft a programme for Mrs Lewis to circulate to the committee.

9. **The Student Experience:** Mr Thompson introduced a “Student Feedback on initial response to online learning” report which had been included in the papers for the meeting. He explained why the fuller “Learner Voice” feedback was suspended due to college closure during lockdown. Mr Thompson discussed the report which summarised responses from 167 predominantly first year students to a survey conducted three weeks into lockdown. Mrs Meier asked how many students had iPads that were available through the Digital Innovation Strategy and Ms Rowe reviewed some of the comments which, she observed, highlighted the challenges the students faced working remotely. Mr Thompson advised that there would be approximately 400 students with an iPad by the end of the autumn half term. He commented that it was fortunate that the college innovation strategy was so well advanced but that the survey had produced some useful information and did identify that although some students preferred working from home, some do not have access to technology.
Mr Thompson reported that some focus groups had taken place with students the previous week and the feedback from those would be analysed and reported to the next meeting. He confirmed that audits had been factored in to the *every student matters* questionnaire at the start of the academic year to explore access to technology, internet etc.
10. **The Staff Experience:** Mr Thompson introduced the “Staff satisfaction survey 2020 – Summary” and “Staff Survey Benchmarking Data 2020” reports which had been included in the papers for the meeting. He explained that the survey take place towards the end of the academic year and the college submits responses gathered to the York College system to produce benchmarking against other colleges that have selected the same survey questions.
Mr Thompson commented that from the more detailed report he had analysed, the responses were pleasingly positive particularly in the context of the uncertainty of the covid-19 pandemic. He reviewed the survey, highlighting and contextualising examples of staff feedback.
11. **Digital Learning Innovation Strategy:** Mr Thompson introduced the position paper “Digital Innovation at SFX, Executive Summary” which had been included in the papers for the meeting which summarised the two launch phases, progress of the digital strategy and the impact of digital innovation (including during lockdown). Mr Thompson reviewed the data in the report which illustrated the number of courses and students now benefitting from the iPad procurement scheme.
Mr Thompson referred to the “Digital Innovation Strategy 2020 – 2023. Raising Curriculum Standards through Digital Innovation” which had been included in the papers for the meeting setting out the strategy in full, dated September 2020. He outlined a new motivational element of the strategy introduced to encourage the progressive skill set of teachers with awards on a four stage digital development journey. Mr Thompson described the use of iPads by teachers and how *Google* classrooms are in place and being used.
The key priorities outlined in the summary paper for 2020 – 2021 included a move away from MOODLE as the virtual learning environment (VLE) to *Google Sites* and *Google Classroom* as the primary VLE. Mr Thompson explained that the SFX digital innovation

website which provides a one stop solution for staff to access remotely digital information and resources was being developed to extend to students.

Ms Rowe referred to Appendix 1 of the summary report which recorded staff and student feedback on the strategy. She would look forward to seeing the impact reflected in future feedback reports.

Mr Thompson emphasised the commitment to addressing the digital poverty aspect of digital learning and outlined steps being taken to support students in receipt of bursary funding.

Mr Belfourd observed that many or most of the students would have smartphones and wondered to what extent they would have fibre or reliable broadband with decent speeds away from college? Mr Thompson confirmed that dongles are being issued to those students who have issues with internet connectivity.

Ms Rowe summarised the committee's view that the strategy was very positive and encouraging development in teaching and learning.

12. **Governor College Engagement:**

Link Governor Scheme: Ms Rowe introduced a discussion on the link governor scheme.

She referred to the focus morning on Saturday 10th October 2020 at which it had been emphatically agreed that the scheme was of great value and should continue to be developed albeit with some revision of the protocol. Mr Thompson was drafting an addendum and update to take account of covid-19 restrictions – he would be happy to receive comment. He suggested that the shape of link visits would change and be remote in the first stages of contact and forming a relationship with the Head of Department. Ms Rowe agreed that revisiting the protocol would support re-energising the scheme.

ACTION: Clerk to circulate the updated protocol.

The timing of visits was discussed for the post October half term window. Governors were mindful that the structure and duration of the college day had changed and was currently timetabled into two-hour blocks (one in the morning and one in the afternoon). Mr Thompson explained that college life was more regimented due to covid-19 precautions currently felt quite different with restrictions on student movement around college including being escorted to the exit at the end of teaching periods.

Student Focus groups: Ms Rowe and Mr Ebele described the importance and value of the experience of chatting with a group of students about their experience in the college. Both recommended that the meetings should continue with as much governor engagement as possible. Mrs Meier expressed her interest in taking part.

Mr Thompson suggested that a "zoom" meeting could be set up to facilitate this. Ms Rowe agreed on the understanding that students felt comfortable about it. The committee proposed that the groups be cross-college and not necessarily subject or course based (eg a group with high needs). Mrs Meier suggested that focus groups with governors could be two-way street for gaining insights that would be helpful to Mr Thompson and his team.

It was agreed that a remote student focus group meeting should be convened when practical.

13. **Effectiveness of committee:**

13.1. The summary included in the papers was received and it was agreed that a shorter online questionnaire seeking feedback would be circulated after this meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

13.2. **Membership / vacancies on committee:** Ms Rowe invited comment on the makeup of the committee. Mrs Meier said that it provided helpful insight into the college delivery of education and was a valuable introduction for new governors enlisted by default as members of CSQ.

Mr Belfourd said that observing the committee provided an insight into the

educational context of cross - Board matters for example digital innovation, which he would consider from a financial procurement point of view.

14. **Risk Management:** The committee agreed that no new risks or modifications to existing risks had been identified for the Risk Register that were not already covered by emerging issues.
15. **Any Other Business:** Mr Garvey commented that he was confident that the committee was in good hands to fulfil its mission. Ms Rowe and Mr Thompson paid warm tribute to Mr Garvey. Mr Belford observed that whilst this was a relatively new committee its effectiveness had been endorsed.
16. **Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 2nd February 2021

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____

The meeting closed at 7.25pm

Membership:
Mrs B Meier
Mrs K Taylor

Mr C Garvey, Vice Chair
Mr G Thompson

Ms K Foan
Mr R Vianello

Ms P Rowe, Chair
Ms S Jones
Mr S Ebele