Confirmed Minutes

Minutes of the Planning & Performance Committee meeting held on Monday 11th December 2017 at 8.30 am.

Present:	Gwyn Arnold Jay Bhayani Angela Foulkes Beri Hare Chris Linacre, Chair Saleem Rashid Seb Schmoller Amy Smith John Timms Ann Wilson
Also in Attendance:	James Smythe, Deputy College Principal Maxine Bagshaw, meeting Clerk

Min. No.		Action By Whom	Action By When
1	**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**		
	There were no apologies for absence with all members of the Committee attending.		
2	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**		
	Seb Schmoller advised that he is on the Board of the NOCN awarding body (agenda item 4.1) and is also a governor at the Northern College (agenda item 6.1). Saleem Rashid declared an interest in relation to Maths and English discussions throughout the meeting given his employed position. It was agreed that none of these interests declared prevented the Governors from participating in discussions.		
3	**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2ND OCTOBER 2017**		
	The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions. AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2017.		

4	**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30TH NOVEMBER 2017**		
	The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions. AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 30th November 2017. <u>Matters arising:</u> <u>DBS Checks:</u> The Chairman commented that there were a number of actions still outstanding on the tracker, it was agreed that he would speak to Alison Shillito, the Clerk to the Corporation outside of the meeting to agree steps required to ensure actions are completed and the tracker brought fully up to date. The acting CEO/Principal took the opportunity to provide an update in relation to staff DBS checks. She advised that there were just under 700 forms that have been sent out with 300 returned. Of these 44 are just awaiting receipt of the certificate. This will in reality mean that 50% will completed by Christmas, however there is clearly more to do. She confirmed that there were no issues of concern identified so far. The Committee questioned what the target date is for 100% completion. The Principal indicated that the executive team will review that this afternoon. An HR Consultant to provide additional support for strategic projects commences employment in early January and it is hoped that he will be able to support progress quickly. The Committee were advised that there are some partner employment status queries that the HR team are currently working through and again, with additional senior HR support it is envisaged that this can move more quickly to completion. The Committee were reminded that the policy in place for the College is currently a 3 year refresh regarding certificates, however this can be extended to 5 years, albeit that all new starts must have a DBS certificate. She reminded that there are cost implications of frequent refreshes and gave assurance that once the current process has taken place then staff will be targeted on a risk basis, with teaching staff who have direct contact with students being a higher priority. The Committee questioned whether the College can make it a condition of employment that staff have a DBS check. It was confirmed that this is the case but that it is the refresh and frequency of the refresh which is the current issue. The CEO/Principal expressed the view that it would be more beneficial for all staff to have a portable online DBS certificate through e-checker, however there are then issues regarding who pays the annual fee i.e. the College or the individual. The	Committee Chair	Dec. 2017

	CEO/Principal expressed the view that there is a need to review the DBS Policy once the College has secured 100% compliance regarding existing staff. In relation to those staff who do not have a current DBS certificate it was explained that risk assessments are undertaken as an interim measure in areas where there is staff shortage. She expressed the view that this is not ideal and the College does not want to rely on this. The Committee challenged the senior team and expressed concern regarding what appeared to be a lack of robust policies and processes in place in this area and as a consequence they requested a full update report and policy proposal changes by 31st March 2018. The Principal advised that it usually only takes a few weeks to obtain a DBS certificate so, the College in utilising risk assessments as an interim measure, only has a relatively short time where there is an accepted risk. The Committee again challenged the senior team and expressed the view that this was potentially leaving the College vulnerable and in their view a DBS check is the only acceptable standard. In the short term they requested that reliance on risk assessments be kept to an absolute minimum and that those who are subject to a risk assessment, rather than a full DBS certificate, are recorded and monitored carefully. The Committee felt that if the senior team must move to update the policy very quickly and then the College could eliminate the use of risk assessments.	CEO/ Principal	31.3.18
	The Committee challenged the senior team and indicated that they wanted to be assured that the risk assessment process does not include an element of self-declaration. They indicated that (by email circulation outside the meeting) they want to know the staff numbers who are in post on a risk assessment rather than a DBS certificate basis, and where they sit in terms of staffing within the College. The Principal explained that there are different types and levels of DBS and that which type is obtained is dependent upon the role undertaken. She confirmed that there would be clarity in relation to this included within the new policy. <u>Awarding Organisations:</u> The Committees attention was then drawn to the updated report provided by the Head of Quality in relation to awarding organisation status (agenda item 4.1). It was explained that this report is for information and that the use of awarding organisations is something that is under constant review, with the target being to drive down the numbers that the College uses. The Committee questioned how much the College currently spends on awarding organisations. Senior staff present at the	CEO/ Principal	Dec. 2017

	meeting were unsure of the figure and were challenged by the Committee, they indicated that there needed to be clarity on this so that they could be assured that value for money is being achieved. The Committee questioned whether the College tests the procurement processes for agreeing awarding organisations, again they asked for assurance regarding efficiencies and economies of scale. The Principal indicated that in the past the College has looked at a much narrower use of awarding organisations, however there was concern that in doing so the College would become 'tied in' and would lose flexibility. She confirmed that senior staff are guided by curriculum staff in terms of the best awarding organisation to use for any given qualification and area of provision. The CEO/Principal indicated that it is fairly usual to have consistency in terms of the awarding organisation to be used for English and Maths and this is definitely the case in relation to Functional Skills. The focus of the College needs to be to do what is right for the students. She advised that there is a sector move to using UAL for creative qualifications. EdExcel is still the preferred provider in relation to BTEC qualifications. She indicated that it would be possible to achieve consistency, certainly in the areas where there are significant enrolment numbers. She acknowledged that there was more that the College could do in terms of the procurement systems. Exam costs are an area of focus. The policy in place could be sharper and it was agreed that there was a need for this to be reviewed. She advised that the product development group gives advice and proposals to the executive in this area. AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.		
5	**APPRENTICESHIPS AND SUBCONTRACTING**		
	The Deputy Principal introduced this report and provided an outcomes update in relation to the 2016/17 academic year. Key points noted were: • The overall achievement rate for apprentices in 16/17 is 76.1% which is + 1.2 PP on the 15/16 position (so a slight improvement on the prior year) and 7.2% above national rates. There were 884 leavers in the 16/17 academic year of which 617 undertook an intermediate apprenticeship and 266 undertook an advanced apprenticeship. There are some rollovers in to the current academic year and this will have a negative impact in terms of the timely outcomes. • The overall timeliness rate for apprentices in 16/17 has declined by 5.4 PP however this remains 6.7% above national rates. • The achievement rates for 16-18 apprentices is 72.2% and has improved by 5.9 PP, this is 2.2% above		

	national rates. • The achievement rates for 19-23 apprentices is 72% which is a 3.2 PP improvement and is 2.2% above national rates. He explained that 16-18 and 19-23 outcomes were two areas of focus in the 16/17 year and it would therefore appear that interventions have had a positive impact. • 24 + outcomes – the achievement rates for 24+ apprentices is 84.3% and has declined by 5.2 PP however this remains 16.7% above national rates. As a general observation he expressed the view that outcomes are 'good' and this is the judgement included in the 16/17 self-assessment report. 16/17 was felt to be a good year, however timeliness is where the college now needs to focus. The Committee questioned why, in some areas, there was not completion on a timely basis. The Deputy Principal advised that the College has had some delays, particularly in motor vehicle. There have also been some internal verification challenges that have had to be resolved. The Committee challenged the senior team and expressed the view that they have been hearing, over a sustained period, that there are issues in motor vehicle and queried what is being done to address this. The Committee were advised that there is a new Deputy in post who is getting to grips with issues and areas of improvement. There have also been some recruitment challenges in terms of staff in key areas that have not helped. The Principal advised that the teams are undertaking an MIS review to ensure that going forward the correct start and end dates are on the system for apprentices. The College is addressing poor administrative systems in place regarding start dates. In addition to this there needs to be more robust discussions with employers so that everyone is clear in terms of expectations. It was felt that there may be a slight disconnect between the business development team and the assessors in terms of start and end dates and expectations. There is an acceptance that there are improvements that the College can make. The Committee expressed the view that it was important to secure quality in terms of apprenticeship provision so that the College can take advantage of growth opportunities. The Committee then received a 2017/18 in year update and key matters noted were: • The College currently has circa 700 apprentices learning (although this figure has now slightly increased as there are some further achievement results since the time of writing the report) • There are retention rate concerns in a number of areas (below 70%), these include Level 2 vehicle body and paint, customer service, vehicle maintenance and		

	repair, hair dressing and horticulture and Level 3 hairdressing and engineer manufacture. In relation to customer service it was explained that a lot of apprentices in this area are in call centres and there is inevitably a really high staff turnover which makes retention a challenge. In terms of predicted outcomes the best case is 79%, however it is likely that the College will see a decline in outcomes as the retention rate is lower than last year (-3%). There is the potential that the rate could be less than 76% and therefore it is important that the senior team and Governors monitor this. Risks in this area include: • Risk of a 'requires improvement' outcome at Ofsted leading to a loss of reputation and a reduction in demand for apprenticeship provision. This in turn would lead to a reduction in income. • Risk of levy contracts and an increase in subcontracting through the levy impacting on quality due to arms length provision leading to a future reduction in outcomes and a requires improvement outcome. • Risk to cash flow as a result of changes to apprenticeship funding and in particularly in relation to the 'double lock' system used by the DAS leading to financial instability • Significant growth in provision leading to a reduction in overall quality and a subsequent loss of reputation. The Committee made the observation that the national decline in apprenticeship take up is a concern. It was acknowledged that the local challenge within the city is in relation to SMEs. The College is doing incredibly well in terms of engaging with the levy employers but is using subcontractors to deliver this which leads to a quality challenge. The Committee were advised that the College has hit the volume target for apprentices set for quarter 1, however income is not aligned and as forecast. The quarter two position will be down in terms of starts, however the senior team do not at this stage know what this will mean in terms of the financial position. It was confirmed that the College secured its apprenticeship contract numbers last week for non-levy starts and the real challenge are SMEs who have to contribute 20%, this is very much a cultural difference from the previous position. As an overall observation apprenticeship delivery looks to be good at the current time, however sustaining the position will require more robust infrastructure. The Committee challenged the senior team and asked whether the model in place is sustainable. Their view is that there appears to be high costs with small numbers of students, and	Deputy Principal and P&PCttee	Jan 2018

	they queried how this could be scaled up. The CEO/Principal confirmed that there was a piece of work to be done to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is in place to secure quality. The Committee questioned whether the Training and Assessment Facilitator (TAF) model can be expanded to work in a different way. The Committee felt that there was a lack of clarity in terms of the lead-in time required to make changes. The Principal confirmed that two models can be operated in tandem so as to build up the required momentum. The Committee indicated that they would find it beneficial to have an opportunity to discuss apprenticeships in more detail. They accept that there is an evolving strategy but would like some assurances regarding the best model to adopt and introduce. They did not feel that there was sufficient time within the meeting today to do this and therefore asked for a separate session to be arranged to discuss apprenticeships. The Committee discussed English and Maths within apprenticeship delivery and it was explained that these are assessed during induction and testing. The CEO/Principal acknowledged that perhaps the College could focus on improving Maths and English earlier within the apprenticeship programme and this could be an improvement. (John Timms left the meeting at 9.30am) The Committee all agreed that retention is an area of concern. The senior team provided assurance that more robust tracking is now in place but, there was a need to keep a close eye on this. AGREED: to note the update provided.	Deputy Principal	January 2018
6	**IN YEAR UPDATE / PERFORMANCE REVIEW FRAMEWORK**		
	The CEO/Principal introduced this item and explained that the purpose of today was to put forward a data dashboard/framework proposal to help this Committee and Governors better understand and track the headline data statistics. The CEO/Principal put forward proposals with key areas to include: • FE performance • Achievement gaps • Student engagement • Employability • Progression • Destinations • Recruitment – within this it was agreed to include both income and headcount. Governors would like to know the different funding bands for the areas of provision so as to better understand focus and priorities. The Committee challenged the senior team and indicated that in terms of 'market share' they wanted there to be a		

	clear and consistent approach to what the 'market' is. • GCSE pass rate • Retention • Functional skills – achievement rate. The Committee indicated that for Maths and English they would like to see in year predictions and forecasting. The Committee questioned and challenged whether the College sets students targets based upon the ability of the cohort. The Principal indicated that this was not something that was currently done but should be something that the College is working towards. The Committee made the observation that Maths and English GCSE attendance needs to be a focus. In discussing the style and format of reporting the Principal confirmed that tables will be produced and will be RAG rated so that Governors know where to focus their attention. To be included in the dashboards are national average figures, with a particular focus on any areas where the College is behind the national position. The Committee indicated that in terms of progress reporting they would like to see it split down by cohort ages. They debated how value added is calculated and it was accepted that this is easier to track in some areas than others. From the data provided the Committee observed that the value added score for academic is showing a negative 3 year trend which is a concern. Assurance was given that there are relatively small numbers of students in this area.		
	It was agreed that a report on accountability measures be presented at the next meeting. This would include a list of statistics and data that needs to be published on the College website (there are some measures that are currently not reported). • Achievement rates by department • Retention • HE performance • Apprenticeship performance The Principal expressed the view that this system once introduced will allow Governors to more closely monitor performance. Governors welcomed the introduction of the dashboards and asked that it be called 'the performance review framework' in the future. The Committee challenged the senior team and indicated that they would like assurance that all external accountability measures are covered in the data provided, for example TEF metrics. Then, in addition to that, they would also like to see	Principal / Deputy Principal	Jan. 2018

	some specific aspects that the College knows needs to be a focus. The Committee indicated that as Governors they need to be assured that the senior team have the right information and systems in place and really know the data. As Governors what is important for them is the RAG ratings so as to bring the areas of concern and focus to the fore. Governors we need to know: a) What are the problem areas b) Why they are problem areas c) What actions are being undertaken and will it work/will it have an impact d) How does this sit alongside external factors. The Committee indicated that for a future report they wanted to see some information provided regarding student discipline i.e. what is the policy in place and is it working. In addition, the Committee asked for some clarity regarding the College's engagement with parents, what are the processes in place here. The Committee felt that it would be beneficial to see some trend data and analysis. The Principal acknowledged that currently the College is 'light' in terms of capacity around the learner experience and that there is a skills shortage to be addressed. AGREED: to note the content of the update provided and to continue to evolve the framework as it is used in practice.	CEO/ Principal	Jan. 2018
7	**QUALITY UPDATE**		
	The Deputy Principal introduced this item and a number of matters were considered. 1) <u>Self-assessment report for 2016/17</u> The Deputy Principal introduced this document and specifically drew members' attention to page 6 which is the proposed grades. In considering the content the Committee made the observation that it was a very lengthy document and whilst comprehensive did have elements of repetition. The Deputy Principal expressed the view that the SAR was an accurate reflection of the College's current position, with more areas requiring improvement than has previously been drafted. Members' attention was drawn to page 2 of the report which sets out the key areas for improvement, these will form the basis of the QIP. These include: • Achievement rates for study programmes/adult provision are not high enough or above NAR to be consistently judged as good particularly in a number of areas including; English, Maths, Motor Vehicle, Health and A Levels. • The rigor of performance management of individual staff is inconsistent		

	• Developmental support for deputy managers needs strengthening • The quality and consistency of TLA across the curriculum area remains inconsistent • Teachers use of questioning techniques, short term target setting to provide increased stretch and challenge, particularly for more able students needs to improve • Value added is not yet good enough across all level 2 and level 3 provision and needs to improve • Attendance rates need to improve to above NAR and TSC target • The promotion and embedding of fundamental British Values and knowledge of Prevent reporting channels in to TLA and personal development, behaviour and welfare is not yet strong enough. • The availability and use of data throughout the organisation, coupled with the requisite knowledge and skills being developed to be able to use it effectively to drive improvements in student outcomes and student experience is not yet good. The Committee in considering the document were content that this is an accurate reflection of where the College currently is, however they would like to see assurance that there is a robust action plan in place to address the issues identified. It was confirmed that this sits within the QIP. The Deputy Principal indicated that in terms of high needs provision, whilst the SAR grade is a 'good', there is a need to closely monitor and track every single high needs student. The CEO/Principal expressed the view that at present the SAR process is limited to curriculum directorates, however in 17/18 the process will be rolled out to include all business units across College as appropriate. The Committee challenged the senior team and asked whether there was sufficient capacity to undertake this rollout process. The Principal stated that initially a light tough review could be undertaken and that it is very much 'the start and not the end'. The Committee suggested that roll out be on the basis of a priority list. Governors expressed the view that they would like to see business reviews drive out silo mentality and activity so that there is a very cohesive approach. In terms of the role of the Board it was acknowledged that in agreeing the SAR they are signing off what 'was' but that it needs to be made clear that the future is different. They suggested that a College summary needs to be included within the document which gives the context and the change in current thinking, approach and actions. The Committee asked whether this document invites more questions without giving answers, it was again explained that the QIP explains how areas of improvement are going to be addressed. The Committee		

	questioned whether the governance section is overstated in the text as opposed to the grade. They felt that there needed to be some acknowledgement there are/have been governance weaknesses to address. It was agreed that an executive summary would be included within the document which would explain the position going forward. The Committee also asked that the document be tidied up from an admin basis in terms of font used etc. Subject to the observations made at the meeting and the introduction of an executive summary the Committee agreed to recommend that the SAR 2016/17 be approved by the Governing Body. 2) <u>QIP & PIAP 17/18</u> In considering the document the Committee made the observation again that what is set out is what 'was' and that it is changing in to what 'is and what will be'. They agreed that in terms of senior staff focus, the QIP and PIAP are a priority rather than the SAR. They would like these documents to really focus on the impact, the 'who, what and the when'. It was confirmed that the QIP and the PIAP will come as an update to each meeting and the intention is to amalgamate the two documents in to one tracker. A challenge made by the Committee was that the plan for improvement seems to be very process driven and that the final action is the delivery of 'an improvement notice' to an area of provision. They questioned whether this process has teeth and what does the College then do if things aren't improving. They urged the senior team to fully reflect upon what does and doesn't work to bring about improvements. AGREED: to note the update provided. 3) <u>Teaching, learning and assessment update</u> The Committee considered the detailed report provided and agreed that the information provided was self-explanatory. AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.	Deputy Principal Deputy Principal	Dec 2017 Standing agenda item
8	**ENGLISH AND MATHS STRATEGY**		
	The CEO/Principal introduced this item and confirmed that she was seeking to develop a more holistic view and whole College approach to Maths and English. This paper is about positioning and setting out the aspirations. She advised that an action plan is being developed explaining what will be done January 2018 to July 2019. This will show how the strategy will be delivered. The target date for completion of this action plan is Easter 2018. The Committee indicated that they would like the Director of English	Director of	January

	and Maths to present the action plan as drafted at the next meeting. The Committee indicated that they would want to gain a better understanding of what is different about the strategy as compared with what has gone before. In terms of the action plan, they would like to see what the College is going to do in each academic year. It was confirmed that the action plan will do this and will be absolutely clear about the immediate actions to be taken. The Committee questioned what metrics will be used to measure the success of the strategy. It was explained that this is the improved outcomes and that milestones would be set so as to ensure better performance and improved opportunities. The Committee challenged the senior team and expressed the view that the performance of the College is down to every single member of staff and students. Governors are sensing a sea change but questioned how this will be communicated to staff and students. The CEO/Principal confirmed that she is in the process of delivering a 'big change' message. There is a whole College meeting planned on 21st December. Part of this will be an honest reflection about where the college is but also setting out ambitions for the future. The CEO/Principal indicated that her aim was to boost morale and that after Christmas she will be looking at different methods of communication with staff. There is a real drive currently to change the culture at the College to ensure that the student comes first in every decision and action embarked upon. The Committee indicated that at the next Board strategy review session they would find it useful to discuss how Governors can do things differently, an example given was using iPads instead of papers to ensure greater efficiencies. The Committee considered the strategy in detail and questioned whether the use of the word 'delivering' was appropriate in sentence 1 page 3. They asked whether a better phrase could be used here. It was also agreed that the recommendation at the end of page 3 seemed to be incomplete. Subject to the comments and observations made today the Committee were happy to recommend that the Board **approve** the English and Maths strategy as presented.	E&M	2018
9	**AOB**		
	As a matter of additional business the Committee requested that the schedule of future meetings be reviewed. It was agreed that the Chair would undertake this in conjunction with the Clerk and the CEO/Principal.		January 2018

	A initial meeting of the Governance Task and Finish Group is scheduled for Friday 5 January 2018 at 8.30 am		
10	**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**		
	It was confirmed that the next scheduled meeting is Monday 22nd January 2018 at 8 am. Should this meeting date need to be rearranged then Governors will be advised by the Clerk to the Corporation. Meeting closed at 11.20 am.		