



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EDUCATION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE held at Bicton College on Tuesday 25 November 2008**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Dr F Harper	- Chairman
	Mr M Ellingham	
	Cllr J Berry	
	Mrs C Bourne	
	Mrs J Yung	
	Mr J F C Lowe	- Staff Governor
	Mr D Watson	- Student Governor
	Miss C Hogan	- Student Governor
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Mrs A M Pearson	- Vice Principal Quality and Learner Services
	Miss J Townsend	- Assistant Principal Learner Services
	Mr K Bond	- Head of Skills & Employer Responsiveness
	Mrs D West	- Registry and Quality Manager
	Mr G R Copper	- Clerk to the Board of Governors
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Mrs L Twigg	

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Recommended approval of the retention and achievement targets for 2008-9 to the Board of Governors.

**1. MINUTES**

1.1 The Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 June 2008 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**1.2 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the Minutes which were not covered by agenda items.

**2. SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT**

2.1 Received the draft Self Assessment Report for 2007-8. The Assistant Principal Learner Services reported that the Chairman's comments and Landex inspection findings were still to be incorporated. The format was being looked at to bring the data forward and reduce the amount of text.

2.2 Governors suggested that the College should aim for 70% strengths and 30%

areas for improvement and also 2 -4 areas of excellence for the future.

- 2.3** Governors were able to question the report and recommended highlighting strengths and suggested adding an executive summary to show progress and plans to make improvements and move forward. Noted that the grouping of curriculum areas remained the same as in the previous year's report. The Chairman enquired about areas where the College could move from satisfactory to good and good to outstanding. It was noted that the data was still being updated for the final version of the report.
- 2.4** As the report was not yet in a final draft form, the Chairman considered that the Committee was not yet in a position to make a recommendation for approval to the Board and it was agreed to hold an additional meeting on 17 December for this purpose.

### **3. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

- 3.1** The Vice Principal Quality and Learner Services presented the draft Quality Improvement Plan for 2008-9. It was confirmed that uncompleted actions from the 2007-8 plan had been incorporated in the new plan. A progress report would be brought to the next meeting. There was a discussion about the relevance of financial matters within the plan, but it was agreed that although some matters would be monitored through the normal business of other Committees, the Education and Standards Committee had a role to monitor standards across the whole College. It was agreed to take the report to the additional meeting on 17 December and review when the final draft of the Self Assessment Report was complete.

### **4. COURSE OFFER**

- 4.1** The Head of Skills & Employer Responsiveness presented the full cost course offer planned for 2008-9. Income to date was £147k (37% of target). Other opportunities continued to be explored and the plan may change in response to this. There was a risk to achieving the income target due to the current financial climate, but the overall target was similar to 2007-8.
- 4.2** A Governor asked how the provision fitted in with the Rural Academy and it was explained that the Rural Academy was an additional brand which was used where appropriate but all provision was under the overall Bicton College brand. Governors referred to recent a recent television news item on a blacksmith course run by another college and suggested that this and also thatching offered an opportunity for new business. Another Governor raised the availability of funding for the 'Making it Local' initiative, opportunities for Bicton to participate would be followed up.
- 4.3** Governors were concerned to ensure that the number of learners on each course was at an economic level and that although some courses were restricted in learner numbers due to safety requirements, emphasised that efficient use of staff was very important.

## **5. ACADEMIC BOARD**

- 5.1** A summary of the Academic Board meeting held on 8 October 2008 was presented. The Chairman had attended the meeting. Noted that a new Foundation Degree Co-Ordinator, Catherine Gough had been appointed.

## **6. QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT**

- 6.1** Received the quality assurance report and the 2008 full time learners completing survey. 83% of full time learners had responded. Overall satisfaction at 84% was slightly down compared with the previous year. Progression in tutorials and support for students was highly rated, but there were concerns regarding the quality of food, dining room service and College Shop prices. The Registry and Quality Manager reported that the first 2009 survey appeared very positive and the results would be presented at the next meeting. Curriculum Section Managers were now meeting with students to obtain their views. The Chairman asked the two Student Governors for their comments which generally reflected the survey but they explained that in some cases a group response may have been provided by some students which may influence the results. Governors were please to note the comments about good support from tutors.
- 6.2** The lesson observation report was received. 131 lessons had been observed by the College observation team and a mock inspection observer. The Vice Principal Quality and Learner Services said that the proportion of good and outstanding lessons had increased in the spring and summer terms and highlighted the very low number of unsatisfactory lessons. The Chairman was however concerned that the number of good or better lessons was not increasing fast enough and recommended that the College should aim for 30% outstanding and 60% good within two years. Noted the higher than average outstanding lessons in floristry and Routes and questioned whether other staff could learn from this good practice.
- 6.3** Received the complaints report and noted the number of complaints was similar to the previous year. The Registry and Quality Manager had conducted an audit of course and tutor files and was concerned that, while target setting had improved, in some tutorials, tutors were not setting sufficiently challenging targets for learners or following them up. It was also reported that the Individual Learning Plan is being reviewed.
- 6.4** Learner enrolments reports were received and the actions being taken to increase numbers were reported. There were plans to introduce roll on – roll off programmes and to work with Connexions. The College was also working with Millwater School to increase the number of 16-18 learners. The core curriculum had been reviewed and appeared fit to meet new requirements and was complimentary to general further education. Recruitment on Train to Gain and Work Based Learning programmes was examined.

## **7. MARKETING REPORT**

- 7.1** The Vice Principal Quality and Learner Services reported that the Principal was reviewing the marketing plan and would present this at the next scheduled

meeting. The Vice Principal Quality and Learner Services reported on the marketing activities to increase learner numbers in 2008-9. Governors encouraged links with schools although this was not always possible with schools with 6<sup>th</sup> forms. The new Diploma may assist as schools would have to offer land based education which would encourage working with Bicton. The Chairman said it was crucial for the marketing plan to be completed and presented to the Committee.

## **8. ATTENDANCE, RETENTION AND ACHIEVEMENT**

- 8.1** Received the attendance report for 2007-8. average attendance for FE full time learners was 87% and 83% for HE. Landex considered 85% was good for FE land based colleges.
- 8.2** Received the retention and withdrawals reports for 2007-8. Noted the reasons recorded for withdrawal many of which were for financial or employment reasons. The retention data was examined in detail. It was reported that where there were concerns over individual courses, Curriculum Section Managers have completed an action plan to address the concerns. Regular data was provided to staff from MI at course and learner level.
- 8.3** The destination report was received and Governors were pleased to note the strong numbers going into employment, further and higher education. A Governor highlighted the opportunities for recruiting learners during the economic downturn.
- 8.4** Received the achievement report for 2007-8 and proposed targets for 2008-9. Noted that achievement at level 3 was on target but level 2 was mainly below target and level 1 was variable. The targets for 2008-9 were considered and it was agreed to recommend their approval by the Board. HE achievement was generally good but there were instances of poor retention.

## **9. ACADEMIC POLICIES**

- 9.1** No new or revised policies were presented, but the Vice Principal Quality and Learner Services reported that policies had been reviewed. It was agreed that the Committee would receive an up to date list of policies which would be updated periodically to show review dates. Any new or significantly revised policies would be brought to the Committee for approval.

## **10. CHILD PROTECTION**

- 10.1** Received an update report on child protection and Care Standards. Noted that the link Governor was arranging to meet the Staff Governor for further discussion. It was agreed that the report should also be received by the full Board.

## **11. ACCESSIBILITY**

- 11.1** Received the accessibility report and noted the details, particularly the range of support provided by the Learning Support team and the large number of learners requiring additional learning support.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**12.1** Next meeting scheduled meeting Monday 23 February 2009 at 2.00 pm. An additional meeting to be held at on Wednesday 17 December 2008 at 9.15 am to receive and recommend approval of the Self Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
ACTION ITEMS ARISING**

<b>MINUTE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>BY</b>	<b>WHEN</b>
<b>7.1</b>	The marketing plan to be presented to the Committee	Interim Principal	23.2.09
<b>9.1</b>	A list of academic policies with last review dates to be provide to the Committee.	Asst Principal Learner Services	23.2.09
<b>10.1</b>	Child protection report to be received by the full Board	Clerk	17.12.08