

## East Coast College

### MINUTES of the meeting of the Curriculum Development Committee held at 9am on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022 Video Conference

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Present:</b>   | Saul Humphrey (SH) Peter Lavender (PL) Stuart Rimmer (Principal) Ian Lomax (IL) Mike Dowdall (MD) and Andrew Walmsley (AW)   |
| <b>In attendance:</b>   | Paul Padda (Deputy Principal, Curriculum and Quality) Julia Bates (Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships) Wendy Stanger (Director of Governance). |
| <b>W/22/10/1</b>  | <b>Apologies and membership</b>  |
| There were no apologies as all in attendance  |  |
| <b>W/22/10/2</b>  | <b>Declarations of Interest</b>  |
| There were the following declarations of interest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mike Dowdall as an employee of the LEP</li> </ul> It was agreed that this declaration didn't preclude full participation in the meeting.  |  |
| <b>W/22/10/3</b>  | <b>To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the 22 June 2022 and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the Agenda</b>                      |
| The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2022 were agreed as a true record.   |  |
| <b>W/22/10/4</b>  | <b>To Review Rolling Action Log</b>  |
| The Action log was reviewed and the CEO updated on progress with the planning for the Strategic Curriculum Review and that LSIPs have been submitted to government from Chamber of Commerce (Norfolk and Suffolk bid).  |  |
| <b>W/22/10/5</b>  | <b>Curriculum Development Strategy QD009</b>   |
| <p>The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships presented the revised strategy which has a strengthened planning cycle to provide integrated and effective curriculum development. There needed to be curriculum efficiency, financial viability and evidence based planning. Curriculum needed to meet local need with a strengthened focus on employer engagement. Behind the strategy would sit procedural documents that set out the processes required. An Employer Engagement Strategy was to be produced to help ensure there was a cohesive approach to engagement. Curriculum was to be validated through establishing a Strategic Employer Partnership Panel, Employer Representative Groups and Employer Advisory Groups. This validation included the decommissioning of curriculum where there was no longer the skills demand. This would all put the employer at the heart of curriculum planning.</p> <p>Governors challenged how employers would be encouraged to engage, as in small firms they were busy running the business, prioritising its survival and their horizons were often short term and in large firms, the headquarters were often not based in the area. The</p> |  |

Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that the College was building these links through going out to the businesses to help understand their needs; this was resource intensive but would help to build the links.

Governors also noted that a lot of local businesses were not part of the various employer groups and would need to be worked with individually. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships commented that the College also needed to engage with the employer groups and monthly meetings were being held.

Governors asked what is going to be different due to this strategy. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that the curriculum plan would be employer focused, sustainable and with clear intent.

Governors challenged how they would be involved in the curriculum validation and decommissioning and it was agreed that this needed to be clarified in the document. The CEO reminded the Committee that the Corporation was responsible for the determination and review of the College's educational character.

Governors discussed:

- That the strategy needed to consider how the College was helping create a better community and life chances. This broader landscape was the purpose of the College and needed to consider transferable and life skills as well as the overall skills agenda.
- The geography of the area needed to be clear including the regional and community context. The catchment areas were different depending on the provision and its level and areas would have different needs due to varying levels of deprivation including that seen in the coastal areas. The College's marketing also needed to be tailored to these differing areas.
- The strategy needed to consider changes such as county deals, economic areas, and investment zones as this would have an effect on the skills agenda and funding and the strategy would need to be agile to take account of change.
- The effects of austerity and government policy on the offer. It was noted that the qualification reforms would mean that some qualifications would no longer be funded. Austerity would mean that courses needed to be economic with pressure to increase the contribution rates. Hard choices would be required where courses no longer economic and this might change the educational character of the College. The CEO commented that the College will need to reset a contribution rate (in context of rising staff and non-pay costs) which could mean reducing some of the offer and/or rising class sizes but at the same time it was important that the richness of the offer was not value engineered out. The College needed to also achieve growth to offset some of the costs.
- Need to future proof the curriculum to ensure that it was sustainable and provided the green skills required and this might require some upskilling internally.
- The need to review how the College provided courses as for instance there was a need for people to have a mix of construction and engineering skills and to manage this the study programme needed to be broad. This was difficult to achieve as the funding followed the qualification.
- That the market assessment section should be a separate document in order to reduce the size of the Curriculum Development Strategy and to make the strategy more succinct and accessible.

- Inclusive practises needed to be seen throughout the curriculum planning so that courses were accessible. The vast majority of students could enrol on the main curriculum with a strong inclusive approach. This approach to SEND students needed to be seen throughout the curriculum planning.
- How to engage adults back into learning and the offer that would be needed to attract adults.
- That provision needed to be mapped to progression routes as part of the curriculum planning.

Governors concluded that the strategy was comprehensive but it was also important that it was agile in order to be able to respond to the changing economic, political and local environment.

**Governors agreed the following actions:**

- **Curriculum Development Strategy QD009 to be updated to include:**
  - **Clarity of governor involvement and their governance of the decision making.**
  - **Digital to be a focus of each advisory group.**
  - **Maps to help demonstrate all of the local areas that the College was working in, including the regional context.**
  - **Inclusive practises as part of curriculum development and planning.**
  - **Curriculum planning schedule to be clearly set including the year it related to.**
  - **A review of the language used to ensue courses and provision was consistent throughout the document.**
  - **A more explicit connection of the college’s strategy to the Strategic Curriculum Review.**
- **Governor update on the curriculum reforms and the effect on the College’s offer.**

**JB**

**JB**

**The Committee recommended to Corporation, subject to the amendments discussed:**

- **the Curriculum development and planning strategy (QD009).**

|                  |                           |  |
|------------------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>W/22/10/6</b> | <b>Recruitment Review</b> |  |
|------------------|---------------------------|--|

The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships presented the report and advised that recruitment was lower than planned, there were some late enrolments and subcontracting still to enrol but overall there would be a reduction of circa 10% from forecast.

Governors noted that The T level in Design and Surveying had not recruited due to learners not meeting entry requirements and low demand).

The Deputy Principal, Curriculum, Quality and Learner Experience advised that the financial effect of the reduction in 16-18 numbers would be seen in 23/24 budget due to lagged funding and this would need to be addressed in curriculum planning.

Governors challenged if the curriculum planning for 16-18 had been incorrect or whether students had been recruited to other colleges. The Deputy Principal, Curriculum, Quality and Learner Experience advised that demographically there was little change. Competition was from other local colleges and school sixth forms who were looking to

retain their students and this would be analysed through the market competitor analysis from the vector data which is used to support curriculum planning. Recruitment had also been affected by low paid seasonal employment where prospective students needed to continue working to support the family income. The College was looking at how it engaged with prospective students and was for instance working with a large seasonal employer to design an offer for those seasonally employed by them.

Governors concluded that this fall in recruitment needed to be addressed.

**W/22/10/7      To review the risk register**

1. Has the risk register been reviewed  
The register was the September 22 review.
2. Is the Committee content that the risks are relevant and are being updated  
The risks had been updated since the last meeting.
3. Is the Committee content that the risks are being mitigated  
Risks are being mitigated and this mitigation included the Curriculum Strategy reviewed at the meeting.
4. Where a red risk is the Committee assured that appropriate action is being taken  
The risk - *Curriculum currently funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) no longer delivered by the College and its partners* – had been added and was a significant risk. It was difficult to mitigate as the funding was not being replaced like for like.
5. Where does the Committee have significant concerns.  
ESF funding was a risk as replacement funding was not available for all the provision currently funded.

**W/22/10/8      Annual Committee Report to the Board**

The Director of Governance presented the report and advised that each Committee produced an annual report for the Corporation and that this was also published on the website.

**The Committee reviewed the annual report and agreed its submission to Corporation**

**W/22/06/12      Agenda Planning**

Strategic Curriculum Review

**W/22/06/13      Review of Meeting**

1. Confidential Items: None
2. Risk Management: None
3. Health and Safety: None
4. Equality and Diversity: None
5. Sustainability: None
6. Media: None.