

East Coast College MINUTES of the meeting of the Curriculum Development Committee held at 9am 13th June 2023 Video Conference

Present:	Peter Lavender (PL) Stuart Rimmer (Principal) Ian Lomax (IL) Mike Dowdall (MD) Lewis Hanson and Malcolm Goodwin (MG)
In attendance:	Julia Bates (Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships) Wendy Stanger (Director of Governance) and Rachel Bunn (Director for Commercial, Projects and Community) for item 5.
W/23/06/1	Apologies and membership
<p>Apologies – Saul Humphrey - Chair (SH) and Lisa George (LG)</p> <p>In the absence of the Committee Chair it was agreed that Peter Lavender (PL) would chair the meeting</p>	
W/23/06/2	Declarations of Interest
<p>There were the following declarations of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Dowdall as an employee of the LEP • Peter Lavender UEA Senior Research Fellow – fixed term contract <p>It was agreed that these declarations didn't preclude full participation in the meeting.</p>	
W/23/06/3	To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the 17 May 2023 and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the Agenda
<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2023 were agreed as a true record. The Director of Governance advised that the issues raised in relation to recruitment and retention by the student governor at the last meeting had been followed up and a response provided.</p>	
W/23/65/4	To Review Rolling Action Log
<p>The rolling log was reviewed.</p> <p>A governor queried the actions and the use of the action log. The Director of Governance advised that the action log was to monitor progress with the actions that the Committee had set. These would not be closed until the action was complete, with progress updates provided. The majority of the actions left open related to the Strategic Curriculum Review which was in progress and the Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that this would be coming to the July Board for review.</p>	
W/23/06/5	Curriculum Plan Update
W/23/06/5.1	Apollo Brochure
W/23/06/5.2	Bootcamps
W/23/06/5.3	Brazil Government presentation – international offer

W/23/06/5.4	Confidential Stage - Securing the Skills Needs- Enabling and Civils Phases of SZC Project	
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The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships presented the update. Meeting recruitment targets is paramount and currently despite an increase in applications compared to this time last year there was a risk that the College would not meet its September recruitment targets. Work was focused on chasing unaccepted offers, securing places for new applicants and securing progression with marketing and enrolment activities focused on these areas. Following a query by a governor additional data had been included in the pack, this has not been analysed but does demonstrate that the market is there to recruit additional learners.

Governors challenged if the College was confident that they would recruit to plan. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that all was being done to meet the plan and work will continue after enrolment through the 'Fix your future' campaign – post main enrolment event to provide support and solutions for students who do not yet have a plan or who have changed their mind about plans and the 'Switch' – active marketing campaign to provide solutions for students who have made the wrong choice re institution.

Governors challenged if the College was confident that they would recruit to the 16-18 plan as this was where growth was needed. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that the College was planning to exceed target as long as it was within the cost envelope. There are the students to be recruited but the challenge may be that the College does not have the right course for them. Once enrolment has happened we need to ensure that we retain the students by providing the appropriate support and interventions, and maintain the quality of teaching and learning. Part of securing the 16-18 plan was ensuring the internal progression.

Governors challenged what target number the College was working to. The CEO clarified that the curriculum plan had been signed off for 2461 learners plus additional growth allowed of around 50 learners which would be at no additional cost. This growth, due to lagged funding, would not be funded until 2024/25 and the budget would be set based on the curriculum plan of 2461 learners. This Committee should be looking to the College to achieve that growth.

Governors challenged why there were lower than expected applications in areas such as hospitality. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that there was a sector issue with recruitment to hospitality and that the cost of living crisis has meant that some potential learners have taken work instead of attending college, to help support their family.

Governors challenged what the conversion rate for applicants was. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that she did not have this detailed information but would look to include in future reports. It was agreed that this detail was operational but had strategic implications if the conversion rate was low.

Governors queried how the adult skills 'step into' courses had been selected. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that they had been based on the College's Adult Strategy, community need, and to ensure that the College didn't duplicate what was already on offer.

Governors challenged what action was being taken to increase recruitment. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that work was ongoing to secure the current applicants by chasing unaccepted offers, as well as confirming secure places for new applicants, and securing places for students progressing. This was being supported by an active marketing campaign and additional enrolment activities.

The Committee discussed the adult provision. The Director for Commercial, Projects and Community advised that new adult skills 'step into' courses were planned as part of the Adult Skills Strategy. This included provision for adults already in work, were short bite-size courses and covered a wide range of subjects. The Bootcamp provision is focused on 19+ (adult) learners and the College's offer was plant, civil, engineering, wind, and care. These do not have to be qualification-led so provide more flexibility and are designed to be intensive modular courses, to equip adults with the skills needed for the modern workforce and designed around employers' needs. Funding is based on 70% delivery and 30% on job outcomes, so the College has been working closely with employers to ensure the employment opportunities are there. The commercial offer was also being developed with an increased demand for bespoke courses and the move into an international offer that provided a full package approach for employers of travel, accommodation and course. Due to these being short course there were no visa implications.

The CEO advised that the tendering process for provision was the future of adult growth, and the Director for Commercial, Projects and Community should be congratulated for winning the tenders. The College would need to consider if there was a need for these projects to look at how the College recruits, employs and utilises staff.

The Committee discussed apprenticeships and challenged why the College was again not recruiting to plan. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that intensive work has begun on sales development, particularly where the College has lost market share, with planned recovery within plan for 2023/24. This was to be supported by a marketing campaign and she was confident that this year's course plan would be met. The apprenticeship team was currently in consultation and part of the proposed change was an internal sales team. The CEO commented that apprenticeship provision could not be cost viable without quality improvements too.

Governors challenged why the HE offer was declining. It was important that with the development of the HE centre that the College had the offer and the students to fill it. This needed to be a vibrant part of the College with a strong offer that the Community were aware of. The reporting data also needed to be improved to ensure clarity. It was noted that a lot of younger students wanted to move away for HE and the College needed to look at its marketing focus for the HE offer.

The Committee discussed Project Apollo, which was designed to strengthen the health and care workforce and was a joint college project across the region. The CEO advised that a large amount of the College's HE offer, including Access, was linked to health and would be part of the new HE centre, with UoS having a whole floor for nursing degrees.

The Committee discussed the opportunities for Sizewell C and also the risk of investing without project certainty and provision need. The CEO advised that the College was investing in Lound but to de-risk the project would not invest more until there was funding from the project. The College was working with employers and building its links with the supply chain to determine their needs and working with the National College for Nuclear. The Director for Commercial, Projects and Community advised that Lound was also being developed for the commercial offer and other projects so that its long-term viability was developed and not just seen as a Sizewell C campus.

The Committee concluded that recruitment and growth was key for the College's future. The CEO advised that if the College did not recruit to target then in-year savings would be needed. The 2023/24 budget would be supported by exceptional income but 2024/25 would be a very difficult year financially unless there was growth.

Governors agreed the following action:

- **Application conversion rates to be included in future reporting.**

JB

W/23/06/6	To Review the Risk Register	
<p>1. Has the risk register been reviewed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, May 2023. • The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships advised that the register was being further reviewed and it was agreed by the Committee that this needed to focus on the risks of not achieving growth and market share in all provision areas. <p>2. Is the Committee content that the risks are relevant and are being updated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The register is to be subject to a detailed review. <p>3. Is the Committee content that the risks are being mitigated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the register is to be subject to a detailed review these will also need to be considered. <p>4. Where a red risk is the Committee assured that appropriate action is being taken</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committees concerns were in relation to ensuring that the College recruited to target to ensure a financially sustainable College. <p>5. Where does the Committee have significant concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The register needed to reflect the significant risks of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Curriculum Reform on the College's offer ○ Not securing recruitment and growth ○ Not meeting the curriculum plan for all provision ○ Devolution of adult funding ○ Bidding for funding - both the significant time at risk it took to bid and the risk of the insecurity of the funding. 		
W/23/06/7	Terms of Reference - to review	
<p>The Director of Governance advised that the Standing Orders had been reviewed by Governance Remuneration and Search Committee and they had asked that each committee review their terms of reference together with its delegation as it is proposed to have less Board meetings with more delegation to committees. It is proposed in order to better focus the role of this Committee to rename it to Curriculum Growth and Development Committee.</p> <p>The CEO commented that growth was key as the College was currently losing its market share and needed to grow.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the draft and agreed to the proposed changes and delegation, subject to the purpose of the committee being highlighted at the start.</p> <p>The Committee resolved to recommend to Corporation that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee be renamed Curriculum Growth and Development Committee and • Subject to the agreed amendment, the terms of reference and delegation. 		
W/23/06/8	Agenda Planning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional data to be shared by email • Progress against Accountability Statement • Review of recruitment against curriculum plan 		WS

W/23/06/9	Review of Meeting	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confidential Items: Report 5.4 2. Risk Management: As set out in the agenda item the risk register is be reviewed in detail 3. Health and Safety: None 4. Equality and Diversity: Equality impact of Curriculum Plan 5. Sustainability: None 6. Media: Recruitment campaign 7. How did the meeting go: a good meeting that highlighted the significant risks the College was facing. 	