

**East Coast College MINUTES of the meeting of the Curriculum
Growth and Development Committee held at 9am 26th September
Board 2023 Room L6FC**

Present:	Peter Lavender (Chair PL) Stuart Rimmer (Principal) Ian Lomax (IL) Mike Dowdall (MD)	
In attendance:	Julia Bates (Deputy Principal Curriculum and Strategic Partnerships) Wendy Stanger (Director of Governance) and Rob Lawson External Board Reviewer on Teams.	
W/23/09/1	Apologies and membership	
Apologies – Saul Humphrey and Colin Yaxley		
W/23/09/2	Declarations of Interest	
There were the following declarations of interest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Dowdall as an employee of the LEP It was agreed that these declarations didn't preclude full participation in the meeting.		
W/23/09/3	To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the 13 June 2023 and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the Agenda	
The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023 were agreed as a true record.		
W/23/9/4	To Review Rolling Action Log	
The rolling log was reviewed. 13 6 23 W/23/06/5.4 'Application conversion rates to be included in future reporting' - The Deputy Principal advised that the current conversion rate from application to formal enrolment was circa 75%. The data was still being checked and the action had therefore been left open. The CEO advised that school conversion to the Sixth Form was lower than the overall conversion rate as these learners tended to submit multiple applications.		
W/23/09/5	Curriculum Growth and Development report	
W/23/09/5.1	2023/24 Letter of Assurance (Growth) St Edmunds Society subcontract for 2023 to 2024	
W/23/09/5.2	Governance for subcontracting in post-16 education and training Published 6 September 2023	
The Deputy Principal presented the update report and advised the Committee on the current recruitment position. 16 – 18 Recruitment had been positive and was above target, HE on target to recruit to plan, and AEB and apprenticeship were behind profile. The CEO advised that the English and Maths enrolment had been significantly higher, this was due to the lower GCSE results with learners not achieving the required 4 in the		

first year of assessment at pre-covid grade boundaries. An additional 12 groups were required and would be an additional cost to the College.

Governors queried if maths and English issues were amplified in the College's recruitment area. The Deputy Principal advised that there were particular issues with low grades at some of the feeder schools. This had previously been particularly with maths but this year low grades were in both maths and English.

Governors congratulated the team on the positive recruitment and challenged if the additional 16-18 recruitment was due to increased market share or organic growth. The Deputy Principal advised that the recruitment data suggested that there had been in 2022/23 a small amount of additional year 11 learners. All courses for 16-18 year-olds recruited to plan, apart from Electrical and Welding. Overall, there has been a slight decline in recruitment for L3. L1 and L2 courses have significantly exceeded targets, and additional L1 'Connect' courses were planned due to over-recruitment. There was still ongoing movement between levels because not all those enrolled on Connect had low attainment and some had grade profiles that would suggest they could tackle courses at a higher level.

The 'Connect' courses were aimed at widening participation for those with lower attainment. Pilots are being run in 2023/24 in construction, and motor vehicle. There would be a need to monitor and assess the outcomes from these, including the support the learners required, including with English and maths.

The CEO commented that the fall in GCSE boundaries was challenging the College to consider its entry requirements and whether a more nuanced approach should be taken. The Deputy Principal advised that the College needed to be mindful that schools have said that having no entry requirements would be unhelpful as it would not inspire learners to complete and revise for their exams.

Governors commented that there was a need to take a balanced approach as exams were not always the best way to assess someone's talents and the College has experience of using the RARPA (recognition and recording progress and achievement) framework. The Deputy Principal commented that other ways of demonstrating a learner's skillset are to be considered. The outcome always had to be right learner on the right course as retention and progression were key.

The CEO reminded the committee of the lagged funding and the positive financial implications of the recruitment increase on 2024/25's funding, as long as the learners were retained beyond the audit date.

The Deputy Principal advised that this retention needed to look at transition, support needs and in some cases additional support through other courses or use of the sub-contracting provision to get learners ready for study. Governors commented that this could be a pedagogical challenge but our purpose as a community college was to provide provision for all. It was noted that this intervention would come at a cost.

The Deputy Principal commented that there was now little under utilisation of staff across the College and temporary staff may need to be recruited in for areas such as the new shorter flexible adult provision.

Governors challenged what action was being taken to address apprenticeship recruitment being lower than profile. The Deputy Principal advised that there was an action plan in place for the remainder of the year which also picked up strengthening employer communications. Construction recruitment had been affected by the region's downturn in building due to mortgage rises and environmental agency restrictions, with house builders not looking to take on apprentices. The action plan included looking at groups in year and the Business Development Team's selling of apprenticeships. It should be remembered that not all apprenticeships attracted the same level of funding

and the reduction had been in the higher funded areas which would have a detrimental effect on the forecast.

The CEO advised that HE recruitment was still ongoing and the final number count would be the end of November. Governors commented that there was a need to develop the HE offer as part of the Great Yarmouth HE Centre. The CEO advised that an update on the HE Centre including the curriculum plan would come to the October Board. Governors commented that it was important that the HE Centre has a good front of house service and an agreement on how all partners would work together. The Library Service will be a key asset including for information exchange. The CEO advised that there was to a partnership working agreement, curriculum plan and a joint website. Under devolution the County Council will determine adult education provision which could be a risk or an opportunity for the College.

Governors discussed recruitment for 2024/25 and how the improvement in 16-18 recruitment can be maintained. The Deputy Principal advised that recruitment had already commenced with school liaison work, launch of the prospectus, open events and a careers-lead event to be held shortly. To help with recruitment, interviews are to be offered in schools.

Governors discussed curriculum planning. The Deputy Principal advised that Curriculum Planning had started earlier in mid-September. This will allow more time for course promotion and budget planning and all areas will have a 3-year curriculum plan by December. Additional Connect courses were being considered as well as pre-apprenticeship provision. Focus also needed to be on priority areas, and in meeting employer need.

Governors challenged what was being planned for NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) provision. The Deputy Principal advised that it is expected that 40 NEET students will be recruited in year. Students will undertake blocks of 12-week employability programmes. The College's new subcontractor St Eds also provided vocational training and employability skills training to young people aged 16-18 at risk of being NEET.

Governors discussed advice and guidance and how this assisted progression. The Deputy Principal advised that the careers team offer intensive and comprehensive careers advice and also offer advice where a learner is looking at a course transfer. The CEO advised that the quality of this advice would be reviewed through the Colleges and curriculum area's self-assessments. Governors commented that the quality of the progression, and whether there were jobs to progress to, in the chosen field needed to be considered. The CEO commented that the curriculum content needed to also be considered as part of this to ensure green skills and changes in industries working techniques taught.

Governors discussed the green agenda and how this would affect provision. The CEO commented that the Board needed to consider as part of its strategy a clear view on sustainability and this could consider whether the College continued to teach areas that were unsustainable and not carbon friendly. Governors commented this would have a major impact on the College's provision and would mean not meeting all learner and employer needs.

The Deputy Principal updated the Committee on the employer partnerships work and how this was feeding into the curriculum planning and development. The minutes of the Strategic Employer Group would be circulated and included in future reports. An Employer Partnership had also been established to help improve employer experience and an Employer Charter was to be launched.

Governors agreed the following actions:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor visits to be increased and to focus on English and maths and to discuss with learners their experiences and support issues. • Apprenticeship action plan to be circulated to the Committee for information. • Minutes of Strategic Employer Group to be circulated. • Update on VCE Consortium to be included in next update. 	<p>WS/Govs</p> <p>JB</p> <p>JB</p> <p>JB</p>
W/23/09/6	To Review the Risk Register	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has the risk register been reviewed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, May 2023 and the new written summary report included that updated the Committee on changes. 2. Is the Committee content that the risks are relevant and are being updated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 3. Is the Committee content that the risks are being mitigated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, Governors queried why the mitigation had not reduced the risk. The Deputy Principal advised that the mitigation had not yet reduced the risk but had brought it back to more of a balanced position. 4. Where a red risk is the Committee assured that appropriate action is being taken <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to develop a curriculum for adult learners which meets stakeholder needs was a red risk and as reported work was ongoing on the adult offer. ESF ends in December and the level of funding had not been replaced. This meant that the Norfolk Community College work would end and wouldn't be replicated. Governors commented that this was a big loss and thought needed to be given to how provision and support for those far from work was now provided. 5. Where does the Committee have significant concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee had no significant concerns but the main risks were recruitment being behind profile for adults and apprenticeships, retaining the 16-18 students and developing HE. 	
W/23/09/7	Annual Committee Report and Self-Assessment	
	<p>The Director of Governance presented the annual report. This covered the work of the committee in year and its self-assessment. The self-assessment would be considered with all the other committee's assessment at Governance Remuneration and Search and feed into the improvement plan which would also be informed by the External Board Review.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the annual report and resolved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to recommend its submission to Corporation. 	
W/23/09/8	Agenda Planning	
	<p>Curriculum Growth and Development report to be the form used at each meeting and to include evidence of learner and stakeholder voice.</p> <p>VCE Consortium</p> <p>Minutes from Employer Forum</p> <p>Apprenticeship Action Plan</p>	

Curriculum Planning and Estates Planning		
W/23/06/9	Review of Meeting	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confidential Items: None 2. Were learners prominent in discussions: There is a need to consider how the Committee hears from all stakeholders including learners, this could be a presentation/discussion at the start of each meeting as per Quality and Standards but considered curriculum growth and development. Proxy evidence for example from employer forums should also be considered. 3. Risk Management: None 4. Health and Safety: None 5. Equality and Diversity: Inclusivity of curriculum and the widening participation developments. 6. Sustainability: None 7. Media: Recruitment campaign and new developments including the HE Centre 8. How did the meeting go: a good meeting that highlighted the significant risks the College was facing. 		