Heart of Yorkshire Education Group Corporation ('Corporation')

Board of Governors ('Group Board')
Curriculum and Quality Committee ('Committee')

Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 March 2024 ('Meeting')

Present:	David Powell ('Chair'), Dmitry Fedotov ('DF'), Ruth Baxter ('RB'), Alex Miles ('AM'), Vijay Teeluck ('VT') (from minute 9)
In attendance:	Clare Allcock ('CA'), Lorraine Cross ('LC'), Lisa Macdonald ('LM'), Steve Mulligan ('SM'), Ben Porter ('BP'), Andrea Quantrill ('AQ')
Apologies:	Annabelle James ('AJ')

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

1.1. The Chair welcomed members, reported that due notice of the Meeting had been given, that a quorum was present and, accordingly, declared the Meeting open.

1.2. The Chair acknowledged the significant contribution of Julian Harrison, who had had to step down from the Committee for personal reasons. He expressed that Julian would be missed dearly. The Chair mentioned that he had committed to writing a letter to Julian on behalf of the Committee to thank him for his work and to send him the Committee's best wishes.

1.3. The Chair initiated a round of introductions to ensure everyone was familiar with each other, especially for the benefit of new attendees.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chair asked for declarations of interest. None were made.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 January 2024

3.1. The following corrections were given:

3.1.1. Page 3, minute 5.2.4: the Chair clarified that the question asked was whether students should be consulted about the role of the duty manager, not whether they could perform the role**.**

3.1.2. Page 7, minute 7.2.5: LC stated that 13.7% of apprentices did not progress onto further study or employment, not 6%.

3.2. IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Committee of 24 January 2024 were approved, subject to the above amendments.

4. Matters Arising

4.1. The Clark led the discussion on the actions from the previous meeting.

4.1.1. Action 4 - AQ confirmed that the data regarding lesson enjoyment was provided at the end of the last session. The Chair asked AQ to resubmit the data separately for clarification.

4.1.2. Action 5 - LM reported that the information on new English and maths staff appointments since September and those who had left was circulated after the last meeting.

4.1.3. Action 6 - LC explained that 13.7% of apprentices did not progress to further study or employment due to various reasons, including mental health issues, leaving or losing their employer, redundancy, or relocation. LC noted that responses to exit surveys are not always received, making it difficult to track these individuals.

4.1.4. Action 7 - LC provided the latest statistics on employer survey responses.

5. Head of English and Maths Update

5.1. BP outlined the following key points:

5.1.1. The maths and English departments had been separated for administrative purposes. New roles had been created and efforts to reduce the reliance on agency staff and improve consistency of teaching were emphasised. Despite some vacancies, there had been a reduction in the number of open positions, with ongoing efforts to manage staffing more effectively.

5.1.2. A new communication strategy had been implemented using Microsoft Teams to enhance internal communication and efforts had been made to

foster a positive culture by clearly defining job roles, addressing workloads and promoting a more enjoyable work environment.

5.1.3. There had been a focus on quality including the introduction of a 'mastery' approach in Maths and a 'rapid response intervention' review for targeted interventions.

5.1.4. Challenges with attendance were acknowledged and it was noted that various strategies were being implemented to address these issues.

5.2. Members:

5.2.1. Sought clarification on how the separation of the Maths and English department impacts the embedded delivery approach. BP explained that while the departments would operate independently for administrative purposes, the delivery would remain embedded within curriculum areas.

5.2.2. Asked whether changes had resulted in any improvements to attendance. BP confirmed it was too early to tell.

5.2.3. Asked if students passing functional skills would move on to GCSE programmes. BP confirmed that assessments would determine placements, and successful functional skills students would proceed to GCSE.

5.2.4. Enquired about the challenges of managing a curriculum area without subject expertise. BP acknowledged the learning curve but emphasised the support he had received from his team and the importance of ongoing professional development.

5.2.5. Asked about the impact of GCSE maths 'mastery' training. BP reported that new teaching techniques from the training were being applied in the classroom, enhancing teaching quality and learner engagement and performance.

5.3. The Committee thanked BP for his detailed update and acknowledged the hard work and dedication of his team. The Committee recognised the progress made and the efforts to address ongoing challenges, expressing appreciation for the contributions of all staff involved.

6. Student Experience Update

6.1. CA was invited to present her report, and it was asked if there were any updates or significant changes since the report was written and circulated. CA confirmed no additional changes.

6.2. CA outlined the following key points:

    6.2.1. The challenges associated with the increasing number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking learners being placed in the Wakefield area, which had necessitated a review of support systems, and the increased number of looked-after children from various authorities.

    6.2.2. A safeguarding agreement had been discussed and agreed with Lightwaves. The focus was on ensuring the support and safeguarding of students in a building not owned by the College, which involved collaboration with Lightwaves staff. Previous issues were reviewed to enhance cooperative practices and address existing gaps.

    6.2.3. Pastoral curriculum knowledge checks had provided an indication of student learning and results were being utilised to inform content for delivery.

6.3. Members:

    6.3.1. Whether the issues relating to Lightwaves involved Group staff? CA confirmed this was not the case.

    6.3.2. Asked CA to comment on personal development figures. CA noted increased student participation in personal development activities although she noted the need for better utilisation of reporting tools.

    6.3.3. Emphasised the difficulty of achieving an outstanding grade in personal development due to its variety and suggested considering the activities students might already be engaged in outside the College framework.

    6.3.4. Raised questions about the visibility of racism and misogyny within the College, to which CA responded there were no significant concerns in the current data.

    6.3.5. Asked how the College supports students facing financial barriers and the implications of the cost of living on their participation in extracurricular activities. CA noted the College ensures support to overcome financial barriers, although certain high-cost activities may be inaccessible without additional funding.

7. QIP

7.1. LM was invited to present her report, and it was asked if there were any updates or significant changes since the report was written and circulated. LM confirmed no additional changes.

7.2. LM noted the following key points:

7.2.1. The significant progress made by the apprenticeship team. Positive outcomes were noted, including collaborations and efforts in career guidance.

7.2.2. Ongoing efforts in personal development were emphasised, with recognition of the need for continuous improvement.

7.2.3. Concerns about the impact of the issues relating to the dashboard on accessing timely and accurate data. She reported that, due to staffing constraints, requests for data had become cumbersome, with reliance on individual requests rather than streamlined dashboard access. The need to address this issue with the Group Board, highlighting the challenges faced in recruiting essential roles, was confirmed.

7.3. Members:

7.3.1. Enquired about the efforts to improve Teaching, Learning, and Assessment ('TLA') ratings for engineering students who did not rate the TLA as good. LM provided an update on the rapid intervention plan, CPD sessions, and ongoing monitoring of progress.

7.3.2. Questioned what percentage of motor vehicle students thought teaching was good or better. AQ confirmed approximately 96%.

7.3.3. Asked for clarification on the number of adult students requiring reasonable adjustments to their learning. LM agreed to provide this information as soon as possible.

7.3.4. Asked why tutorial attendance was so low against target. LM explained that it was aspirational and outlined the many strategies employed to improve the number. Members discussed the matter and the arguments for and against such a high target. AM was asked for her opinion. She advocated a realistic target.

7.3.5. Asked what percentage of apprentices had had their programmes changed as a result of initial assessment? It was suggested this be included on the QIP going forwards. LC agreed to circulate the details.

8. PJs update

8.1. AQ noted that there was a minor decrease in PJ outcomes compared to the first PJ report, but this was thought to be due to the timing of assessments. She highlighted that adjustments and improvements were ongoing.

8.2. AQ turned to the percentage of students at risk of not meeting their target grades. She reported that 37% of students had not yet had their risk levels set, and of those with set risk indicators, 2% were outstanding, 29% were low risk, and 32% were medium or high risk. Members pointed out that this meant that potentially 69% of students were at risk of not meeting their target grades, although AQ noted that the medium risk category indicated they were likely to pass. She also noted that a new process for setting risk indicators had been implemented to better track and support students.

8.3. Members:

8.3.1. Asked about comparing current PJ outcomes with those from the previous years. AQ agreed that such comparisons were valuable and agreed to provide relevant data in future. She noted, however, that current PJ outcomes were comparable with the same period the previous year. She confirmed that improvements were possible for the remainder of the year bringing the outcomes closer to target.

8.3.2. Expressed concern about the high percentage of students at risk and asked about staff compliance with the new risk assessment process. AQ explained that the new process had been introduced recently, and while guidance was provided, some staff might not have fully implemented it yet. She assured members that quality monitoring would address these gaps. Members asked for a follow up at the next meeting.

9. Apprenticeships Update

9.1. LC discussed apprenticeships, noting the following key issues:

9.1.1. That a large proportion of apprentices had progressed to a positive destination.

9.1.2. Retention had decreased slightly due, primarily, to a small number of withdrawals.

9.1.3. That surveys had resulted in largely positive results from employers and apprentices.

9.2. Members:

9.2.1. Asked whether the reported 80.4% of apprentices moving to positive destinations was considered good. AM explained that, although there is no national benchmark, the government often cites an anecdotal figure of 85% for apprentices staying with their current employers post-achievement. Members asked whether the College result was satisfactory, considering it was potentially lower than expected. It was clarified that this percentage included apprentices who stayed employed but did not cover those who had withdrawn. Members suggested breaking down the data further to differentiate between those who completed their programmes and those who withdrew.

9.2.2. Enquired about the apprentices past their planned end dates, asking for absolute figures, rather than percentages, on those who were over 180 days and over 365 days past their planned end dates. LC agreed this detailed information would be included in future reports for better clarity.

9.2.3. Questioned the certainty of the noted decline in predicted Selby College engineering achievement rates being caused by delays attributed to staffing issues. LC confirmed that these were indeed due to staffing issues at the College.

9.2.4. Asked how many employers the College worked with. LC clarified that the College worked with approximately 1,150 employers.

9.2.5. Asked about the participation rate in the exit survey, noting that 39 apprentices participated. LC promised to follow up with the exact number of potential respondents to determine the response rate accurately.

10. HE Update

10.1. SM noted that the response rate to the National Student Survey (NSS) had increased to 81% since the report was initially written. This was noted as a positive development.

10.2. SM then provided a brief context regarding student engagement efforts. He explained that since the merger, the student voice had primarily been heard within curriculum areas, and there was an effort to centralise this feedback. This

involved conducting focus groups in every curriculum area and year group, followed by an internal survey. Plans were in place to conduct another focus group and survey later in the year to capture more feedback, particularly around induction processes. SM addressed concerns about induction inconsistencies, noting efforts to standardise key information delivery across sites. Mental health and counselling support for HE students were highlighted as areas needing better communication, as resources were available but not widely known. IT and music equipment issues were also mentioned, with SM noting that Curriculum Heads would address these concerns. Finally, SM acknowledged the need for continuous improvement in those areas scoring below 80% to enhance the overall student experience.

10.3. Members:

10.3.1. Raised concerns about accommodation issues highlighted in the report, which could potentially impact NSS scores. SM acknowledged these challenges, noting efforts to manage space more effectively, including increasing security and planning new areas for development at Selby.

10.3.2. Touched on the potential for Wakefield to have a university, which was part of the levelling-up funding discussions. LC confirmed the College had been asked this during consultations and had emphasised their existing university centre as fulfilling this need. It was confirmed that the focus was on increasing higher-level skills and growing HE numbers rather than establishing a standalone university.

10.3.3. Raised a question about the lack of study skills support, which SM responded to by noting recent efforts to secure new roles to address this gap.

11. Digital Learning update

11.1. Members discussed the brevity of this report, noting that its short length made it easy to review.

11.2. A discussion was had about the baseline for digital technology skills for staff and the identity of digital leaders and key figures were introduced as digital leads.

12. Review of Effectiveness of Meeting and Identification of Emerging Risk

12.1. The Chair asked everyone to consider the effectiveness of the meeting. Members commented positively on the effectiveness of the meeting, noting productive discussions and insightful questions and expressed an appreciation for the blended approach of both in-person and online meetings. Members thanked staff for responding to previous requests and staff thanked members for the useful questions asked.

12.2. The Chair closed the meeting.

Signed…………………………….………… Date 11 June 2024

Actions

No.	Minute	Details	Deadline	Responsibility
1	1.2	The Chair mentioned that he had committed to writing a letter to Julian on behalf of the Committee to thank him for his work and to send him the Committee's best wishes.	The next Committee meeting	The Chair
2	4.1.1	AQ confirmed that the data regarding lesson enjoyment was provided at the end of the last session. The Chair asked AQ to resubmit the data separately for clarification.	The next Committee meeting	AQ
3	7.2.3	The need to address the dashboard data issue with the Group Board, highlighting the challenges faced in recruiting essential roles, was confirmed.	The Board meeting of 2 July 2024	LM
4	7.3.3	Asked for clarification on the number of adult students requiring reasonable adjustments to their learning. LM agreed	The next Committee meeting	LM

No.	Minute	Details	Deadline	Responsibility
		to provide this information as soon as possible.		
	7.3.5	Asked what percentage of apprentices had had their programmes changed as a result of initial assessment? It was suggested this be included on the QIP going forwards. LC agreed to circulate the details.	The next Committee meeting	LC
	8.3.2	Members asked for a follow up at the next meeting regarding students at risk of failing to meet their target grade.	The next Committee meeting	AQ
	9.2.1	Members suggested breaking down the apprenticeship destinations data further to differentiate between those who completed their programmes and those who withdrew.	The next Committee meeting	LC
	9.2.2	Members enquired about the apprentices past their planned end dates, asking for absolute figures,	The next Committee meeting	LC

No.	Minute	Details	Deadline	Responsibility
		rather than percentages, on those who were over 180 days and over 365 days past their planned end dates. LC agreed this detailed information would be included in future reports for better clarity.		
8	9.2.5	Members asked about the participation rate in the apprenticeship exit survey, noting that 39 apprentices participated. LC promised to follow up with the exact number of potential respondents to determine the response rate accurately.	The next Committee meeting	LC