**Preston’s College**

**First Meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee**

**13th October 2015 at 5:30pm**

**Board Room, Preston’s College**

**Present:**

Dr A E Jones (Chair)

Ms L Hornsby (Deputy Chair)

Mr T Readett

Dr E H Smith

Mr J Taylor

**In attendance:**

Chris Wood (Vice Principal - Excellence & Learning)

Stephen Fell (Clerk to the Corporation)

Louise Noblett (Head of Learner Experience)

Marie Haworth (Assistant Principal - Excellence & Learning)

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

The Committee noted that apologies had been received from Anne Markland.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

No declaration of interest were made.

**3. Appointment of Committee Chair and Deputy Chair**

**Resolved:** That Dr A Jones be appointed as Chair and Ms L Hornsby be appointed as Deputy Chair.

**4. Committee Terms of Reference**

**Resolved:** That the Committee’s Terms of Reference be received for information.

**5. Higher Education Review**

The Committee received a report from Alison Humphreys on the background to the Higher Education Review, the method for determining the quality of higher education delivered in further education colleges in England from 2013-14. Chris Wood talked through the contents of the report.

The Committee noted that Preston’s College would undergo its Higher Education Review in the week commencing 25th April 2016 and considered the associated processes and timescales set out within the report.

Mr Wood confirmed that it was unlikely that governors would be required to be directly involved in the Review process. Notwithstanding this fact he underlined the importance for members to have an understanding of the context and process.

The Chair explained that institutions had found it extremely difficult to obtain an “exceeded expectations” grade, which represented an extremely high and potentially unrealistic watermark for the vast majority of HE providers.

In closing, Dr Smith confirmed that Alison Humphreys was doing an excellent, proactive job to seek to ensure that the College was in the optimal position in time for the Review.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

**6. Student Satisfaction Data 2014/15**

Louise Noblett presented a summary report of the Learner Satisfaction Survey for 2014/15 and explained how the results had informed changes made to the internal feedback mechanisms at the College and facilitated improvements to the final outturn and learner experience.

In response to a query from the Committee Ms Noblett confirmed that she was working with colleagues with a view to ensuring that focus groups were optimally engaged. The Committee briefly discussed the benefits of the “You Said, We Did” campaign that the College publicised last year.

In response to a query from the Committee, Ms Noblett confirmed that the Questions that formed the survey were based upon a national template to ensure consistency across the sector.

**Resolved:** That i) the report and the results of the Survey be noted; and

ii) the proposed changes to the internal learner survey

mechanisms be approved.

**7. Complaints and Compliments 2014/15**

The Committee received a report setting out information in respect of complaints and compliments received by the College between 1st August 2014 and 31st July 2015 and the measures that had subsequently been put in place to improve services. The report was talked through by Ms Noblett who, in doing so, drew the Committee’s attention to the fact that the report also set out the College’s obligations in relation to HE Provision and how these obligations were being discharged.

Ms Noblett confirmed that she would circulate a revised Complaints Procedure to Committee members for comment and, following, a discussion regarding the impact of consumer legislation, confirmed that the College had already made changes to its policies and procedures as a result of the legislative changes.

**Resolved:** That i) the contents of the report be noted;

ii) that the revised Complaints Procedure be circulated

to Committee members for comment.

**8. Dashboard**

a) 2014/15 Outturn Indications

Chris Wood gave a presentation to the Committee on 2014/15 Outturn Indications. The presentation included information relating to classroom based learning and apprenticeship outturn, together with an analysis of the current position and the associated challenges faced by the College.

He drew the Committee’s attention to the challenges associated with the Maths and English provision and confirmed that whilst the College was considerably above the national average in relation to overall provision its targets were more aspirational.

Mr Wood confirmed that the College’s priority was to be “the most employable” and, as a result, it was focusing on vocational qualifications and apprenticeship provision.

The Committee emphasised the importance of ensuring that the College was “commission-ready” in order to enable it to take advantage of future opportunities.

**Resolved:** That the presentation be noted.

**b) Project 42**

Marie Haworth presented information representing a snapshot of performance at the College, taken at ‘Day 42’ of the Academic Year, in preparation for the designated census point within the sector.

The presentation set out detailed information in respect of numerous categories, including statistics for ‘non-started learners’, ‘withdrawn learners’ attendance, punctuality, and associated benchmark information.

To emphasise the importance of performance against these criteria, Ms Haworth explained that if the College’s attrition rate last year had matched the 7% national average instead of falling behind, the College would have an additional £500k of revenue for that year.

The Committee discussed some of the challenges faced by the sector and the College specifically, which, in the latter instance, reflected broader health and social issues within the local community.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

**9. Targets for 2015/16 and Key AFIs**

Mr Wood presented a report outlining the work done by the College to continuously improve, via a system and culture of rigorous target setting and monitoring to support progress as well as endeavouring to meet expectations of a range of external agencies and their requirements.

He explained that in some instances targets within the report had been set below the best case scenario presented of 2014/15 due to the fact that the national position was also likely to reduce due to multiple changes in measurement and reporting across the sector.

In response to a query from the Committee, Mr Wood explained the importance of ensuring that the targets set out within the report were realistic and updated as appropriate. He confirmed that, as part of the implementation of the new ‘Continuous Improvement Framework’, there would be a ‘speed dating’ session for members in November.

**Resolved:** That i) the targets in relation to curriculum performance for 2015/16 in support of the College’s continuous improvement objectives be approved for submission to the Board;

ii) the targets be reviewed in early 2016 to enable a full and frank target debate in respect of their ongoing validity and performance against the same.

**10. Learner Experience Annual Update (Including Safeguarding)**

Mr Wood presented a report appending numerous learner experience related reports and explained that Louise Noblett’s team had devoted a significant amount of resource to producing the documents. He emphasised the importance of ensuring the governors were aware of the contents of the reports, particularly the reports referring to Safeguarding and Prevent.

Mr Wood confirmed that whilst the costs of meeting these various requirements were significant and it was unlikely that efficiency savings could be made in this regard, every effort would be made to do so. The Principal and Chief Executive confirmed that the College took the learner experience very seriously.

The Committee discussed the importance of Safeguarding training and agreed that the online training for Governors needed to reflect the training staff were required to undertake. The Clerk agreed to ensure that this was the case and to circulate a link to governors prior to the next Board meeting.

**Resolved:** That i) the report and appendices be noted, particularly the Safeguarding and Prevent report;

ii) Governors be required to complete online Staff Safeguarding modules as soon as possible.

**Date of Next Meeting:** 26th November 2015