

Chair	Vivien Bailey
Corporation Members	Steve Hedges, Cynthia Griffiths, Gerry McDonald, Diana Murray, Marilyn Hawkins, Dawn Samwell, Cynthia Griffin, Ryan McLean, Shehzad Siddiqi, Rob Hull (Observer),
Officers	Principal Tower Hamlets & Hackney: Alison Arnaud Principal Redbridge & Epping: Janet Smith Deputy Principal: Paul Wakeling Group Director – Apprenticeships: Jamie Stevenson Director of Quality - Ruth Kendrick Senior Projects Manager – Riikka Vihriala
Director of Governance	Elsa Wright
Item No	Item of business
PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
	Chair’s Welcome & Opening Remarks The Chair welcomed everyone to the committee’s first online meeting. It was important to ensure the committee focused on maintaining high quality for students and ensuring there was a positive impact for students during unusual circumstances.
	Apologies for Absence All members were present.
	Declaration of Interests None received.
	Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 10 March 2020 The minutes were corrected to show that Cynthia Griffin was not at the meeting and to correct the spelling of Ryan McLean’s name. The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

Matters Arising and Action Points from the Meeting.

The MiDES data was not fully available for the year due to the merger, however the Deputy Principal confirmed that performance was strong at GCSE in the Sixth Form. The ILR would be available for the current year for the group and by campus. There would be a full report on Governor visits and the programme for 20/21 at the autumn meeting. Feedback had been positive and the Chair thanked those who had visited and fed back. The plan was to resume visits in Spring 2021 with the possibility of some online discussions before then.

The Equality and Diversity annual report 2019/20 would come to the October meeting. The E & D committee had met recently and evidence showed that the college had developed its curriculum to ensure individuals were supported and that the curriculum did not disadvantage any group. There was more detail in the QIP.

The committee noted the Chair's analysis of the impact achieved by the Committee against its PIs, as demonstrated in the meeting of 10 March 2020.

Action – Visits programme and E&D report for the October meeting

ITEMS FOR CHALLENGE, MONITORING & REVIEW

Response to Covid 19

6.1 Online Learning - Update

The Principal of Redbridge & Epping updated the Committee. Between 93 and 95% of students were engaged in activity at every campus. This varied from online teaching and learning to activities via the online learning platforms (VLE) and workbooks which had been printed for some students, notably in construction and ESOL. The IT team and the Quality and Innovation Team had done a huge amount of work to support both staff and students and to move delivery online in a matter of days. The Chair thanked the college and its staff. It was a phenomenal achievement to get such a comprehensive system in place in a short time.

Governors **asked** whether quality and engagement had been sustained. Janet Smith explained that work had been done to improve areas where there had been less engagement. The at-risk parents' evening had been held online with phone calls home to those who had not been engaged. For example, all 22 students who had been contacted in Epping had now engaged with their tutor. The challenge was to find different ways of keeping students working at this point in the academic year. For many staff, it was an extension of the way they had worked before lockdown and for others it had been more of a challenge to change their approach, particularly where more adaptation was needed for practical subjects. This explained some of the variance between campuses. Staff had been supported and this had helped with student engagement.

Feedback from other colleges was that engagement was dropping and it was reassuring to hear that this was not the case at NCC. Governors were also pleased to hear that processes had been adapted to meet the needs of learners, especially those with no or limited access to the internet and those with low levels of English.

Governors **asked** about the lower levels of uptake for English and Maths. The college had changed its approach and integrated more of the teaching into the vocational subjects. There was more scope for innovation as teachers were not restricted to teaching the GCSE syllabus and this had allowed for more flexibility. E and M discrete teaching was complete and the focus was now on vocational delivery. **In response to questions**, the Principal of Hackney & Tower Hamlets explained that the individual focus on disadvantage students had led to better connections and enabled the college to put support in place such as laptops and dongles backed up with advice from staff, including staff governor Steve Hedges. There had been a very successful online conference for looked-after children (LAC) which had provided careers advice and guidance, pastoral care and interactive sessions to keep students engaged. Governors thanked the SMT members for this update.

6.2 On Campus Learning

There had been a very small uptake, as set out in the paper, but over a thousand students had been contacted with the offer of support and the college was in contact with all vulnerable students on a regular basis. Governors **asked** whether they expected take up to rise over time. The CEO explained that the provision was primarily a safe space where students were supported by ALS staff, who were doing an excellent job. Numbers at Havering were rising slowly. It had provided very valuable opportunities for personal development for those individuals. Governors expressed their thanks for the support that staff were providing for these and other students who were experiencing poverty and domestic violence. It was incredibly important the college staff were there to support them. It was good to hear that counselling had continued for students with new referrals being made by staff.

<p>11.</p>	<p>Community engagement report Riikka Vihralia joined the meeting</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Projects Manager for her paper. The College was involved with a wide range of projects relating to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was good to hear that the campuses were embedded in their local communities and working with the Local Authorities. The CEO explained that the work was valuable in its own right but that it had given the college traction in some different areas and enabled the relationship with Tower Hamlets to develop which was key as the College was not seen as part of the education family in the borough. The impact of education was shown through the inventiveness of former students and the influence that they could have in their local community. Governors endorsed the work of the college and asked about links with civil society and charities. The Foodbank projects had created some new links which the College hoped to develop further. The College had developed strong links over time with the police, particularly in Hackney, who were quick to let the college know if they had concerns about any students. Governors asked the CEO to pass on their thanks to all involved and looked forward to the positive impact that this would have moving forward. RV left the meeting</p>
<p>6.3</p>	<p>Jamie Stevenson joined the meeting</p> <p>6.3 Apprenticeships report</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Group Director for Apprenticeships for his paper updating Governors. Since his paper had been written, 36 apprentices had returned to work and online support continued for those who were still furloughed. Achievement for 2019/20 was expected to be in line with the target, or at least in line with 2018-19 outcomes of 64%. Governors asked whether all apprentices were expected to return or whether some would be made redundant. The picture was positive and some would return to work in construction once materials began to arrive on sites. The team had worked well together with the curriculum and business development teams coming together to create new opportunities. There were new starts in the pipeline for September and any current apprentices who were made redundant would be prioritised where possible. Governors asked about the number enrolled. There had been 225 new starts last year; in the current year there have been 302 enrolments and without the pandemic this would have exceeded 400 for the year. Some starts had been moved to September and there were 20 live vacancies which were being recruited to with 15 students waiting to enrol.</p> <p>Engagement during lockdown had improved although in areas such as construction it had been difficult. Employers had provided evidence of competences through emails, photos and videos to support the portfolios. Governors asked about the impact of business closures on the programme. There had been a positive response from employers towards maintaining apprenticeships although it was difficult to know how this might change. The college anticipated an increase in areas such as health and social care. The Chair thanked all those involved in the programme for their work and looked forward to hearing about recruitment in the Autumn. JS left the meeting</p>

Re-opening Proposal

The CEO explained that the paper had been written 10 days ago and the position had moved on. The risk assessments had now been completed and one of the benefits of a large college group was having full time specialists who could lead on this with outstanding support from the Estates team. The campuses had one way systems in place using barriers and signage. Eight campus-based risk assessments had been completed with around 15 specialist non-classroom-based assessments. The format for the main assessments was on the website.

A vast piece of work had been completed to assess which learners were in scope to return. This had been completed in conjunction with the Group Curriculum Directors (GCDs) and Assistant Principals. Some students would only need to attend once for a course assessment and others would need to come in for 3 weeks. Keeping the numbers low was the best way to mitigate risk. Paul Wakeling had led on the return of L3 learners which would not begin until 17 June. All students would be invited to book up to 3 sessions with their subject teachers. Sessions would be from 10-12 and 1.30 to 3.30 and students would not be able to book two sessions on the same day to encourage students to leave after their session.

All staffing would be voluntary and some areas, such as catering and plumbing, had already started with small groups of students. Additional parking was available for staff at Tower Hamlets to give staff the option to drive rather than to use public transport. The college had worked with the unions and the overall aim was to bring back those students who needed to come back to college whilst ensuring the college maintained its duty of care to all staff. Safety was paramount and that had been at the forefront of all the planning. Governors were asked to lobby against the withdrawal of subsidised travel for 16-19 year olds as this could be extremely damaging for young people. **In response to questions**, the CEO confirmed that they had spoken to students as part of the planning for bringing more people back on site and governors were pleased to hear that this was being done in a measured way with small, controlled groups. The CEO stressed that the sessions were planned to add value and to help students make the next step to either the second year of their course or to complete their qualification.

There would be some students who would not return due to their personal circumstances. For some who were shielding family members, it would not be possible even if they wanted to return. It was important to make the offer and allow those who were keen and able to come back to do so. Online support would continue until the end of term. Governors **asked** about the planning for September. The CEO explained that it was difficult to plan in too much detail at this stage as things changed on a daily basis but there was an agreed approach and the team was in a good position to respond when the picture was clearer. Governors thanked the team for their rapid response and for the continuing support for all the learners.

Approach to Calculated Grades

The paper set out the process that the college had developed to ensure that the system for calculating grades was robust, fair and accurate. Quality assurance had been built into the process at every stage with the Principals providing a final check. Governors agreed that this was a robust process which provided both review and oversight. This offered reassurance to students and protected staff as no one individual was making the decision. This was a message that was being reinforced with any parents who contacted the college.

The DFE had spoken to the Federation of Awarding Bodies about the poor coordination between awarding bodies who were offering no fee remissions. Many had not considered the impact of not having a system for uploading large volumes of data which was having to be rekeyed. There had been a very limited consultation on appeals which had resulted in the response being that students should resit in November unless they could prove that the awarding bodies own algorithm had been misapplied. The impact of this could be considerable and the costs to the college, when full fees had already been paid for the summer entry, would need to be calculated.

The algorithm would use a combination of the student's prior attainment, the institution's prior attainment in that subject and the teacher's judgement. For some students there was no data on prior achievement and the college had asked for clarification from Awarding Bodies. In addition, some departments had made big improvements during the year and it was important to ensure that this was recognised. The detailed processes developed by the college with several layers of moderation would support this case. The CEO explained that the refusal of appeals might lead to challenge at national level and potentially a judicial review on equality grounds.

2019-20 In Year Monitoring

9.1 Progress against the QIP

QIP 1 Improve achievement. The national achievement rates for 18-19 had been published since the last meeting but these had not made any difference to SAR judgements based on 17-18 national rates. The QIP reflected the position to May although areas such as attendance were up until lockdown. Item 1.7 reported the feedback from the Equality and Diversity Forum and the figures on engagement from 14-16, SEND and LAC students were encouraging. Both papers set out the attention to detail for LAC learners which had really improved. Governors discussed engagement by white working class males who continued to be least engaged, those with mental health issues who were engaging more and students studying health and social care whose engagement was increasing on two campuses. This had been investigated further and the college would look to see if they could build on this success after lockdown.

QIP 2 – Improve apprenticeship outcomes. Jamie Stevenson had updated governors under item 6.3. The forecast of 74% (best case) for 2019-20 apprenticeship achievements was on target, with a worst-case position of 64% which would match achievement in 18-19. This was set against a national picture of decreasing achievement.

QIP 3 – Improve attendance. Attendance was increasing and the engagement figures since lockdown were good. A lot of work had been put into closing the gap between the lower attendance and engagement with discrete English and maths compared to that in vocational subjects. During lockdown students had engaged less with English and maths online. Since the completion of English and maths exam courses, teachers on vocational courses were increasing their focus on embedding these subjects into coursework. A blended approach was being considered in some areas moving forward and this might be how some courses were delivered in the autumn. The Principal of Epping and Redbridge thanked Ruth Kendrick and her team for their work during this time. They had delivered CPD across the college and given individual support to staff to help them improve their delivery and maintain quality.

QIP 4 – Embed external work experience. The amount of work experience that had taken place before lockdown had been positive and this should continue. Some online work experience was now available and this was encouraging.

QIP 5 – Improve teaching, learning and assessment. **Governors asked** whether there were some aspects of quality that couldn't currently be captured. Managers explained that attendance could be measured in terms of various forms of engagement and retention was still strong; and the calculated grades process had helped the college to be confident in its own self-assessment. The quality improvement process continued and the team was meeting departments every month or more frequently where required.

QIP 6 – Spelling, punctuation and grammar. Pre-lockdown some improvement was noted in staff correction of student errors since publication of the rubric, but this was not yet consistently applied.

The student experience of college provision during lockdown was discussed. Learner voice was captured through surveys and feedback was positive with learners saying that they felt safe online (see 6.1 above). Student governor Ryan McLean confirmed that his tutor was keeping students up-to-date and Teams allowed some face-to-face contact with calls to check in on individual students. He preferred to go into college to work but there were others who were content working from home. The VLE worked well and students could access the resources they need. Student governor Shehzad Siddiqi reported that year 1 and 2 students at Arbour Square were feeling positive. As a final year A level student, he had been offered careers

Termly HE Activity report – UKCBC strategic update

The OfS had postponed the deadline for submission of evidence about the fourth and final enhanced monitoring requirement condition, relating to a self-assessment of management and governance. The college was waiting confirmation of the revised date.

Student registration numbers have been transferred by Pearson from UKCBC's centre number to NCC's centre number. The paper at page 70 set out how the college was working through all the registered students to ensure the validity of the assessment records. The agreed certification process with Pearson has been put on hold owing to the pandemic and discussions are taking place about how the process can be expedited.

Governors discussed the delivery options set out in the paper. Governors **agreed** to recommend Option 1 to the Corporation.

The Havering HE provision had been revalidated by the OU and the revalidating panels had commended all three programmes. The team were congratulated for the significant piece of work that had been required to achieve this.

The CEO thanked Ruth Kendrick who had led the quality process for assuring all the assessed grades. It was a huge task that continued to take a significant amount of time. Governors passed on their thanks to Ruth and her team for their tremendous work.

Recommendation – The committee endorsed the Colleges approach to UKCBC and Option 1 should be recommended to the Corporation

The Chair thanked the Student Governors for their contribution to the meeting. The CEO thanked Ryan for his contribution to the piece on the college by BBC London. It had been a very positive report.

Ryan McLean and Shehzad Sidiqi left the meeting at 7.28pm

<p>12.</p>	<p>Safeguarding Termly Report</p> <p>The report set out the monitoring that was taking place and the changes that had been made since lockdown. The Chair thanked the Deputy Group Principal and the Safeguarding team for their quick response and their work which enabled Governors to be reassured about their safeguarding responsibility. Page 81 set out the measures in place.</p> <p>Governors asked about the incidents recorded as 'Other'. Paul Wakeling explained that the team had looked at this and there were slightly different ways of recording incidents. The team was working on a common system which would be used from the autumn to ensure consistency. In response to questions, Paul Wakeling confirmed that the college was appointing its own counsellor at Epping. This would ensure that there was access for all students and that the college team could work together and support each other.</p> <p>Lockdown had brought new safeguarding challenges. College devices could be monitored and any incidents were dealt with promptly, however the college could not monitor what students were accessing on their own devices. There had been a national shift towards more self-created pornography which was shared on social media platforms.</p> <p>There were some areas in the safeguarding plan where the college had rated itself as amber. These related to areas where cross group implementation was in hand but not yet complete. Systems that were strong on one campus were being rolled out across the group. Governors thanked the Deputy Group Principal for his report and the positive response during lockdown.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Committee self-assessment</p> <p>The Chair had suggested some performance indicators for the committee for 2020-21 which she had cross-referred to the Ofsted evaluation criteria. The format for the agenda and minutes could show which committee PIs were being covered, and indicate clearly the impact achieved against the PIs. This would remove the need for a separate impact assessment. Governors were asked to comment on the KPIs and to complete the committee self-assessment report for 2019-20.</p> <p>Action – all Governors</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>There were no items. The Chair thanked everyone for their input.</p> <p>Date of Next Meeting 22 October 2020 at 5.30pm at Tower Hamlets campus</p> <p>The meeting ended at 7.43pm</p>

Agreed as an accurate record of the meeting

Signed.....

Date: