



**WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held in the Board Room at the Derby Road site on Thursday 9th June 2016 at 5.00pm.

BOARD MEMBERS John Holford (Chair)
PRESENT: Dame Asha Khemka DBE
 Councillor Diana Meale
 Chris Hatherall
 Mark Williams

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
 Patricia Harman, Deputy Principal Teaching & Learning
 Chris Thomas, Incoming Deputy Principal Teaching & Learning
 Eleanor Taylor, Head of Higher Education & International
 Louise Knott, Director for Communications, Marketing & Learner Engagement

		ACTION by whom	DATE by when
16.16	<u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u>		
	The Chair reminded those present to declare at the start of the meeting any interests in any matters to be discussed. No interests were declared.		
16.17	<u>WELCOME INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>		
	Apologies for absence were received from Nick Golubs. Chris Thomas and Chris Hatherall were welcomed to their first meeting of this Committee.		
16.18	<u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24TH FEBRUARY 2016 & ANY MATTERS ARISING</u>		
	The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.		
	AGREED: to approve the content of the minutes of the meeting held on 24 th February 2016.		
	There were a number of updates given in relation to matters included within the minutes:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 5 – the Deputy Principal confirmed that the Quality Report referred to went to the full Governing Body meeting in May. • Page 7 – Study Programmes – the updated information regarding this went to the full Governors meeting in May. Chris Thomas is 		

Signed : _____Chair

Date:

providing an update at the residential. Given the number of Governors who are unable to attend the residential this year, it was agreed that a repeat information session would be provided in September for the full Board.

- Page 9 – the entrepreneur programme will be in place for September.
- Page 9 – as agreed, the Deputy Principal spoke at the Curriculum Managers Forum in March regarding improved communication with students and about progression opportunities.
- Item 12 – the action relates to the Learner Voice strategy update which is being withdrawn from this meeting.
- Page 13 – the Deputy Principal will report upon the impact that recruiting the new safeguarding officer has had in his October safeguarding report to this Committee. It was noted that the individual had only started work in May and therefore there has been insufficient time to evidence demonstrable impact.

Deputy
Principal

Sept. 2016

Deputy
Principal

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AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.19 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

Members reviewed the action progress table and were happy to note the position. It was acknowledged that the majority of items had been discussed as part of the 'matters arising' section of the review of the earlier minutes.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

16.20 DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and drew key matters to members attention:

- 1) Qualification Achievement Rates (QAR) data set – in previous years the QSR was published towards the end of January and the national rates were included in the data set. When the QAR was published this year national rates were not included. The national rates have very recently been published however, Compass our provider, have not yet incorporated them within the system and therefore the College is unable to undertake the analysis required. It was confirmed that an update on this would be provided at the October meeting.
- 2) Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare – members' attention was drawn to the table at section 3.2. It was acknowledged that the use of the disciplinary procedure at the first stage does have a significant positive impact. There have been 24 stage 3 disciplinary panel hearings during the period September 2015 to March 2016. Since the last report there has been one further exclusion as a result of unacceptable behaviour by a student, which included using equipment in an improper

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way that was potentially dangerous. All acknowledged that two exclusions in one year was a relatively small number given the size of the College. The more consistent use of the disciplinary procedure at the earlier stages of an issue arising has shown a positive impact, for example within Care and Education Studies, the use of the early stages of the procedure has led to improved attendance and in turn much improved retention.

Members reviewed the statistics in section 3.2 and it was explained that Schools are of very different sizes and therefore there will be significant variances in terms of numbers. In relation to EMAPS, they have a lot of adult students and therefore appear to be fewer issues. In the Lifestyle Academy there have been a lot of incidents involving groups of students with poor behaviour towards each other and this has influenced the number of matters reported. In CES there are some particularly challenging students. The Committee noted that there were 'spikes' in terms of the number of matters reported in CES and ETS in November. It was confirmed that this has been analysed and there can be no particular pattern discerned regarding the reasons for the incidents. There doesn't seem to be a consistent reason for the matters reported.

There are positive interventions evident which stop escalation. The College has a student code of conduct in place which helps too and this gives a clear direction regarding expected behaviours.

The Committee were advised that some behaviours on the bus also account for a high number of incidents and that this is something that is harder to tackle.

CH The Committee, in reviewing the information, indicated that they would find it useful to know where the fundamental issues are so that they can help to address and reduce what could be perceived as a high number of behavioural incidents. It was explained that some of the numbers include attendance and that it is not all about poor or unacceptable behaviour. The Committee agreed that it would be useful to have a better differential so that they could more clearly ascertain the number of behaviours that are of concern.

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CH The Deputy Principal indicated that the new tutor and 1:1 system to be introduced for the next academic year may help to address early interventions needed. The Committee agreed that it was important that the College know all the contributing factors so that they can target support and interventions in the most needed areas. It was explained that this is the first academic year that the College has tracked Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare in this way and as a consequence it is unable to compare any prior year trends.

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3) Ofsted College outcomes

Members' attention was drawn to the in-year update and it was confirmed that a full academic year report would be provided at the next meeting. At the time of providing the report there had been nine short inspections of which eight providers were graded as good and one as requiring improvement. Since that time there have been even more Colleges who have retained their good status.

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- 4) Qualification changes – within the College many 19+ students are not taught in discreet groups but follow a similar programme to 16-18 year olds. As from September 2016, some of the qualifications currently delivered, for example Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance, and Repair Principles Level 3, will not be funded for 19+ students. Detailed review of the funding guidance, eligibility for loans guidance and qualifications offered is taking place to ensure students are able to access appropriate funded qualifications. It was explained that this does not affect many students and the current estimate is circa 30 students.

Q The Committee questioned whether there was a danger that any courses could become non-viable as a consequence of these qualification changes. It was explained again that the College does not have many 19+ standalone groups and it tends to be 16-18 year old groups with 19+ students incorporated within them. It was agreed that the incoming Deputy Principal would look in to whether there are any groups capable of doing a level 3 and accessing funding before the changes, and if there are, how can the College support them to take this step.

Deputy
Principal

June 2016

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.21 **QUALITY REPORT**

The Incoming Deputy Principal introduced this item and explained that his report covers a number of discreet areas.

1) Retention and Attendance

Key matters noted were:

- All existing retention data lies considerably above comparable national averages.
- Students are equally retained at College regardless of gender, ethnicity and/or learning difficulty.
- Higher education retention rates have fallen by 5 percentage points compared with 14/15. Plans are in place for greater monitoring of this provision in year. Next year should provide opportunity for identifying at risk students earlier in the course.
- Six curriculum areas have in-year retention rates of 95% or greater

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- Five curriculum areas have in-year retention rates below 90%.
- Eight areas have in year attendance rates below 90%.
- Subject areas with low attendance and retention rates will be identified for further support next academic year.

In relation to the six curriculum areas with retention rates over 95% and five with rates below 90%, it was agreed that the incoming Deputy Principal would check the retention rates and analyse any correlation with attendance following the end of the academic year.

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June 2016

He confirmed that the overall picture was good and that at the top level the College is 4% up on the 14/15 retention rate. The College is consistently above national average in most areas. Where retention is low then these courses are a focus for quality improvement in 16/17.

The Committee generally discussed whether there was a specific correlation between attendance and retention. The Deputy Principal confirmed that yes, there was a definite link and in his view measuring retention is reviewing the position 'once the horse has bolted'. Attendance is a much earlier indicator and something that needs very close monitoring at all levels.

2) Student withdrawals

- 41 more students have been withdrawn from courses in 15/16 compared to 14/15. Much of this increase can be accounted for by students progressing in to employment in year.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of students withdrawing from fulltime provision in the School of Construction. Again this can largely be accounted for by students going in to employment in year.
- There has been a significant decrease in withdrawals in Creative Industries and Digital Technologies.

CH

It was acknowledged that whilst the overall figure has increased by 40 there have been some positive aspects to this in terms of employment and a move to apprenticeships. The Committee indicated that for future reports they would like to know whether the move into employment is to a place of employment that is relevant to the course taken. It was acknowledged that at this stage the link to relevant employment is not necessarily there in all areas.

Deputy
Principal

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3) Student destinations

The Deputy Principal indicated that there were two elements of data that he would wish to specifically bring to members' attention:

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- a) The table at 6.8.2 – this shows the destinations of all full time classroom based students for the academic year 14/15. The data table shows a high number of destinations as FE (60%) and it was acknowledged that many of these would not be classed as a ‘positive destination’ in terms of government criteria.
- b) The ‘no response’ category is quite large and can therefore effect and impact upon the statistics.

Q In reviewing the statistics the Committee questioned whether the apprenticeship figure is comparable to other FE colleges as it seems low. It was agreed that the incoming Deputy Principal would investigate this and provide an update to the next meeting.

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CH In relation to the information provided at section 6.8, the Principal requested that the incoming Deputy Principal think of a more succinct way of presenting key headline data so that Governors have greater clarity regarding what requires their attention and focus. The incoming Deputy Principal’s recommendation was to move to measure student destinations in the same way that the government does and that this would give consistency and also allow easy comparisons. In discussion it was acknowledged that it is also important to measure and monitor progression internally, particularly as there are some real success stories here.

4) Work based learning

Members’ attention was drawn to page 39 and the headline figures. The incoming Deputy Principal indicated that the report needs to come with a certain ‘health warning’. The overall and timely success statistics appear to be lower than 14/15, however there is over 50% of the 15/16 data still to be realised and as a consequence this is still very much an in year position.

CH The Principal expressed the view that Governors need to know simply where the concerns are and also where there are areas to celebrate in terms of future reports.

CH Members’ attention was drawn to section 11.15 which was confirmed as the predicted position. The incoming Deputy Principal confirmed that this would be a good outcome if achieved. The Principal indicated that the key for her was for all report writers to explain in their executive summary cover reports, where the College is in terms of its journey and where it expects and hopes to get to.

It was confirmed that, similarly Traineeships is still an in-year position.

5) Lesson observation report

The incoming Deputy Principal confirmed that this is a positive picture. He was satisfied that there are robust and supportive processes in place.

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Any grade 3 observations or below have a supportive plan in place for staff and also for partners. This system contributes significantly to the overall quality of the College.

6) External verification/external examiner reports

Members' attention was drawn to page 48 where the information was noted.

7) Quality improvement plan 2015/16 progress update

CH Members' attention was drawn to page 49 and they expressed some concern regarding the level of non-achievement stated. The incoming Deputy Principal expressed the view that there were some tracking improvements required. The Committee felt that the table on page 49 could better explain progress and how close the College is to achievement, rather than simply stating 'not yet achieved'. It was explained that there are a number of issues which are interrelated in terms of tracking and recording.

CH The Committee challenged the senior team and indicated that, the way the table is presented raises concerns regarding how much is still to be done at this point in the year. Governors can't really tell where the College is or how far away it is in terms of achieving its stated objectives. They challenged the reporting and expressed the view that in some areas

CH they would like to better see the targets and not just achievement progress.

It was agreed that the incoming Deputy Principal would provide an addendum update paper in early September, this is to be emailed out to Committee members.

Members discussed the action described as 'to better evidence impact contribution in the workplace when students undertake work placements'. It was acknowledged that with hindsight, the wording could have been sharper in terms of this action.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

16.22 STUDY PROGRAMMES UPDATE

The Deputy Principal introduced her written report and reminded that the Committee that in October 2015 they had received an overview on the principles and characteristics of study programmes and information on two specific elements; Maths and English and work placements. Members' attention was drawn to table 1 in section 2.1 of the report where retention and attendance statistics were noted. She explained that retention is similar for main qualifications and Maths and English, as these are part of the study programme. Students are not able to withdraw from Maths and English and remain on programme other than

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in very exceptional circumstances. Attendance is lower for Maths and English than for the main qualification of the study programme. This is regularly reviewed by curriculum teams, but improvement in attendance is required in order to support achievement of the qualifications this year and in to 16/17.

Members specifically discussed the difference in attendance between the main qualification and Maths and English for the Construction and Building Services School of Learning, this has a 10% difference which is a significant concern. All agreed that attendance needs to be addressed much earlier in the year in 16/17.

CH The Committee was advised that Maths and English continues to be the biggest challenge relating to study programmes. In 15/16, students who had achieved a grade D at GCSE on entry to the College completed initial and diagnostic assessment at the start of their course and, based on their results, they were enrolled to resit their GCSEs or study functional skills level 2. Students who at enrolment had achieved GCSE grade E or below have undertaken functional skills qualifications. A decision has been taken that as from September 2016, students who have attained grade D or E at GCSE will be enrolled to resit the GCSE qualification. This will mean that very few students will be enrolled for functional skills level 2.

It was explained that functional skills tests have got much more difficult nationally and that this has impacted upon the decision to enrol for resits at GCSE. The new GCSE specifications are out and assurance was given that staff have had a lot of training in relation to this. Governors were also reminded that the Maths and English department now have a much different team. Teacher quality has improved and as a consequence the College can see a positive impact.

Q The Committee went on to then discuss work experience and work placements and the data table provided in 4.2. They questioned what exactly constitutes a 'work placement'. It was explained that this is a minimum of 24 hours but can vary significantly between different courses. A lot of media students complete live briefs from industry as there are fairly limited offsite work placements available. In addition to work placements the College also offers a broad range of work experience, these are more internal development opportunities whereas work placements are all external placements.

In discussing the statistics, all agreed that the Lifestyle Academy had seen a real positive improvement in terms of the number of external placements secured. The total percentage of work placements achievements for the College as a whole has now increased to 66%, which is quite an improvement on the 14/15 position which was in the 40s. The College's stated aim is to get everyone a related work placement.

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The Deputy Principal circulated an updated appendix A which shows the functional skills actual pass rates as at 7th June 2016. It was explained that this is a snapshot report. The College position has gone up marginally but not significantly and that the issue remains at level 2. It was confirmed that the College was still waiting for quite a lot of results and therefore the position will change further.

Q In reviewing the functional skills maths data, the Committee questioned why entry level 2 percentage pass rate had decreased from 96% to 93% between 24th May and 7th June report. The Deputy Principal confirmed that she would seek clarification on this. It was agreed that an early September report/update would be circulated by email.

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Sept. 2016

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.23 HIGHER EDUCATION UPDATE

The Head of Higher Education and International introduced her written report and drew a number of matters to members' attention.

- QDP survey results are due at the end of August. It was confirmed that a summary of the results will be provided at the October meeting.
- NSS national student survey final response rate was 91% and mirrors the QDP pulse survey. For the latter the response rate was 70%. This is more of an internal review. It was explained that this sits at 80% satisfaction which nationally is a positive, however there are some issues regarding personal development which need to be addressed.
- University Centre activity – applications – these are in line with national trends. Applications are down against last year and in the main this is due to business management courses and courses in Lifestyle Academy. Recruitment activity is now focused on mature applicants and level 3 students who have yet to confirm destination (internal and external). The College is reviewing subscription to UCAS as a mechanism to increase applications.
- Transition into the new build in September is being carefully planned to include information to students at each of the enrolment points. The HE team is planning a launch event for students in October in addition to the formal opening. Plans are in place to use the new HE Centre to recruit more students in September 2017. The focus will be on higher level skills and commercial programmes. The centre will also be used as part of the BDU's process to sell and engage with employers.
- National changes
 - a) Quality assessment – following the HEFCE publication of the revised operating model for quality assessment the College noted the announcement of preferred bids. The new QA process will have a focus on the Principal and Governors who

Head of
HE

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will need to be able to respond to HE questions.

- b) Teaching excellence framework – the TEF was published on 16th May and this will inform annual updates to the HE and HLS strategy and quality assurance mechanisms for HE. One interesting point noted was that this will not include observations of HE teaching.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.24 LEARNER VOICE STRATEGY 2015/16 UPDATE

It was agreed that the three scheduled report items;

- a) national learner survey
b) work based learner student survey and
c) compliments and complaints would be deferred for consideration to the October meeting.

It was explained that in relation to the national learner survey the data was not available in time to be analysed for this meeting. In relation to the work based learning student survey information provided, the data is incorrect and the team would like the opportunity to revisit, as well as the fact that this survey has been reopened to improve the response rate. In relation to the work based learning student survey, the Committee indicated that at the October meeting they would welcome the opportunity to ask questions of the senior member of staff responsible for coordinating the survey and they would also like an explanation as to how incorrect data was presented to this Committee.

CH

Paul Rana

October
2016

AGREED: to defer consideration of this item to the October meeting.

16.25 SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

The Deputy Principal introduced her comprehensive written report and key matters noted were

- Safeguarding steering group met in April 2016
- Potentially at risk vulnerable students – currently 265 identified students are on programme within the different groups. The team has completed over 2000 support interventions this academic year.
- The retention for students remains closely monitored, the most concerning group are those described as ‘not in parental accommodation’. She provided assurance that the College has looked in to the reasons for the decline in retention for this group. It appears to be the case that the College has more students living in hostels and within the hostel programme there has been a significant change to the level of support offered. The team are looking at how they can support from within the College next year.

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To date, more students have been identified as high priority when compared to the previous year.

- The annual review of Prevent is scheduled at agenda item 11 for this meeting.
- Work is already underway to identify those students who need support from day one in the next academic year.
- The safeguarding policy statement has been reviewed and minor amendments made. This was approved for 16/17 by the Corporation Board on the 19th May 2016. This will be reviewed again following the revision to the DFE document. It was confirmed that this document has been circulated to Governors. Any changes needed will be incorporated within College policy.
- Safeguarding incidents – the comparison of the reported incidents within College provision in the current academic year indicates that there has been a significant increase in the number of reported safeguarding related incidents, 106 in the year to date compared with 23 in 14/15. A comparison of the data indicates that there has been an increase across all months of the year and that the increase is not due to a spike in referrals. There has also been a slight increase in referrals within partner provision this year, 14 within the period September 2015 to April 2016 compared with 14 referrals in the whole of the 14/15 academic year. It is helped by better staff training and staff taking a 'better safe than sorry' reporting approach has led to this increase. Members' attention was drawn to section 6.8 of the report which details the number of referrals by each School of Learning.

59% of the referrals related to female students. Within the three Schools of Learning, the highest proportion of referrals 30.9% were related to students with a learning difficulty or disability (LDD). Within the College population, LDD students equate to 26.5% of the cohort. 87.05% of the referrals related to students who are 16-18 years of age. It was explained that the College is seeing a high number of mental health issues particularly a high number of students showing suicidal thoughts and evidence of self-harming. The Committee questioned whether there was any correlation with an increased use of synthetic drugs. The Deputy Principal indicated that this was not something that the College has seen evidence of.

Q

The Deputy Principal indicated that by and large the increase is a positive sign of confidence in reporting. It was agreed that the statistics would be monitored next year to see if there is an increase in numbers again.

It was confirmed that the College has now had some QDP learner survey information returned and it was pleasing to see that 100% of students said that they knew how to keep themselves safe on the internet. 96% said that they had received training on radicalisation and extremism.

Signed : _____Chair

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AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.26 **PREVENT – ANNUAL REVIEW**

The Director of Communications Marketing and Learner Engagement introduced her written report. She confirmed that the 15/16 academic year had been a year of implementation. Her paper presented has been constructed to reflect the statutory headings. Key matters noted were

- a) Risk assessment – the risk assessment has been updated throughout 15/16 to reflect the changes in risk profile of the College. The risk assessment is mindful of the local counter terrorism profile which, overall assesses risk for Nottinghamshire as relatively low. In addition the College has a Prevent self-assessment which RAG rates various aspects of Prevent activity. Governors were asked to note that this assessment in all areas is at least amber with many areas being assessed as green.
- b) Staff training and development – there are currently 30 staff who are outstanding in terms of completing their mandatory training and these individuals are being pursued through performance management processes. The expectation is to achieve 100% compliance by the end of June. It is now a requirement to obtain an annual update to safeguarding training. The College is currently investigating how it will deliver this.
- c) Welfare and pastoral support – 96% of students indicated that they could recall training on this. There is more to be done to ensure that students can explicitly articulate British Values.
- d) Speakers and events – the College drafted and approved a speakers and events policy in March 2016. This requires staff to seek approval for speakers or events where they might be controversial or staff are unsure about whether the nature of the event would be appropriate. The vast majority of events within the College are employer related and as such would not be a cause for concern under the Prevent heading.
- e) Prevent referrals – to date the College has received 21 referrals through the safeguarding team relating to Prevent. Of those, three have been referred to the Police Prevent Team for support. Two are receiving ongoing intervention from agencies outside of the College. None of the referrals to date have met the threshold for channel support.

It was noted that Prevent duties in relation to FE and HE are the same in terms of expectations. QAA have confirmed that they will defer to Ofsted's view of the College for this element of inspection.

It was explained to the Committee that the IT Director gets a weekly report on students trying to access violent sites or extremist sites. The College uses a third party web filter company that is commonly utilised in the FE sector. The College ticks the themes and subjects to be included within the filter and blocking process. In addition to this it can add

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additional sites as appropriate. The awareness on the part of staff is key to ensuring a robust system.

It was explained that the identified gap at the current time is students' use of mobile phones on the College system. From September 2016, the College will be able to identify which student is linked to which mobile phone number and this will help to improve the system.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.27 GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Clerk introduced this item and indicated that the papers presented were intended to support Committee self-assessment for 2015/16. In addition she asked the Committee to consider whether any changes were recommended to the current terms of office and membership. She also put forward a work plan for the 2016/17 academic year.

The Committee considered the papers provided and all agreed that it had been pleasing to see that attendance has improved. The Committee in general felt that it was working better, although it was felt that there would be a benefit in simplifying some of the content of reports with more focused delivery. The Principal indicated that she would like to see a focus on what Governors need to know to effectively challenge and monitor and that in her view, there was still room for improvement in relation to this.

The Committee felt that the number of and phasing/timings of meetings worked well.

The Committee were happy to put forward proposals that the Terms of Reference remain unchanged for the next academic year.

In terms of membership, the Committee felt that this was solid in terms of the current position which is Dame Asha Khemka, Diana Meale, John Holford, Nick Gollubs, Mark Williams and Chris Hatherall, the external co-optee. It was noted that Diana Meale would conclude her second and final term of office as a Governor in October 2016 so realistically she has one more Committee meeting left. Nick Gollubs, if not successfully reappointed as the Student Union President would also cease to be a Governor at the end of July 2016, however any replacement for his position would be invited to sit on this Committee. The group felt that membership remained strong but all agreed that there would need to be careful monitoring of this throughout the next academic year.

Members were happy that the work plan proposed was fit for purpose and was useful as a framework document with other matters being added throughout the year as required.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

Signed : _____Chair

Date:

16.28 **AOB**

The Committee Chair took the opportunity to thank Patricia Harman for all of her hard work and support to this Committee throughout her time as the Deputy Principal.

16.29 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk confirmed that the date of the next meeting was 6th October 2016.

Meeting closed at 6.55pm.

Signed : _____Chair

Date: