

TEACHING, LEARNING AND SKILLS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 21 November 2018 at 6.00pm In the Boardroom at Paddington Green Campus

Present

Mary Elliott, (Chair of the Committee)
Glenys Arthur, Governor
Keith Cowell, CEO (& Governor)
Lee Horsley, Governor
Joshua Khaku, Student Governor CWC (to 7.10 pm)
Ravina Jignesh, Student Governor CNWL (to 8.30 pm)
Jan Knight, Vice Chair & Governor (from 6.45pm)

Also in Attendance

Jackie Grubb, Principal CWC
Stephen Davis, Principal CNWL
Ita Leavy, Head of Learner Services
Grethe Woodward, Vice Principal CNWL
Sam Bramfitt, Vice Principal CWC

Natalie Watt, Acting Clerk to the Corporation (Minutes)

1. Attendance & Apologies for Absence

Cllr Matthew Green.

Action

Chair's Announcements

The Chair welcomed those present, introductions were made and newly appointed Governors and staff were welcomed to the meeting. The Committee were informed that the schedule for agenda items would be revised to accommodate delivery of reports by Officer attendees.

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Health and Safety Announcements

Standard arrangements, no alarm drills expected. Noted.

4. Minutes of the Meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2018 were APPROVED and signed as a true and fair reflection of the meeting.

7. Learner Voice Monitoring Report UCG

- Member's attention was drawn to the executive summary. It was noted that CWC learner surveys results exceed the KPI by 7%.
- The VP CNWL confirmed that CNWL did not have comparable figures.
- Discussion followed on the reported outcomes from CNWL, including the outcomes from student focus groups.
- Members sought assurance that there would be a cross Group approach and comparative data available for scrutiny in the future.
- The Principal of CNWL advised the Committee that the Colleges were moving towards using QDP to ensure that this would be achievable during 2018/19.

- Members of the Committee noted the progress made to date and reiterated the need for data comparisons.
- Detailed discussion followed on the student engagement strategy particularly at CNWL.
- Members acknowledged the need for more robust measures and welcome the proposals identified.
- The two Student Governors were invited to comment and discussed their exposure to the Student Engagement Strategy.
- The Committee discussed other sector methods and surveys in use noting the FE Choices was widely reported and would also be used to assess student satisfaction. The Chair asked for a report to come back to the Committee when the information was available.
- Members discussed the high profile of safeguarding and PREVENT training and the Student Governors provided anecdotal information on their personal experiences in each of the Colleges.
- The Chair noted that Q13b specifically addressed PREVENT and that a positive response rate of 79% had been reported.

Hof LS

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** the report.

9. Student Exclusions & Complaints Report UCG

- The Committee was informed that the final number of exclusions for CNWL was 29.
- The Committee challenged the SLT on why there was no exclusion data for CWC.
- The Committee were assured that all individual student records were complete and had been checked, however, the gathering of the statistical data had not taken place in year.
- Detailed discussion followed on the issues with the system in place for capturing the data due to a change in process and staffing.
- The Committee were assured that both Colleges had robust systems in place for capturing the data for 2018/19.
- The Committee discussed the reasons for exclusions and the challenges in supporting students so that they achieved. The Student Governors contributed to the discussion with feedback from their peer groups in their colleges.
- Members noted that 6 appeals against exclusions were made and none were upheld
- The Committee noted the update on student complaints. The number and reasons for the complaints were discussed. The Committee noted that the complaints policy had been reviewed and would be updated for administrative purposes only and was otherwise fit for purpose. Agreed and noted.
- The Committee noted the 3 year trend in complaints reported at both CNWL and at CWC. The Chair of the Committee welcomed the detailed reporting from each College but asked that in future SLT also provide an overarching UCG profile for ease of monitoring.
- The Principal at CNWL assured the Committee that UCG was moving towards homogenous reporting across all areas.
- Discussion followed on trends that may arise. The Committee were informed that a spike in complaints is usual in the Autumn Term and that in 2017/18 this was largely due to late payment of bursaries which had subsequently been dealt with. It was noted that this was also reflected in the number of complaints to date in 2018/19.
- The Chair noted the lessons learned around the need for efficient and effective systems to be robust to monitor infrequent information in year and at year end.
- The Committee discussed enrolment and the challenges around this that can lead to poor behaviours and exclusion and noted the significant improvements that had been introduced in 2018/19 which had already reduced complaints.

SLT

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** the report.

11. Safeguarding Report UCG

- The Committee noted the comprehensive and detailed executive summary. Members noted the trialling of a new Retention and Intervention Tutor role.
- Discussion followed on the challenges faced by the differing cohorts of students across both Colleges.
- The Committee discussed at length the range of support and provision for students with mental health challenges at both CNWL and CWC.
- Discussion also followed on the challenges that had arisen as a result of the introduction of GDPR.
- Members noted that at CNWL safeguarding had been a topic at the all staff development day on 19th October 2018. It was noted that CWC would receive the same training at the development day in January 2019.
- Discussion followed on the importance of maintaining training records and it was agreed that safeguarding training for Governors would be a priority for 2019.
- The Interim Clerk informed the Committee that a number of on line packages were available and it was proposed that these may be suitable for Governors who were not in college every day. It was agreed that this would be flagged up with the new Director of Governance for consideration.
- The Chair asked the Student Governors for feedback on their experience of information dissemination. Both Governors stated that they were aware of the safeguarding and PREVENT officers and what support was on offer.
- The Committee discussed the rising levels of safeguarding issues across the sector. However, the VP CNWL noted that the involvement of multi agencies appeared to be beneficial and response from other bodies had recently improved.
- Discussion also followed on attendance monitoring and how this can be used to flag up potential safeguarding concerns. It was noted that staff were provided with advice and guidance on how to spot potential issues as well as deal with reported incidents.
- Discussion also followed on the challenges facing students due to the immediate danger presented by the gang culture in London, the differences in the two Colleges and worrying trends nationally for young males at risk of suicide. The Chair requested that in addition to detailed information on both Colleges that an overarching UCG table be produced for tracking and trends. Agreed
- The Safeguarding Governors requested dates for relevant meetings in both Colleges and it was agreed that these would be provided.
- The Principal CNWL informed the Committee that in a recent study Westminster was shown as being 6th in London for child poverty.
- Members were assured that a mental health policy was comprehensive and was widely circulated and available to staff and students. Discussion followed on possible intervention measures and fitness to study reviews.

Dir. of
Governance

Principal
CNWL & CWC

Principal
CNWL & CWC

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** the report.

13. Overview of Higher Education Report UCG

- The report was presented to the Committee who noted the 6 main areas addressed in the report. Members were updated on the HE landscape, reminded of the requirements of the Office for Students and the challenging and competitive market.
- Members noted the detailed context provided for each of the recommendations presented in the report. Members welcomed the update on the Office of Students and the requirements for submission of an assurance statement.

- The Committee were informed that UCG had completed and submitted their application in a timely manner. The CEO expressed appreciation on behalf of the organisation of the work completed by Carole Lewis in respect of this application. Noted.
- The Group was currently waiting for feedback on the submission and was anticipating that further work may be needed in this area to resolve any outstanding queries.
- The CEO discussed the importance of the registration and the business implications for the Group. The Committee noted that the Group had submitted an application for registration with the Office of Students (OfS). The CEO confirmed that a declaration of assurance was in hand and would be submitted by the required deadline.
- However, the Committee were also advised that due to the scheduling of the Corporation this assurance would be needed in advance of the Board meeting this term.
- Discussion followed on the table presented at section 3.
- The Committee's attention was also drawn to the proposed international opportunity at section 4.
- The Chair acknowledged the potential of these opportunities but requested that this be taken back to SLT to develop a business plan to address risks and opportunities and to assess the costs and potential compliance issues.
- The Chair of the Committee noted that UCG had yet to fully discuss its strategy for international business and that this would be raised with the Chair of the Corporation for further consideration and development.
- The Interim Clerk confirmed that the Chair of the Corporation was Governor Champion for HE and communication and a meeting would be set up via the CEO ASAP.
- Discussion followed on the points raised in relation to the Teaching & Excellence Framework and the development of Teaching Learning and Assessment in HE.
- Discussion took place on UCG HE provision, the Committee noted that total student numbers were currently 363. The Committee discussed two year degrees and the challenges in introducing a different HE curriculum, the level of progression currently in place and the proposal and actions outlined in the plan.
- Discussion followed on the proposed study agreement. The Principal CNWL informed the Board that this would be considered in more detail by SLT as there was significant implications for the organisation. It was noted that legal advice would also need to be sought before any contract could or would be introduced.
- The CEO advised the Committee that a fully developed HE strategy would also be proposed in the following term to take a number of initiatives forward following scrutiny by the SLT.
- Discussion followed on the competitive environment particularly in London where there was a significant number of providers competing for the same students.
- The Committee noted the actions proposed in the report and the recommendations made. The CEO confirmed that the actions and recommendations would be considered in more detail by the SLT.
- The CEO advised the Committee that the HE numbers had declined significantly and that further work on identifying and managing the challenges and opportunities, risk and costs and the context for UCG would be undertaken

CEO

CEO

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** the report and recommend that the SLT produce a detailed HE Strategy and Development Plan that would come back to the Committee for information and consideration in due course.

5. Teaching, Learning & Assessment Report UCG

- The Committee were reminded that a new Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy had been approved and implemented post-merger. The Committee discussed the points raised in the executive summary on page 1.
- Noting the following:
 - 155 Learning Walks were carried out early in the academic year at CWC
 - CNWL have undertaken Learning Walk with 85% showing good practice in behaviour for learning strategies.
- The Committee noted that both Colleges had commenced full observations from 5th November 2018.
- Members noted the self-assessment feedback from CWC and that TLA strategies and their impact were being robustly monitored.
- The Chair noted the key messages contained in the report on pages 3 and 4 for both Colleges.
- The Committee noted that two Governors had visited UCG in the last week and more learning walks and visits were planned across the campuses prior to December 2018.
- The Chair expressed her appreciation for the detailed reporting from each College.
- The Student Governors were invited to comment on the reports and provided positive feedback open their experiences at CWC and CNWL respectively.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** the report.

6. Achievement Rates UCG

- The Committee received the report and the Chair confirmed with the author that the table referred to at 1.1 provided an overview of UCG rather than CNWL as noted. This was confirmed.
- Members noted the positive report on delivery of partnership working.
- Detailed discussion followed on gender performance and section 1.2 free school meals.
- Members noted the achievements rates in London and the historical achievements of both Colleges pre-merger were also discussed. Members queried how ESOL was performing.
- The Principal at CNWL informed the Committee that a significant curriculum review and mapping exercise was underway.
- The Chair sought clarification on how Governors could monitor achievements effectively to ensure that they were contributing and having an impact.
- Discussion followed on the recent SAR process and the high level of Governor Involvement across both Colleges.
- Governors discussed the Maths and English achievement reported at paragraph 2.4 and the Subject Sector Area achievements at paragraph 2.5.
- The Committee noted the update on apprenticeship achievements at paragraph 2.10 and the key areas for improvement identified at paragraph 2.12 and 3.11 and 3.12 respectively.
- The Committee discussed the challenges of unifying reports given the differing data collection and performance at each college but it was noted that more work was underway to achieve group focussed reporting the Board during the coming year.
- The Chair requested that future reports provide the context for performance against comparable London Colleges. Noted.
- The Principal of CNWL reminded the Committee that comparators were presented at the development event in September. It was agreed that the Interim Clerk would recirculate these presentations to the Committee for information.
- Discussion followed on the future format of the reports. The Chair of the Committee noted the useful detailed for the individual Colleges. However, she

Interim Clerk

requested that an overarching UCG update also be provided, which identified where data was skewed by one college or another.

- Discussion followed on A level provision. The Principal at CWC informed the Committee that a new Head of Faculty had been appointed for A levels and it was anticipated that this would have an impact in year.
- Discussion followed on high need provision and it was acknowledged that more work was needed to ensure that high need students were fully embedded and integrated where appropriate. It was agreed that an update on high need provision would come to the next meeting.
- It was noted that high need provision at CNWL was good. The Chair expressed her appreciation for the depth and scope of the report.

Principal CWC

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** the report.

8. Employer Feedback Report UCG

- The Committee received and discussed the report. Members noted the very positive report and feedback on employer satisfaction and welcomed the comments reflected in paragraph 2.4 about the organisations accepting that it must not become complacent.
- A view that was endorsed by the Committee. Members noted the summary feedback from the FE Choices employer Satisfaction Survey at paragraph 2.6.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** the report.

10. Equality & Diversity Policy UCG

- The Policy was presented by the CEO who confirmed that there were no significant changes. The CEO informed the Committee that the only change was to update the job description of the person responsible for the policy.
- The Committee briefly discussed transgender and gender issues and were assured that the organisation had experience of managing and supporting staff and students through this process.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Policy for recommendation to the Corporation.

12. Self-Assessment Report & Quality Improvement Plan

- The Chair of the Committee summarised the process and confirmed that a range of Governors (including herself) had been involved in the validation panels at either CNWL or CWC.
- Those Governors who attended were asked to confirm their opinion of the process. Governors that attended both CWC and CNWL validation panels both confirmed that they felt that the validation process was robust and detailed. All those involved confirmed that they were satisfied with the level of scrutiny and challenge applied to both Colleges.
- Discussion followed on the focus of the self-assessment process and discussion followed on the validation process at UCG and at other London Colleges.
- Members endorsed the inclusion of an external/OFSTED qualified member of the panel.
- Some discussion took place about peer validation between the two colleges and the Principals confirmed that they had been discussed by SLT for possible future consideration.
- The CEO confirmed that an overarching UCG SAR and Quality improvement Plan would be presented to the Corporation which would reflect the overall Group position.

a) **CNWL**

- The Committee noted the key judgements reflected the outcome and discussions held at the validation panel.
- It was noted that significant improvement had taken place on personal development and behaviour and welcome hence its judgements of requires improvement rather than inadequate.
- The Committee confirmed the overall grade as a 4.

The SAR and Quality Improvement Plan for CNWL was **RECEIVED** and recommended to the Corporation for **APPROVAL**.

b) **CWC**

- The Committee noted the key judgements reflected the outcome and discussions held at the validation panel on page 3
- The Committee confirmed the overall grade as a 2.

The SAR and Quality Improvement Plan for CWC was **RECEIVED** and recommended to the Corporation for **APPROVAL**.

14. **Review of Committee Terms of Reference and Draft Committee Work Plan**

- The Interim Clerk to the Corporation presented the report. Members noted that the Committee Membership had been approved for 8 Members and endorsed the inclusion of the Student Governors.
- The work plan for the Committee was agreed. The Interim Clerk to the Corporation advised the Committee that the CEO had confirmed that CPD reports were reviewed by the SLT.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the revised Terms of Reference and the Committee work plan.

15. **Date of Next Meeting**

- **Monday 4 March 2019 at 6pm at City of Westminster College**

16. **Any Other Business**

- FE Week – The CEO tabled copies of FE Week and Members noted the strong performance of UCG and that it was ranked joint 7th in London in the context of the survey published.
- Members of the Committee requested that an updated list of acronyms be completed and circulated and that all authors use the full names at least in the first instance before. Agreed.
- Members requested that a copy of the senior management team at both Colleges as well as the overarching SLT structure be circulated with the next CEO report.

Director of Governance

CEO

17. **Issues of Confidentiality**

None.

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____