

## BRIGHTON HOVE & SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE QUALITY AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 16<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2009 at 6.00 P.M. IN THE SPORTS CENTRE CAFE

Present: Peter Freeman, Sandra Clinton, Rosa Friend, Yvonne Hillier (Chair), Leslie Ironside, Elizabeth Lamb, Jamal Salman, Jim Smithyes, Chris Thomson.

In Attendance: Sally Bromley, Anne Fielding Smith, Louise Pennington, Sam Rowe and Matt Ward (Student Governors)

The meeting was quorate.

#### **Q&C09/15 Apologies and Welcomes**

Welcomes: Apologies: Vanessa Brown.

#### **Q&C09/16 Minutes of the Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

#### **Q&C09/17 Matters Arising**

**Item Q&C 08/42 Student Union Constitution** – Anne Fielding Smith advised that the update to the SU Constitution had not yet been completed and would be brought to the Autumn Term meeting. **ACTION: AFS**

**Item Q&C09/05 College Charter** – Louise Pennington explained that a proposed change to the Charter had been received from Senior Tutors, via Angus Stroud and Anne Fielding Smith as follows:

SECTION ON: If you are a parent or guardian of a 16-19 year-old student, BHASVIC will offer you:

6<sup>th</sup> bullet point: “reports on your son’s or daughter’s process” ADD “*and attendance*”

The Committee agreed to recommend that the Charter be amended accordingly. **ACTION: LEP**

#### **Q&C09/18 Declaration of Interests**

None.

#### **Q&C09/19 Update on Current Quality and Curriculum Issues**

Sally Bromley gave an oral report to the Committee noting the following current issues:

- a) National Teacher Awards – Five teachers were nominated by students for the awards, including Tony Scola, Paul Penketh, Steve Warby, Nick Price and Neil Commin and all received certificates as a result of this, but sadly none went on to the national final.
- b) Whole College Inset Day 2<sup>nd</sup> June – this was an opportunity for staff to share good practice via workshops.
- c) College is taking part in a county wide quality initiative amongst general FE and sixth form Colleges scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> July, at which SLB will be running a workshop and CT will also be attending.
- d) Curriculum – unprecedented student applications received for 2009/2010 academic year for maths and science which has required the College to recruit another full time

mathematics teacher. In September the teaching staff within these departments, will organise focus group surveys to determine the reasoning behind the increased demand for these subjects. (304 biology applicants, 230 chemistry applications and 355 maths students). The uncertainty over the Capital project's future has also caused issues regarding accommodation as the laboratories in particular, limit space and facilities. It was noted that refurbishment would be essential, should the Capital project definitely not proceed. Curriculum areas where there are reducing student applications compared to previous years, are business and economics, and communications and media. A rise in general applications has been experienced from West Sussex particularly.

- e) Extended Project – BHASVIC piloted the new extended project in Perspectives in Science, last year and 6 out of 10 of the best results nationally came from BHASVIC Students. It's intended to extend the programme for the next academic year, promoting it as a fourth course in year 2. The extended project is equivalent to AS level and allows students to develop research skills combined with independent study. Perspectives in Science will be offered again, together with Geography and Social Science. At the forthcoming Sixth Form Colleges' Conference, Sally Bromley will be giving a presentation on the Extended Project programme.

At this point, Jim Smithy joined the meeting.

### **Q&C09/20 Lesson Observation Review 2009**

Sally Bromley presented the paper to the Committee and the following points were noted:

- a) Fewer Lesson Observations have taken place in 2008/2009 – 72 compared to 100.
- b) All staff are observed at least once per academic year.
- c) Fewer grade 1 classifications were awarded this year by the in-house observers and on reflection, this may have been slightly harsh. As a consequence, from next year, Gaynor Green (leads on Lesson Observation process) intends to pair with some observers to ensure consistency in the use of the whole range of grades (1-4).
- d) Following a question from the Committee members, Sally Bromley explained the reasoning behind the decision not to advise each teacher the lesson observation grade, unless specifically requested to do so, explaining that the details from the lesson observations were discussed in order to provide the support needed to improve future grades, both individual and via the department heads; action plans were then prepared and reports made via the usual channels (SARAPS) and PDR (professional development review/appraisals) as necessary.
- e) Lesson observation benchmarking information (general profiles per College) is available via Ofsted and in response to a request from the Committee, Sally Bromley agreed to include comparisons with other Colleges. **ACTION: Sally Bromley**
- f) To improve practice further, for the 2009/2010 year the College will be introducing a pilot quality improvement tool (including the examination of E & D and independent learning issues) within two departments – ESOL and Languages. The feedback from this will be presented to staff via the College's bitesize training inset.

### **Q&C09/21 Strategic Planning 2009-2012**

Chris Thomson presented the paper to the Committee, explaining that the final version would need to be approved by Corporation in July 2009.

The Committee noted the contents of the Plan and particularly welcomed the new section 5 Drivers for Change.

Jamal Salman informed the Committee that Section 7 Values, used to be reviewed at specific faculty meetings which had proved very useful in generating new ideas. However it was noted that owing to time constraints, the College relied on input from staff via the consultation process and the Managers' Away Day. The Committee agreed that Section 7: Values should follow on

from the Section 3 Mission.

Peter Freeman had various suggestions to make and the Committee agreed that he should pass these directly to Chris Thomson for consideration by SMT. The Committee also agreed that comments external influences should be including within a section of the Plan e.g. future funding provisions, Partnership Board developments etc. It was resolved that Peter Freeman should liaise with Chris Thomson, outside the meeting. **ACTION: PF/CT**

At this point Chris Thomson left the meeting.

### **Q&C09/22 Child Protection Policy and Procedures**

Anne Fielding Smith presented the policy and procedures (based on AoC model policy and passed through JUMCoG) to the Committee and confirmed that she has completed the required Child Protection Training course and will organise appropriate training for key Governors in this area, namely Yvonne Hillier and Peter Freeman. **ACTION: AFS** Staff will also be required to update their training which will be completed during an inset day.

With regard to policy statement 1.8 (The Governing Body will receive from the Vice-Principal an annual report which reviews how the duties have been discharged), Anne Fielding Smith gave an oral report to the meeting advising that there had been only one issue at College during the academic year and that the procedures were followed at all times by the staff involved. A student reported that she had suffered abuse as a child and that although she was now 17, there was a younger sibling at home – social services had therefore taken appropriate action. It was noted that the College had had difficulty obtaining feedback on the outcome of this matter from social services and that it would be helpful for this aspect to be improved, notwithstanding the issues of confidentiality.

The Policy was recommended to Corporation for approval. **ACTION: AFS/LPE**

### **Q&C09/23 Annual Review of Disability Statement – Meeting your Needs booklet**

Sally Bromley introduced the item to the Committee which noted that it was required to review and approve the Disability Statement annually. Sally Bromley agreed to delete “Kay Dawes, Student Services Manager” from the first paragraph of page 36 of the papers. **ACTION: SLB.**

Students are given the first opportunity to disclose any particular special need (disability or learning support requirement etc) during the application and interview stage, but there are several other opportunities for students to discuss their specific needs with their tutors (Moving-On Day etc). The College completes a quality review of the learning support area in terms of achievement, retention, attendance etc and is able to benchmark analysis against the students' incoming GCSE grades. Next year the College's learning support area will be included within the EQR (External Quality Review) process. Certain secondary schools such as Lewes Priory, have excellent systems in place to identify students' special needs. Other secondary schools' special needs facilities are less well-developed and as a result, the College has to make use of its own systems to identify students' needs.

The Annual Disability Statement was recommended to Corporation for approval, subject to the amendment given above. **ACTION: SLB/LEP**

### **Q&C09/24 Admissions Policy and Procedures for entry in September 2010**

The Admissions Policy and Procedures were introduced by Anne Fielding Smith who explained that only minor changes had been made – correction to the member countries of the European Economic area and updating the entry guidelines within Appendix 3. The contents of Appendix 1 were reviewed, regarding the Offers of places and it was noted that the College should have a

clearly defined process for prioritising applicants in instances of oversubscription. Students in Brighton and Hove have priority over Students outside the area, subject to applications having been received by the deadline. The Committee observed that there was no separately identifiable priority for “looked after children” applications and Anne Fielding Smith explained that this would be included within item 4. Students with special considerations.

Following a suggestion from Peter Freeman, regarding Falmer’s new sixth form which is intended to commence for 2009, it was resolved to retain “Falmer” as one of the listed Schools in Brighton and Hove without sixth forms (clause 4.4 on page 41 of the papers), for the time-being, until the final details from Falmer, have been announced formally.

The Admissions Policy and Procedures was recommended to Corporation for approval.  
**ACTION: AFS/LEP**

At this point, Peter Freeman left the meeting.

### **Q&C09/25 Report on Retention Statistics 2008-2009**

Sally Bromley presented the paper for noting by the Committee and she advised that overall retention had improved over the last three years (2007 – 85%, 2008 – 87%, 2009 – 88%) and was above the national benchmark for sixth form colleges. Certain areas have improved significantly such as within the Arts and Communications faculty, whilst the less satisfactory subject areas were Dance/Performing Arts and Geography and Skills Faculty has also shown a reduction in 2008/2009, following a marked rise in 2007/2008.

The Committee noted some anomalies within the analysis owing to CIS software issues e.g. ESOL where retention overall is shown as in excess of 100% (owing to some students being entered for examinations later in year, thereby increasing numbers and distorting the final retention figure). Certain curriculum areas e.g. Society, Health and Care have low retention figures, solely as a result of the small student numbers, whereby if one or two students leave, there is a significant impact upon the overall retention percentage for the subject – likewise this then has a consequential affect upon the associated faculty (Business, Geography and Skills).

Following a request from the Committee, Sally Bromley agreed to include retention analysis in respect of students moving from AS to A level, which she confirmed could be included within the SAR (Autumn Term Q & C Committee). **ACTION: SLB**

### **Q&C09/26 Student Management Policy**

The Committee were advised by Anne Fielding Smith that this new policy replaced two existing policies/procedures, namely Exclusion or Expulsion of Students Policy and the Student Discipline Policy and Procedures, highlighting new policy wording shown in italics. Although procedures/appendices are not required to be brought to Committee and Corporation for consideration/approval, the appendices have been included here for reference so that the Committee may understand the processes involved regarding student discipline.

The Committee recommended the Policy for approval to the Corporation. **ACTION: AFS/LEP**

### **Q&C09/27 Parents Survey Results 2008-2009**

Sally Bromley presented the results of the Parents’ survey for 2008-2009, prepared by Angus Stroud (Senior Tutor) to the Committee, which noted that the survey had been despatched to a random selection of 300 parents of students, resulting in 120 replies (40% response rate).

It was also noted that in future, it may be possible to produce an on-line survey which would involve the whole parent body and allow improved analysis of the results.

Following a suggestion from Sally Bromley, Elizabeth Lamb (parent governor) agreed to chair a focus group of parents to examine survey responses and action plan. **ACTION: SLB/Elizabeth Lamb.**

**Q&C09/28 Committee Self-Assessment**

The Committee completed the annual self-assessment, issued for the first time, this year and also reviewed its terms of reference. The following comments were made:

The Committee agreed that the answer to all nine questions was “Yes” and noted in respect of item 4 (Is the information provided to the Committee sufficiently detailed to facilitate decisions and monitor progress?), that the information provided by SMT and managers as Committee papers/oral reports, was extremely comprehensive, allowing a good understanding to be acquired to the Members. Regarding question 7 (are there any ways to improve the manner in which the Committee conducts its business?), it was noted that the Chair’s pre-meeting with the lead SMT member, Sally Bromley, regarding the Q & C Committee business, was particularly useful. It was also suggested that adding times per agenda item might guide Governors in a timely manner through the business.

The Committee terms of reference attached to the self-assessment form were also considered and approved unchanged. **ACTION: LEP**

**Q&C09/29 Any Other Business**

Sally Bromley brought the Committee up to date on the current discussions at SMT regarding smoking on the premises. A discussion was held and it was noted that the College would be completing a survey of Staff on this subject in the first instance and would also canvas Students’ views.

**Q&C09/30 Date of Next Meeting**

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

**Q&C09/31 Reserved Business**

Refer to separate minutes.

Louise Pennington  
Clerk to the Corporation

CHAIR..... DATE.....