

CAPEL MANOR COLLEGE
CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
THURSDAY 27TH NOVEMBER 2008 AT 2.00PM

Members:

Governors: James Wisdom (Chairman)
John Bennett
Steve Dowbiggin OBE
Irene Byard
Vacancy

Staff Governor: Susan Gorman

Student Governor: Cecilia Henze and Kayleigh Hart were both in attendance.
One Student Governor attended in the capacity of observer.

In attendance: Madeline Hall, Head of College
Nick Evans, Director of Estates and Buildings
Sue Adams, Personnel Manager
Janet Hughes Hallett, Finance Manager
Simon O’Hear, Personnel Manager

The Chairman welcomed Malcolm Parkinson as an observer to the meeting.

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Susan Gorman.

2. MINUTES OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 JULY 2008

RECEIVED paper 2, minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Committee

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING 2 JULY 2008 NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

RECEIVED paper 3, matters arising for information

NOTED:

- i. the increase in the number of students taking part in the survey reflected the growth of the College. Progress achieved appears to have impacted more favourably and at a faster rate for the older age group. However, the differences in distance travelled may not be cause for concern: it may be due to interpretation of the questions. Variables affecting the response include the perceptions and expectations of students in the transition from secondary school studies to starting a vocational course in a College environment. A different approach to managing study time has to be achieved to fit the pressure of several assessments occurring in a short timescale. Cecilia Henze, Student

- Governor, felt that sufficient advance warning was given to expect concentrated periods of high workload;
- ii. it was suggested that a review of how some of the questions were worded might assist accuracy. In particular, the Chairman requested that question 9 of the exit survey should be changed to reflect an opinion on the quality of support services provided rather than the amount of times the service was used; MAH
- iii. the information gleaned from the surveys is helpful and is discussed with course teams and action plans formed. SMT also uses the data to prioritise resources to address issues raised;
- iv. Madeline Hall reported that the College, in partnership with The Royal Parks, has been awarded Horticulture Week's 2008 prize for 'innovative training programme' of the year. The winners' logo will now be included in our marketing material. SRD praised this achievement;
- v. a Train to Gain contract for 120 places has been commissioned by the LSC;
- vi. the outcome of the application for the project with 16-19 NEETs is still awaited;
- vii. the option of providing a video link between Enfield and the centres for staff meetings is being explored. Currently there is sound but no visual link.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ACADEMIC BOARD HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2008 (unconfirmed)

RECEIVED paper 4, minutes of the Academic Board Meeting held on 13 November 2008

NOTED:

- viii. Malcolm Parkinson expressed concern at the high number of apologies for absence, but was reassured that the large membership allows for contingency so that all schools remain represented;
- ix. incomplete evidence for the NPTC 0220 Horticulture, level 3 Sports Turf, remains unresolved, partly due to the logistics involving travel from Ireland of a verifier;
- x. Madeline Hall reported that matters are in hand to address the relatively small number of secondary school visits to the College. Schools are being targeted in relation to their curriculum and MAH is helping to coordinate efforts and build on existing links, including working with a school in Hertford to develop entrepreneurship;
- xi. East London has been identified as an area of enormous potential to develop our activities. SRD reported that despite budgetary constraints, F&GP had agreed to allocate a sum of money to focus on this development and consideration is being given to the appointment of a Development Officer, possibly part-funded by Nuttalls. Matters will be referred via the Academic Board to F&GP and the Governing Body. Irene Byard advised that an article in The Times had recently reported on the creation of a new national park in the Thames Gateway region. The College could usefully exploit the opportunities to engage in land based recruitment.

5. LEARNER SATISFACTION SURVEY: EXIT 2008

RECEIVED paper 5, Learner Satisfaction Survey for information

NOTED:

- i. matters have progressed since the survey was conducted in June 2008;
- ii. using national benchmarks, the College is in the top quartile nationally for overall satisfaction. SRD expressed concern that the mixed results shown in the more detailed national benchmarks could be misleading since it is difficult to compare Capel against other colleges in view of the high percentage of students who study whilst in employment. The Chairman requested that we further investigate the link between College and industry to ensure that students are adequately supported. Curriculum enhancement for employability and increased employer visits are in hand. MAH reported that two weeks ago an HE week and careers day was held at Enfield and Gunnersbury. Crystal Palace will hold one next year;
- iii. Irene Byard enquired about the teaching of profoundly deaf students. SO'H reported that progress has been made and systemic procedures are in place, for example teaching in a circle to enable lip-reading;
- iv. SRD referred to previous challenges at Crystal Palace Park (now overcome) due to disruptive resource commissioning, but noted that the £20 voucher given to students to acknowledge their difficulties had engendered goodwill. The Chairman noted responses indicated that there was a good atmosphere at Crystal Palace Park and a feeling of belonging to the College as a whole;
- v. MAH enlarged on the negative comments regarding Student Registry explaining that their ability to be helpful had been hampered, due in large part to system failures, particularly in regard to technical difficulties with Southgate College. A new Student Registrar has now been appointed and is brokering good links with colleagues;
- vi. MAH advised that more stringent regulatory requirements are coming into force for overseas students. The College will be licensed as a 'sponsor' of students by the UK Border Agency;
- vii. Appendix I Action Plans: It was felt that the best way forward to facilitate discussions at future meetings would be to emphasise underlying themes: selecting five things we do well and five things where improvement is needed, rather than picking out individual disparate items and comments. MAH

6. STAFF SATISFACTION SURVEY - JUNE 2008

RECEIVED paper 6 report of the Head of College, for information

NOTED:

- i. there was a 44% return to the survey (a 35% return to questionnaires is considered sufficient for statistical significance). SRD noted that the timing of the survey closely followed an announcement to staff advising of redundancies and a reduction in financial resource, but

- nevertheless felt that links with staff remain good and that staff feel engaged;
- ii. significant progress has been made in the level of support for IT, and issues have been addressed in Learning Support;
- iii. some concern was expressed about staff satisfaction in the Schools of Animal Care, Saddlery, Arboriculture and Countryside, although there may be some overlap and be skewed by the earlier difficulties previously mentioned at Crystal Palace Park;
- iv. there were some low cluster scores for SMT. SRD suggested that SMT will consider producing their own mini action plan to test areas that can be improved and to monitor the response. SRD

7. SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT

RECEIVED paper 7 report of the Head of College, for information

NOTED:

- i. following the inspection and peer review exercises, a revised format is being adopted. The final document will be put to the Governing Body for consideration;
- ii. some concern was raised about grading. Malcolm Parkinson noted that the Animal Care and Saddlery curriculum area has been grade 3 since 2003 and queried the absence of excellence in teaching observation. MAH undertook to look further into this; MAH
- iii. Governors were concerned that a success rate for any course of less than 50% reflected badly on the College. SRD advised that local knowledge of the detail could satisfactorily explain the circumstances (as presented by the figures) and that SMT had been reassured by the detailed data; SRD
- iv. the grading for the School of Arboriculture and Countryside was reviewed. The need to recognise exceptional performance at level 3 contrasting with lower success at level 2 was acknowledged;
- v. a correction to the Arboriculture and Countryside teaching observation profile was noted - background detail to be forwarded to the Chairman.

SRD left the meeting.

8. QUALITY AND CURRICULUM UPDATE

RECEIVED paper 8, report of the Head of College for information

NOTED:

- i. MAH reported that a grant for £18,000 has recently been offered, and accepted, from the LSC to support improvement of equality of opportunity;
- ii. the submission to meet the new Training Quality Standards for Employer Engagement has not been approved. The application is in two parts, of which Part B was a very strong submission. However, Part A was insufficiently strong due to difficulties in supplying consistent supporting data. This arose from having used three different surveys over the last three years. MAH advised that we

- could reapply in six months' time, even though not all the information is in place, as a conditional approval with annual review;
- iii. QAA will undertake a review of the College in Autumn 2009. The HE Coordinator, Kim Page, will be attending a training event in this respect in January;
- iv. the Foundation Degree in Garden Design is now fully validated;
- v. the Foundation Degree in Horticulture is close to completion;
- vi. the Mobile Learning Network (MoLeNET) bid for £44,000 has been won to support new resources for the countryside, ecology and environmental science areas;
- vii. the Team Capel beacon project was not deemed innovative enough to attract funding;
- viii. the e-portfolio partnership project with SE training providers won their bid, but the amount of funding is small.

9. PROTECTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN COLLEGES - ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLICY

NOTED:

- i. the Policy is reviewed annually to ensure currency and compliance with any changes in law. Irene Byard undertook to keep the Committee abreast of changes as and when they occur;
- ii. IB advised that it is a criminal offence to access child pornography, including via the internet and any such evidence must be reported to the police;
- iii. a change in the law is about to make forced marriage a criminal offence;
- iv. NE pointed out a typographical error in the first sentence of Item 7.6 whereby 'than' should read 'that';
- v. MAH undertook to ensure that college counsellors are alerted to the changes.

RECOMMENDED TO GOVERNING BODY that they

- i. commend the policy as amended following review;**
- ii. record that annual review will continue to be undertaken by the Committee each November prior to final consideration by the full Governing Body.**

10. CURRICULUM UPDATES - STANDING ITEM SHARING INFORMATION FROM MEMBERS

- i. None to report.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- i. The Clerk to the Governors reported on a constitutional matter that the addition of two Student Governors to the Committee extends membership beyond the requirement of 7. The Clerk will report to the Governors whether both should attend or alternate at meetings, since this also affects the Health & Safety Committee membership. **SA**

12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 19th March 2009 at 2.00pm.