**REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD**
**QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 5 November 2020 at 10.30am**
**Via MS Teams**

Present        Marcus Clinton (principal) MC
               Jane Cowell (independent) JC
               Mike Gorton (independent) MG
               Peter Green (independent) PG
               Anne McKay (staff) AM
               David Pearson (independent) DP
               Alastair Taylor (independent) (chair) AT

Attending      Matthew Gower (vice principal) MGower
               Trudie McGuiness (assistant principal) TM
               Wendy Watson (quality manager) WW
               Sharon Yates (assistant principal) SY
               Hilary Hill (standing in as clerk for the meeting) HH

Part A unless stated

| Item | Content |
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| **1.** | **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair** |
| **1.1** | **RESOLVED: Alastair Taylor was appointed Chair of the committee for the academic year 2020-21.** |
| **1.2** | **RESOLVED: Jane Cowell was appointed Vice Chair of the committee for the academic year 2020-21.** |
| **2.** | **Welcome and apologies for absence** |
| 2.1 | The Chair AT welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from attendee Paul Spearritt and company secretary Jackie Schillinger, with thanks to Hilary Hill for covering the clerking role at the meeting.  AT noted that a couple of other senior team attendees had indicated that they might have to dip out of the meeting and whilst this was unfortunate, AT acknowledged the current challenges of managing college business required some flexibility. The new Student Association nominated further education student governor had been invited to the meeting but did not attend. |
| 2.2 | The meeting was quorate. |
| **3.** | **Declarations of interest** |
| 3.1 | There were no interests declared as giving rise to a conflict of interest in relation to the agenda items for the meeting. |

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| **4.** | **Minutes and matters arising** |
| 4.1 | The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2020 were confirmed as a correct record. |
| 4.2 | The rolling action log was reviewed and the action to progress the governor dashboard and development sessions on this was noted as something that had been postponed and needed to be picked up as soon as is practical given current circumstances. |
| **5.** | **Student Experience** |
| 5.1 | Covid update, including safeguarding and wellbeing:  Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality MGower provided a presentation on screen in the meeting to take members through the management of the student experience in the coronavirus context and an update on safeguarding and wellbeing in this first half term. His presentation included communications with students and parents, the online enrolment process, zoning and management of student flow on the campus, use of Microsoft teams and digital delivery, safeguarding and student wellbeing. MGower provided assurance that overall the management of safeguarding and wellbeing has been very positive. He provided an overview of disciplinary actions taken as well, with a number of these being related to failure to follow rules on covid management measures in college. He highlighted the initial induction survey feedback that suggests that 98.8% of students feel safe in college, 99.9% understand the covid rules, 96% have a positive experience of digital learning, with a 98.6% overall student satisfaction rate. He also explained the process of dealing with any coronavirus cases, with 190 students so far this term having had to self-isolate and 12 cases of coronavirus in the student population. |
| 5.2 | AT thanked MGower for the comprehensive update, received by the committee for information and assurance. A number of comments were made and questions posed:

-DP noted the transformational impact of the coronavirus challenge on digital delivery and stressed the need to maximise the benefits of this going forwards.  He also welcomed the assurance provided on support and CPD for teaching staff during this time and he sought and received assurance on support provided for non-teaching and support staff such as domestic and estates staff. He welcomed the assurance received from MGower on this as he stressed that the domestic and estates staff are at the forefront of the ongoing work to keep the campus safe. In addition, he welcomed the strong assurance from the induction survey on student voice feedback.

-JC thanked MGower for the impressive assurance from the update received and she commented on the supportive and enabling approach to digital learning, which she hoped will mean it can be sustained. She noted that it is important to make extra effort to connect with new colleagues as it is not so easy to make these connections when working remotely.  She also wondered if there were significant additional costs to the remote working environment. Finally, she suggested that it would be useful when reporting to the Board to pull out the lessons learned.  MGower thanked JC for her helpful comments and confirmed that he did not consider there has been a significant increase in costs due to digital delivery and remote working.

-PG confirmed that he had gained very good assurance from the update. He asked about the main concerns for MGower now going forwards. MGower noted that the main concern for the rest of the year is the impact of the continuing lock down and possible future measures and how this might impact on student retention as the year goes on. |

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| | -AM also welcomed the good assurance received on the student experience and she added that staff wellbeing and resilience is a key factor in being able to sustain this good standard of delivery and asked whether this should be noted as a concern.  AT agreed that resilience of the staff is key and wondered if this needs to be escalated as a concern to the Board. DP confirmed that staff wellbeing has been a key focus of Board discussions in recent meetings and it could be reviewed within the strategic risk register on staffing. MGower agreed that staff wellbeing is key and that the Executive is focused on supporting staff, responding to concerns and providing reassurance, including in the daily covid steering group meetings with, for example, the recent recommendation for wearing face coverings in class over and above the government guidelines in response to staff concerns on this issue.  MC added that an update on staffing will be provided in his covid briefing to the full Board meeting on 12 November and will be looked at in the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting as well later this term. He reassured the committee that overall the staffing position is positive at the moment with the vast majority of staff back in college and doing a fantastic job. |
| 5.3 | In summary, AT confirmed that the committee records its thanks and acknowledgment for the ongoing excellent attention and efforts to maintain a good quality student experience and notes the ongoing concerns on retention as the situation progresses, acknowledging that the Executive is doing all that it can to manage this challenging situation. PG concurred with this summary and noted that committee members will need to monitor retention this year, bearing in mind the potential risk to retention. DP supported these comments and added that these are unchartered times that require management via the college's business continuity and contingency plans. |
| 5.4 | Quality Update and dashboard: WW presented the quality dashboard for information and discussion. Her presentation provided an update on learning walks, quality health checks, online learning walks, key themes coming out of these so far, key areas for improvements (high expectations and assessments for progress), good practice and additional support required. She confirmed that, in line with the SAR validation earlier this week, Engineering, Sport and Public Services and Reaseheath Training were highlighted as areas for improvement in 2020-21. Complaint and compliment reporting was received for information and assurance, including a formal complaint that is at appeal stage, of which the Chair of the Board has been made aware, and WW provided assurance that college policy and process is being very carefully followed in relation to all ongoing complaints. Student Induction Survey results were provided and noted as very positive. Questions and discussion followed:

-AT and PG welcomed the comprehensive dashboard information. PG provided his view that the two key KPIs for the committee to monitor are attendance and retention. He asked if retention could be reported at this stage and going forwards in addition to attendance. He also noted that attendance is good overall but looks a bit lower in Foundation and requested confirmation of the proposed college KPI on attendance. WW provided assurance that attendance and retention can be reported going forwards on the quality dashboard. The overall KPI on attendance was confirmed as 90%. WW confirmed that Foundation is being followed up after the self-assessment process to look at attendance and provide any support needed. MG added that the action to provide access to committee members to the data dashboard will help with this and needs to be progressed, as noted in the rolling action log.

-AM asked for more detail on the malpractice and maladministration data reported and WW confirmed the details of the two individual cases reported that were fully investigated to the satisfaction of the awarding body, had no wider impact and no further action has been required. The committee took assurance from the further information provided. |
| 5.5 | AT thanked managers and committee members for the presentation and discussion and the quality dashboard report was received for information and assurance. |

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| **6.** | **College FE Performance** |
| 6.1 | College Draft Self- Assessment Report (SAR) 2019-20: The Assistant Principal, TM, provided the college SAR for recommended approval to the Board at its December 2020 meeting, following the external SAR validation meeting earlier in the week, when all the independent Quality and Standards Committee members attended, with the chair of the committee chairing the SAR validation. AT noted that the committee had been presented with the SAR for approval and this included the outturn performance against targets and KPIs for 2019-20. This being the case, he considered it did not require full presentation in this meeting, and the meeting could focus on further discussion in advance of a proposal to recommend approval of the SAR to the Board:<br><br>-AT's main observations highlighted the need for the committee to closely monitor those areas identified as dropping in grade to 'requires improvement'– Engineering, Sport and Reaseheath Training. JC requested that it be noted that Motor Vehicle within Engineering remains very strong and this was a factor in keeping the college grade to a 'good' overall. AT expressed his view that the SAR process and validation has been tough and rigorous and represents a college pushing to improve. MC confirmed that whilst the SAR process is robust and challenging, the team strives to be completely objective and avoid using the process based on preconceptions. AT noted that there are many positive aspects that can perhaps be celebrated more clearly in the reporting.<br><br>-PG agreed that it was a robust review and confirmed his view that the college remains a 'good' overall with outstanding aspects within that. He requested that the drop in Food and Foundation from grade one be noted by the committee and monitored via the risk review and quality monitoring reporting this year. AT added that it may have been useful as part of the external validation process to have looked at some of these areas that have dropped in more detail. MC noted, for context, that those areas that have dropped from a one to a two are still very close to the threshold for a grade one and that Reaseheath Training and Sport are close to a grade two.<br><br>-DP explained that his main interest is how progress against the quality improvement plans (QIPs) is effectively monitored going forwards. TM confirmed the college processes involved in monitoring in year progress against the QIPs including the termly performance reviews with the Executive team for each department, the half termly reviews with the Quality team, which TM joins, as well as ongoing monitoring at department level. She welcomed the committee's role in overseeing this monitoring process and provided assurance that the QIPs for those areas the committee has identified will be reported to the committee at each meeting. |
| 6.2 | Following the discussion, AT requested approval from the committee to recommend the SAR 2019-20 including the reported outturn against targets and KPIs, for recommendation to the Board for approval at its meeting in December 2020. Members were content to approve the recommendation. |
| **6.3** | **RESOLVED: The committee recommends the Self-Assessment Report 2019-20 including the reported outturn against targets and KPIs, to the Board for approval at its meeting on 10 December 2020.** |
| 6.4 | Draft Targets and KPIs 2020-21: MGower provided some context for the discussion. He explained that the quality team this year will be looking at how to take the SAR process forwards and considering how targets and KPIs can be used more effectively to drive performance improvements. TM then presented an overview of the proposed objectives and KPIs for 2020-21 for consideration and discussion by the committee. A discussion followed on the proposals: |

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| | -JC welcomed a review of the SAR process and she suggested that it could perhaps move from a descriptive, document heavy process to a more analytical KPI focused process, which also avoids staff spending so much time writing up these documents.

-AT welcomed a review and considered the key objective of this review to be which are the critical KPIs for governors to understand and monitor and that can indicate in year if things are on track or if there is a concern emerging. He wondered if a task and finish group might be a useful way of contributing to this review.

-PG also welcomed MGower's comments and suggested that it would be useful to review what we have now against the criteria of how the KPI is meaningful and useful and to try and reduce the number of KPIs that governors monitor. He suggested that inclusion of the previous year's performance and college benchmarking ought to be part of the target and KPI reporting to governors, as this helps understanding. He wondered why the previous year's performance had not been included in TM's KPI presentation. TM noted, and the committee acknowledged, that the committee had requested earlier in this meeting that TM's SAR presentation that covered last year's performance not be given in the meeting as all members had already reviewed it in the SAR validation earlier in the week. It was noted that this information is clearly reported in the SAR report, but TM offered to provided details again now if needed. AT did not consider this necessary.

-MC reminded members of the KPI reporting infrastructure flowing from the strategic plan through the strategic risk register with the eight major strategic risks, underpinned by KPIs that are reported to the Board termly as part of this strategic risk reporting. He noted that the full report on college wide KPI performance for 2019-20 is available in December as it takes some time to assess the previous year's performance, for example, financial outturn. He emphasised that the Executive team are keen to make sure the KPIs are mapped against the relevant committee so that they can have that ongoing monitoring and also to develop the dashboard reporting, specifically refined for governors, in addition to the usual committee scrutiny. AT thanked MC for this useful reminder of the overall college context.

-DP echoed MC's approach and noted that the strategic plan and strategic objectives lead what we do and so the KPIs need to be meaningful in this context and avoid creating an unnecessary burden on managers and governors. JC endorsed this approach and noted that the key strategic targets should be the end point with the KPIs serving as meaningful milestones along the way that can help managers and governors to monitor if things are on track or if there are any emerging concerns in year. PG added that in year factors such as attendance are critical KPIs as milestones. He agreed that realistic year end targets are still important as these can serve to drive improvement year on year. |
| 6.5 | AT summarised the discussion as very helpful and noted that there is evidently a piece of work to do on clarifying the targets and KPIs and developing the governor dashboard. TM thanked the committee members for their very helpful comments and she would take away the key aspects of what we are aiming to achieve and what milestones we can use to check if we are on track in year. DP agreed that it would be helpful for further work to be done but noted that the current meeting agenda is significant and the meeting has not been able to complete the agenda in the time available. AT agreed it is important not to overcomplicate things and he would be content to recommend approval of the KPIs currently presented, subject to the view of the other committee members. MC endorsed the tone of the comments in seeking not to overcomplicate and he accepted that work ongoing could look to put more milestones in place but he considered the KPIs currently proposed as acceptable, provided they are linked to each committee to allow close monitoring each term. PG said that he had reservations about recommending the current KPIs proposed for approval to the Board as he thought that there were too many and some further work was needed to reduce these to four or five key KPIs for the Board to include attendance, retention, overall achievement rates and progression. He suggested that further |

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| | detail could then be looked at in committees by exception, as required. Given the view expressed by PG, DP wondered if an additional committee meeting should be arranged for December to allow some further work to be done by TM and this can then be brought back to the committee for consideration. MG agreed with this suggestion and the other members of the committee concurred. It was agreed to seek to arrange a further committee meeting in December to revisit this agenda item and complete the outstanding items on the agenda. |
| **7.** | **Apprenticeships Performance**<br>*(Taken between item 5.3 and 5.4 but recorded in these minutes as shown on the agenda item 7)* |
| 7.1 | Reaseheath Training (RHT) and DART performance update:  SY presented her update report and apologised for the late arrival of the paper. She explained that the move over to the new management information system this month had delayed the availability of the information a little. Her paper and presentation covered last year's performance in RHT and DART, both overall and timely achievement. She noted that there will be no official comparative data or minimum standards for 2019-20 due to the coronavirus pandemic.  She explained that the significant drop in rates for RHT is due to the lockdown earlier in the year meaning that end point assessments for standards could not be completed. She added that this has not hit DART's data so much because it still works with more frameworks rather than standards and so has not had the end point assessment problem to the same extent. She gave assurance that the latest lockdown will not have the same impact because end point assessments are continuing this time.  She also provided assurance that despite the delays to end point assessment, learners have remained engaged and on programme and will be supported to complete their apprenticeships despite the delay. In terms of performance so far this year, SY confirmed that both RHT and DART are on track for a minimum overall achievement of 75%, with the main concern being the continued impact of covid disruption and possible redundancies of apprentices. She noted that recruitment is holding solid at the moment with improvements on last year for DART, with Vet Nursing being the main concern as practices are not currently taking on placements, though this could start to ease from the spring. She gave assurance that she feels confident on RHT numbers this year.  Finally, on quality improvement progress on RHT she explained that the new management team is working well and have completed the vast majority of the actions in the Quality Improvement Plan and this positive progress should see completion of the actions and good progress in 2020-21. |
| 7.2 | AT thanked SY for her very helpful update. He considered the huge impact of end point assessment issues on performance figures needed to be highlighted to the Board, even though this was out of the control of managers. He considered that the committee needs to monitor this group of about eighty apprentices to ensure they are properly supported to complete their programmes. The committee agreed that reporting to the committee to monitor this group be made to the committee this year. |
| **8.**<br>8.1<br>8.2<br>8.3<br>8.4 | **Teaching and Learning and Curriculum Update- these items were postponed to a later meeting.**<br>Adult and STEM update<br>Digital learning strategy update<br>ALE update<br>Teaching and Learning and CPD update |
| **9.**<br>9.1 | **College Group Strategic Risk Register and KPIs**<br>FE and Apprenticeships risk update report was received for information and assurance. |
| **10.**<br>10.1<br>10.2 | **Monitoring reports for information – these items were postponed to a later meeting**<br>FE Academic Board Minutes<br>Update on implementation of college security policy |

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| **11.** | **Any other business** |
| 11.1 | Online Learning Walks – guide for governors – raised by Peter Green: PG raised the suggestion that it would be helpful to have some guidance on how these might work to make them more effective. For example, he explained that, in the past, it has been helpful to do these with another member of the team and being able to discuss with them after the session. He said that it would also be useful to be able to talk to a small number of students after the session.  WW agrees that this should be possible and something can be worked on and communicated to governors to support the online learning engagement. JC supported this approach but noted that governors need to be aware that it is the art of the possible at this moment and any contact, such as an online link meeting with the department manager or being able to drop in to an online session are equally useful, even without this additional structure. PG expressed his wish that this structured approach be communicated to governors so that this can be progressed before Christmas. |
| **12.** | **Any items to escalate to the risk register/report to Board** |
| 12.1 | The committee agreed the items to report to the Board in the committee Chair's report are:<br>• Good assurance received on management of Covid impact on the student experience<br>• The College Self-Assessment Report is recommended to the Board for approval at its meeting in December (following a look at the SAR in the Board meeting on 12 November for any feedback)<br>• The significant impact on RHT performance figures for 2019-20 due to the lack of end point assessment and the commitment of the college to support these learners affected to complete this year<br>• The decision to re-look at draft targets and KPIs, to be brought forward for approval at a future meeting<br>• The ongoing work to facilitate engagement of teaching and learning during this time of remote working<br>• The need for flexibility in approach at the moment due to latest lockdown and pressures on management, and ensuring that committee business is completed in as practical way as possible. |
| **13.** | **Date of next meeting** |
| 13.1 | It was agreed that a further meeting would be arranged in December, with a date to be arranged outside the meeting, in order to complete the meeting's business.<br>The proposed move of the spring term meeting was postponed for decision at the later meeting (proposed move: Thursday 4 March 2021 at 2pm to 11 or 12 March 2021) |

The meeting closed at 1.30pm
Approved as a correct record 12.03.21.