



THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE QUALITY & CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Thursday 30 November 2023 at 5.00pm (*online via Zoom*)

PRESENT:	Tina Coates	Chair	<i>(part attendance)</i>
	Jacob Clay	Governor	
	Nathan Garat	Governor	
	Rob Lewis	Governor	<i>(Acting Chair from item 6)</i>
	Gillian May	Group Principal & Chief Executive	
	Janet Robertson	Governor	
	Alison Wheatley	Governor	

APOLOGIES:	Aaina Khan	Student Governor FE
	Ksenija Pavlovska	Student Governor Sixth Form
	Antonia Spinks	Co-opted Member of Q&C Committee
	Signe Sutherland	Governor
	Angela Wellings	Chair of Corporation

IN ATTENDANCE:	Amanda Down	Principal, Sixth Form	
	Anne Entwistle	Principal, FE	
	Karen Griffiths	Vice Principal Sixth Form	
	Reena Kainth	Assistant Principal Apprenticeships	<i>(part attendance)</i>
	Tracy Reeve	Group Director of Governance	

<u>MINUTE</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
<u>No</u>		
1.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies had been received as shown above.	
2.	<u>Notification of any other urgent business</u> There was no other business notified.	
3.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> No member declared a conflict of interest with the agenda.	
4.	<u>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 September 2023</u> The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 September 2023, having been previously sent to members, were agreed as a true record and would be taken as signed by the Chair. All Members were agreed.	
5.	<u>Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting Held on 26 September 2023</u> The Director of Governance presented a report which confirmed that all matters arising had been actioned or would be covered within the current agenda.	
(Item 7.5.)	<u>Apprenticeship Update</u> <i>(Item taken at start of the meeting to allow staff to leave.)</i> The AP Apprenticeships (RK) presented an update on Apprenticeships across the group since last reported in September 2023. ➤ <u>Achievement 2022/23</u> RK outlined the achievement data 2022/23 for Apprenticeships across the college group. The following was highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final achievement at year-end 2022/23 for the group was 60.1% (prior year figure was 54%). Governors were reminded that the ESFA had set a minimum target of 60% for 2022/23. 	

- Achievement at Langley College was positive – at 67% - and ahead by 16% on the prior year. The BCA figure was less positive at 50% but RK assured the meeting that actions were in place to ensure this was higher for 2023/24.
- The number of apprentices who had gone past their planned end date and were now continuers into 2023/24 was too high. At BCA 71 apprentices passed their planned end date and at Langley there were 32 learners who had gone past their planned end date. RK assured the meeting that comprehensive arrangements were now in place to work with these apprentices and their employers to support early achievement in 2023/24.
- The meeting noted that apprentices failed to complete on time for many reasons including: change of employer/ losing their job role/ functional skills challenges/ failing mandatory exams/ non-availability of end point assessment (EPA) dates. RK confirmed that although some of these factors were outside the college's control the Apprenticeship Team had recognised that improvements could be made to college processes including the timeliness in booking EPAs.

The meeting sought additional detail on the number of learners who had gone past their planned end date. RK informed the meeting that at Langley College this issue was centred on Electrical or Carpentry & Joinery apprentices. As already discussed there were numerous reasons including a lack of availability for EPA and employers not getting learners ready (a particular issue in Carpentry). The number of hard exams in these two technical areas was also a factor. Governors noted that the college had now employed highly skilled skills coaches in these curriculum areas which had already improved attendance and learner engagement in Electrical Apprenticeships.

The meeting sought clarity on why apprenticeship performance at BCA was so much worse than Langley. RK informed the meeting that BCA had moved from frameworks to standards later than Langley College and the Skills Coaches had not received sufficient training on the new standards. Another reason was that BCA had delivered all of the Functional Skills element of the apprenticeships online which meant achievement in this mandatory area was less strong. RK confirmed that all of the Functional Skills element was now delivered face to face at both colleges and was to some extent front-loaded within the apprenticeship qualification. The Principal FE (AE) confirmed that BCA had a number of legacy issues with apprenticeships pre-merger which had taken time to remedy after the merger and the sharing of good practice from WFCG specialist staff.

The meeting noted the following key actions which had been identified to continue to drive forward apprenticeship performance across TWFCG during 2023/24:

- Maths & English delivery needed improvement. Apprentices were now using EQUAL and receiving additional face to face support where required. Recently recruited functional skills tutors were now delivering face to face sessions to learners at Langley. RK confirmed that feedback from apprentices indicated that this was already improving the learning experience.
- Apprentices did not yet consistently receive the level of personal development, additional learning and welfare support experienced by full time students. Reasonable progress had been made but there was still work to do to ensure parity.
- Pastoral Support for apprentices was now being provided by Apprentice Support Officers at Langley and BCA. This has been a role at Langley College for over 4 years but was a new role for BCA; there was already positive feedback from staff and apprentices on this support. The Apprentice Support Officers were providing day-to-day support to apprentices and employers, being their first point of contact in regard to attendance, punctuality, off the job hours, safeguarding and delivering tutorials.
- New apprentice and employer survey questions will be distributed in December.
- An Apprenticeship Data Dashboard was in development – as requested by Governors - to inform progress and early intervention opportunities.

AE highlighted the increased pastoral support for apprentices which had previously been missing at BCA. The newly recruited Apprentice Support Officer at BCA had already received positive feedback from skills coaches, employers, and apprentices. AE assured the meeting

that management were very mindful of the need to provide the same holistic 'wrap-around' support for apprentices as given to other learners.

The meeting took the detailed Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2023/24 for Apprenticeships as read and Governors asked questions as appropriate. RK highlighted the following aspects of the QIP: Functional Skills; regular feedback to apprentices and employers; and the need to fully involve employers in curriculum delivery and sequencing. The meeting noted that the Apprenticeship Team was arranging employer forums and focus groups to see how the College could best support them and how they could in turn support their apprentices. The lack of feedback which had been raised as a previous issue was being addressed and RK confirmed that surveys would go out in the next couple of weeks to employers and apprentices.

The meeting discussed the action identified for a need to go further with careers advice for apprentices. From 2023/24 the final progress review for apprentices would be an 'exit review' to establish what their next step would be. Governors commended this new initiative and asked whether the College was collecting data on how many learners stayed with their employers or moved on. It was agreed that comparative annual data would allow governors to see any trends. RK confirmed that the Apprenticeship Team would start to collect destination data at exit interviews.

The Committee Chair (TC) commended the progress made on Apprenticeships since the Deep Dive considered by the Quality & Curriculum Committee (April 2023). The CEO assured the meeting that the close monitoring of ongoing progress would continue and an updated 'snapshot' on progress since merger would be brought to the next meeting of Q&C Committee.

The Apprenticeship Update report and QIP 2023/24 was NOTED and RECEIVED.

ACTION:

- i) The Data Dashboard for Apprenticeships would be developed with the input of the Link Governor (to include Exit Interview data).**
- ii) An update position paper on Apprenticeships to be brought to the March 2024 meeting of Q&C Committee**

[RK left the meeting.]

6. **Curriculum Risk Register (RR)**

This item was presented by the Group Principal (GM). Members considered the curriculum risk register 2022/23 detailing the key strategic risks. Members were reminded of the six priorities for TWFCG, namely:

- i. Growth - with a particular focus on 16-19 study programmes.
- ii. Finance - to return to "Good" financial health (not maintain as currently stated on the RR).
- iii. Quality - to raise academic standards and approve student outcomes to agreed targets.
- iv. Inclusion - to enhance social mobility through improved access to college provision.
- v. Alliances - to develop alliances and secure the strategic future of the Group.
- vi. Resources – to maintain investment in the Colleges resources to provide inspirational teaching and learning.

The meeting noted that there were no risks and no changes to risk scores since this document was last seen by Q&C Committee in September 2023. The Group Principal (GM) reminded Governors that the changes to the narrative on the Risk Register since last seen by the committee were highlighted to aid visibility. The meeting considered the following risks in more detail:

Risk 1: Financial and Quality risk associated with the self-assessed RI grade for Langley College (Current risk score at 16 'amber'): This risk reflected the recently self-assessed grade of 'Requires improvement' for the Langley College Self-Assessment 2021/22. The detailed mitigation was noted by the meeting and GM highlighted the role of Vice-Chair Rob Lewis in acting as a Langley College Link Ambassador to monitor progress with the improvement plan throughout 2022/23. Achievement rates and student feedback were much improved at Langley and a further Peer Review of the provision would take place in Spring 2024.

Risk 2: Ongoing recruitment & retention of key staff/ Higher staffing costs/ Potential Trade Union action (Current risk score at 16 'amber'): The meeting was reminded of the ongoing

issue with 'hard-to-fill' vacancies across the FE sector and TWFCG was struggling to deliver some adult courses due to a lack of specialist staff. A graduate training programme had been trialled in September 2023 to support the recruitment of teaching staff. The meeting was reminded of the need to maintain the staff costs as a percentage of income ratio below 70%; anecdotal evidence from other colleges supported this becoming more difficult.

Risk 3: Uncertainty and risks associated with emerging national curriculum reforms (Current risk score of 12 'amber' after mitigation). The meeting was assured that the college continued to keep a close watch on all aspects of curriculum reform and would be providing targeted IAG for learners in response. Reworked curriculum plans would be in place for September 2024 once delisted courses were confirmed. The college was now actively engaging with the plans for T level delivery.

Risk 4: Under recruitment leads to non-financially viable curriculum areas (Current risk score at 12 'amber'). GM highlighted that this key risk associated with 16-18 enrolment was being closely monitored and managed but remained a challenge. Group sizes had been reviewed in September 2023 to inform planning for 2024. GM reminded the meeting that the recent curriculum planning project – supported by the FE Commissioner Team – had not led to any substantive recommendations for change or action.

The Curriculum Risk Register was NOTED and RECEIVED.

7. **Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2022/23**

- **Headline College Summary**

Before the meeting went on to consider the detailed SARs for each element of the WFCG provision, the CEO/ Group Principal (GM) presented a paper which provided the consolidated headline data for outcomes for learners 2022/23. The meeting noted the performance – achievement and retention - by college and level of provision against prior year and national rates. Governors were pleased to note the strong overall completion/ pass rate of 94.3% compared with the national average of 90.9% and the prior year WFCG figure of 90.8%. The retention rates were also above national average figures - Level 1 at 92.9% (National Rate [NR] of 91.1%); Level 2 at 92.9% (NR of 91.1%) and Level 3 at 89.8% (NR 89.6%) apart from Entry Level which was just below the NR at 89.5% (NR 92.4%). GM assured the meeting that there was a back story to explain this lower retention in all cases – entry level students had been moved to different courses for their own benefit but this impacted the raw data. The retention data against EDI characteristics was noted – there were no gaps based on gender. In relation to ethnicity there was a gap in retention data for Asian/ Asian British learners – 88.4% against the NR of 93.4% - which would be included on the Langley College Improvement Plan. There was also a small gap with Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British retention data – 90.2% against the NR of 92.9% - this was also an improvement action for 2023/24. The meeting noted the detailed Functional Skills and GCSE English and maths data. GM confirmed that there were fewer Functional Skills learners in 2022/23 as many had moved over to GCSEs; the College aim was to get as many learners to Grade 4 as possible. GM highlighted the positive data on page 24 where the college performance in grade progress could be seen against the national average. GM highlighted that this college summary obscured the four very different colleges with very different data but this detailed data was being used within each of the colleges at a department level.

The meeting discussed the EDI data in more detail and sought clarity on the different EDI characteristics of each of the four colleges. It was noted that Principal FE (AE) was doing some work to analyse this at the moment but the largest curriculum areas in terms of a mix of ethnicity were Construction and Motor Vehicle which were also male biased and were on a fast track for quality improvement within Langley College. Principal Sixth Form (AD) asserted that Windsor College was probably the most diverse college in terms of ethnicity within TWFCG. The mix of ethnicity at Strode's College was increasing but this was currently still a majority of White learners.

- **Sixth Form (SF)**

This item was presented by the Principal, Sixth Form (AD). Members noted the detailed justification for the self-assessed grades of 'good' for Overall Effectiveness, Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development and Leadership & Management.

The meeting noted the detailed SF SAR and accompanying data which highlighted the following. Teachers at Strode's and Windsor Colleges prioritised high expectations for

achievement and focus on developing academic, personal, professional, and vocational skills. The colleges offered a comprehensive curriculum and had established strong links with industries, higher education institutions, employers, and the community. Student satisfaction was high, with over 91% of students reporting that they enjoy their learning and college experience. The colleges provide personal development opportunities through lessons, pastoral support, and enrichment activities, helping students develop the necessary behaviours and attitudes for a successful future. Students received high-quality support and guidance for their next steps, resulting in successful progressions to higher education, training, and employment. Notably, all four students who were offered a place at Oxford or Cambridge in 2022-23 were successful in gaining their places. AD highlighted the national dip in progression to HE which was evidence of the cost-of-living crisis and learners not wanting to incur high HE fee debt.

A-level results were positive, with a sustained pass rate of 96.08% and an improvement in high grades (A*-B) to 38.5% compared to 2019. There had been significant improvements at Strode's, with 45.43% of students achieving A*-B grades, and a 3% increase in A*-C grades. L3 BTEC results remained consistent with 2019, with a 97% pass rate, and high-grade results staying in line with previous years at 74%. AD confirmed that there was still development work to be done at Windsor in relation to High Grades achievement. The achievement rates for all 16-18 learners on A-level study programs were above the average for the sector, with an 89% achievement rate, a 2% improvement compared to 2019. The achievement rates on all long courses for 16-18 learners continued to improve, reaching 86.3% at Strode's and 84.10% at Windsor. GCSE pass rates were in line with sixth form sector averages and above GFE averages, reflecting a national dip in GCSE Maths results; 55% of SF learners gained a grade 4 or above in English GCSE compared to 22% GFE average. Similarly, 34.5% of SF learners gained a grade 4 or above in Maths GCSE compared to 13% GFE average (MIDES data). Attendance rates were consistent with the national average, with a slight dip to 87%, but punctuality to lessons was excellent, with over 97% on-time attendance. The meeting noted the ongoing struggle to secure strong attendance and the increased impact of parents/guardians who sanctioned non-attendance.

The meeting noted the detailed Quality Improvement Plan and the seven actions that would take the sixth form at TWFCG towards an 'Outstanding' Ofsted grade:

- Improve two-year retention rates on Level 3 courses to be in line with College KPI and secure improved achievement rates
- Ensure consistency in high grade achievement in identified A Level subjects
- Improve GCSE Maths high grades (9-4) to pre-Covid levels
- Ensure no differential between student groups, in particular:
 - Achievement of 19+ males to be in line with 19+ females
 - Close the gap between achievement of 16-18 learners and 19+ learners.
 - Achievement of African learners to be at least as good as SFCA and GFE averages
- Improve value added scores on identified L3 courses
- Secure consistent engagement of all courses with local, regional, and national priorities
- Develop opportunities to share good practice across the Sixth Form provision to ensure consistently high-quality TL&A and learner experience.

The meeting discussed the ongoing issues in relation to mental health and wellbeing which continued to be at raised levels post-Covid. Governors were assured that robust safeguarding measures were in place to deal with the increase in numbers of learners declaring mental health concerns. VP Sixth Form (KG) confirmed that since Covid learners were now very used to the vocabulary around mental health and were comfortable with using it so that they called on support more readily. Although the new intake of learners for 2023/24 seemed to be exhibiting stronger resilience the increased level of anxiety and mental health issues were not likely to disappear. AD reminded governors of the decision taken two years ago to separate wellbeing from Additional Learning Support as they supported very different issues and needed the distinction. KG informed the meeting that she and the FE Safeguarding Lead (AE) had completed a recent senior safeguarding course which had alluded to the need to change the narrative and promote a stronger focus on developing resilience. Learners should be helped to overcome challenges rather than just calling on someone else to diagnose and fix the issue.

The Sixth Form SAR 2022/23 and QIP 2023/24 report was NOTED and RECEIVED.

- **Further Education (FE)**

This item was presented by the Principal FE (AE). Members noted the detailed justification for the self-assessed grades of 'Good - 2' for Overall Effectiveness, Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, and Leadership & Management. The meeting also noted the self-assessed grade of 'Requires Improvement – 3' for Personal Development. The rationale for this grade 3 in Personal Development and the areas flagged for improvement were noted as follows:

Strengths:

- **Industry Placements:** BCA excelled with 90% completing high-quality placements, enhancing employment readiness.
- **Community Engagement:** Students positively contributed locally, fostering purpose and self-esteem.
- **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion:** Active student participation in events promoted understanding of diverse backgrounds.
- **Safeguarding Curriculum:** Diverse methods ensured a comprehensive understanding of key safeguarding issues.
- **Employer Engagement:** Robust engagement led to positive destinations and successful university applications.

Areas for Improvement 2023/24:

- **Social Action Projects:** Increased opportunities for projects, enhancing self-esteem and sustainability knowledge.
- **Adult Learner Support:** Improved provision for positive outcomes among adult learners and apprentices.
- **Turing Scheme Funding:** Engage with Turing Scheme funding for enhanced cultural capital.
- **Group Tutorial Topics:** Improved delivery to ensure consistency and improved understanding of safeguarding, local risks and wellbeing topics across all provision types.

The detail of the Further Education SAR 2022/23 by category was noted as follows:

Achievement and Progress:

- BCA achieved a 93% course pass rate and 89% overall achievement in 2022/23, exceeding sector averages.
- Langley's vocational programme achievement rose to 81% for 16-18 students (from 77.3%), with adult achievement at 73.5% due to an 80% retention rate.

Inclusivity and Support: Students with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCP) at both BCA and Langley achieved at a level comparable to their peers. The invaluable assistance of specialised tutors and Additional Learning Support (ALS) staff ensured good communication with Local Authorities, facilitating the necessary funding for optimal support.

Quality of Education: Teachers crafted curriculum content with a dedicated emphasis on industry relevance, culminating in good achievement rates for FE colleges. AE highlighted the strong culture of peer review and sharing of good practice that was now common place across FE and between the two colleges.

Behaviour & Attitudes: Teachers created professional environments, fostering mutual respect and support. Opportunities for social action projects (where available) enhanced student engagement and community impact.

Personal Development: BCA (90%) and Langley (75%) provided relevant industry placements, contributing to employment readiness. Extensive community engagement opportunities and robust careers advice lead to a high number of positive destinations, progression and successful university applications. However, as already discussed there was a need to ensure consistency across all of the FE provision including Apprenticeships.

Leadership & Management: Leaders actively invested in staff development, resulting in enhanced student outcomes. Robust connections with local stakeholders further strengthened student support and safety.

Quality Improvement Plan 2023/24 The areas for improvement and future development 2023/24 in FE were noted as follows:

- Improving the quality of Level 2 programmes to align with Level 1/ Entry level and Level 3 standards.
- Implementing targeted action plans for improvement in construction and motor vehicle.
- Strengthening support for adult learners and apprentices in English and Maths.
- Ensuring uniformity in attendance and optimising the design of study programmes.
- Broadening opportunities for social action projects and elevating the quality of careers advice.
- Pursuing Turing Scheme funding to enrich students' experiences.
- Enhancing communication, transparency, and ensuring consistent Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for staff.

The meeting discussed the SAR and was pleased to note that the Information & Guidance (IAG) had been strong during 2022/23 so the college had the right students on the right level 3 courses for 2023/24. AE confirmed that achievement in Construction and Motor Vehicle (MV) was not yet where it needed to be. The recent change in awarding body for MV – the college moved to City & Guilds but this was not suitable for all learners. The provision at Langley had now changed back to IMI with BCA staying with C&G; this gave learners options as the two awarding bodies suited different students. AE also highlighted the lack of Value Added on construction courses with some poor data due to admin errors; achievement would be within 2023/24 data due to this error. The meeting discussed the need to increase Employer Engagement to ensure consistency across the whole curriculum; this would be tested during the Quality Review Boards with each curriculum area. AE confirmed that the college would use its employer database from the Industry Placement work to focus on employers who were keen to engage with the college on curriculum design and delivery.

The Chair sought confirmation from the CEO that the College Group was where she would want it to be one year post merger. GM confirmed that she was pleased with the progress made post-merger which would need to be further evidence by strong retention and tracking data at mid-year 2023/24. GM was particularly pleased with the progress made at Langley College where there had been a wholesale change in behaviour and attitudes of learners and staff. AE confirmed that the SLT would review the self-assessed Grade 3 for personal Development before any Ofsted inspection but it was the correct assessment at this point in time to reflect where the College needed to in to develop a holistic package for learners. GM also asserted the ongoing strength of the performance data at BCA and in the Sixth Form which had been maintained during the post-merger year when people were working to integrate and use new systems

The Further Education SAR 2022/23 and QIP 2023/24 report was NOTED and RECEIVED.

[The Chair of the Committee – TC – left the meeting at 6.00pm and RL took over the Chair's role.]

- **Higher Education**

The meeting noted a report from Principal Sixth Form (AD) which advised the governors of the key strengths and areas for development arising from the review of the Higher Education (HE) and Access to HE provision in the academic year 2022/23. During 2022/23 there were 119 students enrolled on full and part-time programmes in Higher Education validated by four universities (Bucks NU, University of Reading, University of West London, and University for the Arts London), City and Guilds and Pearson. AD highlighted that the different format of the SAR from FE and Sixth Form was because it needed to be submitted to different external agencies.

The key strengths of the HE provision at TWFCG during 2022/23 were noted as:

- HE Pass Rates had been sustained for the sixth year at 95%.

- High standards had been achieved on final year courses: seven Firsts and nine 2:1s achieved on BA (Hons) Working in Integrated Services for Children and Young People.
- High academic standards continued to be delivered across the provision as evidenced through external verification from course progression boards and external examiners' reports.
- The introduction of cross-moderation between Partner Institutions had been identified as good practice in external examiners' reports.

Areas for improvement included ensuring the early identification of students needing additional support to support sustained outstanding achievement, the continued sharing of good practice across the provision to ensure consistency in standardisation processes and the continued focus on developing strategies and resources to support students with academic writing skills. AD informed the meeting that the Management Team would continue to review the HE offer and provision to ensure that it was meeting the needs of students and local, regional skills priorities. This would include a review of the college HE provision to ensure that it remained competitive; including a review of current HE partners and courses to aim for the best offer possible to learners and maintain some flexibility. Ad confirmed that there would be a review of the current TWFCG commitment to the Office for Students (OfS) Register in light of the introduction of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement forecast for 2025. Governors sought clarification on whether the strategic aim was to grow the HE provision at the college. AD informed the meeting that whilst growth would be desirable, the Executive were very mindful that HE was a highly competitive market. TWFCG had a clear view of its target audience for HE and the current approach would be a continued focus on high quality and meeting student needs.

The meeting noted the identified improvement within the HE provision at TWFCG since the 2021/22 SAR:

- All HE staff had received training and now had a clear understanding of the mechanisms and processes in place in order to support HE students effectively, including using the new cross college ILP system.
- Development of a more specific and focused HE peer development network, through the use of peer observations within departments. This has benefited staff in being able to share expertise in order to share teaching strategies and has improved student experience.
- Students had benefited from workshops which ensured a smooth transition from one level to the next, by sharing information about the potential next stage in their studies to achieve their career aims.
- A stronger focus on internal progression, including liaising with Level 3 Lecturers has ensured that Level 3 learners are better prepared for their next year of study and move into HE.

The Acting Chair (RL) commended the good progress and the strong performance. AD highlighted the HE Team at TWFCG and the excellent work they did to care about and support HE students as individuals. Recent improvements around identifying individual learning needs and providing holistic care for HE students had produced a sea-change. This had included Learning Support (writing skills, research, referencing skills, footnotes etc.) as well as pastoral care and ongoing Information and Guidance advice.

The Higher Education (HE) SAR 2022/23 and QIP 2023/24 report was NOTED and RECEIVED.

- **Adult SAR 2022/23**

Principal Sixth Form (AD) presented the report which gave a review of discreet adult provision 2022/23 delivered at TWFCG including Access to HE, ESOL at Langley, Windsor and Strode's, Multiply and community provision, business and professional, languages and leisure courses delivered at Windsor and Strode's. The meeting noted that all four elements of this provision – Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development and Leadership and Management – were all graded as 'good' (2) for 2022/23.

The following highlights were noted:

- Pass rates on Access, ESOL, Languages, Business and Professional courses were good.

- Retention at Langley College had been identified as an area for improvement.
- Progression was good across the provision with new courses offered to support learners with the introduction of Essential Digital Skills, Living and Working in the UK, Pre-Access L1 and higher-level languages.
- Improved pastoral, welfare and financial support had been noted across the provision with clear sign posting and discreet support offered where needed. AD highlighted that this would be a continuing area of focus for 2023/24 with the development of student Apps to support improved communication and access to services for adult students.
- Attendance for 2022/23 was below the college KPI at 86% overall but the meeting was reminded of the context of the adult cohort and the challenges faced by adult learners. The meeting discussed the challenges with asylum seekers often being moved out of area at short notice.

The meeting noted the clear actions which had been put into place for 2023/24 to secure a move towards a grade of 'outstanding' for Adult provision:

- *Quality of Education:*
 - Improve Pass Rates on ESOL at Strode's College.
 - Improve retention on ESOL courses at Langley to bring in line with NA.
 - Continue to review and develop the course offer to ensure learners needs and interests were met and local skills' priorities were addressed.
 - Continue to develop the additional learning support offer for adult students to support academic success and positive progression.
- *Behaviour & Attitudes*
 - Improve attendance across all adult provision to be in line with college KPI of 90%.
 - Continue to develop the use of Google Classroom for all learners to ensure consistent accessibility for all and inclusivity for adults into college/ learning life.
- *Personal Development*
 - Develop further enrichment opportunities across all adult learning programmes to enhance learners' experiences and support development of Skills for Life.
- *Leadership and Management*
 - Continue to review and develop the course offer for adult students including online delivery and free course opportunities to meet college targets for growth and student recruitment. (Strategic Target: £2.9m)
 - Continue to develop connections with employers and local businesses to support development of courses for adult learners that meet local, regional, and national skills needs particularly within screen industries, care sector and life sciences.
 - Support all teaching and support staff to improve the utilisation of Google classroom, the new ILP and the Adult Learner App to ensure adult learners have full access to learning, pastoral, welfare and financial support mechanisms.
 - Utilise the ALS funding to create a more flexible, but permanent, presence for ALS support for adults.

Further development of discreet adult provision to secure growth in student enrolments was ongoing including online delivery, and Multiply (numeracy) and short courses delivering skills identified in the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs). AD informed the meeting that there had been a great deal of interest in the following adult courses: 'Cooking on Budget' ; helping parents to support their children with Key Stage 1 Maths; Managing Online Money; and, sewing and gardening courses with a focus on developing numeracy skills. The meeting discussed the current challenging environment in relation to full-cost courses. There was also a great deal of positivity and interest in relation to the new curriculum provision at Windsor for the Screen Industries. There was likely to be adult short courses in all aspects of this new curriculum - hair and make-up, script writing, sound, and visual effects - as well as mainstream provision.

The Adult SAR 2022/23 and QIP 2023/24 report was NOTED and RECEIVED.

Safeguarding Update

Principal FE (AE) presented a paper which provided a suggested format for Safeguarding reporting to the Board during 2023/24 in order to give governors the correct level of assurance.

The proposed reporting structure was noted and agreed as follows:

- Annual Safeguarding Report presented to the Board at the second full meeting of the academic year (December).
- Standing safeguarding reports presented at all Quality & Curriculum Committee meetings which would focus on emerging themes.
- Case studies to be shared to demonstrate process and impact.
- Filtering and monitoring processes and reporting will be demonstrated at the December 2023 Board meeting.

The content for the WFCG Annual Safeguarding Report was noted and agreed as:

- Overview and current challenges in safeguarding
- Presentation of relevant data on safeguarding incidents and trends for past & current year
- Analysis of data to identify key areas of concern or improvement
- Digital safeguarding
- Training and professional development for staff and students
- In-year and future planning and initiatives

AE confirmed that any changes to safeguarding policies would be highlighted and shared with governors. Significant changes would be accompanied by additional presentations or training where required or requested.

The meeting agreed that the suggested format for future safeguarding reporting to governors generated the necessary assurance for the Board. The meeting reminded the Exec that they had suggested that a dashboard format would be helpful with some anecdotal evidence and examples including any occasions when there might have been a problem with the college process. AE reminded the meeting that a comprehensive Annual Safeguarding Report for 2022/23 would be presented to the Board on 13 December 2023.

The meeting APPROVED the suggested format for Safeguarding reporting which would be RECOMMENDED to the Board for approval (13 December 2023).

AE/ KG

10. **Update on in-year performance**

The meeting noted an update report on enrolment and retention 2023/24 and performance year-to-date against the College KPIs. The meeting commended the strong enrolment across the College Group for 2023/24 which had been maintained throughout the crucial six-week census period. GM highlighted that growth at the end of this period stood at 6% on the prior year for 16-18 learners (243 learners). Retention on 16-18 courses was 96.1% YTD and retention on adult courses was 100%. The detailed attendance data by learner type was also discussed. The detail of this report along with the corresponding report on HE, Adult and Apprenticeships was taken as read as Governors agreed that this item had already been covered in discussing the detailed SAR's 2022/23 and QIPs 2023/24. The detailed Risk Register for Apprenticeships was also taken as read.

The monitoring reports on in-year performance 2023/24 – 16-18, Higher Education, Adult and Apprenticeships were NOTED.

11. **Annual Complaints Report 2022/23**

The meeting noted the annual Complaints Report for the Windsor Forest Colleges Group 2022/23. Governors were reminded that the College strategic priorities placed a high priority on the management of learners' experience, in particular learner satisfaction and its likely impact on the teaching and learning experience. The College therefore regarded complaints to be one of the key elements of the learner voice.

The meeting noted that there was a decrease in complaints from 28 in the prior year to 19. GM highlighted that BCA complaints were also included for the 2022/23 data and had not been included in the prior year figures. Of the 19 complaints received, 10 were upheld – 7

MINUTE
No

ACTION

curriculum related and 3 in customer service. The meeting was assured that complaints were being dealt with in a timely and effective manner. Governors were given assurance on the very detailed nature of the complaint which had been carried over from the previous academic year. The EDI data breakdown in relation to the complaints was noted; there were no trends within this data.

AD highlighted that concerns within the sixth form hardly ever became formal complaints but it was agreed that it would be good for Governors to have some visibility on any concerns raised within the sixth form.

The Complaints report was NOTED and RECEIVED

ACTION: The Complaints Reporting would be further developed for 2023/24 to cover all aspects of TWFCG provision.

12. **Letter to T Level providers from DfE**

The Director of Governance (TR) updated the committee on a letter sent to all FE Colleges from The Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP (Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education) on 7 November 2023. This was presented to the Q&C Committee for information. The letter from the Minister followed the announcement from the Prime Minister (4 October 2023) about the Government's intention to create a new 'Advanced British Standard' (ABS) – a new baccalaureate-style qualification which "*will combine the best of the A level and T Level*". TR confirmed that the letter from Robert Halfon sought to provide assurance to FE Colleges on the ongoing validity of the T Level route for the foreseeable future. This was in response to concern from some FE Colleges who were already T Level providers that parents and learners were questioning the value of enrolling on T Levels now that the ABS had been announced. There had also been some anecdotal evidence of concerns from staff at early adopter colleges. The meeting also noted the accompanying briefing note which provided additional detail on the ABS and how the reforms would be implemented.

The letter from the Minister and the update on the Advanced British Standard was NOTED.

13. **FE Commissioner's termly newsletter**

The meeting noted the termly newsletter from FE Commissioner Shelagh Legrave dated 9 November 2023.

NOTED

14. **Dates and Times of Future Meetings** *(All to be held online via Zoom.)*

The draft meeting dates for 2023/24 were noted as:

- Thursday 14 March 2024, 5.00pm
- Wednesday 19 June 2024, 5.00pm

NOTED

15. **Any Urgent Business**

There was no urgent other business notified.

The meeting ended at 6.30 pm

Chair

Date