MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LEICESTER COLLEGE CORPORATION: MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM STRATEGY AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2025

Present: Jackie Rossa (Chair)
              Nicky Randall
              Shabir Ismail (Principal)
              Susan Hopewell
              Neil McDougall
              Kyle Cameron
              Shawn George

In Attendance: Louise Hazel   Director of Governance and Policy
                 Kully Sandu   Vice Principal
                 Lee Soden (Observer)   Governor
                 Andy Cookson   Assistant Principal
                 Fran Monk   Director of Quality Improvement
                 Pete Thorpe*   Personal Development Manager
                 Matt Widdowson (Minutes) Governance and Policy Officer

* Present for item 6

1   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1.1   Two new student governors were welcome to the meeting along with Neil McDougall who had joined the CSQI Committee. The Assistant Principal was also present at the meeting for the first time.

1.2   Lee Soden would be observing the meeting.

1.3   There were no declarations of interest.

2   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1   Apologies were received from Lesley Giles.

3   MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19 JUNE 2025

3.1   **The minutes of the meeting on 19 June 2025 were <u>agreed</u> as an accurate record and <u>approved</u>.**

3.2   MATTERS ARISING

3.2.1   There were no matters arising.

4   2024/25 INITIAL RESULTS

4.1   The Principal presented the 2024/25 initial results which included the most recent data. The following points were highlighted.

   4.1.1   As of 24 September 2025, 16-18 achievement was at 80.9%, which was the highest achieved although still lower than the NAR of 83.4% meaning that there was still more work to be done.

   4.1.2   The data for adults was still being cleansed and there were still some results missing due to external verification.

   4.1.3   T Level achievement rates had moved to 72.5%. However, pass rates were used rather than achievement rates as it reflected the numbers reaching the end of their two-year course. The pass rate had improved to 88.7%.

   4.1.4   Apprenticeships were at 66.1% which was above the NAR of 62.3%.

   4.1.5   The overall GCSE Maths pass rate stood at 25% compared to the national pass rate of 17.1%. For 19+ maths the pass rate was at 34%

4.2   The Vice Principal, Adults and HE, provided an update on the Engineering curriculum area. The following points were highlighted.

   4.2.1   The Vice Principal had taken temporary responsibility for Engineering and had taken the following actions:

      4.2.1.1. There had been clarification of PAM roles.

      4.2.1.2. Support had been put in place for six new members of the teaching staff. Four of these new staff had been recruited from overseas and work had taken place to help them understand what was expected from students. Additionally, strategies were put in place to support them to teach in a second language. Mentors were also provided to new teaching staff.

      4.2.1.3. There had been a focus placed on formative assessments, retrieval, and scaffolding.

      4.2.1.4. There had been a refresh of L3 which had impacted on the curriculum area's T Levels.

4.3   **Governors made the following comments.**

   4.3.1   **Level 1 would need to be a focus in the QIP.** There were still concerns around L1 16-19 which required further investigation. Attendance had been thought to be the underlying cause and this was now being monitored on a weekly basis. Retention was another issue for L1.

   4.3.2   **What was driving low attendance?** There were multiple issues including transport problems. There would be a deep dive carried out for L1 English and Maths.

   4.3.3   **Were there any particular areas of concern regarding attendance?** Areas that did not do so well included sport, HAAB, computing and food. Areas that did well included CAPA and childcare. The areas that were doing well had been actively monitoring and tracking, and the College' Attendance Policy had recently been updated to strengthen this.

4.3.4   **With regards to attendance, was the teaching and learning being looked at?** The deep dive would be considering this as well as progress.

4.3.5   **There had previously been some concern that root causes were not being considered. However, as staff were now regularly meeting to discuss these issues, it was now less of a concern.** There had been a discussion at a full meeting of the CLT.

4.3.6   **The problem with the figures being discussed was that movements of around 1% were not statistically significant. What was more relevant was the comparison with the NARs where 2% change could be classed as being significant.**

4.3.7   **It was important to properly engage with staff rather than just impose another areas' 'best practice' on them.** Agreed; there had been good discussion and engagement about effective strategies for improving attendance.

4.3.8   **When were the deep dives planned for?** The deep dive would take place before Christmas. They would take place across the College to follow students' journey across their L1.

4.3.9   **It was concerning that, although the committee had been told that actions had been taken to improve attendance, it was still falling. There had not been a proper evaluation. What would be different this year? Should the College be considering the inclusion aspect of the new Ofsted framework which would no longer just be focused on high needs?** At the start of the year the College updated its data collection so that attendance could now be monitored from day one. It had been recognised that there was an attendance issue and that there had previously been less rigorous approach to monitoring in some areas. CLT had met to discuss this and had decided to set out attendance expectations from the outset including by writing to parents and carers. SLT now met on a fortnightly basis to monitor attendance KPIs. Providing high quality teaching and learning had also been recognised as being an important part of this.

4.3.10 **The work done in hospitality would be replicated in computing including building a culture of involving parents and carers.**

4.3.11 **A lot of work had gone into trying to get English and maths classes together on one day, which had involved working closely with MECC.**

4.3.12 **What triggered the deep dive in Engineering in January 2025?** There had been a difficult situation in Engineering and there was only limited information coming from the curriculum area.

4.3.13 **It was important to remember that behind the data there was someone's child, or sibling. The question should always be "have we done everything we could have done?"** Agreed.

4.3.14 **What were T Level placements currently like?** Work placements were going well. There had recently been work on tracking placements and ensuring that high quality placements were identified. Furthermore, IAG had helped students to better understand what they would be undertaking as part of their T Level.

4.3.15 **For apprenticeships, it was noted that the NARs were still a low benchmark and might still rise a little. However, there had definitely been an improving trend.**

4.3.16 **Was the 30% figure for GCSE English and maths based on high**

grades? It was.

4.3.17 **The attendance was really high for GCSE maths.** One of the big issues across the sector was students not sitting their exams. Students had been encouraged to attend by being given breakfast in the morning, and by having counsellors on hand during the exams to provide support.

4.3.18 **The work that MECC had done should be shared across the College as these were great results.**

4.3.19 **The SAR should refer to pass rates.**

4.4 **Governors <u>noted</u> the 2024/25 initial results.**

5   <u>ENROLMENT UPDATE</u>

5.1 The Principal provided an Enrolment Update. The following points were highlighted.

5.1.1 For 16-19 study programmes (including T Levels) the College was on track to be at 102.3% of plan, although some withdrawals were to be expected. This was the highest ever number.

5.1.2 Enrolment had worked really well as had inductions.

5.1.3 There had been some issues around T Levels stemming from the need to adhere to the entry requirements and the College had been prepared to take a hit on this to ensure that students were on the correct courses.

5.1.4 It was known that the ESOL 16-18 target would not be met at the starte of the year due to new arrivals joining throughout the year.

5.1.5 Likewise with Launchpad students as these were students who had not applied to the College. Courses did not commence until week 3 and there would be students joining later on, although it could not be left too late due to the requirement to enrol them on functional skills courses.

5.2 **Governors made the following comments.**

5.2.1 **Was there a safety net in place to support late arrivals?** The exact support available would be down to the individual programme area and how late it could be left for a student to catch up. It was a matter of professional judgement with shorter, more intense courses being more difficult to accommodate late starters. There tended to be very few late applicants though. In terms of inductions, while the main presentation took place early on, the induction period lasted for six weeks with catch up sessions available. Areas had been given more autonomy over how they facilitated latecomers.

5.2.2 **The Careers team had worked hard to promote 'swap don't drop.'** This had been embedded into the induction programme.

5.2.3 **Was the target post-42 days?** Yes.

5.3 **Governors <u>noted</u> the Enrolment Update.**

6   <u>INDUCTION, PDE AND INTENDED OUTCOMES (PDE FRAMEWORK)</u>

6.1 The Assistant Principal and Personal Development Manager presented a paper

on Induction, PDE and Intended Outcomes (PDE Framework). The following points were highlighted.

6.1.1 <u>INDUCTIONS</u>

6.1.1.1. The previous 'Bus Stop' system had not been popular and a lot of work had taken place to re-design the induction process. A new framework and matrix had been developed, as well as single induction events taking place at the Sue Townsend Theatre (STT).

6.1.1.2. In addition to induction events at STT, further induction sessions would take place until the half term break including sessions that were more bespoke to the curriculum area such as library skills, goal setting and visioning.

6.1.1.3. The events held at STT had gone well with positive feedback received from staff. Everyone had valued the opportunity to come together as a whole cohort and the sessions had included talks on curriculum, essentials, student services and careers. There had also been autism-friendly sessions and a session for pathways to learning students. Sessions had lasted around 2.5 hours including a break.

6.1.1.4. Students were asked to make their own way to STT which was also part of their personal development, and attendance had been 95%. Catch-up sessions had been made available.

6.1.1.5. These sessions were not mandatory for curriculum areas, and Construction and HAAB had run their own inductions due to specific health and safety information they had needed to provide to new students.

6.1.2 <u>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</u>

6.1.2.1. The framework had been reviewed, and a new personal development programme had been put in place which had been mapped onto the new Ofsted framework.

6.1.2.2. There was now a PD calendar and around 30 learning blocks. Programme areas could build up their own calendar from these blocks which gave them the opportunity to work around their own requirements.

6.1.3 Work was underway to organise an afternoon tea for Black History Month which would include a PD session on values which may include community members.

6.2 Governors made the following comments.

6.2.1 **The student governor had received feedback that the induction session at STT was too long and that they could not recall everything that had been said.** It had been recognised that the length of the sessions had been an issue. There would be more work to cut down the length and make the session more interactive.

6.2.2 **Hospitality students had the opportunity to hear an ex-student talk at the induction session which had been well received.**

6.2.3 **Was feedback on the new induction programme being taken?** Yes.

Further consultations were underway, and it may actually be a good topic to discuss at the Student Liaison Committee.

6.2.4 **Did the personal development programme still include some of the more challenging topics, and was it possible for programme areas to avoid these?** There were still mandatory training blocks, and learning coaches were keen not to avoid the more challenging topics. There would also be PD themes running across the whole College.

6.2.5 **Were learning coaches subject specialists?** In some areas they were. Some curriculum areas such as CAPA had requested subject specialist learning coaches and many of them were also lecturers or practising artists. What was key though was that learning coaches were seen as being part of the whole team.

6.2.6 **It should be seen as everyone's responsibility to deliver PD, not just the learning coaches.**

6.2.7 The aim of renewing the PD programme had been to ensure the consistency and equity of the offer, and how it could contribute towards an inclusive offer. There was also an opportunity to work towards one of the Five Missions, Taking back our streets, by looking at antisocial behaviour.

6.3 **Governors noted Induction, PDE and Intended Outcomes (PDE Framework).**

7 REVIEW OF RISKS

7.1 The Chair and Director of Governance and Policy presented the Review of Risks. The following points were highlighted.

7.1.1 The Audit Committee had assigned risks to the other committees to monitor.

7.1.2 It was still too early to provide a narrative on these risks.

7.2 **Governors made the following comment.**

7.2.1 **The mitigating actions were observations rather than controls. ELT would need to look at this and the Audit Committee could assist.** Noted.

7.3 **Governors noted the Review of Risks.**

8 COMMITTEE SELF ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN

8.1 The Director of Governance and Policy presented the Committee Self-Assessment and Action Plan. The following points were highlighted.

8.1.1 The issue around the recruitment of governors to the committee had been highlighted.

8.1.2 With regards to the issue around dashboards, a new governor dashboard had been developed and would be used in conjunction with other dashboards during committee meetings.

8.1.3 A briefing on the new Ofsted framework would need to be arranged.

8.2 **Governors made the following comment.**

    8.2.1 **The dashboard would be a valuable tool in meetings which could be referred to during presentations.** Noted.

8.3 **Governors <u>noted</u> the Committee Self-Assessment and Action Plan.**

9   <u>AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING</u>

9.1 The Chair requested suggestions for agenda items for the meeting of the CSQI Committee.

    9.1.1 **The SAR and draft QIP would be major items on the next agenda.**
    9.1.2 **At the next meeting there should be consideration of what curriculum areas should be asked to present to the committee.**

9.2 **Governors <u>approved</u> the suggestions for the items for the next meeting.**

10   <u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u>

10.1 Governors requested an update on the restructure of the Quality Team. The Director of Quality Improvement provided details. The following points were highlighted.

    10.1.1 There would be a new Head of Quality for Teaching and Learning who would be responsible for implementing strategy.
    10.1.2 Job descriptions had been altered for the two existing Quality Managers and Curriculum Development Leads.
    10.1.3 The aim had been to get more 'bodies on the ground' and to provide early interventions.

10.2 **Governors <u>noted</u> the update on the restructure of the Quality Team.**

11   <u>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</u>

- 27 November 2025
- 26 February 2026
- 26 March 2026
- 18 June 2026