

# Minutes of Meeting of the Personnel & Quality Assurance Committee of the Governing Body of Carmel College held on Tuesday, 16 September, 2008 at 5.30 pm

**Present:** Mr Peter Alcock (Chair)  
Mrs Margaret Buckley  
Dr John Humphreys  
Mr Karl Smith  
Mrs Helen Stevenson  
Ms Esi Appiah-Anane (Student Governor)

**In attendance:** Mrs Moira Barton  
Mr Nick Burnham  
Mr John Perry (Clerk)  
Mrs Alison Fishwick (Minuting Clerk)  
  
Mrs Carmen Nunez, (Year 0 Coordinator) for Item 5

## 1. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 2. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Canon Leo Stoker.

## 3. **Minutes of the Meeting of 5 February 2008**

**The Minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly.**

## 4. **Matters Arising**

### **Agenda Item 6 – January 2008 Modular Results**

The Vice Principal had followed up the query in respect of the significant fall in 2007/08 of the Media Studies A-B Pass Rate which was 26.9% compared to the previous year at 69.4%. The Vice Principal reported that this fall was due to some issues with the module in the first place which meant a number of students had to re-sit the module and the following year they did not need to re-sit, hence the fall in the A-B pass rate.

### **Agenda Item 8 – Framework for Excellence: Final Report**

The Vice Principal reported that at a recent meeting the body were not in a position to report on what changes will be made to the Framework, although it looks similar to the framework that was in operation last year. However, the Vice Principal added that they were receptive to the issues raised.

## 5. **Quality Assurance Report: University of Liverpool Degree Provision – Year 0**

The Year 0 Co-ordinator, gave an overview of the Degree provision at Carmel which began in 1995 with just 12 students. Since its inception Carmel has enrolled over 800 students studying a range of Science and Engineering modules feeding into 86 programmes and 4 University of Liverpool Faculties. The Department also offers the first year of a Medicine and Dentistry programme.

Governors enquired about the retention rate for Year 0. The Year 0 Co-ordinator responded that this year the retention rate is in the low 90s – but this is high compared to Universities. Governors enquired about progression data, the Year 0 Co-ordinator explained that it has been difficult to identify the progression of students via the University's Spider Database as the course codes change which makes tracking difficult. The College have asked that Carmel's students are flagged up in some way for the future as it has only been possible to monitor those students who have kept in contact with the College. Governors were informed that one Year 0 student has gone on to lecture at John Moores University and another is specialising in Robotics.

The Year 0 Co-ordinator referred to the Institutional Visit which took place at the end of the last academic year the purpose of which was to ensure that the appropriate policies, procedures and resources were in place for Carmel to continue to deliver University of Liverpool provision. The Visit had been successful and Governors noted the three recommendations made.

Governors enquired about the benefits of the Year 0 provision. The Year 0 Co-ordinator referred to the benefits of the students' natural progression to the University of Liverpool, access to University talks on biological sciences and visits to courses. It was also a different experience for the staff at Carmel teaching on the programme.

The Principal wished to express his thanks to the Year 0 Coordinator for the range and quality of the provision which has flourished under her leadership and phenomenal contribution. In particular, the Medical Dentistry course which involved winning the trust of the medical dentistry team at the University. The Chair congratulated Carmen Nunez and her team on the success of the Year 0 provision and wished to place on record the thanks of the Committee.

## **6. Ofsted Report 2008**

The Vice Principal explained that the annual report is compiled by Ofsted's desk based monitoring which is carried out for those Colleges judged "Outstanding". Ofsted look at performance data and the college's Self Assessment Report making judgements on both current performance indicators and the rigour and accuracy of the college's quality assurance and capacity to improve. A risk assessment is then completed as to the scheduling of the next inspection. The Vice Principal was very pleased to report that the desk based monitoring went very well and the judgement was that inspection should be as currently scheduled.

Governors noted that the Chief Inspector of Ofsted is visiting Carmel in October and it will be an opportunity to raise any concerns the College may have, in particular the paragraph in the report relating to the dip in the long course success rates to around the median level in 2005/06 due to the General Studies Success Rate; this Governors noted that via negotiations with the LSC should not have been taken into account but unfortunately the desk based monitoring personnel were not informed of this.

**Governors noted the contents of the report.**

## **7. Staff Climate Survey**

The Vice Principal was pleased to report that the Staff Climate Survey, which is now in its third year, showed increasing positive responses to the statements. There were no scores below 3. The target now is to achieve scores 4 – 6 with all statements.

In summary, 13 of the 20 statements showed an increase in score, the remainder were unchanged.

Governors noted that Investors in People are due to visit Carmel soon.

The Chair congratulated the College on the outcome of the Survey.

**Governors noted the content of the report.**

## **8. Examination Results 2008**

The Vice Principal was very pleased to report the outstanding 2008 examination results at both AS and A2. The ALPS Value Added analysis shows that the A2 results place Carmel in the top 10% in the country and AS results in Band 1 with a score above the best single top score over the benchmark; no College in the country has been in this position since the ALPS system has been in place. In short, the examination results are the best ever since they have been measured by ALPS.

The Chair wished to place on record the Committee's congratulations to the management team for this success. The Principal added that it is a fantastic achievement and a credit to everyone at Carmel College. The Clerk referred to the systems underpinning the teaching and learning, for example, the excellent quality systems.

The Clerk was asked to communicate the Committee's appreciation of the work undertaken to achieve these results to all staff at Carmel.

The Student Governor enquired as to why it was not possible to take a GCSE Maths re-sit which enabled students to achieve an A or B grade, the ceiling at present is a grade C. The Vice Principal responded that as the majority are re-sit candidates the idea is to try and guarantee that students achieve a C, however this in itself is an issue as progression to Advanced courses is not possible unless a student has an A or B grade in Maths. The Vice Principal agreed that this would be raised for discussion at the next Head of Faculty meeting.

**Governors noted the contents of the report.**

## **9. Current Accommodation Arrangements**

The Principal informed Governors that the project is slightly ahead of schedule, is on budget and relationships with the contractors remains good. Construction has begun on the new Art Building with the laying of the concrete floors. The steelwork for the third finger of the three fingered building is soon to be erected. There had been a lot of pressure in setting up the mobile accommodation in readiness for the start of term. The staff are delighted with the temporary accommodation and, apart from the initial safety issues with the decking which has now been addressed, there are no health & safety matters to consider.

The Student Governor referred to the lack of toilet facilities and water dispensing facilities in E Block and T Block and whether anything could be done to address this. The Principal responded that unfortunately there is no water supply available but the College was aware of the issues.

**Governors noted the Principal's verbal report.**

## **10. Staff Travel & Subsistence Policy**

The Chair referred to three sections of the Policy which required clarification:

- a) **Page 2 Para 1.1 Car Sharing** – The College were asked to clarify whether the second paragraph indicating the College’s wish to actively promote the use of car sharing and the increase in the rate of mileage allowance paid also applies to the first paragraph suggesting that should you wish to explore the option of car sharing for day to day travel to work to contact the HR Manager. The HR Manager thought that this first paragraph related to the Travel Plan and the second paragraph relates to staff travelling from work to external meetings etc. It was agreed to make this section clearer to the reader.
- b) **Page 2 Para 1.1 Car Sharing and Page 3 Para 2.2 Mileage Allowance** – The second paragraph under 1.1 stating the College’s wish to actively promote the use of car sharing and will therefore increase the rate of mileage allowance paid by 5p per mile for the first passenger and 2.5p per mile for each subsequent passenger will infringe on the current Inland Revenue’s allowance for the casual user of 40p. It was agreed to clarify this point.
- c) **Page 2 Para 2.2 Mileage Allowance and Page 4 Para 6 Payment** – Advice on claiming mileage allowance in both paragraphs are contradictory. The HR Manager agreed to clarify the advice to be given and amend the Policy accordingly.

**The Committee approved the Policy in principle subject to the aforementioned clarification and necessary amendment and authorised the Chair to give approval to the final draft of the policy.**

## **11. Staffing Update**

Governors noted that there are currently two vacancies. The recruitment of a Laboratory Technician has not been successful; only one applicant has returned the application form out of thirteen which were sent out. The Chair suggested contacting those who expressed an interest but did not return the application forms to ascertain the reasons for doing so; there may be a trend.

The Vice Principal wished to place on record his thanks to the Human Resources Department who have done a fantastic job. The College is very pleased with the quality of candidates. Governors noted that four of the new appointments are past students. The HR Manager reported that the organisation of a “bank” of cleaners has gone well.

The Chair referred to the positive outcome of the Climate Survey along with the positive recruitment and feedback and commented on the fact that people must feel that Carmel College is a good place to work and this is in no small way a reflection of the College’s management style.

**Governors noted the contents of the Report.**

## **12. Accident Report**

Governors noted no underlying common themes although the Chair drew caution to incidents 1, 2, 3, 7 & 8 (situations where members of staff have slipped on food and drink or rubbish which had been left near the skip) and felt that this type of incident could be avoided and asked for the need for constant vigilance.

**Governors noted the contents of the report.**

## **13. Absence Report**

Governors noted the positive picture. There was only one member of staff on long term absence and is being supported by occupational health and home visits. There are no Support Staff on long term absence. Cleaning staff absence is a little high.

**Governors noted the contents of the report.**

**14. Committee Performance Indicators 2008-09**

The Performance Indicators show that the Committee is fulfilling all functions effectively and referred to the recommendations therein.

**15. Any Other Business**

None.

Signed by the Chair: .....

On this day: .....