

Minutes of the Learner Council Forum held on 24 May 2018 in the Cove, Dartford

Chair:	Assistant Principal Teaching and Learning – Wendy Davies (“WD”)
Members:	Principal – David Glead (“DG”) Deputy Principal Curriculum – Rhiannon Hughes (“RH”) Student Engagement Assistant Dartford – Lorna Goddard (“LG”) Student Engagement Assistant Gravesend – Trevor Fox (“TF”)
Student Union Representatives:	Millie Knapp - L3 Applied Arts (Dartford) – (“MK”) Eliza Cox – L2 Professional Cookery (Gravesend) – (“EC”) Meg Irving – L2 Early Years (Dartford) – (“MI”) Jasvinder Philpot – L3 Graphic Design (Dartford) – (“JP”) Lucy Giles – L3 Early Years (Gravesend) – (“LG”) Harry Rutherford – FL2 Food, Beverage & Cookery Studies (Gravesend) – (“HR”) Fred Titshall – L2 Motor Vehicle (Gravesend) – (“FT”) Fiona Winder – L3 Electrical Engineering (Gravesend) – (“FW”)
In Attendance:	Clerk to the Corporation – Yolanda Hughes - (“YH”) College Governor – Phil Hatton (“PH”) College Governor – Keith Norman (“KN”) Vice Principal Gravesend – Mark Andrews (“MA”) Assistant Principal Sport, Care and Computing – Chris Lydon (“CL”) Executive Director Facilities and Resources – Sean McCormick (“SM”) Teaching and Learning Improvement Partner - Sue Barry (“SB”)

Action By

1. Introductions

WD welcomed learners to the meeting of the Learner Council Forum and explained that, going forward, CL would be taking on operational responsibility for the Learner Council with LG and TF, as WD was changing her role.

Prior to commencing the meeting, WD asked everyone to introduce themselves around the table in the customary manner.

2. Feedback on points from last meeting

DG and RH received feedback from the last meeting and had drafted in MA and SM to help address points raised from this meeting. Members noted that the majority of points on the schedule had been carried forward to this meeting.

WD referred members back to the points raised on the Dartford and Gravesend Learner Council Feedback sheets overleaf and mentioned that additional comments raised at today’s meeting were noted in **red** on the sheets.

Feedback Sheet

Gravesend Council Final Points May 2018

	Point raised	Suggested solution	Action By
1	<p>As a department we are available to cater for members of the public, therefore, we need equipment that works and is up to specification; however, we feel our kitchen does not have enough items to support all members cooking, as well as ovens that are temperamental with knobs that don't work and the occasional smell of gas which may not be safe – Catering.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC mentioned that the equipment ovens were very faulty – knobs were falling off, smell of gas not investigated, in terms of insurance etc. 	<p>Please can the kitchen be checked for equipment that needs replacing or adding to, and a new oven fitted that is safe to use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG introduced MA, Head of the Gravesend Campus and line manager of the Catering Curriculum Manager to respond to these concerns. • MA reported that the machinery suppliers were in College the week before last to check the kitchen equipment, particularly the Training Kitchen – the writing on the control knobs had worn off and would be replaced with new ones in a week or so. • MA advised that the gas smell was traced to poor cleanliness of valves – oven was now back in use. • Also looked at some of the equipment in the Production Kitchen; there was one oven in there that was out of service and would be kept for spare parts use. • MA advised that there was a steam oven in the Refectory, which may be moved during the summer, so that the Production Kitchen had an additional steam oven in there. • He confirmed that regular checks would be made on the equipment in both kitchens and added that the College had received a 5 star hygiene rating, overall. 	
2	<p>We have been having agency staff that teach us for a while now, due to a member of staff leaving. However, they don't seem keen on actually teaching us and have often said it's more for the money than anything else. This also leaves us with a problem, as we have only completed half the course and only have 6 weeks remaining – Engineering.</p>	<p>Employ staff members, rather than relying on agency.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FW added that agency staff coming in to cover staff that had left the College did not cover the course content or teach properly. She mentioned that one member of agency staff referred to Google and wrote on the board and just stood there and waited for students to be quiet before teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA advised that he had asked Steve Crockford, Curriculum Manager in Engineering to undertake a review of each of the groups. The College would endeavour to keep staff in place and facilitate whatever support workshops were required to support learners. MA would also look at bringing extra staff into the area to help with the process. 	

Feedback Sheet

Gravesend Council Final Points May 2018

	Point raised	Suggested solution	Action By
3	<p>Since the lifts have been taken out of action we have had a few problems, that main one is boys in the College have been “upskirting” the girls whilst walking up the stairs. Also students who have asthma have not been allowed to use the lifts to the top floor and this has caused issues, even when staff have been shown there is proof of their conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LG mentioned that some tutors were already aware of the “upskirting” issue, but no action seemed to have been taken regarding this. • Lifts taken out of action at Gravesend, with staff telling students that they can’t use the lifts, unless they have a valid reason. 	<p>Reopen lifts or offer lift passes to those who need them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RH advised that, in terms of the “upskirting” issue, this needed to be reported by learners, as it was a type of bullying abuse and stressed that it was a zero tolerance issue. • MA added that he did circulate with tutors, a message that the College viewed this kind of behaviour as sexual harassment and had a zero tolerance approach. • RH mentioned that some learners need to be educated about what constitutes sexual harassment and this would give victims the confidence to report any such incidences. • MA advised that he had asked tutors specifically to find out the names of learners with health conditions to enable them to use the lifts. He asked members to let him or TF know if a learner required access to a lift and this would be dealt with straight away. • MA mentioned that there had been repeated occasions whereby lifts were being misused and repairs were needed and asked Learner Voice members to relay a message to their peers to use them with respect. One of the students suggested that cameras should be placed inside or outside the lifts to monitor any incidences of damage. 	<p>RH will speak to Teri Boulton to alert her tutors to the “upskirting” issue and ensure that they relay a message to their learners that the College has a zero tolerance approach to this.</p> <p>Learner Voice representatives</p>
4	<p>Speed ramps at the back of the campus have started to lift off of the road, as well as there being some larger pot holes around the site as well, whilst we understand some people don’t drive carefully, a lot of others do and we would not like our cars damaged.</p>	<p>Fix the Ramps and potholes before they become too dangerous.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA mentioned that there was a bolt standing up on one of the speed bumps in the back rear car park area at Gravesend and he had pulled it down. He believed that there was now nothing remaining that would damage vehicles on campus. 	

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Gravesend Council Final Points May 2018

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MA confirmed that any holes would be filled and re-set with compound and re-drilled, but this work would be undertaken over the summer, so that the car park was not out of action. MA reported that the surface dressing behind GT Block would be re-covered with instant tarmac. 	<p>MA to speak with Estates to action.</p> <p>MA to speak with Estates to action.</p>
5	<p>Canteen – Nothing has changed following the last meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Learner Voice representatives had a meeting with the Head of Catering and it was agreed that, for next academic year, a full student member in Catering would oversee changes in the Refectory relating to cleanliness, type of food served etc. TF reported that the Learner Voice representatives had designed a Catering Survey for students to complete by hand or online, gauging their views on the current food options and service received in the Refectory etc. One of the Learner Voice representatives mentioned that, if a learner came out of a lesson late, they missed out on food. However, there was an option to reserve food and not many people were aware of this option. Therefore, this, together with the advertisement of new menu changes, could be promoted. 	<p>Update from yourselves please.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MA stated that the College needed to become better at communicating with learners about the Refectory. He mentioned that Refectory staff had experimented with different menus in April and May, but this may have gone unnoticed by learners. He agreed that the College needed to inform learners and staff of what it was doing in these areas to receive better feedback. He welcomed changes led by the student body and added that the College would try new menu ideas in June and relaunch an attractive offer in September. WD suggested that electronic menus could be posted on MyDay for students and staff. DG said that, in terms of the Refectories at Dartford and Gravesend, the College was not looking to make a profit, they were run at cost. He said that the College needed to offer prices that were affordable and minimise wastage etc. MA reported that he had spoken with Lawrence Jenkins to determine the types of food options that sold well in both canteens and changes were needed to those menu options that did not sell well. It was also agreed to look removing most of the £3.50 price points from the menu. This was quite challenging, in that there was a diverse group of students at Gravesend particularly and the College needed to come up with a menu that satisfied the majority of people's needs. DG proposed that it would be useful to have sub-groups at Dartford and Gravesend for Catering staff and students, with suggestions fed back to these groups for further discussion and possible implementation. DG reported that a new café would be opening in September at Dartford. 	

Feedback Sheet

Dartford Council Final Points May 2018

	Point raised	Suggested solution	Action By
1	Not enough outside eating/seating areas	<p>More picnic tables/benches needed around the College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG introduced SM, Executive Director of Facilities and Resources to respond to these concerns. SM stated that the College used to have a number of picnic benches around the Refectory and, because of changes in the buildings, the existing benches had been scattered around the campus. He said that there always appeared to be free benches available. He raised a concern over the litter that came with the use of these benches, as students did not throw litter in the bins and this created another problem. SM asked the Learner Voice representatives to promote the putting of litter into bins to their peers to prevent this from happening. • One of the Learner Voice representatives asked if some benches could be located outside E Block. SM said that he had no objection for seating to be moved and asked members for their suggestions as to where to place them around the campus. 	<p>SM will speak with Marketing for their assistance in promoting a litter campaign.</p> <p>SM will speak with Estates to request that some of the benches be moved to the outside of E Block. DG asked SM to look at purchasing additional seating.</p>
2	<p>More water fountains in Dance studios and E Block</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow • Not cold • Dirty water 	<p>Replace water fountains and more needed in Miskin Dance H Block and Studios Water Fountain needed in E Block</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SM reported that the College had a contractor that maintained its water fountains and explained that these fountains were replaced regularly, together with the filter that the water came through. SM said that the water was just tap water that came out at the same temperature of tap water, not cold water. • SM asked members to contact Estates if they identified any faulty water fountains and the College would arrange for the contractor to come in and look at them. 	

Feedback Sheet

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In terms of the lack of water fountains in E Block, SM explained that the corridors were very narrow in that building and there were no common areas to place water fountains that would pass fire regulations. It was agreed to locate a water fountain outside of E Block. 	SM to action.
3	<p>Graphics/3D design, Photography</p> <p>1- Printers do not connect with the Macs 2 - Printers fall off the system 3 – More storage needed 4 – Print Credit</p> <p>Numerous jobs have been logged and emails have been sent but with no permanent fix suggested.</p>	<p>1 - Mac server needed 2 - This is continuous and stops teaching and learning from progressing on a daily basis. A job needs to be logged to get the printers back onto these computers but once this has been resolved it could only be a matter of hours until the issues reoccurs. This has left students, understandably, very angry and frustrated. Some have suggested that this is the reason they have decided not to stay on at the college. Printing 3- Some have suggested that this is the reason they have More storage needed 4 - Printing credit allowances are also a huge barrier especially within the creative digital design and photography departments. Our courses are print heavy and rely on students printing work every day to either use in sketchbooks or experiment with. In both areas the students were able to print as often as they wanted without being charged up until the end of academic year 2016. They were then 'networked' and that is when students had to pay for their prints and when all of the printer issues started occurring.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JP mentioned that there were so many issues with servers – Mac based software printing system is Windows and does not correlate – printers fall off Apple Macs and causes frustration. Another problem occurred whenever a new toner or cartridge was required for printers or mopiers – takes a while for IT to come and fix it and students can't get on with their work in the meantime. Mopier cartridges are also changed by IT, as they store them. Prevents students from using mopier. Would be useful for lecturers to store cartridges locally and teach them how to change a cartridge to save time etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SM was aware of the printing problem with Macs – now can see the printers to all Macs and they are not disappearing. Printers will be available on Macs. DG said that it was a good idea for lecturers to have the ability to store cartridges locally. 	SM to investigate.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JP said that there was not enough credit for printing – only £12 allocated. A boost or top-up would be helpful. JP mentioned that she had no access to Adobe software at home – can use it in College, but not externally. Able to use Enterprise systems, which allows students to log in from College, as well as from home. Helps to improve coursework etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DG advised that Curriculum Managers had the ability to advise IT which groups required more printing credits – easily resolved. SM advised that Macs were quite difficult for the College to manage and, because of GDPR regulations, the College had a responsibility on how it managed PCs and how staff accessed PCs etc. There is a Mac User Group to work on resolving these issues and the College was currently trialling a system for students to use, that was not that different to a normal PC. In terms of Adobe software, the College signed up to the Enterprise Quality, which enables all staff and students to have access to all Adobe software. SM mentioned that a couple of years ago, the College had free printing for Mac users and not PC users. However, the College was now trying to standardise its systems to ensure that Mac users had the same standard experience as PC users. 	<p>SM to speak to Curriculum Managers in Graphics to ensure that printing credits are topped up to get students through their course.</p> <p>SM will ensure that Graphics tutors are aware of how to access Adobe software from outside the College and relay this information to their students.</p>
4	<p>Shuttle bus Last bus at 6.30 rarely turns up</p> <p>Only the female bus driver swipes the ID cards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MK mentioned that there had been a discussion around shuttle buses and the quality of drivers. MK said that the last bus does not turn up and if a student has to stay late, that is the only means of transport for them to get home. 	<p>Update from February meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.30 pm bus - feedback from Contract Manager is that they believe he does come – College will use scanner to identify exactly what time people are getting on the bus. DG reported that the College had received comprehensive feedback from the company and was informed that the scanner system is currently a pilot which is why only one driver is currently using one. In terms of not checking lanyards, Abbey Travel spoke to their drivers to request that they carry out this action, going forward. DG confirmed that members of the public were not allowed to ride on the shuttle buses. However, students were allowed to bring their parents with them to ride on the buses. DG mentioned that the bus company had a detailed scheduled replacement strategy of buses, with targets to meet and part of the 	

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		<p>scanning process was to monitor if buses were full at peak times for planning schedules, going forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members noted that the bus App was working and to contact Student Services if it was not. In terms of buses not arriving on time, this was dependent on the traffic situation in Dartford. Issue about drivers on phones, rude, speeding etc. DG asked members to log details such as the time and driver name and feed this information back to Student Services. 	
5	Canteen	<p>Please see additional points of feedback. Students would like to use contactless cards to pay for meals, as well as their ID badges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SM reported that one of the vending machines at Dartford accepted contactless payments, but stated that it was up to the vending machine supplier to supply further vending machines like these. He agreed to follow this up with the supplier and find out if they would be supplying further machines the facility for contactless payments. In terms of the query regarding contactless payments on till points, SM said that they incurred additional costs for the College that were not really justified. 	SM to contact vending machine supplier.

WD thanked learners for their well-presented points.

3. Points from this Term's Campus Learner Council

WD reported that the College held its first Student Conference at SusCon for all those students that had given their time willingly to assist the College in other events, outside of their normal course hours. These included Student Union representatives, Learner Voice representatives, Student Governor representatives and British Value Champions. Members noted that the food was provided by Catering students from Gravesend. WD thanked Learner Voice representatives and SB, TF and LG for their contributions to this Conference and added that it had been a great success, with great energy and some brilliant ideas for the next academic year.

4. Any other business

DG thanked students for their valuable contributions and confirmed that the forum was beneficial to obtain feedback on students' experiences with regard to teaching and learning within the College.

He concluded by wishing everyone good luck in terms of their next steps and looked forward to seeing a number of Learner Voice representatives back at the College next academic year.

5. Close of meeting

The meeting finished at 5.00 pm.