

# MidKent College

## Public Value Statement

### 1. The Background

The English Colleges' Foundation Code of Governance contains a statement of the Governing Body's accountability to its learners, the wider community and other stakeholders. It requires a public value statement that describes how the College seeks to add value to the social, economic and physical well-being of the community (FCG 1.8).

This paper proposes a statement based upon AoC Guidance and goes on to suggest how the statement should be made available to the public and reviewed in future.

The intention of the Public Value Statement is that it should fit somewhere between the College's Mission Statement and its Strategic Priorities. It should also strongly reflect its vision and core values.

### 2. The AoC Guidance

The guidance is deliberately very vague with the view that each College is unique and that its Public Value Statement should reflect its individual character. It does however raise some points against which a College might wish to evaluate its statement. These are included below and can be used by the Governing Body in its consideration of this draft statement.

- a) Has the College identified and defined the 'wider community' it serves?
- b) Which of this wider community's particular needs is it striving to serve?
- c) How does it assess its effectiveness in meeting these needs?
- d) Has the College had a due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on reporting of public benefit in preparing its statement? (Please note that at present there is no formal mechanism for this for FE Colleges although it is possible that guidance similar to that for Higher Education Institutions will be issued this year. This requires HEIs to include statements about its charitable principles and benefits in its financial statements).
- e) Does the statement provide a clear statement of the College's commitment to demonstrating how it provides a benefit to the public in return for its charitable status?
- f) Does the statement explicitly link with the College's mission, values, aims and objectives?
- g) Does the statement capture the distinctive nature and scope of the full range of benefits provided to the College's learners, communities and wider society, and can these be evidenced?
- h) Is the statement readily accessible and intelligible to all the College's stakeholders, and is it regularly reviewed and updated by the Governing Body?

### 3. The Draft Public Value Statement

**MidKent College seeks to be at the heart of its community, assisting individuals and groups to become the best they can be. We believe that education can and should be life-changing and inspirational. The Governors and Staff of MidKent College seek to be the best we can be to ensure that we help to make this a reality in the community we serve.**

#### **Our Communities**

MidKent College, as an exempt Charity, delivers a wide range of Further and Higher Education courses to a diverse group of people in the mid-Kent area, through its campuses in Maidstone and Medway, at its training base at the Royal School of Military Engineering and throughout the area in workplaces. Our purpose in doing so is to increase the knowledge, skills and aspirations of local people such that they, in turn, become more valuable members of their local communities through employment, community engagement and the quality of family life.

As an inclusive College, we work, or seek to work, with almost every type of community within our geographic area. Broadly speaking, our communities fall into the following categories:

- Local residents;
- Our students;
- Local voluntary groups and charities;
- Local employers and businesses:
- Our staff;
- Our training partners and sub-contractors;
- Other local education providers;
- Local public services (i.e. Police, Fire, Health Service);
- National and local government.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. It serves to indicate the diversity of the communities we serve and to highlight some of the most important.

#### **The Benefits to Our Communities**

**Local residents** will benefit from the courses we provide. These will be made available to as many people as possible, regardless of age, ability or interests. This will be done through Strategic Priority 2 'Our curriculum will be broad, relevant and modern'. In particular we shall focus on:

- young people seeking full-time education post-16 in academic and vocational subjects at Further and Higher Education levels;
- young people accessing the job market for the first time through apprenticeships;
- adults seeking vocational and professional training in order to improve their employability;
- adults seeking access to higher education.

**Our students** will benefit from the quality of their experience at College, enabling them to gain relevant qualifications, to develop their confidence and life skills, and to progress on to further study or to employment. The key mechanisms for this will be

Strategic Priority 1 ‘We will provide first rate teaching’ and 4 ‘We will maximize the employability of all our students’. However, the experience of our students is at the heart of all our strategic priorities.

**Local voluntary groups and charities** will benefit from partnering with us in providing education and training to those they support, and for whom the College is not yet directly accessible. Additionally, through the voluntary work and community engagement of our staff and students, we seek to provide some additional resource to assist these groups with their aims. Strategic Priority 3 is the main mechanism for achieving this.

**Local employers and businesses** will benefit from the bespoke training, the general vocational and professional qualifications and the apprenticeships we offer. These are designed to increase the skills and knowledge of their workforce, improving their productivity. Additionally, in partnership with local businesses we seek to increase the employability of our students through high quality work experience or temporary/part-time jobs. This is addressed in Strategic Priority 4.

**Our staff** will benefit from high quality training and support designed to help them provide the best quality experience to their students and customer (internal and external). This underpins all of our Strategic Priorities but is referred to most explicitly in Strategic Priority 1 where it relates to the quality of our teaching.

**Our training partners and sub-contractors** are a key component in making the College a great place to learn and work. They will benefit from an honest and open relationship with us in which we expect high performance but will be a fair and good customer in return. Where it is possible and relevant we would wish to include the staff of our sub-contractors in our community and social activities and to encourage them to take up training. Whilst this category contains a broad range of organisations, we recognize a key and unique level of partnership with Holdfast and the Royal Engineers in providing training at the Royal School of Military Engineering.

**Other local education providers** will benefit from our partnership with them to enable local people to experience a smooth transition from one stage to another of their education. Whilst we understand that this partnership is sometimes challenged by the fact that we all do offer some over-lapping provision, we believe that we all share the same vision of doing the best for our local community and are able to work together to achieve this.

**Local public services** will benefit from our work with them in encouraging the development of responsible citizenship in our students. In partnership with them, we provide excellent education and advice to young people on a diverse range of subjects from health to law.

**National and local government** will benefit from our ability to offer very high quality education and training in an efficient and cost-effective fashion. In particular, our qualification success rates and the progression of our students into employment of further education contribute to their targets in these areas.

How We Will Measure These Benefits

The impact of our activities upon our communities will be measured through the community statements included in our Strategic Priorities. For instance, in measuring whether we have actively engaged our local community, we shall compare stakeholder opinions with statements such as:

*'The College is part of our community and we are proud of it' – local residents.*

Each of our priorities contains a series of these statements that are designed to assess the impact of our activities upon those communities they are intended to benefit. More detail on them can be found in our Strategic Priorities publication. The outcomes of the impact assessments will be published annually on our website.

#### How We Will Engage Our Local Communities in this Public Value Statement

Engagement with this statement consists of consultation about its contents, assessment of community views on the benefits.

The main vehicles for consultation will be:

- Students – we will actively involve students in the annual review of our Strategic Priorities and will also consult the Students' Union on the content of this document;
- Staff – we will consult our staff via the staff representatives;
- Employers and the Local Community – the Advisory Committees containing representatives from business and local community organisations.

An annual assessment exercise will be carried out to measure the impact of our strategic priorities upon our stakeholders' views of the College and what it has done for them. This will be done by seeking the views of representative samples of each community group. The outcomes of this assessment will be publicly available via our website.

#### Link Documents and Further Information

The key delivery vehicle for the Public Value Statement is our Strategic Priorities plan. The current version can be found at:

<http://www.midkent.ac.uk/uimages/File/Misc/Strategic%20Priorities.pdf>

Further links will be published as assessments and reviews are carried out.

For more information, please contact:

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