

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 5 JANUARY 2021 AT 4:00 PM, VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present:

Andrew Barnes (Chairman), Corrienne Peasgood (Principal), Jill Lanning, Noel Bartram, Philip Richardson, Nikki Gray, Emily Staley, Jonathan Barnard, Andrea Blanchflower, Bree Sherwood, Denise Troughton

Attendees:

Jerry White (Deputy Principal), Julia Bates (Vice Principal, FE Curriculum and Quality), Clare Johnson (Clerk to the Corporation), Sue Millions (Administrator)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Martin Colbourne (NES MD).

2. Declaration of Interest

In the interest of transparency and in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Corporation, all Governors of the Corporation Board are asked to make a written declaration of relevant pecuniary interests on appointment. Governors were requested to make known any relevant pecuniary interests relating to any items on the agenda and it was noted that all declarations will be recorded.

There were no new declarations of interest given at the meeting.

3. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 15 December 2020 (Paper 02)

Following a slight amendment, the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2020 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

4. Unconfirmed Confidential Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 15 December 2020 (Paper 03)

Following a slight amendment, the unconfirmed confidential minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2020 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

5. CEO Report

The Principal informed the Board of the journey the College has been on since the last Board Meeting in December, in relation to testing, examinations, and a new national lockdown.

The Principal reported that they had seen a spike in COVID cases since the last Board meeting in December 2020 and that over Christmas there had been considerable work undertaken to prepare for the new term and particularly for the introduction of the required testing of staff and students. She noted that the College have received excellent leadership from Norfolk County Council during the Christmas break, and since the beginning of term, in

relation to testing and their input has made a significant difference for the Principal and her team. The AoC have also been very helpful with frequent guidance and support.

This preparation was then overtaken by the Prime Minister's decision to put the nation in a national lockdown on Monday evening, and to cancel GCSE and A Level examinations in the summer. As Governors were aware, the College made the decision not to go ahead with BTEC and other vocational qualification examinations, or controlled assessments, during the national lockdown. Staff and students had been informed of this decision that morning in order to provide clarity for those students. It was appreciated that the decision was made with very short notice for students, but it was confirmed that this decision has been well received by both staff and students. It was noted that a national petition to stop these examinations had over 100,000 signatures in 24 hours and that other colleges are following the decision made by CCN. The Principal reiterated that the college will ensure that no student is disadvantaged by this decision. Further information will follow to staff and students once more information is received about how GCSE and A Level exams will be awarded this year.

It was confirmed that the College has processes in place for internal assessments should no examinations take place this year and further guidance from DfE and Ofqual is awaited before the college undertakes any processes. Discussions are currently ongoing with the UEA about HE assessment week which is planned for next week.

Where Are We Now? - as of today's date, a number of staff and students are still in self-isolation, some of the staff members are particularly unwell (but getting better) but still unable to work at the present time. Out of the students, a small number are unable to work. It was noted that many are showing additional symptoms alongside those expected and everyone is asked to be aware of, such as: flu like symptoms. It was agreed that the holiday break has helped as several staff and students have been able to serve out their isolation period during this time.

Following the new national lockdown which will last until 22 February, at the earliest, only those students who are eligible to attend college will do so. These include students that have Child Protection Plans, Education Health Care Plans, vulnerable learners and in addition, those students who do not have electronic devices, poor connectivity or a suitable space to work at home. This eligibility is determined on an individual level and not at group level. The ESOL unaccompanied asylum seekers will be in college and taught as a class via online learning. The provision of IT facilities will be supervised by staff at all three sites. Guidance is still awaited on shielding staff and students. It was noted that the lockdown guidance is broader than in the original lockdown in March 2020 and the CLT is trying to interpret this latest guidance.

Eaton Vale, the Aviation Academy and Norfolk House will be closed and members of the CLT will be present across all open sites during the lockdown. It was confirmed that activity will need to take place on site including livestock and animal care, IT, cleaning and grounds maintenance. Carter's will remain on site constructing the DigiTech building and it was noted that the capital allocation works, such as the boiler work, will be easier to carry out whilst students are not on site and Chris Nix and Jon Bonham will continue to oversee the works planned. Infrastructure works planned by IT for the Easter break will now go ahead during lockdown.

The Principal informed the Board that the Risk Assessment will not be rewritten but Julie Jarvey, Health and Safety Manager, will prepare an operational procedure to be aligned with the current Risk Assessment. The 2 metre rule will again be implemented, as a minimum, and face coverings will be worn if staff are on site. The reintroduction of staff signing in will be implemented for lone working.

Teaching and Learning – Julia Bates informed governors that staff are very conscious of what students are experiencing and want to make sure that their online learning is impactful. The College is expecting that all timetabled lessons will be delivered online at the scheduled time with students expected to attend virtually. It was agreed that the work undertaken last term, and over the Christmas break, is a testament to the dedication of the staff, many of whom have engaged with numerous CPD sessions available to them and made use of the digital learning designers.

Julia Bates explained that she and her team have checked in with several lessons today and gave examples of good practice that had been seen across all sites. This included the online delivery at Easton where the planned learning exceeds expectations. Their teaching has been changed to engage with technology, video links have been set up to “live” stream the animal care centre and video and films have been prepared. Specialist guest speakers have been sourced and links to external stakeholders are proving very useful.

All staff will be supported online, and lessons will be viewed daily by senior leaders. Students will be made aware that their learning must continue even if they are not sitting exams. New staff are being supported and advice and guidance is available to all staff, with pastoral staff linking up online with those identified students who need additional assistance. Julia Bates informed Governors how proud she is of the positive approach from staff and students to carry on with their learning, exemplified by a MINT student who has found work today.

Philip Richardson noted how beneficial video learning is and that he hopes that it will be continued after lockdown.

Further details will be given and discussed at the next Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting taking place on 26 January 2021.

Testing – Jerry White updated Governors on the latest developments and preparations for COVID testing at the college. He informed Governors that he visited the UEA and held discussions with Loughborough University and the FE Colleges that had trialled the testing although it was noted that the Army had conducted the testing in this case. Engagement with six DfE webinars have been undertaken and the fourth version of the guidance is currently being studied. Some very useful meetings have been held with local Public Health officials who have advised on matters such as the prioritisation of those tested and have also been very helpfully engaged to advise and provide their views.

Colleges have been asked to 1) test all staff on a weekly basis (regular testing); 2) students to be tested on their return (as many as possible, twice) and 3) individual who have been in close contact with a positive COVID case (close contact testing). The latter is intended to allow staff and students to remain on site if a negative test is recorded rather than have to self-isolate. It was noted that students and staff are under no obligation to receive a test. It was agreed that it will not be possible to do the full extent of the expected testing with the resources available.

It is proposed that each main site will have a testing centre with the possibility of a centre for Eaton Vale and the Aviation Academy, if required. Jerry White noted that the announcement of the national lockdown has afforded more time for these preparations and the college will be able to pilot the testing processes with the groups that are on site in the coming weeks. The college is still several days away from setting up the testing centres and recruiting the people needed. In addition, IT will need to build a tracking system as the college has to report the results to the NHS as well as the college conducting individual internal tracking.

It is expected that CCN will have 16 testing bays, on the Norwich site, which will be run 8 hours a day, 5 days a week with approximately 20 / 30 staff required each day. The other three sites will be on a smaller scale due to lower numbers of staff and students. A wing of the CCN library and two storage rooms at Easton and Paston have been cleared in preparation. It was confirmed that up to 50 staff could be occupied across the testing areas and this will impact financially on the college. This capacity is not expected to not enable the college to test everybody in the required categories prioritisation is essential. It was noted that it is planned to discuss this further with Norfolk County Council and the Public Health Officer, and potentially other Norfolk colleges, with the intention of developing an agreed testing strategy that takes into account the impact on disadvantaged across the county.

Governors asked for information regarding the availability of people to administer the tests and it was noted that a strong response has been received from part time staff and friends and family of staff who are willing to assist, and a comprehensive online training will be available. It was noted that staff and students are expected to self-administer the tests, but it was noted that some vulnerable students will need assistance and therefore clinical experience would be required. The need for people for the testing has been flagged with the County Council who will said that they will assist in this

6. Finance Update

There was no financial update prepared for today's meeting.

7. Chairman's Update

The Chairman thanked all CCN staff for keeping everyone informed and safe whilst acknowledging that governors cannot know the full extent of the work done to keep the college going.

8. Governance Matters

8.1 Approval of Term of Office

Emily Staley – The Clerk reminded the Board that the Student Union President role was extended to December 2020 due to the pandemic.

It was confirmed that following the recent Student Union President elections, Emily Staley was re-elected as President, for a further term, until June 2022. Governors were therefore asked to confirm her reappointment to the CCN Board until the end of June 2022.

Emily Staley was congratulated on her re-election and the Board formally agreed to reappoint her to the CCN Board until the end of June 2022.

9. Any Other Urgent Business

Additional Board Meetings - the Principal informed Governors that this meeting was the last scheduled additional Board meeting and she asked whether Governors would like the fortnightly update meetings to remain throughout lockdown and it was agreed that it is important that all governors are kept in the loop in relation to all COVID related matters but that this should not take time away from normal business in committee and Board meetings.

It was agreed that meetings should be minuted but that no paperwork is required.

Following discussions, it was agreed to continue with the additional meetings and the Principal will issue suggested dates to Governors.

Remuneration Committee Discussion – it was noted that the remuneration committee will be meeting on Wednesday 13 January 2021 from 4:00 pm for an informal discussion following an action at the committee.

Strategy Day – the planned day will go ahead on 19 January. It was noted that there will be an Audit and Risk Committee Meeting at 9.00 am and a full Board Meeting after lunch to formally approve the financial statement and accounts for 2019/20. The remainder of the day will include four sessions and include a review of the current Strategic Framework.

Full details and all reading materials to follow.

10. Confidentiality

There were no items deemed confidential at today's meeting.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next CCN Board Meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 19 January 2021 at 4:00pm, via Microsoft Teams.

All business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 5.25 pm.

Signed **Date**
(Chairman)