

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 05 MAY 2020 AT 4:00 PM, VIA SKYPE

Present:

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

Attendees:

Jerry White (Deputy Principal), Martin Colbourne (NES MD), Julia Buckland (Vice Principal, FE Curriculum and Quality), Clare Johnson (Clerk to the Corporation), Sue Millions (Administrator)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Bree Sherwood and Sophie Gray. Aiden Little was not in attendance.

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 21 April 2020 (Paper 02)

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 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 21 April 2020 (Paper 03)

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2020 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

5. Chairman's Update

The Chair thanked Governors for their continuing support and asked that if anyone has any concerns or comments that they please contact him.

6. CEO's Report (Paper 04)

The CEO Report, previously distributed, was fully discussed at the meeting and the Principal informed the Board that the report is aimed to keep Governors up-to-date with important changes in how the College is operating during the Coronavirus outbreak and inform them of risks and mitigating actions. Currently everyone is awaiting the Prime Minister's announcement later this week on if, how and when the lockdown measures will be relaxed or altered and it was noted that this has unsettled staff and more risk and health and safety

questions have been emailed to the Principal this week. A meeting has been convened on Monday between senior leaders and the new Health and Safety Manager to review the new Government guidance received and staff will be informed, via email, accordingly.

The following information was discussed and highlighted:

The DfE has published a document on 'Reducing burdens on educational and care settings'. Data collections are listed as cancelled, paused or continuing and only one post-16 return, for the Capacity and Delivery Fund is either cancelled or paused. It was noted that the Department's approach to post-16 feels very different to that for schools and academies.

It was noted that Ofsted appears to be travelling in the direction that in post-lockdown inspections the focus may be on how educational establishments have transitioned new students into college and to ensure that out-going students are well prepared for their future destinations.

The College are now working through the process for assigning Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) and Rankings within each grade in each subject for all GCSE and A Level entries. A process is being followed which has three levels of verification. The first stage will be completed this week which is that teachers present their grades to the Head of Area who then signs off the proposed CAG and Ranking. The second stage which will see the Head of Area presenting the CAG and Ranking to a new FE Awards Board, chaired by Julia Buckland, which will be undertaken next week and the week after, the third stage will see Julia Buckland presenting the agreed CAG and Ranking to the Principal for sign-off as Head of Centre. It was noted that the process is similar for Access to Higher Education except that Jerry White, as the member of CAVA Council, will have the final sign-off.

The Principal informed the Board that vocational and technical qualifications will either follow the GCSE and A Level model or have some form of modified assessment. All relevant students, approximately 3,500, have been informed of this development and this will be followed-up with more detailed guidance once which form of awarding each qualification will take has been agreed by Ofqual and the college has been notified by the Awarding Organisations. The FE Awards Board will again oversee the new processes that need to be put in place.

The Principal pointed out and governors noted that the scale of this task should not be underestimated, including the support given to staff, where necessary.

The Principal informed the Board that today the OfS have increased the student number cap by 5% for September 2020 to help stabilise the sector. Spring payments will be available to colleges in the autumn term 2020 to support cashflow, but no additional monies will be made available to the HE sector as had been requested. It was noted that the UEA have concerns as the proposals fall far short of what was hoped for. The Vice-Chancellor will discuss his concerns on tonight's edition of Look East. It was confirmed that the HE Regulations have been amended as reported at the last meeting.

The Norfolk County Council definitive list, of the students who have a social worker has now been received and regular welfare checks are carried out on each student and the need for them to come into college, if it is felt that they are unsafe at home, is being kept under constant review.

Apprenticeships – the College has heard formally from the UEA that when the current apprenticeship contract for Nursing Associates concludes, for which no new starts are planned, that they intend to bid for the new contract on a direct delivery basis, i.e. not

sub-contract the delivery to CCN. Following discussion, it was formally agreed that this is very disappointing as the College had put together an innovative partnership tender for the current contract and ceased their own overlapping provision in order to deliver the sub-contract.

The potential for this move by UEA had not been identified by the College and the change will have a significant financial impact, around £1m p.a. and may potentially involve the TUPE of some staff if the UEA are successful in their re-tender. It was noted that the College cannot tender for the work as the lead organisation has to be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). This is one of the reasons the College went for the partnership approach originally.

Andrea Blanchflower informed the Board, in the spirit of openness, that she had not aware that the UEA was going to take this action.

The Principal reported that the College had run a snap staff survey, to check of how staff are feeling at this time. The survey closed on Friday 1 May and was completed by 569 members of staff. The results are provisionally noted as follows:

| Questions | Responses | Average rating out of 5 |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. I find the regular email updates helpful and informative | 565 | 4.53 |
| 2. I feel supported by my manager | 567 | 4.28 |
| 3. I am keeping in touch with my colleagues | 566 | 4.37 |
| 4. I have accessed some of the wellbeing resources in the email updates | 249 – yes 316 - no | |
| 5. What other resources would you like signposting? Either more on a particular topic or something new. | 187 replies | |
| 6. How much are you struggling with the current situation? From 1 'not at all' to 5 'I'm finding it very difficult'. | 567 | 2.71 |
| 7. Any comments on what is working well and/or suggestions for what else we could do to support you in these unusual times. | 312 replies | |

The Principal informed the Board that she was very pleased with the results so far and further analysis is being undertaken and a staff satisfaction survey will be issued before the May half term. All comments received in this snap survey will be followed up and more resources will be made available to staff shortly to address the expressed needs. It was noted that the union meetings have been positive with support for the actions already taken by the College. They did express concerns about the risks related to the re-opening of the college which is mirrored at a regional and national level. Please see agenda item 10.

The Covid-19 Risk Register was previously circulated as part of the CEO's Report and the table produced shows the risks presented to governors at the last meeting and the two extra risks identified. All risks have now had the mitigation identified and rescored to give the current risk. The red risks will continue to be reported upon, but it was agreed that they will be difficult to bring down in these exceptional times. It was noted that the system is designed to be shown online and further updates will be provided at future meetings. Governors suggested that within the body of the risk register the mitigations could be further highlighted and a full update of work undertaken included.

The full content of the report was received and noted.

The Chair thanked the Principal for her full and comprehensive report.

7. Financial Update and Emerging Picture

(Papers 05-06)

Please see the confidential minutes.

8. Digitech Factory Project

(Paper 07)

Please see the confidential minutes.

9. Fees Policy

(Paper 08)

Please see the confidential minutes.

10. Minutes of the Meeting between Principal, NES MD and Union Reps

(Paper 09)

The minutes from the Meeting held between the Principal, NES MD and Union Reps, which took place on 2 April 2020 were previously circulated and the full content noted.

It was noted that an additional meeting has taken place on 27 April 2020 and the positive attitude from everyone has been and is key.

11. FE Commissioner Letter

(Paper 10)

Richard Atkins, the FE Commissioner, has emailed a letter to all Chairs, CEO / Principals and Heads of Governance in Further Education and Sixth Form College Corporations to let them know that he has been hugely impressed by the magnificent response to the national COVID-19 emergency by so many colleges in all parts of the country.

A copy of the full letter was included in the meeting pack, for information.

12. Any Other Business

Land Sale at Easton – the question was asked if the land sale was still going ahead and it was confirmed that Chris Nix is in touch with Building Partnerships who are seeking to confirm Persimmon's intentions. It was noted that Persimmon are reviewing all their projects and the local project manager remains positive that things will proceed as agreed.

Student numbers 2020/21 – Philip Richardson asked about the risk of a significantly reduction in new students in September 2020, noting that many Year 11 students will not have been in education since March. Jerry White outlined the activities being undertaken to recruit students including an online Open Evening with interviews, articles in the EDP and on-going communications with potential students and their parents. This includes a letter from the Principal that promises to find a suitable course for all applicants.

13. Confidentiality

It was agreed that agenda item 7, 8 and 9 will remain confidential.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next CCN Board Meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 19 May 2020 at 4:00pm, via Skype. This will be in the form of a verbal update. A Skype invitation will be issued before the meeting.

All business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 6.15 pm.

Signed **Date**
(Chairman)