

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE CCN BOARD MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6 JULY 2021 AT 4:00 PM, VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present:

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

Attendees:

Jerry White (Deputy Principal), Julia Bates (Vice Principal, FE Curriculum and Quality), Helen Richardson-Hulme (Assistant Principal, Student Services), Martin Colbourne (NES MD), Jodie Mitchell (Head of Professional Services), Sue Millions (Administrator)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Clare Johnson (Clerk to the Corporation).

2. Declarations 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.

- Bree Sherwood confirmed that she is currently an Internal Auditor for Norse.
- Jill Lanning confirmed that she is no longer a member of SEC Award Board.

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

Action 1: Clare Johnson to update the Declarations of Interest documentation (CJ).

3. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 May 2021 (Paper 02)

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2021 were amended slightly and formally agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chairman at the next available opportunity.

4. Unconfirmed Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 May 2021 (Paper 03)

The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2021 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chairman at the next available opportunity.

5. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 June 2021 (Paper 04)

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2021 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chairman at the next available opportunity.

6. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes (Paper 05)

Action 1 (25.05.2021): *Committee Strategic Priorities and Targets to be forwarded to all governors for information.* It was noted that the paper was included in recent committee packs in OnBoard and the Committee's Strategic Priorities and Targets will be monitored in Committee Meetings. Action completed.

Action 2 (25.05.2021): *Martin Colbourne to review the proposed revised date for the 2021 Group Audit Meetings, with the auditors and finance team, and confirm the date as soon as possible.* The Group Audit Meetings will take place on Tuesday 30 November 2021 and the information has been included in the CCN Meeting Calendar for 2021/22. Action completed.

Action 3 (25.05.2021): *The Principal and Jill Lanning to liaise on the completion of the OfS Assurance Return and confirm any changes or additional dates for meetings in November 2021.* Jerry White informed the Board that he had confirmed that there is no requirement to have a formal Board sign-off of the OfS Assurance Return at a single point in the year around 1 December. The Board does need to assure itself that the college is fully complying with OfS requirements and this can be done through a cycle of scrutiny throughout the year. It was formally agreed that Jerry White will provide an annual update on how the OfS requirements have been met in the previous 12 months and any plans for the coming year at the first C&S Committee Meeting of each academic year and the first Board Meeting. It was agreed that the process would be included in the college's schedule of business. Action completed.

Action 1: *Confirmation of the Strategic Aims and Success Indicators will be discussed at the next CCN Board Meeting taking place on 6 July 2021.* Please see agenda item 8.5. Action completed.

Action 2: *Catch Up Funding Update to be provided to the Business Committee Meeting taking place on 29 June 2021.* Action completed.

Action 3: *Martin Colbourne to arrange for Bree Sherwood and Corrienne Peasgood to hold informal discussions with the new MHA MacIntyre Hudson team.* It was noted that Bree Sherwood has agreed to hold discussions with MHA MacIntyre Hudson when their first interim audit report is published. Action completed.

Action 4: *Discussions on the LIBOR transition agreement to be held at the Business Committee Meeting taking place on 29 June 2021 before presenting to the full Board for approval at their meeting on 6 July 2021.* Please see agenda item 8.1.2.3. Action completed.

Action 5: *Governance to formally record the leaving date for Denise Troughton as 8 June 2021.* Action completed.

Action 2: Jerry White to prepare an annual update on the OfS Assurance Return for delivery to the first C&S and Board meetings of each academic year (JW).

Action 3: Clare Johnson to amend the Schedule of Business to include Action 2 above (CJ).

7. Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman asked that Governors are available for a short period at the end of the meeting for a chat in advance of the Strategy Day.

NES Strategic Discussions – please see the confidential minutes.

The Principal updated the Board on the recent leadership and management reorganisation which has taken place following a review.

Several line management changes have taken place, including Registry being moved and managed by Jerry White and some responsibility changes; Jon Bonham will take on responsibility for Estates and Facilities across all our sites. It was noted that Jodie Mitchell's role has been changed to Director of Governance and Legal and Health and Safety will

report to this area. Jodie Mitchell will become the Clerk to the Corporation and will attend all CCN meetings and will be supported by Clare Johnson.

Some more fundamental changes to curriculum and curriculum resource management have also taken place. The new role of Assistant Principal for Higher Education and Adults has been created and this post also reports to Jerry White and Ed Rose has been appointed to the role. A Head of Projects post reporting to Jerry White has also been created and this role is currently out for recruitment. Also, out for appointment are three new Director roles for Land-Based Industries, Technical Education and Apprenticeships and Academic Progress and Individual Achievement. An additional Director role for Resourcing and Performance has been filled by Tom Roberts. These roles report to Julia Bates.

In the Land-Based Industries area, the college is recruiting a Head of Easton Estates. This role will manage all the specialist land-based resources at Easton; the farm, the equine yard, the animal management unit and the grounds. The Director of Land-Based Industries will also manage the Heads of Area for Land-Based and Animal and Equine. In addition to these roles the college is also recruiting to two Heads of Area posts due to retirement and maternity leave.

A planned transition from where the college is now to the new structure by 1 September 2021 is taking place and the Principal agreed to keep governors and staff informed as appointments are made throughout the summer.

The Principal informed governors that the changes have been positively received. A consultation has taken place with all staff and some suggestions were taken onboard and the restructure has resulted in only one redundancy.

The Chair thanked the Principal for her input and presentation into the NCC Conference on digital and green issues, which was hosted by BBC's Suzie Fowler-Watt and attended by council leaders, MP's, the Chief Fire Officer and Norfolk's Chief Constable.

COVID – it was noted that the college is awaiting the Government's guidance for the easing of restrictions from 19 July 2021. The guidance will be carefully considered and staff updated over the coming weeks ready for the start of the new academic year when staff and students will be expected to conduct further tests and hopefully face to face teaching will be back to normal.

Action 4: Martin Colbourne and Jodie Mitchell to prepare a high-level timeline regarding the dissolving of the NES Board for the CCN Strategy Day (MC / JM).

8. SECTION A – papers in Section A are for discussion and action

8.1 Chairs' Summaries of Committee Meetings

8.1.1 Curriculum and Standards

(Paper 06)

Jill Lanning, the Chair of the Curriculum and Standards Committee, informed Governors that a meeting of the Curriculum and Standards Committee was held on 22 June 2021 and all key matters discussed at the meeting are highlighted and brought to the Board's attention in the paper previously distributed. The minutes from the meeting are available under agenda item 10.1.1.

In addition, it was noted that a huge amount of work has been undertaken by staff and managers to ensure a thorough approach for calculation of student grades for submission to the Awarding Organisations under the qualification arrangements.

Easton Report - it was confirmed that the recent Ofsted visit to the residential facility at Easton has given a good preliminary grade across all three themes and thanks were passed to Helen Richardson-Hulme and her team. The Principal informed governors that the recent visit to Easton by the NFU was very positive and resulted in offers of help and support.

The full content of the Curriculum and Standards Update was noted.

8.1.2 Business

(Paper 07)

Andrew Barnes, the Chair of the Business Committee, informed Governors that a meeting of the Business Committee was held on 29 June 2021 and all key matters discussed at the meeting are highlighted and brought to the Board's attention in the papers previously distributed. The minutes from the meeting are available under agenda item 10.1.2.

The full content of the report was noted.

8.1.2.1 ESFA Financial Health Letter and Dashboard

(Papers 08-09)

The ESFA Financial Health and Letter and Dashboard, received from the Education and Skills Funding Agency in May 2021, was previously distributed and discussed in detail at the Business Committee meeting which took place on 29 June 2021 and it was noted that the documentation was written following the ESFA's receipt of the college's audited financial statements and assurance returns for the year ended 31 July 2020 and the finance record for the years ending 31 July 2020 (2019/20) and 31 July 2021 (2020/21) and the following assessment grades, based on the college's finance record, are noted as Outstanding for 2019/20 (the outturn year), and Good for 2020/21 (the current budget year).

Martin Colbourne confirmed to governors that the College's audited financial statements, financial statements management letter and the annual report of the audit committee were reviewed by the ESFA and they have not identified any significant financial control concerns.

The full content of the ESFA Financial Health and Letter and Dashboard were noted.

8.1.2.2 Latest Management Accounts and Emerging Picture – April 2021

(Paper 10)

Please see the confidential minutes.

8.1.2.3 LIBOR Transition Proposal

(Papers 11-13)

Martin Colbourne informed governors that in March 2021 the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) announced that GBP LIBOR will cease after 31 December 2021, therefore, CCN's bankers have prepared a 'LIBOR loan facility transition proposal' which governors are required to consider and approve at their full Board meeting. It was noted that Lloyds have prepared two documents: a Transition Proposal document and LIBOR transition guide and both documents were included in today's pack for information.

Length discussions took place at the last Business Committee meeting on the two possibilities: pegging to the Bank of England Base Rate or using the Sterling Overnight Index Average (SONIA), Lloyds are recommending the first option. It was confirmed that there will be no gain or loss for CCN as the rate will stay the same on the two loans. It was noted that Lloyds Bank will cover the cost of the transition and this will not affect the cost of borrowing. Martin Colbourne informed the Board that these discussions relate to the Ipswich Road loan, which comes to an end in 2027/28 and the final 5-year rate will need to be set in the next 12 to 18 months. The Ipswich Road loan is on a 10-year rate fixed until September 2022 and the Easton loan is fixed until 2034.

Andrea Blanchflower asked why Lloyds is recommending the Bank of England Base Rate when the Working Group recommend the Sterling Overnight Index Average. It was agreed that the rates of both are very similar and following agreement, all governors present agreed to accept the proposal made by Lloyds of pegging to the Bank of England Base Rate.

8.1.2.4 New Draft College / NES Finance Regulations (Papers 14-16)

Martin Colbourne prepared a paper for the recent Business Committee highlighting the proposed updated draft of the College Finance Regulations and the supporting schedule of delegated authority for discussion and approval at the full Board.

Martin Colbourne confirmed that following the mergers with Paston and Easton, the de-merger of the academies, and the subsequent wind-up of the TEN Group structure there has been the need for a revision of the Finance Regulations. It was noted that the structural changes to the College are reflected in the document and the key delegated authorities, which remain unchanged, are included in the schedule.

Following the Business Committee's review, the Finance Regulations are presented today to the full Board and the following are proposed:

- For items over £100k, these will need Board approval and may appropriately be set into the budget. It was confirmed that there are very few items at this level, i.e. UEA; KLM delivery costs. It was agreed that an easy way to present these to the Board will be reviewed and could maybe set into the budget at the beginning of the financial year if pre-approved and previously identified. Any new contracts and capital spend, will be brought to the Board as usual.
- Principal and CFO to approve items over £25k up to a value of £100k.
- Principal to approve items between £5k to £25k.
- College and NES management to approve items between £1k to £5k.
- Department managers to approve items up to £1k.

Following discussion by the Board, governors gave full approval of the proposals and agreed for the documentation to be presented to all staff for information.

8.1.2.5 Draft Budget 2021/22 (Papers 16-17)

Please see the confidential minutes.

8.1.3 Audit and Risk (Papers 18-19)

Bree Sherwood, the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting, informed Governors that a meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee was held on 15 June 2021 and all key matters discussed at the meeting are highlighted and brought to the Board's attention in the papers previously distributed. The minutes from the meeting are available under agenda item 10.1.3.

Bree Sherwood informed governors that the Annal External Audit Plan for 2021/22 from MHA MacIntyre Hudson and the Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22 from Scrutton Bland were appended for information and it was agreed that the content is suitable and sensible for the coming year.

8.2 Grounds Maintenance (Horticulture) Tender Extension (Paper 20)

Please see the confidential minutes.

8.3 Cleaning Services Tender

(Paper 21)

Please see the confidential minutes.

8.4 Health, Safety and Well-Being Policies

(Papers 22-23)

The CCN and NES Health, Safety and Well-Being Policies, were previously distributed for information.

The Chair informed governors that he thought that the policies are thorough and comprehensive and have been discussed and scrutinised by the Business Committee at their last two meetings.

It was noted that Health and Safety will be one of the internal audits conducted in 2021/22 by Scrutton Bland.

8.5 Strategic Framework Update

(Paper 24)

Following the Strategy session held on 5 May 2021, the 5 proposed aims were drafted and are published for comment under agenda item 8.5.1. The draft success indicators will be agreed at the Strategy Day being held on 13 July 2021.

The Principal informed governors that at the Strategy Day a high-level delivery plan for 2021/22 to 2025/26, and a more detailed plan for 2021/22, will be presented. The Curriculum Strategy will also be discussed and then approved by the Curriculum and Standards Committee in September.

8.5.1 Agree Success Indicators

The following success indicators, which drive success, will be agreed at the Strategy Day on 13 July 2021:

- To achieve outstanding outcomes for our students and apprentices that add value and enable personal and professional progression.
- To make a significant and exemplary contribution to education and training at all levels to respond to changing economic development needs.
- To have a culture where we strive to continuously improve through innovation.
- To deliver a professional and inspiring college environment in a sustainable way.
- To engage at local, regional, and national levels to build purposeful partnerships which benefit our communities.

8.5.2 Estates Strategy – Final

The Principal asked that this action is delayed to the autumn term so that the Estates Strategy can fully reflect the Curriculum Strategy and the Strategy delivery plans.

This was formally agreed by all governors present.

Action 5: Estates Strategy to be delayed until the autumn term (CP / CJ).

8.5.3 FE White Paper Update

The Principal informed the Board that to align to the FE White Paper, the AoC has formed a Policy Group bringing together Chairs of AoC Policy Group to work alongside AoC officers to identify and develop the AoC response. Jerry White in his role as Chair of the AoC Policy

Group on Teaching, Learning and Assessment is a member of this group and is bringing back intelligence from this group, which supplements the information the Principal gains from a number of her meetings.

The College has now coordinated a bid for the Strategic Development Fund (part of the Skills Accelerator initiative which forms part of the White Paper developments) on behalf of the 5 FE colleges in the New Anglia area. This bid was based upon securing high levels of investment in new technology such as augmented and virtual reality to support teaching and learning between and across the Colleges. The college is expected to hear if they have been successful in the first round of this process in the next couple of weeks.

8.6 Review of Governance Structure and Compliance with Code of Good Governance

Jodie Mitchell informed the Committee that a response to the draft revised AoC Code of Good Governance has been submitted and the College is awaiting the final version of the new Code. When this has been received, the college governance will be reviewed in ensure it meets the AoC Code and any expectations arising from the Skills Bill / Act.

Andrea Blanchflower informed the board that a new Code of Good Governance in HE has been received which would inform this review.

8.7 Governance Matters

8.7.1 Review of Terms of Reference

It was confirmed that this agenda item is on hold until the new Code of Governance has been published.

8.7.2 Corporation and Committee Standing Orders (Papers 25-26)

Standing Orders relating to committees and the corporation, were previously circulated, and it was noted that both have been reviewed following the recent Scrutton Bland internal audit, and were published for information.

8.7.3 Meeting Calendar for 2021/22 (Paper 27)

The proposed meeting calendar for 2021/22 was previous distributed, discussed and agreed by the full Board.

8.7.4 Schedule of Business for 2021/22 (Paper 28)

The Schedule of Business for 2021/22 has been agreed but it was noted that following the publication of the new Code of Good Governance the schedule will be reviewed and amended, if necessary, and brought to the next CCN Board Meeting taking place in 19 October 2021.

Action 6: The revised Schedule of Business to be brought to the full Board meeting taking place on 19 October 2021 for discussion and agreement (CJ).

8.7.5 Review Governor Appointments and Length of Service (Paper 29)

A full discussion and review on Governors' length of service will be held following receipt of the new Colleges Governance Code as part of the governance review.

The Chair informed governors that resignations have been received from Aron Whiles from the C&S Committee and Philip Richardson from the A&R, C&S and Board with immediate effect. The Board thanked them for their input and support during their appointments.

Governors were informed that discussions have been held with Mark Eastwood, an experienced internal auditor, by Bree Sherwood, Andrew Barnes and Corrienne Peasgood, on the possibility of him becoming a CCN governor. Bree Sherwood informed governors that she is in the process of checking with her employer, PWC, as to any conflicts of interest and subject to clearance the Board approved the appointment of Mark Eastwood to the Board of governors.

Following discussion, it was agreed that a governor with agricultural experience and an understanding of the land-based curriculum is desirable and a secondary school representative to replace Aron Whiles on the C&S committee will be sought. The Principal commented that the Board would be strengthened by a governor with digital experience and that the number of staff governors would be reviewed as part of the governance review. The Principal and Jodie Mitchell agreed to review the available skills matrix for suitable appointments.

The question was asked if there is scope for more co-opted governors on committees and this was unanimously agreed.

It was also agreed that diversity is important on committees and the Board and it was suggested that the use of an external agency might widen the pool of potential governors to join the Board.

Action 7: A review of Governor Appointments and Length of Service will be held following receipt of the new Colleges Governance Code (JM).

Action 8: Subject to Bree Sherwood checking that she had no conflict of interest the Board approved the appointment of Mark Eastwood to the Board of Governors (JM / CJ).

8.7.6 Roles and Responsibilities and Job Descriptions

(Paper 30)

The Roles and Responsibilities and Job Descriptions for the Chairman, responsibilities of the Board, role description for College Governors, responsibilities of the Principal, job description for the Principal, responsibilities of the Clerk and the job description of the Director of Governance and Legal were previously distributed and governors are asked to scrutinise the papers and suggest any changes and to formally approve them for their annual review.

Following discussion, it was agreed that Jodie Mitchell will contact Hilary Bright, Head of HR, to review and amend the Principal's job description to remove reference to the TEN Group.

The Roles and Responsibilities and Job Descriptions were approved by governors, subject to amendments being made by Jodie Mitchell.

Action 9: Jodie Mitchell to review and amend the Roles and Responsibilities and Job Descriptions documentation (JM).

8.7.7 Annual Re-Election of Chair, Vice Chair of Board and Confirmation of Committee Chairs

Following discussion, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board and Committee Chairs agreed to continue their roles for a further one year term.

Andrew Barnes – Chair: this was proposed by Andrea Blanchflower, seconded by Nikki Gray and formally approved by all governors present.

Jill Lanning – Vice Chair: this was proposed by Andrea Blanchflower, seconded by Nikki Gray and formally approved by all governors present.

Committee Chairs:

Andrew Barnes – Business: this was proposed by Noel Bartram, seconded by Jonathan Barnard and formally approved by all governors present.

Jill Lanning – Curriculum and Standards: this was approved by Andrea Blanchflower, seconded by Andrew Barnes and formally approved by all governors present.

Bree Sherwood – Audit and Risk: this was proposed by Nikki Gray, seconded by Jill Lanning and formally approved by all governors present.

Bree Sherwood – Remuneration: this was proposed by Nikki Gray, seconded by Jill Lanning and formally approved by all governors present.

8.7.8 Corporation Sealing Register – as of 16 June 2021 (Paper 31)

The Corporation Sealing Register Update, as at 16 June 2021, was previously circulated for information, and the full content noted.

9. SECTION B – papers for discussion only if required by Governors

9.1 Student Voice Report (Papers 32-35)

The full Student Voice Report was previously discussed at the Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting and included very useful updates on the End of Year Feedback Form, Welcome Week Update, Dawn’s Horizons Prom Dress / Suit Donations, Student Reminders – Lateral Flow and Hand Washing and June – Pride Month where the resources booklet was updated. It was confirmed that the summary and response to the published materials was beneficial and well-received.

Emily Staley and her team were thanked for their excellent work and the full content of the report was noted.

9.2 Well-Being and Inclusion Report (Paper 36)

The Wellbeing and Inclusion Report, including Safeguarding and Child Protection, provided by Helen Richardson Hulme, and previously distributed, was discussed and the following highlighted:

- It was noted that the papers inform governors of safeguarding, wellbeing and equality, diversity and inclusion matters relating to staff and students since the last Board Meeting.
- Helen Richardson-Hulme informed governors that the main theme of the report is around sexual misconduct, sexual harassment and sexual violence. There has been a significant amount of activity locally, and at a national level, with Government setting out expectations and guidance on sexual harassment and sexual misconduct.
- A new sexual harassment, sexual abuse and on-line safety referrals report for the End of Year 2020/21 was linked for viewing and it was noted that the purpose of the report is for Governors to have year on year data in relation to sexual harassment, sexual violence and on-line sexual abuse referrals so that they have a basis from which to scrutinise referrals. The Safeguarding team log referrals and these will be pulled through at regular intervals throughout the year for governors to view.

- An update has been received from Ofsted and additional links to Ofsted documentation have been included in the report, which it was agreed are useful aide memoires for governors.

The Chair thanked Helen Richardson-Hulme for her full, excellent and comprehensive report.

9.3 Residential Report

(Paper 37)

The Residential Report, provided by Helen Richardson-Hulme was previously distributed, and the following was highlighted:

- The paper informs governors of residential matters relating to students throughout the year. The paper covers the student experience and statutory duties outlined in the Further Education residential accommodation: national minimum standards and the Social care common inspection framework (SCIFF): residential provision in further education colleges.
- The current end of year position on child protection allegations or concerns, suspensions and exclusions, complaints, details of student disciplinary actions taken and outcomes were noted.
- Helen Richardson-Hulme informed governors that next year's residential updates will be aligned to the minimum standards for clarity.

The Chair thanked Helen Richardson-Hulme for her positive report and the outcome of the recent Ofsted Residential visit.

10. SECTION C – papers for information only

10.1 Committee Minutes from Previous Meetings

10.1.1 Curriculum and Standards

(Paper 38)

The unconfirmed minutes from the Curriculum and Standards Committee Meeting held on 22 June 2021 were previously distributed for information.

10.1.2 Business

(Paper 39)

The draft minutes from the Business Committee Meeting held on 29 June 2021 were previously distributed and the full content noted.

10.1.3 Audit and Risk

(Paper 40)

The draft minutes from Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 15 June 2021 were previously distributed and the full content noted.

11. Any Other Business

The Principal informed the Board that an Ofsted intelligence and research visit took place last week and was held virtually by the college's ex colleague and governor, Rebecca Perry, to review the impact of the pandemic on 16-18 year olds. Feedback received at the end of the day was positive, noting that the college have resilient and positive students.

Jodie Mitchell informed the Board that HMRC had made a formal objection to the dissolution of TEN and NA and following further enquiries the objections have been resolved and hopefully the process will be completed by the end of July.

12. Confidentiality

It was agreed that agenda items 7 (NES Strategic discussions); 8.1.2.2; 8.1.2.5; 8.2 and 8.3; would remain confidential.

13. Date of Next Meeting

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

All formal business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 6.45 pm.

Signed **Date**
(Chairman)