

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 07 JULY 2020 AT 4:00 PM, VIA SKYPE

Present:

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

Attendees:

Jerry White (Deputy Principal), Martin Colbourne (NES MD), Clare Johnson (Clerk to the Corporation), Sue Millions (Administrator)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Jonathan Barnard, Nikki Gray, Bree Sherwood and Julia Buckland (Vice Principal, FE Curriculum and Quality). 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 30 June 2020 (Paper 02)

A small number of minor changes were made to the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2020. Following agreement, the minutes 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 30 June 2020 (Paper 03)

The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2020 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

5. 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.

The following information was discussed and highlighted:

DfE - The Principal informed the Board that the £200m of capital funding for refurbishing the FE sector estate which was announced recently is expected to be allocated rather than subject to a bidding process, but this has still to be confirmed. Guidance is awaited on what the formula, such as student numbers will be used and when it will be announced.

It was noted that two ESFA staff, from the capital team, visited the College site on Monday on a fact finding visit and technical review to familiarise themselves with the changes faced by FE with regard to estates and capital provision including the limitations that these place on the curriculum.

The College has now received guidance on 'What FE colleges will need to do from the start of the 2020 autumn term' and the expectation is that colleges should plan based on all students returning to college with revised and updated risk assessments. Key themes in the Guidance are Prevention with control in pace at all times, Minimise Contact with students in 'bubbles' but socially distanced from staff and the use of PPE. The College is now working through the guidance and will need to develop a very comprehensive risk assessment for all aspects of delivery from the beginning of next term that also reflects the guidance for each individual sector, e.g. guidance for hairdressers. The College will continue to work with the current risk assessment until mid-August, when a new risk assessment specifically to cover the enrolment period will be followed. It has been agreed that new students will receive face-to-face academic interviews and those students returning in the next academic year will be interviewed online.

Governors asked if the Guidance is workable and the Principal thought that it was but that a full return of students to all sites is primarily dependent on the setting of bubbles at a size that minimises the impact if a positive result is recorded by someone within a bubble but remains workable for staffing and best use of the resources. In this regard, A Level groups with mixed subject groupings pose a major challenge. The Principal informed Governors that if several specialist staff were self-isolating at any one time, the curriculum would continue to be delivered online. Jill Lanning asked about the impact that the required arrangements could have on monitoring the quality of TLA and particularly on quality improvement at the Easton campus where the planned activity had been suspended in March. The Principal confirmed that this will need to be built into the new arrangements but explained that key cross-college roles such as Training and Development may not be able to work across sites.

The government have announced an £111m package for traineeships giving employers £1,000 for each new traineeship place they offer. Further information and guidance is awaited. The DfE has also made a few announcements around flexibilities in industry placements for T Levels and the Capacity and Delivery Fund for 2020/21 and these announcements are currently being worked through.

Ofsted – the Principal informed Governors that Ofsted have announced that formal graded inspections and monitoring visits will remain paused until at least January 2021. A series of interim visits will be carried out in the autumn term and it is expected that the College will almost certainly receive one. These are 'professional conversations' between two inspectors and senior managers, curriculum managers, a small group of teachers and possibly a small number of students. Ofsted have said that they will be naturally inquisitive, supportive and helpful. It was noted that the discussions will exclusively be on provision from September 2020 and Inspectors will not ask how Colleges reacted to lockdown or the student experience during this time. Actual or virtual classrooms will not be visited, and it is unlikely that Inspectors will want to speak to governors. The visits will result in a published letter explaining why Ofsted visited, what they found, and the next steps leaders should take. Scheduling of monitoring visits and full inspections will then resume with the timing 'as though the interim period hadn't happened'. The Principal reiterated that the College would have expected a monitoring visit and full inspection by December 2020 and explained to Governors that the College is always ready for an Ofsted visit.

Examinations - Ofqual has agreed to move ahead with the plans they announced for an Autumn series for A Levels and GCSE resits. The timing of the exams is not yet fixed (probably October for A Level and November for GCSE) but the November English and

Maths GCSE exam dates and entry deadlines should be as usual. Students will sit exams at the centre where they were entered, i.e. their previous school for GCSEs, apart from GCSE English and Maths which will take place at the college. The college will need to support any A Level students wanting to sit an exam in the autumn.

Ofqual has published a consultation on possible changes to academic qualifications in 2020-21 and a position paper on vocational qualifications. The consultation closes in mid-July and the outcomes will be published before the start of term.

Students – it was noted that students are now off site as term ended last week. Some students and apprentices are still on site and activities continue especially where there are delayed assessments being taken. It was noted that the College will continue welfare checks for all students, under a statutory intervention, over the summer.

Staff – the Staff Survey is currently being completed and analysis will be brought to a future meeting for discussion.

Site – it was noted that the New Anglia LEP have been allocated £31m following their bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (HCLG) for capital funds. The College await news as to whether our Science Central project will be funded, and it was noted that the outcome is imminent. The Towns Fund, also administered by HCLG, as well as being a possible source of additional funding for the DigiTech Factory, may also bring additional opportunities for other investment. The T Level Capital Bid is also outstanding. Updates will be made available to Governors, when notified.

Governors' Meetings – the Principal informed Governors that there will be no Strategy Day this term and that she proposes to keep fortnightly meetings throughout the summer and into the early part of the autumn term to cover all operational and financial matters which arise. There will not routinely be papers for each meeting, however some matters such as the internal audit plan for 2020/21 and the external audit plan and fees will need to be discussed at the next meeting. These will be reviewed by Bree Sherwood, as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, before the meeting. The proposed dates are as follows:

- 21 July
- 04 August
- 18 August
- 01 September
- 15 September
- 29 September

It was agreed that meetings will be arranged in Teams and invitations sent through the Principal's office for governors.

Discussions followed on the restart of committee meetings with C&S on 06 October, Business on 13 October and a full Board meeting on 20 October and these were agreed by those present. The next round of committee meetings would then commence with Audit and Risk on 26 November, C&S on 01 December, Business on 08 December and Board on 15 December. Between these two rounds of meetings it was proposed to hold interim Board meetings, probably without papers, on:

- 03 November
- 17 November

Discussions followed on whether Governors will then move back to their usual cycle of meetings or keep the interim meetings going depending on the external environment at the time and it was agreed that a final decision will be made nearer the time.

In response to the question about efficiency of virtual Board Meetings, it was agreed that all meetings need a clear direction and focus and last no more than two hours.

The Principal informed Governors that she is sharing her CEO Report with the TEN Board to keep them up-to-date with all important changes in how the College is operating during the Coronavirus outbreak and to inform them of risks and mitigating actions. All Governors present formally agreed with this approach.

Aviation Academy - please see the confidential minutes.

LEP Priorities – please see confidential minutes.

The full content of the report was received and noted.

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

6. Finance Update and Budget for 2020/21

Please see the confidential minutes.

7. Governance Matters

7.1 Appointments

The Principal informed the Board that Emily Staley's role as Student Union President has been extended to 31 December 2020 and therefore, she will continue to be a member of the Board. This was formally agreed by Governors.

It was noted that the recruitment for student representatives will begin in September 2020.

Governors were informed that Aron Whiles' term of office on the Curriculum and Standards Committee expires on 19 September 2020 and governors were asked to approve his reappointment if he is happy to continue for another term. This was formally agreed by those Governors present.

7.2 Governance Self-Assessment for 2019/20

It was noted that the self-assessment is currently being updated and will be published to all Governors as soon as available.

7.3 Schedule of Business for 2020/21

The Schedule of Business is currently being updated and will be published on Passageways as soon as it is available.

7.4 Calendar of Meetings for 2020/21

Following earlier discussions, under agenda item 5, the agreed calendar dates for 2020/21 will be uploaded onto Passageways. Invitations will be published to Governors shortly.

8. Chairman's Update

The Chair thanked the Principal and the Executive team for the remarkable outcome through what has been an amazingly difficult year. The Chair asked the Principal to express to all staff in both CCN and NES how impressed all governors have been with their commitment, passion and hard work throughout the last four months. The Chair added that all the work undertaken is a reminder to all governors why everyone is part of a great college.

9. Any Other Business

The Principal informed Governors that the College were delighted to receive around 500 nominations from staff and students for individuals or teams for the 2020 staff awards. The judging panel comprising colleagues from across CCN and NES have had a very difficult job, and everyone is looking forward to seeing the results of their deliberations. It was agreed to share the link next week revealing the winners and our long serving staff, with governors.

10. Confidentiality

It was agreed that part of agenda item 5 and agenda item 6 will remain confidential.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next CCN Board Meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 21 July 2020 at 4:00pm, via Skype. A Skype invitation will be issued prior to the meeting.

All business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 5.40 pm.

Signed **Date**
(Chairman)