

CCN BUSINESS COMMITTEE MEETING

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE CCN BUSINESS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2020 AT 4.00 PM, VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Committee members:

Andrew Barnes (Chairman), Corrienne Peasgood (Principal), Noel Bartram, Jonathan Barnard, Denise Troughton

In attendance:

Martin Colbourne (NES MD), Jerry White (Deputy Principal), John Pollitt (Director of IT) – agenda item 1 only, Hilary Bright (Director of HR) agenda items 1-4 only, Clare Johnson (Clerk to the Corporation), Sue Millions (Administrator)

1. IT Update

The Chair welcomed John Pollitt to the meeting and Governors were given a verbal update on the work being undertaken and completed by the IT Services and the following highlighted:

- Enrolment has been completed fully online this year and it has been agreed that things will not return to how they used to be – a review on developing the way forward is underway.
- COVID – PPE equipment has been purchased, rooms reconfigured to enable social distancing and Collaborate used effectively. Governors asked if any concerns have been raised around safety and it was noted that terminals have been removed and more screens added. Walls have been removed in A35 for additional space. A PC booking system has been put in place, supported by the library team, to ensure all students book-in in advance to give more clear transparency as to usage. 15-minute 'cleaning' windows have been booked in to ensure all areas are cleaned before and after use. This system has also been rolled out in Norfolk House.
- As cases of COVID are growing it was noted that the majority of students are set up to learn at home, but some are not. Information is being sought from those students who do not have access at home to PC, Wi-Fi, etc and the use of bursary funds is being regularly reviewed. It was confirmed that the main issue is access to kit for home working.
- It was noted that there have also been several incidents attacking the IT system in previous weeks, but all were effectively detected by the IT team, who are also working with JISC to check our systems. Staff have also been spoken to regarding phishing attacks. Martin Colbourne confirmed that the College is insured for online fraud.
- The migration of Easton College's network system has successfully been completed. Improvement have been made to the CCTV and it is hoped that Wi-Fi will be enabled for guest users in the coming days.
- John Pollitt informed the Committee that the College is working towards the initial certification of the Cyber Essentials Accreditation.
- Governors asked if the college has capacity for all students and staff to work at home and John Pollitt confirmed that currently two GB lines are in use and is not by any means near full capacity.

The Chair thanked John Pollitt for his comprehensive report, and he left the meeting at 4.20 pm.

2. HR Report

(Paper 02)

The Chair welcomed Hilary Bright to today's meeting.

The annual HR Report, previously circulated, was discussed and the following highlighted:

- The average sickness for the year was 3.03% which was 15% below the previous year. It was noted that sickness absence has decreased dramatically when staff were working from home. Absence as of today, is very low.
- Stress and anxiety had decreased 25% from the previous year. It was confirmed that stress continues to be monitored. Occupational Health are available to all staff twice a week and advice is available very quickly.
- The overall compliance for core training decreased by 3% points from the same time last year. This was affected following the merger with Easton as the number of staff needing to undertake core training increased as face to face sessions could not be delivered since March. It was noted that all core training is now available online. Following Governors' questions, it was agreed that Health and Safety training is a real priority and that safeguarding courses are currently been run twice a week to ensure all staff have completed their core safeguarding training.
- Appraisal performance - only 60% of initial appraisals were fully completed, although this figure could have increased to 76% if managers had completed the appraisal meeting form. Mid-year reviews were impacted by lockdown, but a big push is ongoing, ready for this year's cycle which begins on 1 November.
- CCN's yearly staff turnover was discussed and noted at 13.4% for the past 12 months, well below the AoC national average. It was confirmed that staff with variable hours contracts are not included in this data.

3. Workforce Development Report

(Paper 03)

The Workforce Development Report was previously circulated and thoroughly discussed. The majority of the report was discussed alongside the Annual HR report under agenda item 2.

The full content of the report was noted.

4. Annual Health and Safety Report

(Paper 04)

The Annual Health and Safety Report was previously circulated and thoroughly discussed and the following highlighted:

Fire Safety - a review of fire safety measures is currently being undertaken by the H&S team. The fire warden needs analysis has been undertaken and wardens have now been appointed at Easton. Some gaps in CCN are now being filled. The online fire warden training has been updated and has been rolled out with a follow up site face to face workshop scheduled.

First Aid - there have been several issues raised recently with regards to first aid provision mainly in relation to identifying the first aiders and how to contact them. The fall-back option of calling the caretakers and / or nurse appears to be happening rather than department first aiders being utilised. The most important point to note is that first aid provision has been provided where and when required.

COVID 19 – the Principal informed Governors that she is working carefully through Public Health guidelines to ensure that students and staff, who have been in contact with the person who has tested positive for Coronavirus during the infectious period, have been identified. Contact is then made to the Norfolk Outbreak Management Centre and the NHS / DfE triage line to report the case and outline the actions that have been taken. Both then check that all the right people have been asked to self-isolate and for the correct period of time. It was noted that if a group of students have not been contacted that is because they have not had contact during the infectious period as advised by Public Health England. Staff are obviously anxious, and all communications are as quick and clear as possible. Staff are asked to continue to contact the Principal via the COVID-19 email response box. It was noted that all daily figures from the college are fed into SAGE and the DfE. It was agreed that Isolation is down to the trust of the individual.

Ventilation of rooms - the Principal confirmed that updated guidance is expected very soon from Government, providing direction on addressing the heating and ventilation in buildings during Autumn and Winter. The college is currently working at Norfolk House to establish a workable and compliant model for heating and ventilation, which can be implemented across all sites. The heating has been switched on at Norfolk House and this week the Estates and Facilities Team will be working in certain rooms to establish optimum ventilation whilst maintaining a suitable working temperature. This will be done by monitoring CO2 levels in occupied and unoccupied rooms, a method recommended in the CIBSE Guidance. Staff continue to monitor temperatures closely and the heating will be turned on when appropriate. However, rooms must continue to be ventilated to minimise the risk of transfer of the virus, whilst heating will be required to keep occupants of rooms comfortable. Staff and students will be encouraged to dress accordingly and to wear warmer clothing than they would in a normally heated environment over the winter months. Guidance will be reviewed, and changes implemented accordingly.

The full content of the report was noted.

Hilary Bright left the meeting at 4.40 pm.

5. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Emily Staley.

It was noted that a quorum was present, and the meeting had been convened in accordance with the articles of association of the company.

6. Declaration of Interests

Governors and Committee members are 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 further declarations of interest given at the meeting.

7. Confirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 February 2020 (Paper 05)

The confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2020 were previously agreed as a true record of the meeting at the Board Meeting which took place in June 2020 and will be signed by the Chairman at the next available opportunity.

8. Confirmed Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 February 2020 (Paper 06)

The confirmed confidential minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2020 were previously agreed as a true record of the meeting at the Board Meeting which took place in June 2020 and will be signed by the Chairman at the next available opportunity.

9. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

(Paper 07)

Action 3 (Business 2): *The Principal to contact the ESFA to discuss the February 2020 deadline for financial returns. The Principal has written to the ESFA and is awaiting a reply.* Action completed.

Action 7 (Business 2): *The Principal to contact other Colleges to ascertain the number of Fire Marshalls and First Aiders they have in place.* This action has been forwarded to Julie Jarvey, Head of Health and Safety, and she has undertaken a review and her detailed paper has been included within this meeting's pack. Action completed.

Action 1 (Business 3): *Business Risk Update to be provided for the Business Committee Meeting taking place on 12 May 2020.* The Risk has been reviewed via Board Meeting throughout 2020. Action completed.

Action 2 (Business 3): *A detailed Debt Action Plan to be discussed at the next meeting taking place on 24 March 2020.* A debt update was provided under agenda item 10.1. Action completed.

Action 3 (Business 3): *Jerry White to make the proposed changes to the draft Fee Policy and further discussions will take place at the next Business Committee on 24 March for formal agreement at the full Board Meeting taking place on 31 March 2020.* The Fee Policy was reviewed at the Board Meeting which took place 5 May 2020. Action completed.

Action 4 (Business 3): *Calendar invitations to be amended and forwarded to all Governors regarding the timing of the next meeting.* Action completed.

Action 5 (Business 3): *Final DigiTech tenders to be forward to Governors on 10 February for feedback and comments before the full Board Meeting taking place on 11 February 2020.* DigiTech tenders were discussed at the Board Meeting which took place on 11 February 2020. Action completed.

Action 6 (Business 3): *Management accounts to be emailed to Business Committee Governors outside of the scheduled meetings, if available.* Action completed.

Action 7 (Business 3): *January accounts and emerging picture to be forwarded to Business Committee Governors when finalised.* Action completed.

Action 8 (Business 3): *Business Committee to recommend the 12-month extension to the Absence Management Tender to the full Board at their next meeting taking place on 11 February 2020.* Discussed and formally agreed at the full Board Meeting which took place on 11 February 2020. Action completed.

Action 9 (Business 3): *Martin Colbourne to review the summary of Estates Year 1 costs.* A range of maintenance works have taken place over the summer of 2020 and further work undertaken to integrate centralisation of Easton compliance costs. Action completed.

10. Section A

10.1 Finance Reports

(Papers 08-10)

Please see confidential minutes.

10.2 MiDES Pilot Finance Benchmarking Report

(Paper 11)

Please see confidential minutes.

10.3 EOC Stub Accounts and KPMG Audit Memo

(Papers 12 &13)

Please see confidential minutes.

10.4 Priority Action Plans

(Paper 14)

The Priority Action list, previously circulated, was discussed at the meeting and the following highlighted for the Business Committee:

It was noted that those priorities highlighted in the paper are still ongoing and split into five phases: Prepare; Reprioritise; Restart; Recover; Rebuild with six themes running through the priorities as set out below.

- Leadership and management
- Communication
- Staying safe
- Curriculum and teaching, learning and assessment
- Staff and student wellbeing
- New ways of working and BAU.

The main priorities for the Business Committee were discussed and these were highlighted as:

- Lecturer contract changes;
- Annual satisfaction surveys;
- Update COVID-19 risk register;
- Agree whether to restart additional Board meetings through 2020/21;
- Plan for strategy review;
- Monitor DigiTech;
- Write submission for Agri Food;
- Deliver FECA projects.

It was agreed that the College has a clear focus on what their priorities are for the coming months. It was noted that the Curriculum and Standards Committee agreed their priorities at their meeting last week and the finalised list will be presented to the next Board Meeting for full Board approval. The Principal asked if any Committee member has any additional comments or suggestions that they notify her prior to next week's Board Meeting.

Action 1: Priority Actions Report to be presented to the full Board at their meeting taking place on 20 October 2020 (CP / CJ).

10.5 Grounds Maintenance Extension Paper

(Paper 15)

The current contract with Vertas Ltd, who provide the College with Grounds Maintenance (Horticulture) services, is due to expire on 31 December 2020. It was noted that the contract allows for an extension for a further period of one year plus one.

When considering the procurement route, it was agreed that Vertas has performed well and achieved compliance against the criteria etc, and NES are therefore recommending that the contract is extended for an additional year until 31 December 2021.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Business Committee would recommend the 12-month extension to the full Board at their next meeting.

Action 2: 12 month extension to the Grounds Maintenance Contract to be approved at the next Board Meeting taking place on 20 October 2020 (CJ).

10.6 Governance Matters

10.6.1 Governance Self-Assessment Results

(Papers 16-17)

Clare Johnson informed Governors that the Self-Assessment questionnaire was opened on OnBoard to be reviewed against the requirements of the Code of Good Governance and reviewed against the Association of Colleges self-assessment recommendations. Governors are asked to complete all questions by 7th October 2020 at 5:00pm and provide detail in the comments sections available. It was noted that as a small number of questionnaires remain outstanding and it was agreed to reopen the survey and bring the full detailed analysis to the next full Board Meeting.

Action 3: Governance Self-Assessment Results to be prepared for the full CCN Board Meeting taking place on 20 October 2020 (CJ).

10.6.2 Governance 2019/20 Attendance

The attendance figures for meetings taking place in 2019/20 was provided to the Committee and the Chair asked for benchmarking figures to be made available to compare with other establishments.

Action 4: Benchmarking attendance figures to be provided for the next Business Committee Meeting taking place on 8 December 2020 (CJ).

10.6.3 Review of Committee and Board Membership

(Paper 18)

Membership of the Audit Committee – it was noted that currently there are two members of the Audit Committee and the quorate for meeting is three. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Principal would contact Bree Sherwood to ascertain the skills she sees as necessary for an additional member of the Board and then make contact with appropriate Governors. The next Audit Committee Meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 26 November at 9.00 am.

The Clerk informed the Committee that Emily Staley's role as Student Union President has been extended to 31 December 2020 and she will therefore continue as a member of the Board.

It was confirmed that no terms of office are due to expire in 2020/21.

Recruitment for the Student Governors is currently open and due to close on 14 October 2020.

Action 5: The Principal to contact Bree Sherwood to ascertain the skills she requires from additional Audit Committee members and then contact appropriate Governors to attend the meeting taking place in November (CP).

11. Section C

Papers presented in Section C are for information only.

There were no papers tabled in this section of the meeting.

12. Other Urgent Business

There was no urgent business tabled at the meeting.

13. Confidentiality

Agenda items 10.1; 10.2; 10.3 are tabled as confidential.

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next Business Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 8 December 2020 at 4.00 pm, via Microsoft Teams.

All business having been concluded; the meeting finished at 6.05 pm.

CHAIRMAN: **DATE:**
(signed)