

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21 APRIL 2020 AT 4:00 PM VIA SKYPE

Present:

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

Attendees:

Jerry White (Deputy Principal), Martin Colbourne (NES MD), Julia Buckland (Vice Principal, FE Curriculum and Quality), Hilary Bright (Director of HR Services), John Pollitt (Deputy Managing Director), Clare Johnson (Clerk to the Corporation), Sue Millions (Administrator)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Sophie Gray and Denise Troughton. 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 07 April 2020 (Paper 02)

The minutes of the meeting held on 07 April 2020 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

4. Verbal Updates from

4.1 Martin Colbourne – Financial Update and Emerging Picture (Paper 03)

Please see the confidential minutes.

4.2 Hilary Bright

The Chair welcomed Hilary Bright, Director of HR Services, to the meeting and she gave the following update:

Furloughing of Staff – it was noted that some staff whose post are not funded by ESFA or other public funding will be furloughed, these are likely to include the Head of Commercial Operations and several staff within this department. The funding position of Easton's Catering staff and supply staff is being checked. Hilary Bright emphasised that the identification of staff to be furloughed is being determined by the nature of the income funding each post.

HR are currently checking the guidance received on Friday to ensure the process is being followed correctly. Unions have been informed throughout the process and a communication plan is being implemented.

It was noted that the 20% of salaries not covered by the Government furloughing funds will be paid to those staff involved.

Those staff who are centrally funded will not be involved in the process.

Staff Well-Being – it was noted that before 23 March 2020, 100 related absences were recorded in connection with Coronavirus and as of today's date, there are 6. One case has been confirmed and Governors were pleased to note that the member of staff is now well and working again from home. Simply Health is now up and running and gives those enrolled the opportunity to seek help and advice 24/7. Mental health, yoga, mindfulness and daily recipes webinars have been made available for all staff via Blackboard. An anonymous snap survey for staff is being implemented currently to ascertain if staff need additional help, guidance etc. On-line inductions are now available to new staff.

4.3 John Pollitt

The Chair welcomed John Pollitt, NES Deputy Managing Director, to the meeting and he gave the following update:

IT – Blackboard Collaborate has been set up and students and staff have been able to successfully access remote classroom delivery. To date; 340,000 user minutes have been used.

Skype for Business continues to be a success. The system has been used to interview for the recent vacancy for the Health and Safety Manager's post and for all meetings. 47 members of staff have access at home to their desktop PCs which particularly assists with finance and timetabling, and 28 laptops have been purchased for staff through the help to buy scheme recovering the cost from staff through their salaries.

Cyber security is thorough and the national guidance from JISC is being followed. This continues to be an on-going learning exercise.

4.4 Julia Buckland

Julia Buckland updated Governors on the awarding of qualification grades for GCSEs and A Levels to FE students and the following was noted:

The FE team are working on the process for awarding qualifications and working with teams and individuals where support is needed. It was noted that the majority of staff know students very well and the process is progressing without any problems. The Principal and Julia Buckland have been working with a steering group to agree the process. It was noted that the grades proposed by college staff will always need to remain confidential to the college as the grade given by the College may be changed at national level by the Awarding organisation.

Jill Lanning informed Governors that a recent AoC Webinar on the process likely to be followed for vocational qualifications was explained by Ofqual. She noted that this will be available on the AoC website and agreed to send some notes from the Webinar to the Principal. She raised the likelihood of a number of students wanting to appeal their awarded grades and the need for the College to be ready to deal with this in the summer.

On-line learning continues and at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of students are successful accessing their learning on-line. A small minority of students, particularly those Level 3 students in their second year, have been harder to engage, but some have been doing volunteering roles and others had IT issues which have been rectified.

Corrienne Peasgood informed Governors that, after four weeks, she is still awaiting the confirmed list, from Norfolk County Council, of those vulnerable students who have been assigned a key social worker. The list is expected this week and all students will then be contacted to assess their individual need. Well-being calls to known vulnerable students by staff have continued.

It was noted that the “lockdown” has given media students the opportunity to receive excellent media presentations from high profile presenters; something that would not have been possible before lockdown, but it is hoped that this could be one of the ways forward in the future.

Staff are currently processing the implications of the ‘lockdown’ on students progressing from Years 1 to 2 as their learning has necessarily been focussed on theory. On return to College these students will need to work on finishing their practical skills to enable them to finish their first year and progress.

4.5 Jerry White

Jerry White was asked to give an update and the following detail was highlighted:

College Nursery – two children of key workers are currently attending the Nursery.

Degrees – flexibility and support are being given to students and amendments to the regulations for the Norwich provision have been made in agreement with the UEA. These have been communicated to students and positively received. It was noted that the UEA have been approving some changes to their regulations in light of COVID-19 to ensure students are not disadvantaged. Work has also continued with the colleges and the UEA on the HE regulations for implementation for the next academic year. Andrea Blanchflower also informed the Board that the UEA is sharing intelligence with other HE institutions and are implementing plans that allow for further waves of COVID-19 and for further disruption in the next academic year, particularly developing a dual approach for face-to-face and online learning to allow an easy shift from one to the other mode of teaching.

Ofqual – it was noted that Jerry White and Corrienne Peasgood are in regular contact with Ofqual to ensure messages are getting through.

NTTC – this year’s trainee teachers will be awarded their teacher status. It was noted that Jacqui Waring has commenced her new role as Head of Centre as of 20 April 2020 to replace Paul McCann. Governors thanked Paul for his significant contribution in establishing and developing NTTC and wished him well in the future.

Safeguarding – all concerns are being followed up on and regular weekly welfare checks on vulnerable students are being conducted.

A “Virtual” Information Evening is taking place on Thursday 23 April and 45 appointments have been made, via the online system.

Communications – all COVID-19 updates can be found on the College’s website and a Examinations 20-20 mailbox has been set up for students with queries related to the

examinations and Jerry White and Julia Buckland have an oversight of this and are updating the FAQs section of the website accordingly.

EDP – Jerry White is working with the EDP and holding Q and A sessions for Year 11 students who wish to progress to CCN and Year 13 students who wish to go University.

DigiTech Building – meetings have taken place this week and an update will be provided at the next meeting.

4.6 Corrienne Peasgood – Risk Register (Paper 04)

The document, previously distributed, was discussed and it was noted that the spreadsheet provides Governors the unmitigated risks and it was agreed that the online Risk Register, including the mitigated risks, will be available and discussed at the next meeting taking place on 5 May 2020.

The Board’s risk appetite was agreed by Governors at the last Strategy Day and it was noted that those highlighted yellow are above governance risk appetite, those amber are in line and those green are below.

The top risks are as follows and the college will struggle to reduce these risks due to the current on-going circumstances.

Impact	Likelihood	Unmitigated risk	Risk appetite	Risk
4	4	16	6	Breach of bank covenants / cashflow
5	3	15	4	Safety when working onsite
3	4	12	6	Digi Tech Building
4	3	12	9	Managing through the outbreak

Governors noted that one of the challenges when the college re-opens will be related to the gaps in the learning of most students and how to reengage students in the new environment whatever it will look like. This could require significant additional resources. The possibility of further waves of COVID-19 and related disruption will also need to be considered. The Principal agreed to consider how best to capture these risks.

It was agreed that the College will be modelling partial opening and second lockdown scenarios in order that they are fully prepared for any eventuality.

The full content of the report was noted by those present.

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.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the key topics / speakers for each verbal update meeting will be uploaded onto Passageways on the Monday before the meeting for information and assistance.

6. Any Other Business

There was no other business tabled at the meeting.

7. Confidentiality

It was agreed that agenda item 4.1 will remain confidential.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next CCN Board Meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 05 May 2020 at 4:00pm, via Skype. A Skype invitation will be issued before the meeting, with full details available on the agenda on Passageways.

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

(Signature)

Andrew Barnes 05/11/2020 13:00 BST

Signed **Date**
(Chairman)