

## **CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 2021 AT 4.00 PM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

#### **Present:**

Jill Lanning (Chair), Corrienne Peasgood, Nikki Gray, Andrea Blanchflower, Emily Staley

#### **Attendees:**

Jerry White (Deputy Principal), Helen Richardson-Hulme (Assistant Principal, Student Services) – for agenda items 1 to 5.3, Julia Bates (Vice Principal, FE, Curriculum and Quality), Sue Millions (Administrator), Clare Johnson (Clerk to the Corporation)

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#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Aron Whiles and Sophie Gray.

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

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 new declarations of interest given at the meeting.

#### **3. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on 01 December 2020 (Paper 02)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 01 December 2020, were amended slightly and then agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the first available opportunity.

#### **4. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes (Paper 03)**

*Action 8 (C&S 01): Principal and Jerry White to review CCN's Risk Register following tonight's C&S Committee Meeting. The Principal advised that a complete review of the Risk Register will come to CCN Board in the New Year following the merger with Easton and the Risk Management will also be considered by the Audit and Risk Committee. The Principal agreed that the Risk Register will be revisited and brought back to a future C&S Committee.*  
**Action on-going.**

*Action 1 (C&S 02): C&S Committee to recommend to the full Board that the College formally begin the process of the September 2021 cohort being the first on the UEA BIM regulations at their meeting taking place on 15 December 2020. Discussed and formally agreed under agenda item 8.2.1 of the Board minutes on 15 December 2021. Action completed.*

*Action 2 (C&S 02): The Chair to contact Nikki Gray before the CCN Board Meeting to ascertain her preferred scrutiny area. Please see agenda item 5.6. Action completed.*

*Action 3: (C&S 02) The Chair to inform the Principal of the scrutiny area available to CCN Board Governors. Please see agenda item 5.6. Action completed.*

*Action 4 (C&S 02): The IAG Report to be moved up the agenda for future meetings. Item now moved to Section A of agenda. Please see agenda item 5.3. Action completed.*

#### **5. SECTION A – papers for discussion and action**

## 5.1 Quality Report

(Papers 04-06)

The Quality Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting. The following key points were discussed and explained:

It was noted that no national data will be published for 2019/20 due to COVID-19, but some sector benchmarking data was presented for 2019/20 and discussed. Jerry White informed Governors that the AoC, via the RCU MiDES (Market Intelligence Data Exchange Service) function, has continued to collect information from Colleges to produce some unofficial data and the benchmarking was appended to the meeting's paperwork, for information. Jerry White informed the Committee that:

- 16-18 retention rates for 2019/20 are 0.2% below sector average, with a marked increase noted in 2019/20 for both CCN and National compared to 2018/19 rates, with the college performing strongly at Entry and Level 1 but comparatively poorly at Level 3. It was noted that it was not clear whether the Easton data had been included and this would be investigated further.
- The 16-18 pass rates for 2019/20 are 0.2% above sector average, with a marked increase in 2019/20 for both CCN and National compared to 2018/19 rates. Within this, the college performs comparatively less well at Entry and Level 1 but stronger at Levels 2 and 3.

It was noted that in all cases, comparisons between years and to national data are more difficult than normal due to the use of centre assessed grades in 2019/20 due to COVID-19 and the likely variability of the application of these CAG processes between institutions. The weaker than national performance in Level 1 achievement and in the Preparation for Work area was discussed and it was thought that this is mainly due to the inclusion of Easton in the data. Jerry White offered to prepare analysis for the next meeting but following discussion, it was agreed that it should be checked that this can be accounted for by Easton performance. It was noted that, if this was the case, an action plan is already in place to address this and any further analysis is not necessary at the present time.

The curriculum mix and balance for the College for 2019/20 was presented and shows the picture of the College in its post-merger configuration. It was agreed that it is a useful summary showing what the college looks like as a merged institution. In particular, it shows that CCN has a relatively small adult provision and it was noted that this had already been highlighted in the initial strategy discussions. It was agreed that it would be important to understand the local context to understand the existing adult provision such as that provided by Norfolk County Council.

The Principal presented three slides on 2020/21 data from MiDES received recently, and it was noted that the current slides do include Easton data. It was confirmed that over 90% of colleges have contributed to the recent data. The first slide provided in-year retention rates analysis, the second apprenticeship analysis and the third slide recruitment and curriculum. Each slide allows the user to change comparators to view different groups, subjects etc. It was agreed to upload the recent slides to OnBoard for Governor information and review.

It was noted that attendance and retention for 2020/21 is satisfactory despite the challenges of the new lockdown and remoted learning processes. At a headline level it was noted that 16-18 retention stands 1.1% above 2019/20 comparators and is particularly strong at Easton.

The Principal informed Governors that the Chair has prepared an analysis of the recent Government's White Paper and it was agreed that this analysis would also be forward to the CLT for their information.

The full content of the report was noted.

**Action 1: The MiDES data slides to be uploaded to OnBoard for Governor information and review (CP / CJ).**

**Action 2: The analysis paper on the recent Government's White Paper, prepared by Jill Lanning, to be forwarded to CCN CLT members for information (CP).**

## 5.2 TLA Report

(Paper 07)

The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update, was discussed at the meeting and the following key points for discussion and explanation were highlighted:

- Julia Bates informed Governors that online learning has continued strongly in lockdown with the majority of sessions being delivered 'live' via Collaborate, with high attendance recorded.
- There are a small number of FE groups who are finding it a little harder to engage with remote learning and staff are working with these groups to find answers to keeping students on track to ensure they continue to make progress, including some positive interaction with their parents. An example of this is the Level 1 bricklaying students who are not making good progress mainly because they have little IT skills and some digital poverty. Staff are ensuring that support is available to them and strategies are being put in place.
- Discussions followed on the ability of students generally to catch up on their practical skills having only had three terms out of six on site throughout their course. It was agreed that support will be put in place when they return face-to-face education to assess their practical skills and additional individualised assistance will be put in place. It was noted that the impact on successful progression to the next level in the next academic year is a concern for staff. The question was asked if outdoor space could be utilised if any lockdown restrictions are lifted and it was noted that this possibility is currently being explored.
- Online Collaborate sessions for English and Maths this term, have taken a little longer to get started, the main reasons being that there is staff sickness in these areas and further development is required for a small number of staff. It was confirmed that a package of specialist CPD has been devised and is being rolled out with these staff.
- The ability of onsite delivery for all vulnerable students, including those in digital poverty, has been risk assessed and there are currently a small number of students learning on site. The number of students is likely to increase in the coming weeks.
- Students across all provisions, and all areas, are experiencing significant IT challenges. It was noted that around 400 students have been identified as in "digital poverty". With the Apprenticeship students the college is working with employers to find solutions, HE is exploring options for students to access adult bursaries and FE students are being prioritised for on-site access to IT, with IT hardware and software being provided where it is available. The Principal informed Governors that they are expecting delivery of around 700 laptops from the Government scheme. It was confirmed that data sticks are also expected from Vodafone and a large number of Abode Cloud licences.
- Staff continue to be supported with their development in several ways - support from Teaching and Learning Coaches; Digital Ambassadors; sessions from e-learning

Developers and additional resources on the TLA hub, including all staff emails and the fairly new TLA Newsletter.

It was agreed by Governors that the position is concerning but they are pleased with the very positive approach being taken by every member of staff.

The full content of the TLA Report was noted.

### **5.3 IAG and Residential Update**

(Papers 08-09)

The IAG and Residential Update Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting. The following key points for discussion and explanation were highlighted:

- Helen Richardson-Hulme informed Governors that the Careers Information, Advice and Guidance team have continued to deliver their services remotely during the current lockdown. The team is providing careers appointments via Skype, live chat advice and guidance through their website and all Advisers continue to respond to emails and phone calls.
- Students can contact the team to request support with their UCAS applications. The Higher Education Adviser and NEACO Coordinator have received a number of bookings for one to ones via the online booking system, where questions have been answered regarding the UCAS process and assistance with personal statements. There is also demand for Personal Statement help and this is likely to continue until the end of January 2021. It was queried whether there has been an increase in UCAS applications and it was noted that currently there are 690 completed UCAS applications, compared to 684 at the same time last year. It was agreed to see the final figures when the UCAS deadline is passed.
- The Apprenticeships team are starting to offer additional support to Apprentices who have recently been made redundant and it was confirmed that this figure has just entered double figures at CCN. Additional support is in place to broker these students to other employees.
- The Residential report was received and it was noted that during lockdown, a number of new appointments have been made to the residential team, including Claire Pigg, who has been appointed as Residential Student Leader. The new Residential Support Assistant, Adele Cook, is making regular wellbeing check to all residential students, who are not on site at the present time. It was noted that this is the first appointment of a Residential Support Assistant who does not have another role within Easton College, and it was agreed that having dedicated staff for the residential provision is probably the preferred way forward.
- Helen Richardson-Hulme confirmed that the team are currently reviewing the college's Residential Guide.

The Chair thanked Helen Richardson-Hulme for her full and comprehensive reports and the full content of the reports was noted.

Helen Richardson Hulme left the meeting at 5.25 pm.

### **5.4 HE Report**

(Paper 10)

The HE Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting. The following key points for discussion and explanation were noted and the headlines from the report were as follows:

- Jerry White informed Governors that since the last meeting, the two sets of Regulatory amendments have now been agreed with the UEA to support HE students and to ensure that there is no detriment as a result of the current lockdown. The amendments provide a degree of consistency across both Norwich students, under the Norfolk Regulatory Framework, and Easton students under UEA Partner BIM (Bachelors and Integrated Masters). It was noted that the changes have been received positively by both students and staff across all sites.
- Academic Year Consultation – it was confirmed that students and staff had been consulted on a proposal for a re-aligned Academic year structure through early January 2021. The proposed year uses a structure to bring together Easton and Norwich campuses to provide a consistent approach to structures and systems across both campuses.
- Office for Students Reassurance on Regulation during the Current Phase of Coronavirus outbreak – Governors were informed that the OfS, in their letter to Accountable Officers, dated 14 January 2021, called upon providers to assure their Governing Body that appropriate steps have been taken to maintain the quality, quantity and accessibility of their provision, and to inform students about their options for refunds or redress where it has not been possible to provide what has been promised. Specifically, they have asked providers to focus on CMA requirements, and their communications with students about, and changes to, their programmes. Information about the way in which CCN had met the OfS requirements had been previously distributed and following discussion it was agreed that governors are happy with the consistency and clarity of the college's messages to students and that they are being as proactive as possible during the pandemic. It was formally agreed that the Curriculum and Standards Committee would recommend to the full Board at their next meeting that they are satisfied that the college is meeting all OfS regulations.
- Jerry White informed Governors that the recruitment to 2021/22 programmes is starting to take shape. The new Policing degree is performing well with currently 15 applicants; more applications have been received than previous years for the BSc Professional Aviation Engineering Practice; a strong progression is noted internally from the Level 3 Aviation Engineering programme which raises the potential for a second cohort for the first time. The application to the Equine and Agriculture programme is below expectation and a marketing push will take place.

**Action 3: Curriculum and Standards Committee to recommend to the full Board at their next meeting that they are satisfied that they are all OfS requirements during the current pandemic (JL).**

## **5.5 Easton Report**

It was noted that there is no update on Easton at today's meeting.

## **5.6 Governor Curriculum Scrutiny**

The Chair updated Governors that following discussions, it has been agreed that Nikki Gray will cover the Implementation of T Levels as her area for scrutiny this year and it was noted that Noel Bartram had expressed a willingness to act as the HE Link Governor.

It was noted that it had been suggested at the Board Meeting which took place in December 2020 that the Principal should set up a Teams Meeting to discuss the role of the Link Governor and the focus and structure of scrutiny review meetings for Link governors. She agreed that this should be arranged for a convenient time in February 2021.

**Action 4: The Principal to set up a Teams Meeting to discuss the role of the Link Governor and the focus and structure of scrutiny reviews during February 2021 (CP).**

## **5.7 C&S Annual Review of the Risk Register**

There was no update to the Risk Register provided at today's meeting.

## **6. SECTION B – papers for discussion only if required by Governors**

### **6.1 NTTC Report** (Paper 11)

The NTTC Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting.

The full content of the report was noted, and it was highlighted that in the next academic year there is no Grant Funding available for Primary trainees. Each Levy paying school would normally receive £4,500 towards the cost of employing a PGTA and this has been removed for 2021/22. In addition, there is only Grant Funding available for a PGTA in Physics, Maths, Computing, MFL and Chemistry. It was also noted that the bursary payments for Secondary trainees to train in 2021/22 have also been reduced. There is no longer a Bursary for Primary with Maths. Concerns were raised that reducing the Bursaries may impact on people being able to afford to train as a teacher next year and the impact on recruitment could be significant.

The full content of the NTTC Report was noted.

### **6.2 Student Voice Report** (Paper 12)

The Student Voice Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting. The full content of the report was noted and Emily Staley informed governors of the full list of resources and workshops that are being made available to students and that her team are trying to hold virtual events in the future.

It was noted that some students are anxious, and the Student Unions' main areas of focus are mental health, feeling comfortable with COVID-19 measures and revision lessons and full details are now available to all students to inform and support them.

The positive work undertaken by the Student Union was noted with thanks to Emily Staley.

### **6.3 2020/21 Term 1 Complaints and Appeals Report** (Paper 13)

The 2020/21 Term 1 Complaints and Appeals Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting and discussion and explanation took place.

The full Committee confirmed that they were happy with the content of the report.

## **7. SECTION C – papers for information only**

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

## **8. Other Urgent Business**

There was no additional business discussed at the meeting.



**9. Confidentiality**

There were no confidential items discussed at the meeting.

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

C&S Committee: Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 4.00 pm, via Microsoft Teams.

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

Signed ..... Date .....  
(Chairman)