

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 30 JUNE 2020 AT 4:00 PM, VIA SKYPE

Present:

Andrew Barnes (Chairman), Corrienne Peasgood (Principal), Jill Lanning, Noel Bartram, Andrea Blanchflower, Emily Staley, Jonathan Barnard, Nikki Gray, Bree Sherwood, 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 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 16 June 2020 (Paper 02)

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2020 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 16 June 2020 (Paper 03)

The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the meeting held on 16 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 (Papers 04-05)

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:

Government Updates – around 10 vulnerable young people, students of key workers and additional vulnerable young people who staff have concerns about have been on site this week. It was noted that students and apprentices who need to complete Delayed Assessments in order to gain their qualification has reduced considerably from the 250 anticipated, as many of the Awarding Organisations changed from Delayed Assessment to

Centre Assessed Grades; numbers are nearer 100. Around 30 A Level students have been recorded on the Paston site and 4 vocational students needed to attend Easton Campus. Apprentices will continue to work on site over the summer and the current risk assessment will remain in place until September, ensuring a safe environment for everyone working on site.

Between 80 and 130 staff are working across the Ipswich Road, Easton and Paston sites most days in accordance with CCN and NES General Coronavirus risk assessment. It was noted that the college nurse has visited each student group on the Ipswich Road campus to check for safe working and has reported back that all risk assessments are being followed.

The Principal informed Governors that the 40 point checklist on re-opening, received from the DfE, is being worked on but the updating of the checklist is not fully completed. The Principal reassured Governors that the college has covered everything, and she will endeavour to provide the completed updated checklist for the next meeting.

It was noted that the College have submitted a bid with East Coast College and Suffolk New College, led by the College of West Anglia to the College Collaboration Fund. It is hoped that confirmation will be received by the end of July as to whether the combined bid for £195k, matched with £16k from each college, has been successful. The main focus has been changed to teaching, learning and assessment activities rather than leadership and management which was the focus in the first round. £200m of capital funding for the FE sector estate has also been announced by the Government. This is not new monies, but its release has been brought forward. At present it is not clear if restrictions will be put in place on the use of these monies or whether it will be allocated to colleges or subject to bids being made, but the Principal added that the College is ready to respond to any scenario.

The question was asked to what the College will look like from September and it was noted that Government Guidance is expected towards the end of next week. It is expected that the guidance for adults attending College will be different from that for 16-18 year olds. The cost of implementing the changes was discussed and it was noted that many of the changes have been undertaken in-house, with the main costs being for materials, such as signage.

Ofsted – the Principal explained to Governors that meetings with the regional Ofsted Inspector have been informative and meaningful and the next meeting taking place on 9 July is being held to discuss how College's should reflect on this year in their SARs and how they create QIPs. There has been discussion about how sequencing of curriculum might need to change for 2020/21 in anticipation of a further lockdown, how courses may need to develop if their course, e.g. hospitality, may not allow early progression into their intended employment, exploration of how to plan and deliver effective digital learning as opposed to online activity, and best practice in blended learning. Jill Lanning noted these concerns and asked the Principal how possible it is so they can at some level, capture the quality of what has been happening through the lockdown as a starting point for next year which would include the delivery for Easton students given the earlier recognition of the quality issues. The Principal noted that some subjects are much easier than others to see the quality of the delivery and outcomes, e.g. online exhibitions, etc., but that in some areas it is more difficult to see this evidence.

It is expected that Ofsted's plans for next term and January 2021 will be updated soon. The Principal informed Governors that she anticipates that interim visits will take place in the autumn term, possibly remotely and details published without a huge amount of detailed feedback. An Emergency Ofsted Framework is expected before any visits take place.

Philip Richardson noted that he is not seeing feedback on Easton's attainment, quality finances, etc and asked the Principal if she is confident with information available to her.

It was confirmed that the Easton FE Improvement Board had completed detailed internal assessments of English, Maths, Sports, Equine and Agriculture before lockdown and Easton provision was being incorporated into the monitoring by course, such as attendance, and attainments that is done across CCN. Jill Lanning confirmed that during these “deep dives” a good understanding of the issues that needed to be tackled was provided. Jill Lanning suggested that the move to on-line and blended learning will require a reshaping of how quality can be judged.

Ofqual - all GCSEs and A Level entries have now been submitted to the Awarding Organisations with Head of Centre sign-off. Centre Assessed Grades for vocational and technical qualifications are being submitted in accordance with the AO deadlines following the same process as A Levels and GCSEs.

The considerable frustration and additional work caused by the AOs was noted. The poor communications, changes to assessment methodology and the huge cost of staff time has been fed back to Ofqual. Andrea Blanchflower confirmed the excellent work which has been undertaken by both the Maths and English teams.

Jerry White informed Governors that he is working alongside Stephen Geraghty, Information Compliance and Policies Officer, on college appeals procedures post results which will be following GDPR guidance. It was noted that they are both well briefed and involved in the AoC national development of the guidance and Governors will be updated when clarity is received prior to the release of results. The first set of results, Access to Higher Education, are expected in mid-July.

Students - the College has informed all HE students of the likely mode of blended delivery for 2020/21 which will vary either if more social distancing measures are eased or the possibility of a potential second wave of infections requires a closure of the college. The focus for FE students has been on securing their progression and planning for enrolment. A process of online admission with face to face academic interviews is being designed for enrolment in the new academic year.

Communication - a combined CCN and NES Staff Satisfaction Survey was launched on 24 June and is open until 17 July. The survey is based around the new Ofsted staff survey questions. The current position, to date, was appended to the CEO's Report for information. It was noted that the survey is confidential and anonymous so any questions asked within the survey cannot be responded to on an individual basis. A full analysis and the full set of comments will be available to Governors following the closing date. Governors asked how the NPS score for Q19: “How likely are you to recommend working here?” works and it was agreed that a full definition will be made available alongside the analysis.

Union Meetings – positive meetings continue on a regular basis and two changes have been discussed: the amendment to the Paternity Policy – changing two weeks statutory pay to one week full pay and one week statutory pay and the other has been to seek local agreement to amend Easton lecturers teaching contracts in line with CCNs. Please see confidential minutes - proposed budget 2020/21 for full update.

Site - Summer works are now underway with some issues around the college being able to obtain the required three quotes from contractors. It was noted that the College is using other VFM justification where this is an issue. Research will now be undertaken following the release of the Prime Minister's speech today on any further capital funds which may be made available to the sector. A joint bid being developed with the LEP may allow for refurbishment of the science laboratories.

The Towns Fund, mentioned at the last meeting as a possible source of additional funding for the DigiTech build, might also bring additional opportunities for other investment and this will be followed up on.

Risk Register – the College’s COVID-19 risk register has been the subject of an internal audit by Scrutton Bland and the possible responses to their suggestions were appended to the agenda and discussed. Following lengthy discussions, it was agreed that the following two risks: internal and or external fraud; and, employee making a claim against the College will be included in the current Risk Register and the full explanation as to why the other five risk suggested would not be included were noted and agreed.

The full content of the report was received and noted.

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

6. Proposed Budget for 2020/21 (Paper 06)

Please see the confidential minutes.

7. Digitech Report

Please see confidential minutes.

8. Letter from FE Commissioner (Paper 07)

A copy of the letter received from Richard Atkins CBE, Further Education Commissioner, dated 16 June 2020, which was issued to Chairs, CEOs, Principals and Heads of Governance in Further Education and Sixth Form College Corporations, was previously distributed for information.

The letter thanked everyone for all that they are doing to support, teach and develop their learners at this difficult time.

The full content of the letter was noted.

9. Minutes of the Norwich Staff Forum Meeting (Paper 08)

The minutes from the Norwich Staff Forum Meeting, which took place on 6 May 2020, were previously circulated and the full content noted.

10. Chairman’s Update

The Chairman highlighted the scale of responsibility and work for manager and staff as well as the need to protect the health and safety of staff at what is an unprecedented time. He noted that the Board had a proposed Strategy Day taking place on 10 July 2020 at which the Board would normally review the CCN Strategy and associated development, but it would not be possible to hold a face-to-face meeting.

It was suggested that the day could be split up into three or four shorter sessions for each to discuss an aspect of the strategy such as: discussing social mobility; working with employers; economic responses post COVID-19. It was noted that while some high level aspirations could be developed now these would be difficult to develop into strategic plans before perhaps October / November, given the uncertainties of the current situation. Therefore, holding this discussion in July is not helpful and it would be better to postpone until a later date.

It was also suggested that Governors' Meetings could continue throughout the summer break, for those who are able to attend, and that Governors could also support the leadership team if they needed to develop a strategic response to the changing environment during that time.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Principal would consider these points and propose ways to move this agenda item forward at next week's meeting.

11. Any Other Business

There was no further business discussed at the meeting.

12. Confidentiality

It was agreed that agenda items 6 and 7 will remain confidential.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next CCN Board Meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 07 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 6.10 pm.

Signed **Date**
(Chairman)