

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 9 March 2021

Present:

Pat	Brennan Barrett	Principal	✓
Sharon	Bunker	Staff Governor	✓
Bill	Chalker	Governor	✓
Shannon	Clarke	Student Governor	Apologies
Robert	Davey	Governor (Chair)	✓
Tracey	Griffiths	Governor	✓
Philip	Hilton	Governor	✓
Ummahani	Mohammed	Student Governor	✓
Mark	Robbins	Governor	✓
Geraldine	Schofield	Governor	✓
Helen	Scott	Governor	✓
David	Smith	Governor	✓

The quorum for the meeting was six Members.

In attendance:

Steve Rankine	Deputy Principal - Finance and Corporate Affairs
Patrick Leavey	Deputy Principal
Phil O'Hara	Vice Principal – Curriculum and Student Progress
Jan Hutt	Vice Principal – HR and Student Services
Gary Brough	Vice Principal (Resources)
Mark Owen	Assistant Principal Student Services
Victoria Murphy	Head of Marketing and Communications
Julie Brasier	Clerk to the Corporation

The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams and started at 5.00pm.

1		Welcome and Apologies	Action
	1.1	<p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting to be conducted via Teams. It was agreed that in the event that the Clerk was unable to be part of the meeting for technical reasons, the meeting would be recorded.</p> <p>It was also agreed that microphones would be muted unless a person wished to speak.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Ummahani Mohammed to her first meeting. Apologies were received from Shannon Clarke.</p>	
2		Declarations of Interest	
	2.1	The Chair reminded Members to declare their interests as and when necessary on the agenda.	

3		Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 8 December 2020 and 27 January 2021	
	3.1	The minutes of the meetings held on 8 December 2020 and 27 January 2021 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair.	
4		Determination of Any Other Business	
	4.1	There were no additional items.	
5		Marketing	
	5.1	The Head of Marketing and Communications gave a presentation to the Corporation. The pandemic had changed the College's approach to marketing. This included holding virtual events, centralised communication and new processes including automated processes.	
	5.2	Key to the marketing approach were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College's awareness of its position within the County • Knowledge of its market • Continuing to enhance the College's reputation • Building awareness of the curriculum offer • Continuing to improve the student experience. 	
	5.3	A lot of these aspects were already in place and there was a 3 year strategy to continue to build on these across the College. The pandemic had driven a multi stakeholder approach and consistent communication across the College was very important.	
	5.4	Recruitment in the 16 -19 age range had increased, was strong for the current year as are applications for 2021 -22. No demographic growth would occur until next year. Recruitment from feeder schools was increasing showing the success of the school liaison strategy.	
	5.5	Opportunities from the Digital Academy would be maximised. The Curriculum offer would align with job vacancies and support Adult Learners and Apprenticeships.	
	5.6	<p><i>Are there opportunities for complete digital learning?</i> This is being reviewed.</p> <p><i>What about other providers?</i> The College keeps provision by other institutions under review. There is overlap between providers and a strong reputation and good provision during the pandemic were very important in this context. The Adult offer was taking account of the need for reskilling in response to the pandemic.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[2/21] The Corporation resolved to note the Marketing Presentation.</p> <p><i>The Corporation thanked VM for her presentation and she left the meeting.</i></p>	
6		Covid Update	
	6.1	The Vice Principal – HR and Student Services gave an update. The current focus was testing students. The infection rate for Northampton was significantly lower than previously. This meant there were less staff and students self isolating.	
	6.2	<p>All students at Lower Mounts and Daventry had been tested. Because of numbers, students at Booth Lane were being tested in phases. There had been an excellent response from students. Home testing would be in place by Easter.</p> <p><i>Is mask wearing compulsory?</i> Yes, unless an exemption has been agreed</p> <p>RESOLVED C[3/21] The Corporation resolved to note the Covid Update</p>	

7		Annual Safeguarding Update Report 2019/20 (including 20/21 Update)	
	7.1	The Assistant Principal Student Services presented his report. Covid had changed the College's approach as there was less face to face contact but it still maintained a strong offer for students.	
	7.2	Internal referrals for 2019/20 were in line with the previous year. Support for these students had continued during Covid. Homelessness has remained a feature. This could arise from difficult home situations that were not easy to resolve. The College was working with the Local Authority on this.	
	7.3	Domestic abuse, in line with the national picture, had risen during lockdown. This did overlap with other areas of concern. The work experience team had been monitored looking at the employment environment for students and any issues have been addressed.	
	7.4	External referrals were consistent with the previous year. The number of vulnerable students had remained constant. More students were on long term child protection plans and Covid may be having an impact on this. The College continued to work closely with the Local Authority to support Looked After Students.	
	7.5	Referral levels had remained the same during Covid even though there was not face to face contact – this was positive. The report set out the additional support provided to the most vulnerable students during lockdown.	
	7.6	Details of training were set out in the report – there had been a small dip during the pandemic but this had now increased	
	7.7	On line safety was even more important with many students working remotely. Training had been given on this. On line monitoring for PREVENT was not possible if students were not using the College's IT systems. It was also harder to spot. With increased social media interactions it was also harder to discover bullying. 1:1 sessions and group tutorials have been held to mitigate this.	
	7.8	The report set out the data for internal referrals for the last 2 years. To address some areas the College was working with the police. Tutorials were linked to curriculum areas to alert students to particular safeguarding risks.	
	7.9	Referrals for 2020/21 were broadly in line with 2019/20 and the reasons for referral were similar. Any increases were likely to be due to Covid. Gang involvement was often linked to poverty. PREVENT referrals were lower – this was probably due to less on line activity within College. The College continued to talk to students to highlight dangers. RESOLVED C[4/21] The Corporation resolved to note the Safeguarding report. <i>MO was thanked for his report. MO and JH left the meeting.</i>	
8		Principal's College Overview Report	
	8.1	The Principal presented her report. There were few changes from the last report. <i>Is there any clarity yet on the assessment regime for the summer exams?</i> A consultation had taken place. Some indicators had been given but more information was now needed from the awarding bodies. The College's Quality Team had set out criteria to be followed. There would be another consultation on technical qualifications. Results had to be reported earlier than normal which would add to staff workloads. Planning was in hand.	
	8.2	<i>What is the position on catch up learning?</i>	

		<p>A school of learning support has been created within the College and it is using the tuition fund to support small group and 1:1 learning. There will also be catch up sessions for the assessment of vocational learning.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[5/21] The Corporation resolved to note the Principal's College Overview report.</p>	
9		Learner Data Monitoring – Retention Attendance and Progress	
	9.1	<p>The Deputy Principal presented his report. Retention so far was good. This year as last year students would receive centre assessed grades. Unlike last year there was not a cut off date for work that could be taken into account and it was not a predictive process. Evidence of learning through to the end of the academic year could be considered. Further information from the awarding bodies was awaited.</p>	
	9.2	<p>Attendance had been impacted by the need for students to isolate. Attendance continued to be followed up on an individual basis where there were concerns.</p>	
	9.3	<p>Progress is monitored at each Key assessment point with intervention put in place as needed. The gap in progress between key assessment points 2 and 3 had closed.</p> <p><i>What is the position on apprenticeships?</i></p> <p>Some apprentices are still furloughed with a very small number being made redundant. There had been much more activity in the most recent lockdown, End Point Assessments are still available. These have continued to keep apprentices engaged in learning. Work was still being done with furloughed apprentices although work place assessments could not be done at this time.</p> <p><i>Will furloughed apprentices be able to resume?</i></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[6/21] the Corporation resolved to note the Learner Data Monitoring, Retention, Attendance and Progress Report</p>	
10		Management Accounts and Commentary for the period up to 31 January 2021	
	10.1	<p>The Deputy Principal (Finance and Corporate Affairs) presented his report. The pandemic had generated some uncertainty, for example with the adult budget as potential students were unable to attend in person. The ESFA's position on any clawback was unknown. Apprenticeship income had been adjusted in the budget. Catering income was lower. Tuition funding had been received which was additional income to that contained in the budget.</p>	
	10.2	<p>In the year to date, pay costs were within budget and were predicted to be below budget at the year end. The Tuition fund was to be used to pay for additional teaching. Non pay costs included the purchased of laptops, in line with last year. The EBITDA rating for the College continued to be Good. The operating surplus was ahead of budget and cash reserves meant the College's financial performance based on the ESFA criteria continued to be outstanding.</p>	
	10.3	<p><i>There are red indicators in the management cost KPIs?</i></p> <p>This is due to the new school created within the College.</p> <p><i>Is further investment planned for the Digital Strategy?</i></p> <p>This is being reviewed. There has been significant investment in the last 12 months by purchasing laptops and Chrome books. There will be a Governor 'bitesize' session on the Digital Strategy.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[7/21] The Corporation resolved to note the Management Accounts up to 31 January 2021</p>	

11		Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee Report	
	11.1	<p>The Committee had met on 8 March 2021 and the Chair of the Committee gave a verbal report of the meeting. The following points were mentioned:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The QIP was reviewed and interventions discussed as well as the challenges posed by the pandemic for practical subjects • November GCSE results were good sustaining the college's credible GCSE outcomes in the context of FE performance • There was a higher number of students sitting GCSEs than in previous years for the November series • Attendance, Retention and Progress and Apprenticeships were reviewed • All students have targets • Use of the Tuition Fund • Observations of teaching were taking place • The Staff Development Report – there was a lot of support being given to enhance skills and confidence. A skills audit was done for new staff • EdTech programme - working with another provider on this 	
	11.2	<p>The Committee also discussed arrangements so far for the awarding of centre assessed grades. This will involve a lot of work for staff, more than last year. The Committee also received an HE update. The College would be offering a Teaching apprenticeship programme from September 2021</p> <p><i>RESOLVED C[8/21] The Corporation resolved to note the report of the Quality Teaching and Learning Committee.</i></p>	
12		Governance Committee Report	
	12.1	<p>The Committee had met before the Corporation meeting. The Chair of the Committee gave a verbal update as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee had reviewed activity against the agreed priorities for Governors • The Committee had agreed a timetable for reviewing various areas of Governance • 3 prospective Governors had recently been interviewed and the Committee recommended the appointment of Lorna Papé <p><i>RESOLVED C[9/21] The Corporation resolved to note the report of the Governance Committee.</i></p>	
13		Appointment of Governors	
	13.1	<p>The Corporation considered the recommendation of the Governance Committee and agreed to the appointment of Lorna Papé for the period up to 31 July 2021, subject to the usual pre appointment checks.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED C9/21] The Corporation resolved appoint Lorna Papé as a Governor up to 31 July 2022, subject to the usual pre appointment checks.</i></p>	
14		Instrument and Articles	
	14.1	<p>The Governance Committee had reviewed the Instrument and Articles for the Corporation.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED C[10/21] The Corporation resolved approve the new Instrument and Articles.</i></p>	
15		Standing Orders	

	15.1	The Governance Committee had reviewed the Standing Orders for the Corporation. <i>RESOLVED C[11/21] The Corporation resolved approve the new Standing Orders.</i>	
16		Bitesize Training Sessions for Governors	
	16.1	The Principal suggested some 'bitesize' sessions for Governors led by College staff to cover areas of development with the College to enable Governors to have a deeper understanding of these areas and ask questions. The AOC had also recently launched some on line training For Governors. <i>RESOLVED C[12/21] The Corporation proceed with the Bitesize Training session for Governors and the AOC training.</i>	
17		Committee Membership	
	17.1	This would be considered further in the summer term.	
18		Clerk	
	18.1	The Corporation were advised that the Clerk would be retiring at the end of the summer term. Arrangements for a replacement would be made.	
19		Date and Time of Next meeting	
	19.1	The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 11 May 2021 at 5.00pm <i>The meeting finished at 18.55.</i>	

Julie Brasier
Clerk to the Corporation
Northampton College

Signed by the Chair:	
Date:	