

## CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

### CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2022 AT 4:30PM, IN ROOM JB031, EASTON

#### **Present:**

Andrew Barnes (Chair), Jerry White (Principal), Noel Bartram (*remote*), Jill Lanning, (*from 4:40pm*), Nikki Gray (*until 6:45pm*) Andrea Blanchflower, Evie Berg (Student Governor) (*from 4:45pm*), Lewis Pepperell (Student Union President) (*until 6:30pm*), Seth Harvey (Student Governor) (*until 7:00pm*), Laura Stewart, Shirley Barker

#### **Attendees:**

Helen Richardson-Hulme (Assistant Principal, Student Services), Jo Kershaw (Vice Principal) Martin Colbourne (Deputy CEO), Hilary Bright (Director of HR) (*until 6:04pm*) Jodie Mitchell (Director of Governance and Legal), Barbara Ashby (Governance & Legal Administrator)

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#### **1. Student Voice**

ABn welcomed 6 Easton residential students who were then asked a variety of questions covering the following:

- How important was it that Easton College had residential accommodation
- The quality and variety of food provided
- How they rated the accommodation
- How they rated their individual courses (enjoyment, the balance between theory and practical and progression)
- Whether they felt safe being in residential accommodation and at college in general
- The level of College support from teaching staff and other college staff

*JL joined meeting at 4:40pm*

*EB joined meeting at 4:45pm*

A discussion took place between the students and Governors in relation to the above questions, which included what was working well and what was not.

The students provided the following responses:

- There is a lack of evening entertainment or activities, particularly as the College is in a rural setting. There are limits with going off-site without transport.
- Each student thought the accommodation was good
- There was a good variety of catering provided with EU foods available if requested
- The College support was appreciated and pitched at the right level for most of them
- Two students felt there was not enough assistance provided when filling out Scholarship applications forms
- Each student said they felt safe while on campus
- Each student was pleased with their chosen course and the progression options available to them

*Students left at 4:52pm and there was a short break for refreshments.*

Governors continued the discussion regarding the students' comments and noted the following:

- They all felt this first session of welcoming students back to the meetings had worked well
- All Governors agreed the students had done very well but thought that for the next occasion it would be better if a more informal chat occurred

JW asked EB for her comments about the perception of being a residential student. EB stated that being a resident meant students can be more involved in their course of study as they are part of the campus environment with sub communities being created, where they get to know each other unlike day students who do not have that opportunity.

*The main meeting resumed at 4:57pm with Student and Staff Governors (LP, EB, SH, LS, SB) not present for the next item on the agenda being confidential.*

## **2. Confidential Item presented – Salary Issues**

Please see confidential minutes

## **3. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Bree Sherwood, Sebastian Gasse and Ed Rose.

## **4. Declarations 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.

JW declared he is a Director of Food and Farming Discovery Trust which was previously noted at Business Committee

## **5. Draft Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 July 2022**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2022, after a slight amendment, were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

## **6. Draft Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 July 2022**

The draft confidential minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2022, after some amendments, were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

## **7. Matters Arising**

20/21 – Board 17 Action 6: The revised Schedule of Business to be brought to the full Board meeting taking place on 19 October 2021 for discussion and agreement. *CJ confirmed once the ToR have been amended, this will feed into the schedule of business, which will then be brought to Governors.* ACTION COMPLETE

Board 5 Action 5 - A review of Risk Appetite to take place at the July Strategy Day. *Propose that this review should happen at the January 2023 Strategy Day.* **ACTION ON-GOING**

Board 6 Action 5 - CP and JM to schedule in training update to provide Governors with a broad view of all sector changes, either within board agendas or the strategy date agenda.

*JW has piloted a video blog that JL, NB and ABn and future videos will be available for Governors to access as they want. ACTION ON-GOING*

Board 10 Action 1 - MC to request from RNAA information regarding rights of way access for Denham Road prior to the shared agreement being signed and an updated provided at the next Business committee meeting. *MC said this has been deferred. ACTION ON-GOING*

Board 10 Action 2 - CP to send a response to FE Commissioner declining CTF (Capital Transformation Fund) funding offer and to copy in MP Clive Lewis. *Response sent. ACTION COMPLETE*

Board 10 Action 3 - CP to provide an update regarding outcome of UCU pay claim meeting on 11 July 2022. *JW confirmed this is currently being considered. ACTION ON-GOING*

Board 10 Action 4 - JL to prepare information concerning EAA resources and send to the Network of Chairs and Quality Committees for their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022. *JL to bring update to C&S meeting on 29 November 2022. ACTION ON-GOING*

Board 10 Action 5 - JM to provide an update on role descriptions for Chair and Vice Chair to be reviewed at the next Board meeting on 18th October. *Further amendments required following suggestions from RemGov on 28 September 2022. Update to be provided when available. ACTION ON-GOING*

Board 10 Action 6 - JM to arrange a meeting between JS, EB, LP and herself to discuss creating a user-friendly version of the Equality statement for staff and students. ACTION COMPLETE

## 8. Chair's Remarks

ABn commented to all present that we are living in very uncertain times but stated that we (the College and Governors) will do their best for both students and staff, which would mean adapting to any necessary changes to make this possible.

## 9. SECTION A

Papers in Section A are for discussion and action

### 9.1 Chairs Summary of Committee Meetings

#### 9.1.1 Curriculum and Standards

JL confirmed the C&S Committee discussed:

E&M results were disappointing and not what was anticipated. E&M would continue to be included as a separate item for FE Improvement until the end of this year. This will be reviewed in 2023 to decide whether E&M should be removed from the Agenda going forward.

#### HE Report

##### Enrolment

- A disappointing start to this academic year with the reduction in figures being a continuing trend
- CCN being students first choice, was 180 but actual enrolment applications were 157 with a target of 167
- Cost of living maybe a factor in relation to mature applicants enrolling
- Enrolment process was much smoother this term due to positive team process changes

JL and NB discussed about the need for a high-level review. JL asked JW if this could be reviewed in December rather than later. There is the need to make sure that CCN are clear what is being looked at for the review and how the results be utilised.

An analysis of the HE provision will be needed, examining what has impacted these results. NB suggested JW could carry out a high-level strategic review in relation to this matter which could include professional bodies and employers and should happen in late November or early December.

**ACTION 2: JW to complete a high-level review relating to the HE Enrolment numbers and the findings to be presented at Board.**

JK stated that the embedding of T-Level 4 and 5 are a central part of the Level 3 delivery and revitalising the L4 and L5 offer is building on HTQs. This idea could be used as a template to apply to other T-Levels as they are implemented. JL said this could feed into HE and FE clarifying what we are offering to what target group.

LS stated she had delivered some of the first T-Levels and advised that there is an option to progress onto a degree, confirming there is potential to develop the T-Level L4.

JW agreed that HE is an area with the potential for growth and so one to focus on.

**ACTION 3: JM / CJ to distribute the recent HE Governors Link report and confirm the location of all reports on OnBoard.**

NSS

Please see confidential minutes

NTTC

- Increase in primary PGTA numbers
- Slight drop in numbers for secondary PGTA. This is affected by national numbers and changes to bursaries
- Accreditation was gained by NTTC (through CCN) to continue delivering Teacher Training from September 2024

**9.1.2 Business**

A verbal update was provided by MC relating to the finances, and noted the following:

**9.1.2.1 Finance Update**

Easton Land Legal - no significant issues to raise.

**ACTION 4: JM / CJ to distribute the Easton Land Legal report presented at Business on 11.10.2022.**

The Annual H&S report- no significant issues to raise.

MC informed the meeting that the matter regarding cabling coming through land at Easton is subject to a timetable which is looming but is in hand.

Draft Managements accounts

Please see confidential minutes

*LP left meeting 18:30pm*

### 9.1.3 RemGov Meeting

JM provided an update in BS absence stating that the RemGov draft Committee Report was considered and will be presented to Board on 13 December 2022 for approval.

Other matters that were considered are as following:

#### 9.1.3.1. Draft Schedule of Business

JM confirmed that RemGov Committee have recommended the SoB for approval by the Board, subject to an additional item discussed earlier in the meeting.

The SoB was approved by all Governors present.

#### 9.1.3.2. External Board Reviews

JM provided an update for information as follows:

Initial enquiries will be made regarding costs and availability of external audits for the external board review and JM will bring an updated paper to board on 13 December 2022 for Governors comments.

#### **ACTION 5: JM to provide an update to Board on 13 December regarding the External Board Review.**

- JL shared her recent experience of attending a two-hour webinar that discussed reviews being carried out by external companies but added they can be expensive with potential quality and standard issues of the reviews
- JL added that following the webinar, it was discussed about having a clear perspective of good governance and items to be included for the review. JL suggested an internal review is completed before approaching an external company
- ABl informed the meeting that a review had recently been done at the UEA and they worked with a framework regarding good governance
- ABl commented that it is useful having an external person advising matters that need considering
- ABn said the review being done for College should include setting their own governance terms
- ABn how are we going to approach the process. JM confirmed she will be researching costs and availability with a view to doing the review before the July 2024 deadline

#### 9.1.3.3. Governor Recruitment

Please see confidential minutes

### 9.2 2022/23 Internal Audit Plan

MC provided a brief overview stating that nothing has changed with the programme already underway and asked if there were any requests to make changes to the plan.

No changes were requested, and the plan was agreed by all present.

### 9.3 Annual Health & Safety Report

JW provided a verbal update as follows:

- The College faces a challenging time with recruiting and providing training for first aiders and fire marshals
- The key concern is the differential of fire marshal numbers across the sites with Ipswich Road having the largest shortfall
- Single session training will be provided for staff including H&S Leads
- As fire marshal's are not always in the same building as some teaching staff move around impacting on the level of cover provided at the College

ABl stated that the UEA train all staff as fire marshal's because of the hybrid working conditions and suggested this might be an option for the College. ABn supported this suggestion.

LS stated it was a good idea to provide a solution regarding the issue with cover across the College sites because not all the rooms have staff occupying them full time, with staff moving to other buildings as required. LS suggested that first aid should be included in training for all, to enable a generalised cover across sites.

SB agreed with LS about the need for more staff cover across all sites.

JL asked whether there are areas without staff rooms that are prioritised for cover?

JW responded confirming there are buildings that do not have staff rooms and that those staff could be identified for training needs. ABn suggested the idea should be explored further.

*NG left meeting at 6:45pm*

#### Easton Farm

JW stated that a lot of progress has been made since the merger with several policies having been updated that will require Governor's approval. Going forward, consideration will need to be given to how the College carries out risk assessments and providing another refresher relating to COSHH regulations. Actions following Fire risk assessments are being dealt with but some still remain to be complete. JW stated that with changes to the CMT structure recently the H&S lead roles will need revitalising as well within the department.

NB stated that CCN need to have more external comparison with other Colleges to benchmark ourselves against as statistics are not being provided by the AoC, which they had done previously. JW confirmed he would discuss this with the AoC and whether they will be redistributing these statistics.

**ACTION 6: JW to confirm with the AoC whether H&S benchmarking data will be distributed going forward.**

JL queried about the high percentage of incidents that have occurred surrounding human behaviours and whether these incidents were happening in workshops. JW responded stating that these mostly relate to the high needs' students, some with learning difficulties, which can impact on the staff who are supporting this group. The H&S Manager, Nick Stainton-Clark, has proposed a change in categories to reflect this differential between groups/areas and monitor the level of incidents.

ABn asked if all present agreed the changes to Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy as recommended by the Business Committee. The Board, subject to including a policy for Snow and Ice, **approved the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.**

#### 9.4 Strategy Reporting Schedule and CLT Leads

JW noted that 15 strategic development priorities were agreed at the July Strategy Day. A reporting schedule and lead role associated with each item was agreed by the Board previously. Updates regarding each strategic item has been added to the Schedule of Business for each Committee.

For discussion at today's meeting '4. Undertake the "Duty to Review" process alongside our NACG colleagues.'

JW stated this process is a consequence of the 'Skills Act' requiring the College to undertake a review of CCN contribution of our curriculum in meeting skills needs, locally regionally and nationally where appropriate. In addition, this process also requires CCN to do this with due regard to other providers locally, in particular, with other FE colleges. A proposal was made that there would be a co-ordinated approach to this between five local Colleges.

JW stated that this process has not yet been finalised with the Principals group. Discussions between JW and JM considered how this process aligns with the governance review, and that the duty to review needs to be carried out first because it provides a judgement on how effective Governors are in delivering the curriculum for the community that CCN serve. JW confirmed this matter will continue to be worked on and an update will be provided to the Board as the process develops.

JL requested if this page and Strategic Priorities could be made easy access in the resources.

**ACTION 7: JM / CJ to upload the Strategic Deliveries Priorities Operational Plan onto OnBoard resources.**

#### 9.5 Curriculum Strategy

JW stated the Strategy was brought to C&S for an annual review. JW said this was discussed at SMT level regarding making this a more operational document out of the high-level strategic aspirations around the curriculum and have a 'live' rolling document that covers priorities for subsequent years. JW suggested this process should be done in conjunction with developing the local skills improvement plan (LSIPs) and enable Chambers of Commerce to inform what CCN should be doing. JW added that it is an evolving process around inclusion by getting students to think about the global world and not just a local world and linking into the employer engagement process.

JL agree this would be a good idea.

The Curriculum Strategy was approved.

#### 9.6 Wellbeing and Inclusion Report and Safeguarding

The Wellbeing and Inclusion report was presented by HRH and the following points were noted:

##### Wellbeing and Inclusion

HRH stated that there are changes this year regarding 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' whereby the governing body need to read the full document not just part one and she has highlighted from part two some of the duties placed upon the governing body.

HRH stated that she had highlighted through the different chapters some of the key changes to the document this year as follows:

- In part one, the wording being used around the safeguarding themes
- In part two, the inclusion of low-level concerns and the reporting process
- Part three, been working with HR regarding the carrying out online searches
- Annex C, DSL taking on the role of the appropriate adult
- Section 2 refers to DSL Norfolk Youth Violence and Youth Offenders Team and a meeting CCN had with them regarding complex matters that some of the students were experiencing. CCN have been liaising with the team to obtain support in keeping students safe
- DSL training updates for this year have been provided and informed the Board that Seb Gasse is a new DSL

HRH noted that for this half term, some initial case analysis is being carried out relating to anxiety and depression and a further analysis will be carried out regarding the issue with students having suicidal thoughts as there have been 22 cases reported.

ABn thanked HRH for the comprehensive report.

The Safeguarding Procedure had some changes made to it over the Summer and HRH requested approval for the changes from the Board; all Governors approved the updated Safeguarding Procedure.

#### Prevent Strategy

HRH informed the Board that there is a procedure included in this strategy regarding any safeguarding concerns staff may need to raise.

JL asked if the numbers of incidents around this strategy have reduced as this is not being included in the mainstream agenda compared with mental health issues. HRH responded stating that this is due to Covid and lockdown impacting on the number of cases being reported. The main thought now concerning this matter is that it is potentially occurring 'online' but HRH added that more cases could be seen next term.

ABn asked whether LS had anything she wanted to add regarding online safeguarding issues. LS commented that she was hearing in class from students about matters around safeguarding occurring outside of College and online incidents such as 'twitter' with students' accounts being deleted. LS asked whether any training can be offered for students to understand their responsibility outside of College. Further discussion ensued around this matter concerning of students using social media appropriately and how this affects applying for work.

The Prevent Strategy was formally approved by Governors.

### **9.7 Strategic Priorities**

JW confirmed the Strategic Priorities had been covered in item 9.4.

### **9.8 Governance Matters**

JM presented the Governance Matters as follows:

#### **9.8.1 SAR review and results**

A meeting relating to the Governance SAR was held on 3 October 2022 and those that were unable to attend had completed the review online with the



comments being shared with rest of Governors at the meeting. The results are contained within the report presented.

The main areas to note are:

- Views of the students and quality of student experience' was an area all Governors felt required improvement
- 3 student Governors have been appointed
- Having a 'buddy up system' in place was discussed together with the suggestion of site visits before Board meetings and implementing the 'Student Voice'
- Discussion regarding having a 15-minute informal meeting between Governors and students such as 'Tea with Governors' before the main Board meeting
- Views of Staff and how this was something could be held on Strategy Day, similar to the above suggestion of "Tea with Governors"
- Engagement between Governors and key stakeholders also required improvement along with Governors understanding their role

JM stated there were several positive outcomes from the meeting, particularly with how well the Board has supported the College with setting the Strategic Priorities, discussions regarding KPI and targets, the relationship between Governors and the College Leadership Team, transparency provided during Committee meetings and the quality of information provided.

ABn commented that it was a better process with the discussion being open and transparent. He welcomed the new Staff and Student Governors to give their views on matters of concern going forward.

JL commented about the effectiveness of how the Committees operates currently and how the SAR does not address this matter. JL suggested this was a query to come back to another time.

Some general discussion took place regarding the effectiveness of having the meeting to discuss the SAR with Governors saying that they had made some important changes.

### **9.8.2 Confirmation of Appointment**

JM informed the Board about the recommended appointments and asked for Board approval for the following:

- Seth Harvey as Student Governor and has expressed an interest in joining the Business Committee
- Laura Stewart as Staff Governor and has expressed an interest in joining C&S Committee
- Shirley Barker as Staff Governor and has expressed an interest in joining Business Committee

Formal approval for the above appointments to the Board and Committees was approved by all Governors.

### **9.8.3 Corporate Sealing Register**

The Corporate Sealing Register was shared with the Board for information. No concerns were raised.

However, JW stated it should be clarified that the sealed letters addressed to students related to Ukrainian students, explaining that the College had been requested to supply sealed letters to the Ukrainian authority to enable them to be allowed to study with CCN.

ABn asked what type of seal is used and JW confirmed it was the Colleges own seal.

SH left meeting at 7.00pm

#### **9.8.4 Whistleblowing Policy - Approval**

JM stated the policy has been reviewed by the A&R Committee and has also been considered by the Unions who have presented their comments.

The Whistleblowing Policy was formally approved by all Governors.

#### **9.8.5 Equality and Diversity Policy – Approval**

JM stated the Policy has been considered by CLT and also considered by the Unions who had no comments.

The Equality and Diversity Policy was formally approved by all Governors.

### **10. SECTION B**

Papers in Section B are for discussion only if requested by Governors

#### **10.1 Confidential – Landex Membership**

Please see confidential minutes.

#### **10.2 Review of Risk Appetite**

JW asked for this item be moved to January Strategy Day Agenda.

**ACTION 8: JM / CJ to add Review of Risk Appetite to the January Strategy Day Agenda.**

#### **10.3 Students Union Update**

In the absence of LP SU President, JW provided a verbal update as followings:

- It was a good start to the new term with Welcome weeks
- LP is working towards having an Executive Officer in place soon
- Work continues to have Course Representatives in place

EB noted that regarding the Executive Officer post there has not been a lot of information available so asked whether this could be brought up at tutorials to spread the word, especially to other campus sites. JK added that the transition of information across the student body is not as clear as they would like so this is an area to be worked on going forward.

#### **10.4 5 Minutes Training Update**

JW noted that a video update will be provided to Governors regarding a recent AoC funding update and would appreciate Governors feedbacks and thoughts.

#### **10.5 Newsletter from the FE Commissioner**

JW stated there are two key areas that were highlighted for improvement as follows:

- Subcontracting - JW stated CCN have low levels of these compared with other sectors and said that an Internal Audit was carried out for this last year, confirming that there is little risk for CCN.
- Governance - Terms of Office  
JW stated that FE do not want Governors to be in post longer than ten years unless there are exceptional circumstances. JW confirmed that this fits with CCNs own approach.

JW stated that CCN are compliant in both incidences.

## 11. SECTION C

Papers in Section C are for information only

### 11.1 Committee Minutes

No committee minutes were presented to the Board.

### 11.2 Student Forum and Parliament

No minutes were presented to the Board.

### 11.3 Conflicts of Interest Policy

This item was not discussed and taken as read.

## 12. Other Urgent Business

### 12.1 Duty to Review

JW confirmed the Duty to Review had been covered in item 9.4.

## 13. Confidentiality

It was agreed that agenda items 2, 9.1.1 (partial), 9.1.2.1 (partial), 9.1.3.3, 10.1.

## 14. Confidential Items

No items were raised under this item.

## 15. Date of Next Meeting

The next CCN Board Meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 13 December 2022 at 4:30pm at CCN, room HB004.

All formal business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 7:35pm

Signed ..... Date .....  
(Chair)