

North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION

Monday 30th March 2020 at 6pm - Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Present: Mrs Karen Baxter, Mr Chris Brewer, Dr Paul Cashian, Mr Martin Cooke, Mr Duncan Cooper, Mr Jerry Hutchinson, Prof Ray Linforth, Mr Anil Majithia, Mrs Marion Plant, Mr Clive Read, Mrs Tracey Simkins, Dr Andrew Turner and Miss Charlotte Walton.

In attendance: Mr Thomas Hamilton-Dick (Deputy Principal), Mr David Poole (Executive Director Finance & Risk) and Mrs Rachel Marshall (Clerk).

The meeting was quorate.

Ray Linforth welcomed everyone to the meeting which he confirmed would follow the shortened agenda, as previously circulated to Members. This agenda would focus on matters of significant importance or issues which required a decision by Members. After the meeting, Members would be invited to raise any questions or challenges they had on the papers which were presented on the 'long' agenda via email; this agenda and the associated papers had already been made available to Members to view on Diligent Boards. The Clerk would seek responses to any questions or challenges raised, and provide those responses to the whole Corporation, again via email. Any questions or challenges from Members, together with the associated responses, would be recorded and appended to the minutes.

1. Substantive Items

1.1 Covid-19 Verbal Update

Marion Plant provided an update to Members on the College's response to the national pandemic crisis and it's current position, highlighting the following matters:

- i. An email containing a written narrative of the College's response to the COVID-19 situation and other supporting documents had been sent to Members ahead of the meeting.
- ii. It was apparent that North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College was one of the only Colleges still open in the Midlands. The Nuneaton campus remained partially open for the foreseeable future, including over the Easter bank holidays. The Wigston campus closed on Friday 27th March 2020 due to the lack of demand, although it continued to provide a daily drop-in welfare service for those who were most vulnerable during this necessary closure period. Both nurseries had also closed on Friday 27th March 2020 due to lack of demand.
- iii. The Nuneaton Campus remained open to provide the following provision and services:
 - An 'engagement project' similar to a youth club style provision for a handful of vulnerable students most of whom had EHCPs or were vulnerable. Some of these students, whom Marion Plant had met, were at significant risk and therefore this provision was a 'lifeline' which needed to continue.
 - Despite the low numbers of students attending, the College's alternative provision 'Inspire' continued.
 - All four of The Midland Academies Trust academies had been re-located into a discrete area of the Nuneaton campus where they continued to offer learning to about 30 students; mainly children of key workers. Each academy had its own 'branded' area where equipment from each academy was available. Strict principles of social distancing were being adhered to during delivery of this provision. This provision was staffed by rotating teams of teachers and support staff which enabled the immediate replacement of staff who might become unwell.

- Providing a shared location for the Trust had enabled greater resilience, with estates, IT, catering and security services being shared across the two organisations. There was a strong common ethos between the College and the Trust.
 - The College had also offered the opportunity to co-locate to all local schools but there had been no take up of this offer.
- iv. The College was undertaking a regular intense cleaning service and cleaners continued to disinfect door handles and surfaces throughout the day.
 - v. The majority of College staff were now focused on delivering online and remote learning. Full time students had also received hard-copy study packs. Assignment completion and return was being monitored and was very high; it was clear that the approaches being taken were working well for the vast majority of students.
 - vi. Communication was Marion Plant's number one priority and communications being issued to staff had been received well. A significant focus of these communications was on health and well-being.
 - vii. A new student communication strategy was also in place and wider stakeholders were also being kept updated
 - viii. The second biggest concern was the impact the current situation would have on College finances and an analysis of this impact was being undertaken
 - ix. Extraordinary staff activity was taking place and included: staff signing up to become NHS volunteers; a large donation of personal protection equipment (PPE) to the George Eliot Hospital and an ambition to provide the same for a local hospice; a donation of food to the food bank in Wigston; and a huge initiative to prepare food hampers for vulnerable students, through the College's excellent chaplaincy.
 - x. The College's Safeguarding Policy was also being reviewed.

The Chair thanked Marion Plant for her update and the additional documents which had been provided to Members, and asked for more information to be given on apprenticeships and student assessments.

Thomas Hamilton-Dick provided the following overview in response:

- i. Higher education (HE) students had been mobilised to work at home and complete their assignments. The challenge arose in respect of the College's validating partners and discussion with those partner were ongoing whilst the College continued with its online approach.
- ii. There continued to be a lack of clarity from the Government around the treatment of apprenticeships. It was hoped that there would, be an update by the end of the week.
- iii. All students in the 16-18 study programme cohort were working at home and individual learner progress was being tracked. Staff were holding weekly virtual team meetings.
- iv. Enrolment procedures were being looked at for the next academic year.
- v. A curriculum planning working group was also meeting to ensure that budget deadlines were met.

1.2 Confidential - Finance Update

1.3 Travel and Substance Policy

David Poole introduced the Policy highlighting that only minor changes had been made to it, in accordance with HMRC allowance rates. The Policy had been reviewed and recommended by the Resource Committee at its last meeting.

Following discussion, Members approved the Policy. (Proposer: Jerry Hutchinson; seconder: Anil Majithia).

2. Routine and Standing Items

2.1 Apologies

No apologies were received.

2.2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received:

2.3.i Minutes of a Meeting held on Thursday 12th December 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 12th December 2019 were approved. (Proposer: Ray Linforth; seconder: Jerry Hutchinson).

2.4 Matters Arising

There were no non-confidential matters arising.

Ray Linforth reminded Members to let the Clerk have any questions or comments about the papers that had not been discussed at the meeting, to enable her to co-ordinate and disseminate responses. Ray Linforth then asked Marion Plant to thank staff on behalf of Members, for all the work they were currently undertaking both on-site and at home. Finally, Ray Linforth thanked Members for joining the Corporation's first virtual meeting, which had worked very well and conveyed his wish that they stayed safe and well.

Date of the Next Meeting: Thursday 9th July 2020 at 6pm

The meeting finished at 6.53pm

Signed: (Chair) Date: