

**North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION**

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 6pm - Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams**

**Present:** Mrs Karen Baxter, Mr Chris Brewer, Mr Duncan Cooper, Mrs Helen Holley, 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 Ben Crook (Vice Principal Quality), Mr Thomas Hamilton-Dick (Deputy Principal), Mrs Nicola Morrison (Director Human Resource, Organisational Development & Marketing), Mr David Poole (Chief Operating Officer) and Mrs Rachel Marshall (Clerk).

Prior to the meeting Chris Nixon - Director of Student Experience and Support had presented a Safeguarding Update to Members.

The meeting was quorate.

Ray Linforth welcomed Charlotte Walton who had just been re-appointed as the Student Member for 12 months and all Members and staff.

**1. Routine and Standing Items**

**1.1 Apologies**

No apologies were received.

**1.2 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

**1.3 Minutes of Meetings held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020**

The minutes of the last meeting of the academic year held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2020 were approved. (Proposer: Charlotte Walton; seconder: Anil Majithia).

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 were approved. (Proposer: Helen Holley; seconder: Tracey Simkins).

**1.3.1 Schedule of Actions**

See attached Schedule.

**1.3.2 Matters Arising**

There were no non-confidential matters arising.

**1.4 Chair's Action**

Ray Linforth reported that he had taken no chair's action since the meeting in July 2020.

**2. Strategic Developments**

**2.1 Principal's Briefing including Covid-19 Update**

Marion Plant provided the following update:

- i. Staff were continuing to effectively manage the College's response to the impact of Covid-19. There was an air of calmness within the College as the precautions which had been put into effect to manage the re-opening of the College were showing

## Agenda item 1.3

impact. This had included the wearing of masks by staff and students in all communal areas.

- ii. The most difficult shift had been to resourcing the increased digital learning. Staff had embraced mirror teaching and the College was responding to staff IT and resourcing needs quickly and effectively.
- iii. The Department for Education (DfE) had indicated that colleges should be delivering face-to-face teaching on an as close to a full-time basis as possible; however the Executive believed that the current balanced being achieved was appropriate although not in line with DfE guidance.
- iv. The College was required to provide attendance returns on a daily basis. Currently, attendance rates were at a lower level than at the same point in 2019/20. Work was being undertaken to improve attendance levels and it was anticipated that rates would rise as half-term was approached.

Members asked whether contingency planning was in place should the current situation change.

Marion Plant confirmed that work to model a number of different scenarios was indeed taking place and went on to outline a range of different models being considered and how these might work. The Executive would also be looking at the development of individualised plans for different cohorts, taking a tailored approach and as well as looking at closure plans.

- v. Staff remained upbeat and were demonstrating extraordinary resilience. A further pulse survey would be undertaken shortly to gauge how staff were feeling and their views on the approach that the College was taking.
- vi. The Trade Unions remained supportive of the work being undertaken and remained engaged, providing helpful feedback.

Members asked what support was being provided for staff.

Nicola Morrison explained that a staff annual well-being plan had been established which had an emphasis on mental-health and she outlined the approach being taken and initiatives included within it.

Members asked whether the College could reclaim the additional costs it had incurred due to the pandemic?

Marion Plant confirmed that there was no source of funding that the College could rely on to offset these costs.

- vii. In response to staff feedback, staff communications were now provided on a more frequent basis and these included written updates, videos and meetings. A recent Teams meeting had been attended by over 300 staff.
- viii. Currently, a number of great developments were taking place in the employer world and with partnerships and these were outlined. The College was in a very positive place with increased bidding and other opportunities which staff were very ambitious about.
- ix. The Nuneaton 'Towns Fund' bid opportunity could result in a grant of £25m to improve the town. This would also bring opportunities for the College which were currently being explored, including the possibility of relocating the College restaurant into the town and the setting up of a skills and enterprise centre with digital capabilities.

Members raised and discussed the following matters:

- i. Were there any other Government Schemes that the College could access such as the decarbonisation scheme?

David Poole indicated that the College was accessing a number of schemes and would be looking at all schemes that the College might be eligible to apply for.

Members asked whether it was possible to receive an update on this position so Members could see a balanced picture.

Marion Plant confirmed that this could be done, and that staff would follow up on the decarbonisation scheme. **ACTION 1 COO**

- ii. Had any issues arisen following the local lockdown in the Wigston area?

Marion Plant confirmed that no issues had arisen.

- iii. What was the impact on staff workload?

Marion Plant explained that in the current circumstances it was inevitable for staff workloads to increase; however, the Trade Unions had not raised any formal concerns, nor had there been any particular issues raised in staff responses to the staff surveys. She was not however complacent over this matter; staff were expressing anxiety over the use of new technology and this needed to be acknowledged.

Following discussion, Members received the update.

## 2.2 **Confidential - Strategic Dashboard Monitoring 2019/20 Closing Position**

## 2.3 **Confidential - Verbal Update on Nuneaton Campus Development**

## 2.4 **Proposed BAME Solidarity Statement**

Nicola Morrison introduced the paper and provided the following summary:

- i. The statement had been drafted in consideration of the Black Lives Matter movement and the events which had been happening in the America. It was a College acknowledgement of the impact on our own communities and a demonstration of inclusivity and anti-racism.
- ii. Account had been taken of guidance produced by the Association of Colleges and views had been sought from local and regional Trade Union colleagues and Karen Chouhan who had previously been a Corporation member and who had expertise in this area.
- iii. If Members approved the statement an action plan would be developed in conjunction with students and staff.

Members provided the following challenges:

- i. As the action plan had not yet been developed and the statement itself did not show a set significant of commitments which would be delivered at pace, it was difficult to support its approval. A timeline to commit to make relevant changes should have been included with the statement. Actual commitments for change were needed.
- ii. It was unclear as to who the audience for the statement was.

Following discussion, Members agreed that there was generally strong support for the statement and the thrust of what the College wanted to achieve but that an action plan was need and that further consideration of some of the wording in the statement would be helpful.

**ACTION 2 DHRODM**

## 3. **Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

### 3.1 **Confidential - Emerging College Achievements for 2019/20**

## 4. **Financial Matters and Arrangements for Internal Control**

### 4.1 **Confidential - Financial Performance Outturn for 2019/20**

### 4.2 **Confidential - Update on Recruitment and Financial Implications**

**5. Governance**

**5.1 Outcomes of from Written Resolutions**

Members were asked to note the following outcomes from recent written resolutions:

- i. The approval of the proposed committee structure and membership for 2020/21 by a majority of Members, without any dissensions, on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at midday.
- ii. The appointment of Charlotte Walton as Student Member until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 by a majority of Members, without any dissensions. on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020 at 4pm.
- iii. The co-option of Leanne Newitt to the Students Learning & Quality Committee until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 by a majority of Members, without any dissensions and one abstention, on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020 at 4pm.

**6. Other Matters**

**6.1 Release of Papers**

Members agreed to the release of papers with the exception of:

- i. Agenda item 2.2 Strategic Dashboard Monitoring 2019/20 Closing Position as the paper contained information which was considered to be commercially sensitive.
- ii. Agenda item 2.4 Proposed BAME Solidarity Statement as the paper was planned for publication subsequent to its presentation at this meeting.
- iii. Agenda item 3.1 Emerging College Achievements for 2019/20 as the paper contained information which was considered to be commercially sensitive.
- iv. Agenda item 4.1 Financial Performance Outturn for 2019/20 as the paper contained information which was considered to be commercially sensitive.
- v. Agenda item 4.2 Update on Recruitment and Financial Implications as the paper contained information which was considered to be commercially sensitive.

**6.2 Date of the Next Meeting:**

Members agreed the date of the next meeting, which would be the Creative Meeting, as Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 6pm at via Microsoft Teams Meetings.

The meeting finished at 7.28pm

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