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MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION BOARD MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 30 MARCH 2022

Present:

Governors:

Dolly Agoro	Karen Jackson
Antony Ball	Emma Kirk
Angela Briggs	Mick Lochran
Ruth Brook	Scarlett Littlemore
Tom Burton	Alan Rayment
Luke Cantrill	Mark Swales
Greg Clarke	Lee Walker
Richard Gravestock	Andrea Ward

The quorum for the meeting was nine members.

In attendance:

Barrie Shipley	Chief Finance Officer
Rachel Maguire	Chief People Officer
Sharon Smith	Principal / Deputy CEO
Jason Wilkinson	Chief Information Officer
Preetha Kumar	Governor Designate
Claire Houlden	Executive Governance PA (Minutes)

The meeting took place at University Centre North Lincolnshire and via MS Teams and started at 5.30 pm.

Item	Minutes	Action	Date Due
1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Jo Garrison, Paul Scanlon, Hayley Barker, Lee Tillman, Peter Grant, and Harry Mallett.</p> <p>A Briggs advised that Item 6 on the agenda – Pay Review – would be considered at the end of the meeting to enable Staff and Student Governors to leave.</p>		
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Members should declare any personal or financial obligation, allegiance or loyalty which would in any way affect decisions in relation to the subjects under discussion.</p> <p>A Briggs stated that due to J Garrison's absence, C Houlden would be minuting the meeting. It was not C Houlden's responsibility to provide advice on proceedings so where possible A Briggs would do that; if it was not possible to provide an answer, matters would be deferred for external advice.</p>		

R Gravestock mentioned that one of his children attended the Kingsway Nursery.

3 Ratification of New Governor

Referring to J Garrison's report, A Briggs stated that the Search & Governance Committee on 2nd March recommended Preetha Kumar be appointed as Governor. P Kumar had served as a co-opted member of Audit & Risk Committee since 20 October 2021. The appointment would be for a term just under 4 years, to 31 July 2026.

Resolution: The appointment of Preetha Kumar as Governor for a period to 31 July 2026 was approved.

4 Minutes of the Corporation Board meetings held on 13 December 2022 and any matters arising

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Corporation Board meetings held on 13 December 2022 and any matters arising

The minutes and confidential minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

5 CEO Report

M Lochran reported that Covid cases were still appearing in pockets throughout the college with historically around 35-45 cases at different points, however more recently this had increased to over 100. Some students were being taught on-line. With the change in the law around isolation and testing from April 1st there was no official guidance for colleges, so the college is following Public Health advice for staff and students to isolate if they test positive. Staff absences were being managed. The provision of free Covid testing kits ends this week and the college will continue to distribute these until supplies run out.

Various Government Bills were progressing through Parliament. The Skills for Jobs Bill was going through the final stages with proposed amendments. The key elements were to put employers at the centre of post-16 skills development, entitlement for lifelong learning, increased accountability for colleges, and enhanced role for Office for Students. M Lochran had attended a meeting with Prof Alison Wolf, the government's advisor on skills, earlier in the week.

The Levelling Up white paper aims to boost productivity and improve living standards in places where they had fallen behind. It would empower local communities through increased devolution. DN Colleges Group was working with other colleges in the area on how to contribute to the 10 missions within the paper. Meetings had been held with the Chief Executives of the local councils to discuss possible devolution models.

There had been significant changes to the Student Finance with increase in grant funding for high-cost subjects; support for the development of Higher Technical Qualifications; freezing of tuition fees to 2024/25 and reduction of interest rates for new graduates; extension of loan period to 40 years.

Consultation was taking place around other potential reforms including development of Higher Technical Qualification and reform of Access to HE, which was of particular interest to the Group.

Changes were proposed for Entry Level to Level 2 qualifications which would be implemented from 2024-27. Consultation to take place on whether these qualifications where the aim is to progress students onto a Level 3 Technical qualification or into employment or apprenticeship, or to just go straight into employment.

Changes for SEND provision was focussed on schools with no recognition of real challenges in post-16 provision.

There were to be changes to the DfE / ESFA structure with policies going back under central DfE control. There is concern about the lack of expertise in 16-18 funding at DfE. It is thought the changes are to bring about a more joined up system.

The South Yorkshire Institute of Technology is going ahead. It was hoped to finalise the capital and licence agreements by May but this is now expected to take place in July. Subject to University of Birmingham approval, the IoT will be based at the National College for Infrastructure (NCATI) in Doncaster which will become a centre of excellence for the Council's University City vision.

Capital Transformation works at North Lindsey were moving forward. The legal document had not yet been received confirming DfE will take up to a maximum of £6.3m from the disposal of surplus land, or a reduced contribution if the sale does not achieve that amount, however email confirmation had been received. The Kingsway Children's Centre was not included in the works and a paper will be brought to a future meeting to seek agreement on its future. DfE were working towards a September 2024 completion.

There had been an increase in 16-18 funding rates of 8.4% based on a 7% increase in teaching hours. There had been no increase in funding for apprenticeships or adults. 16-18 funding for 2022-23 had been increased by £800,000. There are increasing cost pressures; energy, national minimum wage and National Insurance contributions for example.

Darren Jones, MP, Chair of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee had visited North Lindsey college to talk about skills and current labour market issues.

An update on the outcome of the Ofsted inspection was provided to governors. This information to remain confidential until the publication of the final report.

6 Annual Pay Award (all staff)

This item was moved to the end of the meeting. As it is considered confidential the notes are kept as a separate record by the Director of Governance / Clerk to the Corporation.

7 Performance Update

S Smith reported that the performance figures had been considered by both CQP and HEPQ committees as well as Finance & Resources for the financial implications. The main areas raised were:

- Attendance gaps between English and Maths and the main curriculum which was being worked on.
- All employers would be involved in apprenticeship reviews.
- Adult courses would work towards the exceptionally high standards set by Ofsted to achieve outstanding.
- 16-18 recruitment had not achieved target but there would be no financial implication due to the extra funding.
- 39 NEETS were among the New Year starts and it is hoped they would progress within college.
- Attendance was below target which needs to be worked on, although retention was strong.
- 16-18 Applications were up on the same time last year.
- Adults enrolled on Sheffield City Region devolved budget was a challenge with some withdrawals and non-starters. Other partners were to be identified for this provision.
- Referrals from Doncaster Job Centre Plus were slow; S Smith will arrange to meet with a senior manager to discuss this.
- Adult attendance was below target as were Apprentices, however retention was strong.
- HE under recruited this year but applications for next year were above the level last year. The Marketing and Recruitment Strategy was presented at a recent HEPQ meeting.
- A new approach to curriculum planning had been introduced to provide a longer-term vision in each area. This work will inform the new Estates master plan.
- A recruitment event will be planned for each campus to try to recruit to hard to fill posts.
- A potential new post would pick up progress and administration elements of the new apprenticeship standard giving technical assessors more time to teach.

SS

6/7/22

8 Gender Pay Gap Report

R Maguire introduced the Gender Pay Gap report for 2021 which had to be published by 31 March. The report for 2020 had also been provided so governors could see the improvement in reporting style. Information on management actions and the job evaluation project was included.

Questions were asked about the apparent non-diversity of staff and students in the report's photos. R Maguire said these were stock photos from Marketing and the Director of Safeguarding, Prevent and Inclusion was to work with the team to increase the diversity of the catalogue of images. It was pointed out that diversity of staff and student wasn't always evident in a photo.

Whilst the Group wanted to close the pay gap, societal norms make it difficult. Most of the organisation's cleaners were female, attracted by the part-time hours, whereas in areas such as Engineering, most of the senior managers were

male and on a higher salary. An internal leadership programme was to be developed to encourage more female staff into leadership roles.

The aligning pay, terms and conditions project will address some of the issues related to the gender pay gap. An analysis of the outcome will be presented to a future meeting.

R Brook asked how data for non-binary staff was reflected in the report. R Maguire said the parameters set by government were for male/female, non-binary staff were not included.

The data was a snapshot in a specific week and did not include staff on sick leave or annual leave.

Resolution: The Gender Pay Gap 2021 was approved.

9 Annual Equality & Diversity Report

R Maguire said this report was recommended for approval by the People and Transformation Committee. There is a requirement to publish an annual E&D Report. Progress on the equality objectives for both staff and students is included in the report.

Resolution: The Annual Equality & Diversity Report 2021 was approved.

10 AEB Premises – Scunthorpe High Street

B Shipley informed members that modern premises were sought for the adult provision at North Lindsey College to replace the previous arrangement at Ongo. A number of premises had been viewed and the former Top Shop site on Scunthorpe High Street found most suitable. The property was in good condition but required work to make more suitable to education than retail.

Benefits of the site include students would have to pass the property to go to the local authority provision potentially increasing DNCG numbers. The large glass frontage would enable advertising of other provision and events.

There was a 10-12 weeks' timeframe to refurbish the property. Rental charge was £30k per annum with an 80% business rates rebate. A 10-year lease was proposed with get-out clause at 5 and 8 years.

The Adult provision management team had approved the property as suitable for their needs.

B Shipley confirmed that there had been no analysis of potential footfall for the property but it is in a prime location on the High Street. Local construction firms would be encouraged to tender for the renovation works but due to complexities of the work it would not be possible for Construction students to be involved.

M Lochran advised that before the pandemic he had discussed Adult Provision with the local authority Chief Executive which could lead to increased provision. S Smith added that the Group Executive Director, Adult Curriculum was in discussions with his equivalent at the Council to identify areas of collaboration. The Assistant Education Director of North Lincolnshire Council is on the North Lindsey College Stakeholder Board and regular discussions were held to involve

operational managers in the process. With regards to student involvement at the site, it may be possible to include them in selecting the soft furnishings; S Smith would discuss with B Shipley and L Berges.

SS

6/7/22

D Agoro questioned whether, with the drop in income from Adult learners, more thought had been given to on-line training. S Smith explained that the income fall was from the Sheffield City Region income, not Scunthorpe. The college is aware that some potential students had not enrolled as they were not able to come onto the North Lindsey site but would attend at a town centre location. More on-line learning had been provided, but the aim of the shop was to target the hard to reach communities. S Smith acknowledged there was a risk due to the drop in referrals from Job Centre Plus however stronger strategic partnerships with both local authorities and the NEETS agenda could alleviate that. It may also be possible to have 16-18 engagement at the site as a contingency.

Resolution: the proposed rental of the former Top Shop premises on Scunthorpe High Street was approved.

11 Management Accounts End January 2022

B Shipley said that the group financial position had not changed significantly since the January 2022 report was completed. The reduction in some income streams has been offset by reduction in pay and non-pay budgets. A deficit of £546k is now forecast compared to a budget deficit of just over £200k, however the group was still expected to achieve outstanding financial health.

There were risks around AEB provision from Sheffield City Region and risks of reduced income due to HE withdrawals. There was also a risk around staff pay award. Apprenticeships were less of a risk as the group was on target for achievement forecasts. There were inflationary pressures around non-pay budgets.

SFA had confirmed the rating for last year's financial statements as outstanding.

It was noted the Apprenticeship income was a good result given the national reduction in Apprenticeships; the college had returned to pre-pandemic levels.

12 Board and Committee Membership Updates

A Briggs referred to J Garrison's report on membership. A Ball's term of office ends on 31 July 2022 and a further term of 4 years to 31 July 2026 was recommended by Search & Governance Committee.

There was need to review the timings of the People & Transformation and Search & Governance committees to ensure appropriate timings were scheduled. A meeting to discuss this had been scheduled.

Resolution: members approved a further 4-year term of office for A Ball.

13 Written Resolutions and Chair's Action

A Briggs reported that there had been no written resolutions since the last Board meeting. There were three Chair's Actions to report:

- award of contract to Complete Business Solutions for supply, design and installation of furniture for UCNL through national framework agreement.
- 2-year contract (plus two further 1 year extensions) with Frontier Software to provide updated to Chris21 software to web browser module to enable 24/7 access to information.
- Application for wave 4 of T Level funding for refurbishing space at Doncaster College for various T-Level routes. Governor body support required for the application.

14 Minutes of Committee Meetings:

Governors had been provided with the minutes of previous committee meetings.

L Walker, Chair of Audit & Risk Committee said that the last committee meeting had considered the increased digital risk. There is a plan in place to mitigate the risk and the Audit & Risk Committee will be monitoring the plan. Any further risks would be reported to Corporation Board.

15 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Staff and student governors left the meeting at 7.05 pm.

16 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Corporation Board is scheduled for Wednesday 6 July 2022, 5.30 pm Doncaster College

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Claire Houlden
Executive Governance PA

Signed: (Chair) **Date:**

TABLE OF ACTIONS				
Date	Minute	Action	Responsibility	Date Due
30/3/22	7	Referrals from Doncaster Job Centre Plus were slow; S Smith will arrange to meet with a senior manager to discuss this.	S Smith	7/6/22
30/3/22	10	With regards to student involvement at the site [AEB property Scunthorpe High Street], it may be possible to include them in selecting the soft furnishings; S Smith would discuss with B Shipley and L Berges.	S Smith	7/6/22