



Minutes of the Board meeting held via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 11th June 2020 at 5pm

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Andrew Cropley, Principal & CEO
 John Gray
 Charles Heaton
 Sean Lyons, Chair
 Mary Mamik
 Neil McDonald
 Rebecca Joyce
 Spencer Moore
 Sardip Sandhu
 Kate Truscott
 Tony Westwater
 Mark Williams
 Paul Frammingham
 Melanie Stirland

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
 Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement & Student Experience
 Jon Fearon, Finance Director
 Matt Vaughan, Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality
 Suzanna Smith, Director: HR & Organisational Development
 Gavin Peake, Director: IT, Estates & Learning Resources
 Mike Firth, ESFA Observer
 Lewis Thacker, Reece Shires, Callan Kemp, Joshua Levy: Students' Union representatives

		ACTION by whom	DATE by when
1	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS</u>		
	The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. No specific declarations were made and standing declarations were noted.		
2	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>		
	Apologies for absence were received from Clive Pitt, Steve Sutton, Lee		

Signed : _____  _____ Chair

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Radford and Jayne Hawksford. Absent without apologies were the two student governors, Jessica Stowe and Sophie Welbourn.

The Students' Union representatives were warmly welcomed to the meeting and it was noted that they will be presenting agenda item 5.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14TH MAY 2020

The minutes were reviewed and the Board agreed that they were a true and correct record.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2020.

There were no matters arising.

4 MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 2ND JUNE 2020

The minutes were reviewed and the Board agreed that they were a true and correct record.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the special meeting held on 2nd June 2020.

There were no matters arising.

5 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

The Board were happy to note the content of the update provided.

6 STUDENTS' UNION UPDATE

The Clerk introduced this item and drew the Board's attention to the cover report provided. It was confirmed that the SU had been invited to join this meeting to provide an update on the 2019/20 position and give a view of priorities for 20/21, which are to be handed over to the new SU representatives.

The SU were invited to describe some of the activities that have been undertaken that they are proud of in terms of achievement for 2019/20. Feedback given included:

- The SU has successfully brought back a physical presence at Derby Road. Students are now able to pop in and provide their thoughts on the college.
- The team has worked hard to raise awareness in relation to the SU and has expanded the network.
- Lots of charity work has been undertaken, with £753 raised over three campaigns, including Children in Need and Sports Relief.
- Foundation work undertaken to develop Vision TV.

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- Development of the LGBT group called 'Connected'. The SU has had regular meetings and been able to provide support.
- A lot of activity undertaken to gather students' feedback on many aspects of college life.
- Reinvigoration of social media to ensure that students can stay connected.
- Regular meetings with the executive and student representatives.
- September 2019 saw the SU organise a political cross-party event at Derby Road. This was a really positive event.
- A lot of the manifesto points made by the SU candidates have been achieved, e.g. introduction of free sanitary products, mental health support, etc.
- It is believed that the team has done really well given the resources available and the small size of the team.

SU representatives were then asked what they would have liked to have made a greater impact on. Feedback provided was:

- Societies and extracurricular events. Some work did start in terms of planting acorns, gaming, sports club, etc. However, given lockdown, the SU was not able to properly establish and commission these ideas.
- Meeting with governors. They confirmed that they had been able to meet with Kate Truscott in relation to E&D, but had wanted to meet with Paul Frammingham in relation to environmental issues.
- Litter-picking volunteers event.

The SU representatives were then asked, looking ahead to 20/21, what they believe the key areas of focus should be. Feedback provided was:

- Better and bigger impact and profile of the SU.
- Development of extracurricular activities, including future trips.
- More involvement across all sites, as 2019/20 felt very 'Derby Road-heavy'
- More involvement with students in the first 42 days and particularly supporting students arriving from the smaller schools.
- SU presence to support and help, it being the case that the SU is considered as approachable

In general discussion it was agreed that Lewis Thacker and Reece Shires would be invited to participate and contribute to the 'first 42 days' business improvement project. It was also confirmed that learning champion programmes are in place for next year. SU reps were reminded to complete the 'rate your course' questionnaire and encourage other students to do the same.

VP C&Q

June 2020

In terms of five key areas for future consideration, these were described

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as:

- 1) A rich Students' Union profile through tutorials and physical presence. Aim to maintain a large presence at Derby Road. The SU should be aiming for a profile similar to that seen in a university.
- 2) Promoting rich diversity and inclusivity across all sites. Work has started with the Connected group, but there is more to do. The SU should seek to ensure that all students have the same opportunities.
- 3) Focus on more events and a richer experience for students.
- 4) Involve more students in the SU's journey; more open volunteering opportunities; expand the team so that more can be done and continue to strive to be better.
- 5) More joint partnerships across all sites and all levels of provision.

SU representatives took the opportunity to thank the executive team for all the support provided, as well as to Richard Skelhorn specifically.

One member of the Board asked what three things leaders can do help the SU. Feedback provided included:

- Promote LGBT and inclusivity.
- Promote the whole SU more to staff in tutorials etc., helping to make the SU more known across college.
- More SU detail on the college's Instagram. This would help to increase the reach and go beyond the Derby Road and Create facilities.

The Vice Principal advised that the college is working with NTU on a programme of clubs and societies and is trying to ensure college links are developed. NTU is providing WNC with ambassadors which are almost like a work experience opportunity. This will be an additional resource to utilise.

The Board all agreed that they were impressed with the achievements made in a very challenging year. Paul Frammingham confirmed that, outside the meeting, he would be happy to take forward a meeting with the Coal Board and the SU. SU representatives were advised that the college is currently revising the tutorial programme and there will be 11 teachers across 11 programme areas. It was agreed that Students' Union reps would be invited to these development meetings.

A question from one member of the Board was whether or not student feedback regarding the work of the SU is captured. It was confirmed that it is and they explained that, before lockdown, SU reps were attending tutorials. They indicated that they have had positive student comments, with many feeling that the Students' Union has been there to help.

The Board took the opportunity to formally thank the Students' Union

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for all of their hard work this year, and SU reps were invited to remain for the rest of the meeting if they would find it interesting.

A question from one member of the board was whether or not the Black Lives Matters campaign had had any impact on the college. It was confirmed that it has not yet, but all agreed that it was something that the SU needed to be mindful of when students return to site. The SU president confirmed that he wanted to better promote Black History Month in October 2020.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

7 **OUTCOMES OF THE GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS HELD ON 14TH MAY AND 11TH JUNE 2020**

The Principal provided a summary of the outputs from the session that took place earlier in the day; key matters noted were:

Crisis recovery:

- Blended learning
- Capacity challenges – space and staff
- Getting to know our new students
- New habits for existing students
- New disciplinary decisions
- Increased student numbers
- Increased costs or staffing shortages
- Subcontractor viability
- New funding streams
- Staff wellbeing vs. anxiety
- Building resilience
- Signposting to help
- Responsiveness

He confirmed that:

- The college is now looking ahead to September and beyond. It is known that there will be capacity challenges in terms of space, time and staff.
- The college has seen a huge success in delivering online learning. The challenge now will be in terms of the new students arriving in September.
- A priority is to manage the college sensibly and not overstretch, with a focus on continuing to operate effectively.

In relation to the strategic objectives, there is a set created as a follow-on from the ones in place for 2019/20. Following earlier discussions, there will now be four new strategic objectives which relate to:

- Ensure that the college operates effectively and safely through and out of the COVID-19 crisis
- Maths and English progress

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- Development of curriculum strategy
- Fulsome staff training, especially teacher training.

There will be six objectives that require amendment; these include:

- Apprentices objective (from OneFile focus)
- Employer engagement (from number of employers engaged to development)
- Employability framework (to integrate with curriculum)
- AEB locality (to include strategic partnerships and to redefine local catchment)
- Staff demonstrating values (to address outstanding performance leadership)
- ILT (to be more ambitious to reflect achievements in online learning)
- Specific HE objective to be deleted but reference made to expectations in the progression objectives.

The Principal confirmed that firm proposals for the 20/21 strategic objectives would be shared with the Board at the July meeting. The paper to be presented will include objectives and also how they will be measured and monitored. All of this will be encapsulated within the balanced scorecard.

Principal

July 2020

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

8 CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

The Principal introduced this item and explained that the position changes every day. He indicated that the discussion today is to focus on what the college knows more about since the last meeting. The update provided was broken down into a number of areas:

- 1) Curriculum
 - The college has 6,400 qualifications to grade and rank.
 - Plans are in place for the phased return of learners. Priority 1 are circa 470 learners who need to complete adapted assessments. Their achievement cannot be estimated and has to be assessed as it includes practical tasks. Students will come in next week and carry on into July. Social distancing, sanitising, etc. is all in place. There are between 240 and 250 students at Oddicroft Lane for engineering, with the remainder being at Station Park for trades. Priorities 2 and 3 are vulnerable students and also those who have not engaged well online. In the main, these are at the lower levels. The college will try to reengage them over the summer.
 - Priority group 4 are those students progressing on to the second year of a level 3 programme. This is between 600 and 700 students who will be supported by the college over the summer.

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- In terms of numbers expected to attend, the maximum at Station Park is 70; maximum at Oddicroft Lane is 55; and up to 90 at Derby Road on any one day.

2) Student support

- There are 20 students requiring specialist assistance support: five are visually impaired and the remainder are on the autistic spectrum.
- The college is fully staffed to give support and online activity is arranged on a rota in bubbles, so that staff and students do not need to move across sites.
- There will be a small group of support coaches on site as only small student numbers are anticipated. The college will continue with remote support already in place.
- Other core support staff will also be on site to help students and staff familiarise themselves with the changes.
- Initially, student support will be overstaffed and will be reviewed as required. The college is intending to extend a small number of support staff contracts in to the summer.
- The college is planning for 2-metre social distancing and will continue with this as the aim.

3) Health and safety/estates

The Director: IT and Estates and Learning Resources shared photos of the site; key matters noted were:

- Reception areas now all have screens.
- Toilets have all been adapted to ensure appropriate social distancing.
- Entrances now all have clear signs in place and it is believed that the position will be manageable because of the numbers anticipated. Queueing systems have been established where necessary.
- In workshops, individual tool stations have been created and disinfectant is provided.
- One-way systems devised on the stairs.
- Dining areas have been zoned.
- Classrooms have been marked to ensure social distancing.
- PPE pack provided for those staff who may have close contact with students.

The Board took the opportunity to congratulate and thank all staff involved in the mammoth undertaking.

It was confirmed that generic and local risk assessments have all been undertaken. The Principal advised that the trade unions have, on the whole, been constructive and supportive. They have taken a very thorough approach and the college has implemented a number of recommendations following engagement with them.

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In general discussion, the Board asked for an update on the position regarding transport and also communication to students. The Director: IT and Estates and Learning Resources confirmed that:

- The college is supplying face coverings for use on every bus.
- Students are being asked to take other methods of transport if at all possible.
- Low numbers will, in the short term, mean that students on buses can be accommodated.
- September is a very different position, but social distancing guidance may have changed by then.
- Specialist transport have been really helpful, sensitive and flexible where required.
- A text was sent out to all students this week to direct them to communications on the website.
- One-to-one meetings will take place with vulnerable students as they arrive on site.
- Videos are being prepared for the website and social media, particularly to inform everyone of the site changes so they know what to expect.

A question from one member of the Board was whether or not the college is getting support from staff in terms of the annual leave position in August. The Principal confirmed that staff are supportive and that the college is being very clear in terms of leave expectations, with the situation being carefully managed. He explained that there is significant good will from staff.

In terms of the challenges for September, the Principal confirmed that staff are mindful that some students will have to catch up before they can move on and progress to the next level. In addition, there will be new entrants who haven't been at school for an extended period of time.

4) HR

Key points noted were:

- The college knows the importance of reassuring staff regarding the return to site.
- An individual approach has been taken, with individual conversations taking place.
- Generally, staff want to come back to work.
- Where possible, support staff will continue to work remotely.
- Opportunities are being given to check in and share experiences amongst staff.
- Occupational health support is in place.
- Counselling support is available.
- Employee assistance programmes are in place, e.g. finances.
- The college is cognisant of the need to monitor the workload

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balance.

- Some staff have childcare responsibilities which makes returning to site more challenging.
- Training is available.
- Advice and guidance is available.
- The college is taking a very supportive approach.
- Really positive trade union feedback regarding the communication provided by the Principal; this has helped to build trust.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

9 **CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Chair provided a brief update. He confirmed that he had been able to join a few AoC regional updates in the last few months and, through participation, it is clear that WNC is 'up there with the best' in terms of its handling of the current challenges and plans for the future.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

10 **PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE**

The Principal drew Governors' attention to his detailed report and provided an update on a number of aspects:

- The College Collaboration Fund has now reopened for bids. It is still the college's intention to submit a bid, although the fund has been reduced by a third.
- The college has been successful in securing £54k external funding to cover teacher training and back-cover for staff joining the college. This is £18k per post. The funding is to support the recruitment of industry professionals and support them to become teachers. Bursary and support will be available from January 2020 onwards.
- In relation to the Institute of Technology, the college's financial status has ruled it out of participation. Financial status may limit the college in other ways, which is a concern.
- SIDDHI investigation is close to conclusion. John Wheaton has confirmed that he has finished his report and it is going through the ESFA approval process. Once this process has concluded, a copy will be shared with the college.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

11 **SAFEGUARDING, PREVENT AND EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

The content of the Vice Principal's report was considered and she indicated that the college is starting to see an increasing number of

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vulnerable students on site; this is expected to slowly increase. The safeguarding steering group met today and one specific aspect considered was the proposal to change the format of the safeguarding development plan for next year. This is a paper that is going to the next meeting of the Standards Committee.

The intention is to create a two-tier plan which splits out the:

- a) Priorities for action, and
- b) Business as usual

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

12 BOARD PERFORMANCE AND CAPABILITIES – OPTIONS FOR REVIEW

The Clerk presented her written report, which gave a summary of the internal self-assessment and review processes in place. She invited governors to volunteer to join a small working group that would look at and agree the framework for an external review. Volunteers agreed were Kate Truscott, Sardip Sandhu, Rebecca Joyce, Sean Lyons, and Andrew Cropley. All agreed that the external review should not be focused on compliance but that, instead, it should look at how the Board is developing and give another perspective on options to consider.

AGREED:

- a) To note the content of the update provided
- b) To the establishment of a small working group that will commission an external review of Board performance and capabilities.

13 AOB

There were no items of additional business.

14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Clerk confirmed that the next scheduled meeting was 16th July 2020 and a copy of the draft agenda was provided for information.

(Students' Union representatives and staff members left the meeting at 6.30pm).

15 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It was agreed that confidential items would be recorded on a separate basis.

Meeting closed at 7.08pm.

Signed : _____  _____ Chair

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