**Meeting of the Corporation Board**

**Friday 12th March 2021 at 1330hrs**

**Board Room, Hartlepool and Via MS Teams Conference Call**

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| **Members present:**  Mr P Smith  Dr M Raby  Mr T Bailey  Mrs S Fawcett  Professor R Simmons  Professor J Rapley  Mr I Swain  Mr K Goldsborough  Mr D Hughes  Mrs A Snow  Mrs E Hardwick  Mr R Kane  Ms G Miller  Mr M Blanshard  Miss G Blake  Ms Jane Havakin | | PS  MR  TB  SF  RS  JR  IS  KG  DH  AS  EH  RK  GM  MB  GB  JH | Chair  Principal  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Staff Member  Staff Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Student Governor  Staff Member | |
| **In Attendance:** | |  |  | |
| Mr P Trotter  Mr S Slorach  Mr P Chapman  Mr M Wheaton  Mrs L McLaren | | PT  SS  PC  MW  LM | Co-opted Member  Vice Principal Resources  VP Employability & External Relations  Vice Principal Higher Education  Head of Governance | |
| **Apologies:** | |  |  | |
| Mr J Waddington | | JW | Vice Principal Student Experience | |
|  |  | | | **Action** | |
| 1. | The Chair opened the meeting at 1330.  Mr Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting. | | |  | |
| 2. | **Apologies for absence**  Apologies were received from Mr Waddington. | | |  | |
| 3. | **Group Quorum**  The meeting was quorate in line with standing order 8.1 “Meetings of the Corporation Board and its committees shall be quorate when 40% of the total membership of the Governing Body or its committee, excluding vacancies, is present, except where otherwise stated within the terms of reference for that committee.” | | |  | |
| 4. | **Declaration of Interests**  The Declaration of Interests was noted. | | |  | |
| 5. | **Confirmation of minutes from the previous meeting**  The Minutes from the previous meeting held on Friday 5th February, 2021 were **CONFIRMED** by all with three minor amendments. | | |  | |
| 6. | **Matters Arising**  There were no matters arising. | | |  | |
| 7. | **Member’s Update**  Mr Smith noted he had visited the new Middlesbrough site to undertake some PR with Ben Houchen, Tees Valley Mayor. | | |  | |
| 8. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 9. | **SUSTAINABILITY**  **Management Accounts**  Mr Slorach presented the Management Accounts to the Board and noted that surplus was better than forecast, cash flow was healthy and there were no concerns.  Mrs Fawcett asked if any information had been received from Ofsted in relation to inspections of online learning. Dr Raby and Mr Kane noted that they had not heard anything relating to this and Ofsted were trying to get back to “normal” with inspections.  The Chair thanked Mr Slorach for the report. | | |  | |
| 10. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 11. | **KPIs**  Mr Slorach presented the update on KPI’s to the Board. It was noted that HE retention figures were very good; however, FE retention was a little trickier and had reduced to 91%. However, as the School had not run the NCFE course, this had led to a 1% drop in figures.  The Board noted the information.  The Chair thanked Mr Slorach for the update. | | |  | |
| 12. | **Update on Risk Management & Risk Register**  Mr Slorach presented the Risk Management and Risk Register update to the Board.  It was noted there were no real changes to the risk levels at present.  Covenant compliance had been reviewed at the Audit Committee on March 5th.  Professor Rapley asked when we would be able to commit to the pay increase. Mr Slorach noted that it would be reviewed in April and would be discussed by the Board in May.  The Chair thanked Mr Slorach for the update. | | |  | |
| 13. | **HE Applications**  Mr Chapman updated the Board on HE Applications and noted that we are ahead of targeted position and have a steady stream of applications. Interviews are taking place online and we are currently in a better place than our competitors.  We are undertaking “keeping warm” activities, personalised communications to applicants as well as FaceTime walk rounds of facilities and socially distanced visits. We are also using social media to promote current students views for interested parties to see.  The Chair thanked Mr Chapman for the update. | | |  | |
| 14. | **EXCELLENT STUDENT EXPERIENCE**  **Student Voice update on the Student Experience**  Miss Blake advised the Board that everyone appeared to be pleased to be back on campus. The blended approach to in-person and online learning was working well at present. The Student Executive and Principalship were meeting regularly and this was being promoted well with students. The Student Union were keen to keep these meetings going forward.  Miss Blake also noted that she was trying to forge links with other Student Union presidents who had recently met with politicians, however, this was proving difficult as they are a very closed group.  The Board thanked Miss Blake for her update. Mrs Fawcett asked how students were from a safeguarding perspective. Miss Blake noted that mental health had been impacted by the pandemic, however a lot of support was available and the SU were keen to start in-person events when restrictions allowed. This is worrying when trying to plan Freshers events, but we are trying to be one step ahead.  Mr Trotter encouraged Miss Blake to keep trying to forge links with the other Student Union Presidents.  Mrs Hardwick noted that the School were currently working on induction plans to be prepared for any gaps in learning depending on students’ previous learnings. A hybrid approach will be taken where necessary.  The Chair thanked Miss Blake for her update. | | |  | |
| 15. | **Lockdown Update**  Mr Wheaton (HE) presented the lockdown update.  **HE**  Mr Wheaton advised the Board that the School opened to allow students to use working space and IT facilities on February 15th. Take up was small the first week but slowly increased over the 3 weeks. Students appeared pleased to have access to the Campus.  Until Easter the School had agreed a phased return to in-person teaching, with a blended approach until the Easter break. Students and staff appeared happy with this approach.  Professor Rapley asked if there had been any learnings for the Library during this time. Mr Wheaton noted that remote borrowing was the only aspect we had been able to undertake. On Ms Hare’s return from maternity leave we would review the situation. Mrs Hardwick noted that Jisc had undertaken some learning, so that would be reviewed as part of the process.  The Chair thanked Mr Wheaton for the update. | | |  | |
| 16. | **GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE**  **Financial Regulations**  Mr Slorach presented the paper to the Board and noted that the financial regulations required Board approval every 5-years. It was noted that the regulations had been reviewed with the School’s Procurement Consultants and Financial Controller and reflected the changes following Brexit. It was also noted that the in 2016 the tendering limit was raised to £50k, this was helpful allowing smaller businesses to give quotes rather than tenders. This has been discussed and reviewed at the Audit Committee.  Mr Swain agreed that there had been useful discussions at the Audit Committee and asked it the £2.5k limit was individual or cumulative. Mr Slorach advised it was cumulative  Professor Rapley asked if there was leeway in relation to professional practice for staff. Mr Slorach advised that there was. Only when it was in competition to us would we look at it and assess the appropriateness.  Mrs Fawcett asked if IT fraud should be included and in particular phishing emails with requests for payment, funds transfer etc and also how this is conveyed to staff. Mr Slorach advised that was covered in the Finance procedures manual. This is covered with staff at induction and covered with all budget holders. Staff ask if unsure.  Mr Hughes asked if the process was clear in relation to charges over land and buildings. Mr Slorach advised that other regulations sit above this, such as the Instruments and Articles. The Northern Studios will be a commercial venture and will be treated as a subsidiary.  The Financial Regulations were **APPROVED** by the Board with minor amendments to be agreed by Mr Slorach and Dr Raby. | | |  | |
| 17. | **Health and Safety Policy**  Mr Slorach presented the Health and Safety policy to the Board. It was noted that the document had been reviewed and the only changes were the addition of Lone Working and Covid guidance.  Ms Swain asked if the “Near Miss” reporting was effective. Mr Slorach noted that this was encouraged and being promoted. Awareness is there. Mr Swain thanked Mr Abbott for all the work he has done in bringing Health and Safety on.  The Board **APPROVED** the Health and Safety Policy. | | |  | |
| 18. | **Minutes of Sub-Committees**  The minutes of the sub-committees for the Capital Programmes Group and Finance were presented to the Corporation Board for information.  The minutes were **NOTED** by the Board. | | |  | |
| 19. | **OFS Reportable Events**  None. | | |  | |
| 20. | **Confidential Items**  Item 8 and 10 | | |  | |
| 21. | **Any Other Competent Business**  None. | | |  | |
| 22. | **Review of Meeting**  Everyone viewed the meeting as satisfactory. | | |  | |
| 23. | **Date and time of next meeting**  The next meeting of the Corporation Board will take place on Friday 23 April, 2021 at 1330hrs. The meeting will be held in person and via Zoom. | | |  | |
|  | The Chair thanked the Corporation Board members for their useful discussions.  The meeting closed at 1508. | | |  | |

**Confirmation of the minutes of the**

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| Signed: | |
| Chair of the | Date: |