**Meeting of the Corporation Board**

**Friday 5th February 2021 at 1330hrs**

**Via Zoom 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 | | PS  MR  TB  SF  RS  JR  IS  KG  DH  AS  EH  RK  GM  MB  GB | 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 | |
| **In Attendance:** | |  |  | |
| Mr P Trotter  Mr S Slorach  Mr P Chapman  Mr M Wheaton  Mr J Waddington  Mrs L McLaren | | PT  SS  PC  MW  JW  LM | Co-opted Member  Vice Principal Resources  VP Employability & External Relations  Vice Principal Higher Education  Vice Principal Student Experience  Head of Governance | |
| **Apologies:** | |  |  | |
| Ms J Havakin | | JH | Staff Member | |
|  |  | | | **Action** | |
| 1. | The Chair opened the meeting at 1332.  Mr Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mr Blanshard to the meeting. Mr Blanshard had been invited to join the Corporation Board following the Governance and Search Meeting on Friday 27 November 2020. | | |  | |
| 2. | **Apologies for absence**  Apologies were received from Ms Havakin. | | |  | |
| 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 4 December, 2020 were **CONFIRMED** by all. | | |  | |
| 6. | **Matters Arising**  There were no matters arising. | | |  | |
| 7. | **Member’s Update**  Mr Smith noted he had met with the Faculty Leads again and everything was progressing well. They were working with Marketing to establish better practice and way of working and promoting the courses.  Mrs Hardwick advised she had been appointed Co-Chair of UKADIA (United Kingdom arts and design institutions association). Mrs Fawcett congratulated Mrs Hardwick on this appointment and this was echoed by the Board. | | |  | |
| 8. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 9 & 10. | **SUSTAINABILITY**  **Management Accounts and Financial Forecast**  Mr Smith noted that Finance Committee had met prior to the Corporation Board and reviewed the accounts. Everything was looking positive and on track.  Mr Slorach noted the following:   * HE applications were progressing, * Refunds - due to lockdown we, together with the rest of the sector are in an ambiguous situation regarding refunds. * Good position on financial covenants * Cash balance currently high due to late payment from TVCA relating to the Middlesbrough build. * Accounts show second write down for Green Lane. This is purely for accounting purposes * Negotiating credit facilities with the Bank   The Chair asked for any comments/questions:  Professor Rapley asked how we feel about the negotiations with the Bank. Mr Slorach noted everything was good, we are looking to reduce our level of debit and discussing with Barclays how this can be done.  Mr Blanshard asked if we had approached any other lenders. Mr Slorach confirmed that we had not as yet. There are not many banks in the sector. The Covenants from other banks when we last looked were unrealistic.  Mr Trotter asked if there was a plan to reduce the debt. Mr Slorach confirmed that this was the case. We reduce our debt by £1m over the summer and it may be possible that we do not need to draw this back down. We are currently looking to pay off Barclays by 2024/25.  Mr Swain asked if there was a sensitised version of the forecast. Mr Slorach advised there was not. The number one risk at present is fee returns, which would have an impact on the whole sector. With the plans set out in the Principals report we would hope to avoid any refund issues.  The Chair thanked Mr Slorach for the report. | | |  | |
| 11. | **KPIs**  Mr Slorach presented the update on KPI’s to the Board.  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.  It was agreed to add Bank Debt for completeness.  The Chair thanked Mr Slorach for the update. | | |  | |
| 14. | **HE Applications**  Mr Chapman presented the HE Application paper to the Board and noted that we are currently ahead of target, with strong applications being received and interviews going well.  We have successfully pivoted our recruitment and marketing focus due to the pandemic moving to online.  Mr Hughes asked what the spread of students across courses and geographical area was and if this threatened the viability of any courses. Mr Chapman noted it was northern centric, with more from the north west. Acting courses were doing well, however fashion was lagging. It would be too early to say if this threatened the viability of any courses.  Ms Miller asked if the new channels being used for marketing were costlier. Mr Chapman noted that £20k had been agreed to allow the additional digital content and raising awareness. A blended approach would be required going forward.  Mr Goldsborough advised that the feedback he had seen was good and it would be good to share this with governors. The blended approach is the way things will move.  The Chair thanked Mr Chapman for the report. | | |  | |
|  | **Break commenced at 1449hrs**  **Reconvened at 1500hrs** | | |  | |
| 15. | **EXCELLENT STUDENT EXPERIENCE**  **Student Voice update on the Student Experience**  Miss Blake advised the Board that she did not have any update relating to FE however, at HE level there were a few students speaking about deferral. The Student Executive and Principalship were meeting regularly and many students were keen to return to campus.  Mr Bailey asked if pastoral care was being covered as well as course work. Miss Blake advised that this was being covered with items such as “What’s up Wednesday” and feedback given to Principalship and Senior Management.  Mr Smith asked if there was anything we had learned that we can continue going forward. Miss Blake noted that knowledge on technical aspects had increased and communication between everyone. This would be good to continue going forward.  Professor Rapley asked about mental health of students and any issues. Miss Blake advised that this area was well covered and students had many ways to access help.  Mrs Fawcett asked about the number of students in Hartlepool and in Halls. It was noted that from Student Services there were around 13 students in halls. There had been some issues around wi-fi however this has been upgraded.  The Chair thanked Miss Blake for her update. | | |  | |
| 16. | **Update on delivery during lockdown**  Mr Wheaton (HE) and Mr Waddington (FE) presented the update on delivery during lockdown.  **HE**  Mr Wheaton advised the Board that there was a significant amount of activity going on behind the scenes. Alternations to module delivery to ensure on-line learning was continuing and theory aspects delivered during lockdown.  Discussions had taken place with Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) and they were sympathetic to our approach and at times took their lead from our initiatives.  Plans had been made to allow students access to the campus, with booking systems in place to ensure social distancing during access. Deadlines have been staggered to alleviate pressure on the spaces available. Faculty Leaders and staff have been working tirelessly to ensure everything is in place.  **FE**  Mr Waddington advised that student engagement and on-line attendance was positive. Whilst officially exams were cancelled, the school were taking a business as usual approach to ensure engagement for end of year grades.  Staff are now far better equipped to provide online teaching and are effectively engaging with students.  Mr Kane advised that the school were engaging with professional learners to run additional student experiences on a Wednesday. Engagement had been mixed but averaged around 50 students participating per week. It was noted that these experiences were recorded so students could watch them after the event.  Professor Rapley noted how impressive this was and congratulated all staff on this. Are there any problems thrown up by assessments? Mr Waddington advised that it was vague at the moment. UAL have not reported anything and we are trying to continue as normal, with extra interventions sessions for students where necessary. We have ordered more computers and are in a positive and strong position for our return.  Ms Miller asked if there were any aspects of the online learning that would be kept. Mr Kane advised that he would like to continue and widen the online offering and try to widen the exposure. Mr Waddington noted that this was a gift of the pandemic, digital learning is something of the future and we have shown that we can cope when we have to provide this offering.  The Chair thanked Mr Wheaton, Mr Waddington and Mr Kane for the update. | | |  | |
| 17. | **Marketing Update**  Mr Chapman presented the update paper to the Board. It was noted that progress continued on the marketing approach.  The Board noted the report. | | |  | |
| 18. | **GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE**  **FE Admissions Policy**  Mr Chapman presented the paper to the Board and noted that the FE Academic Committee had reviewed the policy and updates had been made in relation to staffing changes, names and job titles.  The Board **APPROVED** the FE Academic Policy. | | |  | |
| 18. | **Risk Management Policy**  Mr Slorach presented the Risk Management policy to the Board. This policy requires the review and approval of the Corporation Board.  Ms Smith noted that he did not think we would be open to more risk in the present climate. Mr Bailey agreed, we would not want to embrace more risk, however, we should keep an open approach and assess the situation on a case by case basis. We do not have to take the risk once it has been assessed.  Mr Swain suggested a more cautious approach to new risk. Professor Rapley noted that we should have an open approach for unexpected opportunities.  The Board had a very useful discussion around the appetite for risk and agreed that while cautious we need a healthy attitude and should have an open but critical approach.  The Board **APPROVED** the Risk Management Policy and agreed an open but critical approach. | | |  | |
| 19. | **Minutes of Sub-Committees**  The minutes of the sub-committees for the Capital Programmes Group were presented to the Corporation Board for information.  The minutes were **NOTED** by the Board. | | |  | |
| 20. | **OFS Reportable Events**  Dr Raby noted that £50k had just been received for the Student Hardship fund. | | |  | |
| 21. | **Confidential Items**  Item 8. | | |  | |
| 22. | **Any Other Competent Business**  Dr Raby noted he was extremely grateful to all staff, Miss Blake and the Student Union for their hard work to continue the online teaching and communications during this lockdown. All staff have gone above and beyond to continue the learning experience for students. | | |  | |
| 23. | **Review of Meeting**  Everyone viewed the meeting as satisfactory. | | |  | |
| 24. | **Date and time of next meeting**  The next meeting of the Corporation Board will take place on Friday 12 March, 2021 at 1330hrs. The meeting will be held via the online platform. | | |  | |
|  | The Chair thanked the Corporation Board members for their useful discussions.  The meeting closed at 1550. | | |  | |

**Confirmation of the minutes of the**

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