**Meeting of the Corporation Board**

**Friday November 29th, 2024 at 1000hrs**

**Board Room, Middlesbrough and Via MS Teams**

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| **Members present:**  Mr T Bailey  Professor R Simmons  Mr D Hughes  Mr K Goldsborough  Professor J Rapley  Ms G Miller  Ms N Brett  Mrs K Baggaley  Ms S Watson  Dr M Raby  Ms J Hemmins  Ms P Clarkson  Ms L McLellan | | TB  RS  DH  KG  JR  GM  NB  KB  SW  MR  JH  PJC  LMcL | Chair  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Governor  Independent Member  Independent Member  Principal  Staff Member (HE)  Staff Member (FE)  HE Student Governor | |
| **In Attendance:** | |  |  | |
| Mrs L McLaren  Mr M Wheaton | | LJM  MW | Head of Governance  VP (HE Quality & Planning) | |
| Mr J Waddington  Mr R Kane  Mrs K Rae  Ms T Latcham  Mrs S Fawcett  **Apologies:**  Mr I Swain  Dr E Leonard Cross  Mrs A Crossland  Mr S Slorach | | JW  RK  KR  TL  SF  IS  ELC  AC  SS | VP (Higher Education)  VP (Further Education)  Armstrong Watson Auditors (Items 1 – 9 only)  Student Services Manager (Item 11 only)  Prospective Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  VP (People Services)  VP (Resources) | |
|  |  | | | **Action** | |
| 1. | The Chair opened the meeting at 1002hrs and welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the 2024/25 academic cycle.  The Chair welcomed Mrs Fawcett to the meeting and advised members that Governance & Search Committee were seeking to appoint Mrs Fawcett as an independent member from December 1st 2024. The Board **approved** the appointment from December 1st and welcomed Mrs Fawcett to the meeting. The Chair advised that this appointment was to replace Dr Leonard Cross who had intimated her desire to step back from the Board due to work commitments. Mrs McLaren had not yet received a resignation; however, succession planning arrangements had been made in advance to allow a seamless crossover in responsibilities. | | |  | |
| 2. | **Apologies for absence**  Apologies were received from Mr Swain, Dr Leonard Cross, Mrs Crossland and Mr Slorach. | | |  | |
| 3. | **Group Quorum**  The meeting was quorate in line with Instruments and Articles 13.1 “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 Board **noted** the Declaration of Interests. | | |  | |
| 5. | **Confirmation of minutes from the previous meeting**  The Minutes from the previous meetings held on Monday July 1st 2024 were **CONFIRMED** by all. | | |  | |
| 6. | **Matters Arising**   1. A potential FE Student Governor has been identified and G&S Committee will be asked to interview soon. 2. Action Completed 3. Philanthropy opportunities to be discussed 4. Action Completed | | |  | |
| 7. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 8. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 9. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 10. | **Members Updates**  Mr Hughes provided an update on his buddy meeting with Film/Stage. Availability of IT and machines with the capacity to run the programmes required was a struggle. Dr Raby advised that Principalship would be reviewing budget at next meeting and review resourcing requirements/requests for the next 3yr period.  Mr Goldsborough advised that he had been involved in discussions for the proposed Marketing Strategy and would be a member of the scrutiny panel for the tenders for the new Digital Marketing Partner in the new year.  Ms Brett met with her FE buddy and advised that there was an increase in students needing support who do not fall into the SEND category. Dr Raby noted that this was something which was being reviewed by Academic Services to support learners.  Professor Rapley advised that she had met with her HE buddies and numbers for textiles/fashion look positive. There were interesting ideas about curriculum, however IT capacity and reliability raised some concerns. There was a positive start to the FE/HE relationship, however concern was raised around the marketing of FE, HE and the Saturday Club which may cause some confusion. A question asked was should there be an FE to HE progression target? Dr Raby advised that there was no formal target for progression, trust is given to colleagues to do the best for people. Ms Clarkson noted that relationship building was going well and colleagues had been undertaking “keeping warm” exercises for potential students  Dr Raby advised that the School’s Marketing Manager resigned and left post in October. Liam Bradley had taken on the role of Acting Head of Marketing and Recruitment and was working at bringing the teams together. Line management now falls under the Principal since August 2023 and combined meetings have been positive. The website will be updated and we are also going out to tender for a new digital marketing provider, which Mr Goldsborough will be on the panel for selection. Mr Goldsborough added that lessons are being learned as we progress with the current structure and change is happening. Positively we are bringing Marketing and Recruitment together, however there are gaps in knowledge which will need to be addressed.  Ms Hemmins added from a staff perspective there has been positivity coming from the changes in Marketing & Recruitment. Early development of the prospectus has been welcomed which allows staff time to produce sections and reflect on what needs to be included. There is still negativity around the online marketing and how we can differentiate the School’s different strands. Mr Goldsborough noted this point and advised that there are ways to change this and develop separate strands on social media, however it does take time to rebuild following. Mr Bailey noted the hard work being done to implement change and move forward and build the relationship. Mr Goldsborough agreed to feedback at the next meeting on the tendering process and any updates as necessary.  Ms McLellan advised that to help support the marketing situation, students are compiling a “Day in the life of a student at the NSoA”. 6 students are currently creating content and developing of a student life handbook. It was also noted that tik-toc responsibilities would form part of her remit.  Ms Miller advised that she had attended the North East Culture Awards where the School sponsored the newcomer award.  Ms Watson advised that she had a good induction session with members of Principalship and a tour of the older buildings in the estate which allowed her to see the challenges on the estates team.  Mrs Fawcett advised that she had met with Safeguarding and the new Academic Services Manager ahead of taking on this role in the coming months. It was also noted that she had attended an AoC EDI Webinar with Mrs McLaren which provided some very useful information and insights.  Mr Bailey advised that he had a meeting scheduled with Olivia Burton next week. He had attended the Culture Awards which was very positive, building good connections and good to see School Graduates in the newcomer’s category. Mr Bailey also noted that he had based himself in the Art Café in Hartlepool between meetings and the space had good vibes and was being well used by students to have some really good conversations.  Mr Bailey thanked everyone for their updates. | | |  | |
| 11. | **Safeguarding Question & Answer**  Mrs Fawcett invited Ms Latcham to give an overview of safeguarding to Governors. It is an area that all Governors have responsibility for and this session was to provide an update on the changes to the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and ask governors if they have adequate assurance and oversight of safeguarding within the School.  Ms Latcham advised members that she had reviewed the KCSIE documentation and produced a briefing page of all areas which Governors should be aware of. Mrs McLaren advised that she would send the one pager to Governors after the meeting. Information included:   * Procedures and Processes * Student Awareness * Safer Recruitment * Staff Training * Online Safety   Ms Latcham added that she sits on a Designated Safeguarding Leader Group which shares good practice  Mr Bailey thanked Ms Latcham for the comprehensive update and there was more information there than some Governors may have been aware of and noted a recently attended online course which provided a list of questions for Governors to ask. Ms Watson concurred and noted she had been on the same course and advised that Governors need to have oversight and good visibility of safeguarding issues.  Ms Watson noted that there were 15 incidents recorded, how does this compare to figures in the sector and are there any reports that can be shared with Governors. Ms Latcham noted that these were actual referrals where academic staff have raised concern for a student. Student Services staff may deal with things in a slightly different way which could be classified as business as usual.  Ms Hemmins asked if student self-referrals were logged. Ms Latcham advised that if there was an immediate concern then it would be logged as an incident.  Dr Raby noted that there were a number of systems and oversights which were reviewed as part of the Safeguarding Committee. It may be useful for Governors to see an overview reports with KPI’s.  Mrs McLaren advised that it was her intention to have an online MS Teams Safeguarding session in the new year to allow Ms Latcham to provide a comprehensive briefing to Governors. This session would be recorded should any Governors be unable to attend.  Mrs Fawcett advised that she will be attending safeguarding meetings going forward.  Mr Bailey thanked Ms Latcham for the update and noted that safeguarding appears to be a well-managed area within the School.  *\*\*Post meeting note – Ms Latcham will produce a summary report following Safeguarding Committee Meetings which will be circulated to Governors\*\**  *The meeting paused for a comfort break.* | | |  | |
| 12. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 13. | **EXCELLENT STUDENT EXPERIENCE**  **Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP)**  Mr Kane presented the Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan to the Board.  Mr Hughes asked why there was no mention on freedom of speech in the document. Dr Raby noted that freedom of speech was an issue for HE.  Professor Rapley congratulated the team on a very good year and excellent news on the A-Level results. The quality of the report and plan are of a high standard.  The Board **approved** the Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan. | | |  | |
| 14. | **Annual Report by Academic Board**  Dr Raby presented the Annual Report by Academic Board to the Board and noted that the paper had been reviewed by the Academic Committee, LTQ Committee and recommended by the Academic Board. The report is also shared with Arts University Bournemouth for assurance.  Dr Raby asked the Board to approve the report and endorse section 14 – opinions.  Mrs Fawcett asked for clarification on the “significant concerns” relating to communications mentioned on page 307 of the pack. Dr Raby advised that when reviewing programme feedback there are some communication concerns, however none are significant. The question referred to relates to the Student Union and organisation of events. Ms McLellan advised that she is undertaking a new role which related directly to this feedback. One day a week, Ms McLellan will be working for the School to produce an events calendar, promoting events and improving communications in this area.  The Board **approved** the Annual Report by Academic Board. | | |  | |
| 15. | **Staff Voice**  Ms Clarkson updated the Board on FE events which had happened since the last meeting, including:   * Collaboration between courses * Working with local businesses * Participation in the Wintertide Festival   Ms Hemmins summarised events at HE, with a number of positive things which had happened since the last meeting, including:   * Hartlepool Christmas light switch on * Collaboration work * Developing Industrial Liaison Group relations * Competitions * Recruitment work – Datafiltr system working well, good relationship with FE to HE and open day well attended   Ms Hemmins noted three items which had been raised by staff:   * External presence seems to be reduced. As an example, textiles were not participating in New Designers this year for the first time in a number of years. Students had self-funded in the past, however it had been noted that Leeds Arts University were offering this as part of their course. * Some members of staff had noted that recently it appeared to be more funds for higher paid staff than support staff and student facing staff. * Social Media Marketing – staff asked if this could be more defined with different streams for FE, HE and Saturday Club to avoid any confusion.   Dr Raby advised that Principalship would be looking at budgeting at their coming meetings in December and January and asked for any items to be forwarded to Mr Waddington to bring to the meeting. We are not in a position to promise anything but we will review departments requirements to see what we can do.  Dr Raby noted on the staffing issue, the Director of HE Quality and Enhancement was a direct response to the DAPs review to establish a more robust position to support quality aspect of DAPs.  Mr Bailey asked if the Staff Survey had been completed and when this would come to the Board for discussion. It was agreed to bring this to the next meeting for review and discussion. | | |  | |
| 16. | **Student Voice**  Ms McLellan provided an overview of student activities to the Board including:   * New student union members appointed, with a number of first year students being appointed. There is also a new SU President * Working with the School as “Events Assistant” on a Tuesday, supporting Dan Tierney. Based in “Folio” helping produce and promote an events calendar and raise the profile of events. * SU bar has undergone renovations * Cost of Living survey will be going to the next Planning & Partnership Meeting * Council Allotment has been allocated and we have access to the seed library to get this up and running. * Hartlepool Pride – we have been asked to get involved in this event again following the success of last year’s event.   Mr Bailey asked if the allotment would be used to help student wellbeing and mental health. Ms McLellan advised that it would be positioned to help students mental health, we have access to seeds to help us get the allotment up and running and we hope that students will sign up to help.  The Board thanked Ms McLellan for the update. | | |  | |
| 17. | **SUSTAINABILITY**  **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 18. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 20. | **GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE**  **Annual Report from the Governance &Search Committee**  Mr Bailey presented the Annual Report from the Governance & Search Committee to the Board summarising the activities of the Committee through 2023/24. The Board were asked to approve the report and the Statement of Primary Responsibilities.  In addition, Mrs McLaren noted that due to delays in Sector Transfer, the Board had not been formally asked to approve the continuation of the current Instruments and Articles, Scheme of Delegation and Standing Orders. Whilst these will have minor amendments with sector transfer, at the present time these remain unchanged and as such would ask members to approve the continuation of these documents.  Mr Bailey asked for any questions/comments.  Professor Rapley asked if the Academic Board was a sub-committee of the Board and should be added to the report. Mrs McLaren confirmed that the Academic Board was a sub-committee and apologised for the oversight.  The Board **approved** the Governance & Search Annual Report (with one minor amendments) and Statement of Primary Responsibilities, and also **re-approved** the continuation of the Instruments and Articles, Scheme of Delegation and Standing Orders. | | |  | |
| 21. | **NSoA Annual Report**  Dr Raby presented the NSoA Annual Report to the Board and advised that on August 1st, the Financial Handbook was issued outlining accountability of the Accounting Officer. The Accounting Officer must take personal responsibility for assuring the Board that there is compliance with the accountability agreement and the Financial Handbook. Dr Raby advised that he was happy to provide assurance that there were no issues with compliance.  Mr Bailey asked for any questions/comments.  Ms Watson queried the health and safety statistics, a year-on-year increase, is there a trend to the figures. Also, there are no “near misses” recorded which is unusual and a possible red flag to reporting issues. Dr Raby agreed that there were some concerns around the statistics, we will look to bring regular reporting to the Board, as we plan to do with additional safeguarding information. There have been improvements in the area, however we do need to ensure monitoring. Ms Hemmins asked if there could be a refresher for staff on reporting requirements including what constitutes “contact” and “near miss”.  Professor Rapley advised that having chaired a health and safety committee for a number of years, the higher reporting at Middlesbrough is understandable as you have younger students who may not have used some of the equipment. This may just require some additional training measures to be implemented. Statistics like these are common place in an art and design environment.  The Board **approved** the annual report and the public value statement. | | |  | |
| 22. | **Strategic Plan 2025-2028**  Dr Raby presented the Strategic Plan 2025-28 to the Board and advised that the paper had been discussed at Academic Committee. The Board were asked to approve the Strategic Plan 2025-28  The paper sets out the process adopted for the drafting of the new plan and the areas for future development remain similar to the 2019-24 plan. The new plan is an evolution of the previous plan, with a development of the key underpinning objectives. Challenges within the sector include demographics and challenges within the creative industries which we take into account. The trajectory of the plan is established and consultations have helped shape the content.  Mr Bailey noted the additional detail to follow. After the activity of the last 2 years with DAPs and Sector Transfer, the plan feels flatter, however outlines our way forward to becoming a Creative University. Dr Raby advised of a cultural change and the need for 3-4mths more detailed work to establish this.  Professor Rapley commented that it would be good to investigate opportunities for any additional steams of income, to raise money from things other than student numbers. Dr Raby noted this and added that with university title there will be opportunities.  Ms Watson asked if accommodation could bring any operational importance to the strategy. Mrs Fawcett added that her background was in a housing association and accommodation was an expensive business and would tie the School into agreements that may not be beneficial. Dr Raby noted that the School were developing an accommodation strategy and looking at this more strategically. The private sector brings bed spaces without commitment; however, we are looking at other providers for opportunities.  Mr Bailey asked for the accommodation and additional income streams to be considered for the next version of the strategy, and asked members to approve the current strategy outlined until further work is undertaken.  Mr Hughes asked what the Schools expectations were on sustainable growth. Dr Raby advised that upwards of 260 students. We expect a modest growth in 2025, and would hope that by 2028 we have around 800. University title may see a 20% increase; however, we will always be small, with the challenge of how Hartlepool is perceived. We hope that the development of the Production Village and the Studios will help with this.  Mr Bailey closed the discussion and noted that this will be parked until further discussions in May, when we will have additional information on student number and the production village/studio development.  The Board **approved** the Strategic Plan 2025-28 as it currently stands, with further discussions to take place at the Corporation Board meeting in May 2025. | | |  | |
| 23. | **OTHER MATTERS**  **OfS Reportable Events**  Dr Raby advised that there were no reportable events. | | |  | |
| 24. | **Confidential Items**  Item 7  Item 8  Item 9  Item 12  Item 17  Item 18  Item 19 | | |  | |
| 25. | **Any other Business**  None. | | |  | |
| 26. | **Review of Meeting**  The Board agreed that the meeting was robust with good discussion and deliberation. | | |  | |
| 27. | **Date and Time of Next Meeting**  The next meeting of the Corporation Board will take place on Friday March 28th, 2025 at the Hartlepool Campus, commencing at 1000hrs  The meeting will be held in person and with the option of MS Teams if required. | | |  | |
|  | The Chair thanked the Corporation Board members for their useful discussions.  The meeting closed at 1335hrs.  Independent Members had a closed session to review agenda item 19 detailed below. | | |  | |
| 19. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |

**Confirmation of the minutes of the November 2024 Corporation Board:**

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| Signed: | |
| Chair of the Corporation Board | Date: |