**Meeting of the Corporation Board**

**Friday March 28th, 2025 at 1000hrs**

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

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| **Members present:**  Mr T Bailey  Professor R Simmons  Mr D Hughes  Mr I Swain  Professor J Rapley  Ms G Miller  Ms N Brett  Mrs K Baggaley  Ms S Watson  Mrs S Fawcett  Dr M Raby  Ms J Hemmins  Ms P Clarkson  Ms M Golden | | TB  RS  DH  IS  JR  GM  NB  KB  SW  SF  MR  JH  PJC  MG | Chair  Independent Member / Vice Chair  Senior Independent Member  Co-opted Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Governor  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Principal  Staff Member (HE)  Staff Member (FE)  FE Student Governor | |
| **In Attendance:** | |  |  | |
| Dr J Dixon  Mrs L McLaren | | JD  LJM | Prospective Independent Member  Head of Governance | |
| Mr R Kane  Mrs A Crossland  Mr S Slorach  Mr L Bradley  **Apologies:**  Mr K Goldsborough  Ms L McLellan  Mr M Wheaton  Mr J Waddington | | RK  AC  SS  LB  KG  LMcL  MW  JW | VP (Further Education)  VP (People Services)  VP (Resources)  Acting Head of Marketing & Recruitment  (Item 10 only)  Independent Member  HE Student Governor  VP (SIP)  VP (HE) | |
|  |  | | | **Action** | |
| 1. | The Chair opened the meeting at 1003hrs and welcomed everyone to the meeting.  The Chair welcomed Dr Dixon to the meeting and advised members that Governance & Search Committee were seeking to appoint Dr Dixon as an independent member. The Chair also welcomed Miss Golden to her first meeting. Miss Golden was the newly appointed FE Student Governor.  Dr Leonard Cross had tendered her resignation from the Board.  For new and prospective members, the Board introduced themselves. | | |  | |
| 2. | **Apologies for absence**  Apologies were received from Mr Goldsborough, Ms McLellan, Mr Wheaton and Mr Waddington. | | |  | |
| 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 Friday November 29th, 2024 were **confirmed** by all. | | |  | |
| 6. | **Matters Arising**   1. Safeguarding briefing circulated to Governors and training session to take place at May meeting 2. Safeguarding brief circulated following March Safeguarding Committee 3. Completed 4. H&S KPI’s being developed and will be circulated to Governors 5. Strategic Plan on the May agenda 6. Staff Survey on the May agenda 7. Philanthropy opportunities – the Board notes this action and suggests that it is left open and on people’s radar for discussion at an appropriate time | | |  | |
| 7. | **Members Updates**  Mr Bailey opened the members update section of the meeting and advised new members that this was time for members to update the Board on any buddy meetings or other items they felt the Board should be updated on.  Mr Swain advised that he had met with 3 of his buddies at FE and HE. It was noted that there were some frustrations around estates in HE and at FE concerns around workshop space. However, an observation made was about the condition of the office at FE. Whilst there were a number of staff based in the space, the staff were not keeping it in the tidiest manner. Ms Clarkson noted this point and said she would raise the issue with the team. Mr Kane advised that there had been a new appointment in Graphics which will ease the pressure in the workshop. Tech’s have also been given a pay rise.  Mrs Fawcett noted that she had met with the Student Services Manager ahead of the Ofsted inspection. The team is well staffed and providing a good service with a considerable amount going on. Mrs Fawcett added that she had been advised that it would be beneficial for the Safeguarding Lead to periodically review cases, however, she was unsure what benefit this would bring.  Ms Brett noted that she had met with her 3 buddies in FE and HE. All going positively, however HE staff had raised a concern about the value of going out to other institutions to give talks/presentations. It was felt that time could be better used providing support to students. Dr Raby noted this point and agreed to discuss further with the Acting Head of Marketing & Recruitment.  Ms Miller noted that she had joined the Sunderland Culture Glass Working Group and that there may be some way to link the School to this.  Professor Simmons had met with Olivia Burton and Mr Waddington to discuss Scholarly Activity and would become a member of the Research Committee.  Mr Bailey advised that he had met with Olivia Burton regarding Scholarly Activity. He had also facilitated a visit from Nic Greenan, CEO of Tyneside Cinema to show her the facilities and also the Northern Studios. Ms Greenan could involve students in some of her projects and was very impressed by the School and its “vibes”. Ms Greenan led the Bradford City of Culture winning bid. Mr Bailey also attended the RTC Awards with Mr Hughes and noted the positive nature of the awards with a number of former students shortlisted.  Mr Kane advised that he had facilitated a visit from a colleague from Arts University Plymouth recently who was very impressed with our Newport Road facilities and noted it was significantly different to the facilities at Plymouth. They are approximately 10% down on our numbers in relation to student recruitment and they have a retention issue. They advised that they have no reception staff, 2 members in student services and one copier to service the whole school.  Dr Dixon noted that she toured both the Newport Road building and the buildings in Hartlepool. It was very impressing and the new FE campus was a vast improvement on Green Lane.  Mr Bailey thanked all members for their updates. | | |  | |
| 8. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 9. | **SUSTAINABILITY**  **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 10. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 11. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 12. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 13. | **EXCELLENT STUDENT EXPERIENCE**  **Student Voice**   1. **Feedback from Student Assembly & Programme Board (HE)**   Dr Raby presented the paper on Student Assembly & Programme Boards in HE in the absence of Mr Waddington. The feedback shows some concerns on operational level, including estates matters. However, we are seeing a good level of student satisfaction rates.  Mr Hughes noted that there still appears to be a split between Church Square and Church Street.  Professor Rapley asked if it would be possible to have a “You said, We did” document circulated to Governors. Dr Raby advised that this would be possible and something which has already been done.   1. **Feedback from Student Forum (FE)**   Mr Kane presented the feedback from FE student forums and noted that the feedback was positive and whilst students are largely happy, we are addressing the issues which have been raised.  Mr Hughes asked if there were any negative comments. Mr Kane advised that any negative feedback was around resources and the format of the meetings, which we have now tweaked. Miss Golden advised that she had been to one meeting there was positive vibes. Where issues had been raised, they have been resolved quickly.  Mr Kane also noted the “skills builder week” which focussed around extra-curricular activities in a “conference” format, with over 20 different workshops. It was a great experience for students with activities focussing on wellbeing and DIY skills to name a few. Feedback from staff and students have been positive and students were able to make new friends and new skills.   1. **Student Governor Feedback**   Miss Golden updated Governors on events at FE. This included a “Pride Event” which was very well attended and included stalls on the ground floor, pub quiz in the art café and lots of different activities. Ms Clarkson noted that it was an excellent event. There had also been a London trip for A-level students, Graphics and animation. The trip was very good and value for money, central hotel and multiple museum trips. It was a great opportunity to meet new people.  Mr Bailey asked what the atmosphere was like on campus. Miss Golden noted that it was really good, a place where people can be themselves. Mr Bailey noted that it was the “art school vibes” which Nic Greenan had commented on when she visited the HE campus.  Mr Bailey thanked Miss Golden for the update. | | |  | |
| 14. | **Staff Voice**  Ms Clarkson noted that it has been a busy term at the FE campus, starting with Ofsted in the second week of term. The celebration screens in the south windows were amazing and a number of students came throughout the week to see them in the evening. There has also been Pride events and a skills builder week which brought wellbeing opportunities for staff and students and socialising opportunities for students too. Kat McDonagh had been selected to participate in the UN Women UK Delegate for the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69).  Ms Hemmins gave an overview of the events happening at HE and noted that there was some good collaboration between courses for a film shoot at Grosmont Station. A number of courses have been involved and the set is now based in the film studio, which Governors are welcome to view following this meeting. The School have been involved in the 200yr Bicentenary of the Stockton and Darlington railway project in Darlington. Banners have been designed and will stay up for a few months until the event in September. They are in Darlington, and we are waiting to see if Stockton will be placing an order. A collaboration “Moth x Human” at South Bank Centre, part of Bradford City of Culture. A number of HE competitions are in progress at present and we will hopefully be able to provide an update in May.  Ms Hemmins also noted 2 points which had been raised by staff. These include pay awards and job security. Dr Raby advised that he met with Ms Hemmins and advised he will cover off these two points as part of his Principal’s talk in early April. Dr Raby advised that there will be no immediate change to terms and conditions relating to sector transfer. There may be a change in the delivery model, however this is in the early stages of review. With pay awards, this needs to be looked at in greater depth when we have received funding information which is currently outstanding. We will also be monitoring numbers closely in this process. The UCU representative does not want us to talk to staff about pay, however this is not an approach we want to take. We want to support staff and provide the best pay award we can achieve without impacting on financial sustainability.  **Break 1202 - 1209** | | |  | |
| 15. | **GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE**  **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 16. | **Health & Safety Policy**  Mr Slorach presented the Health & Safety Policy to the Board for approval. The Board were advised that the policy had been reviewed by the H&S Committee and remained the same as last year.  Mr Slorach noted that there is a piece of legislation working through Parliament, Martyn’s Law. Teams are working on the premiss that this piece of legislation (formerly The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill) will come into force in the near future.  Dr Raby advised the Board that H&S is a focus of the School and currently Mr Wheaton is reviewing H&S and helping VPs make improvements in their areas.  Mr Swain noted that the Board had discussed H&S in previous years and was content with the current policy.  The Board **approved** the H&S Policy. | | |  | |
| 17. | **Risk Management Policy**  Mr Slorach presented the Risk Management Policy and advised that the Audit Committee had discussed the policy at its meeting on Wednesday.  Mr Swain, Chair of Audit, advised the Board that a detailed discussion had taken place at Audit Committee and the School and Board had always taken a common-sense approach to risk. To this end the Committee recommended that the Board continue to have an “open” mind to risk.  The Board **approved** the Risk Management Policy and **unanimously agreed** to keep an **“open” mind to risk.** | | |  | |
| 18. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 19. | **Gender Pay Gap Reporting**  Mrs Crossland presented the Gender Pay Gap 2024-25 report to the Board for approval. It was noted that the GPG for 2024-25 is 16.4%, a reduction of 2.5% from the previous year which indicates that the School is heading in the right direction. The School continues to be committed to doing everything practicable to reduce the gap. The School is confident that the GPG does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work, which shows a 0% equal pay gap. The GPG is the result of the roles in which men and women work within the institution and the salaries that these roles attract (this relates to the in-house cleaning staff).  Mrs Fawcett asked if the School had considered outsourcing the cleaning. Mrs Crossland advised that the School had looked into this and it would actually cost more for the School to do this.  Mr Bailey highly applauded the results and noted that this can be a tough journey to reduce the GPG. Dr Raby noted that the increase in the Real and National Living wage was helping as the roles in this area are mainly filled by female workers.  The Board **approved** the Gender Pay Gap 2024-25 Report. | | |  | |
| 20. | **Safeguarding Policy**  Mrs Crossland presented the Safeguarding policy to the Board for approval and advised that the policy had been updated by the Student Services Manager in line with changes made to the Keeping Children Safe in Education documentation. The updated policy had been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Safeguarding Committee. Mrs Crossland noted that the Committee will be working with Mrs McLaren to bring the policy to Governors earlier in the academic cycle.  The Board **approved** the Safeguarding Policy. | | |  | |
| 21. | **Use of the Company Seal**  The Board **noted** the silent paper on the use of the Company Seal. | | |  | |
| 22. | **OTHER MATTERS**  **OfS Reportable Events**  Dr Raby advised that there were no reportable events. | | |  | |
| 23. | **Confidential Items**  Item 8  Item 9  Item 10  Item 11  Item 12  Item 15  Item 18 | | |  | |
| 24. | **Any Other Business**  Mr Hughes asked if there would be a discussion on AI at a future Board meeting. Dr Raby advised that this was something Mr Waddington was working on and could be brought to a meeting of the Board later this academic year. | | |  | |
| 25. | **Review of Meeting**  The Board agreed that the meeting was robust with good discussion and deliberation. | | |  | |
| 26. | **Date and Time of Next Meeting**  The next meeting of the Corporation Board will take place on Friday May 16th, 2025 at the Middlesbrough 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 and invited everyone to view the set in the film studio.  The meeting closed at 1238hrs. | | |  | |