**Meeting of the Corporation Board**

**Friday May 16th, 2025 at 1000hrs**

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Members present:**  Mr T Bailey  Professor R Simmons  Mr D Hughes  Mr K Goldsborough  Mr I Swain  Professor J Rapley  Ms G Miller  Ms N Brett  Mrs K Baggaley  Ms S Watson  Mrs S Fawcett  Dr J Dixon  Dr M Raby  Ms J Hemmins  Ms M Golden | | TB  RS  DH  KG  IS  JR  GM  NB  KB  SW  SF  JD  MR  JH  MG | Chair  Independent Member / Vice Chair  Senior Independent Member  Independent Member  Co-opted Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Governor  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Independent Member  Principal  Staff Member (HE)  Student Governor (FE) | |
| **In Attendance:** | |  |  | |
| Mrs L McLaren | | LJM | Head of Governance | |
| Mr M Wheaton  Mr J Waddington  Mrs A Crossland  Mr S Slorach  Mr L Bradley  **Apologies:**  Ms P Clarkson  Ms L McLellan  Mr R Kane | | MW  JW  AC  SS  LB  PJC  LMcL RK | VP (SIP)  VP (HE)  VP (People Services)  VP (Resources)  Head of Marketing & Recruitment  (Item 10 only)  Staff Member (FE)  Student Governor (HE)  VP (FE) | |
|  |  | | | **Action** | |
| 1. | The Chair opened the meeting at 1000hrs and welcomed everyone to the meeting.  The Chair noted that the first point of business today was to approve Dr Dixon’s appointment to the Corporation Board. Members may remember Governance & Search Committee recommended the appointment of Dr Dixon who had been in attendance at the last meeting. Members **approved** the appointment of Dr Dixon to the Corporation Board.  ***1003hrs – Dr Dixon joined the meeting***  Members welcomed Dr Dixon to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves. | | |  | |
| 2. | **Apologies for absence**  Apologies were received from Ms McLellan, Ms Clarkson and Mr Kane. | | |  | |
| 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 March 28th, 2025 were **confirmed** by all with one minor amendment. | | |  | |
| 6. | **Matters Arising**   1. Mr Waddington had circulated a “You said, We did” document to members 2. Review of Principalship operating plan will take place in November 2025 3. Artificial Intelligence Guidelines to be brought to June Corporation Board meeting for assurance/information 4. Safeguarding brief and new E6 Conditions of Registration on Sexual Harassment & Misconduct to be brought to June meeting 5. H&S KPI’s being developed and will be circulated to Governors at June meeting 6. 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. Dr Raby noted that there will be more interest in this when we have title change, however we are working with Time+Space in relation to opportunities surrounding the new studios development. | | |  | |
| 7. | **STRATEGIC MEETING**  **Strategic Plan Update**  Dr Raby presented the paper on the Strategic Plan and noted that   * The plan was approved by Corporation Board in November 2024 and had previously been reviewed by Academic Board. * The Marketing Strategy is currently under development and we hope that it will be finalised by the end of the year. * Messaging from the plans were being effectively used in the 2026/27 prospectus. Focussing on “creative community” * We continue to do well against general universities in the North East, less so against specialist institutions, although we hold our own against Leeds Arts University. * Continue to focus on collaboration opportunities and not become siloed * Working on a People Strategy over the summer months * Strategic Plan continues to be linked to Team Operating Plans and personal targets   Dr Raby highlighted the OfS Review of Financial Sustainability and noted that expectations around UK student recruitment shows significant growth and a very competitive market. Some of our competitors are having redundancy exercises.  The Labour Governments 10-priorities did not link to our area; however, the creative industries do and the Mayoral Authorities are expected to produce local growth plans by September. The North East Combined Authority has published an interim growth plan, which have been heavily associated to Crown Works, which is still in the early stages of production and may have issues due to the recent tariffs set out by President Trump. The interim CEO of TVCA has noted that the creative industries will be a priority for the area and we continue to work with them and HBC to develop the new Northern Studios and associated network.  Ms Miller enquired as to how the School would approach the Strategic Plan on Sector Transfer. Dr Raby advised that principalship were debating this, however we would need to split the plan and ensure that there were links and connectivity between both plans.  Mr Bailey thanked all members for their updates. | | |  | |
| 8. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 9. | **Key Strategic Projects Updates**  **DAPs**  Mr Wheaton advised that the School had validated the first NSoA programmes (MA in Art, Culture and Curation, BA Illustration for Commercial Application). All discussions were recorded and received excellent student feedback.  The School is now focussed on working through the action plan developed from the initial assessment and addressing all points ahead of the next review by the OfS.  ***Confidential Information redacted***  ***Mrs Baggaley and Professor Simmons left the meeting at 1100hrs***  **The Northern Studios**  Mr Waddington gave members an overview of events in relation to the Northern Studios, including   * Leonard Design and Time+Space progressing well * New designs show that entry to the School will remain off Lynn Street. We are seeking clarification on signage for the School as this will be in the vicinity of the Studio signage * Public Consultation events were very positive. One was held in the Studios, the other in Middleton Grange Shopping Centre * The plans will be available at the end of year show for people to see * Plans have been submitted to planning for approval and Studios aim to close in 2026 * Production has been in the Studios for 2wks; however, production has been paused due to issues with the script * Other projects in pipeline but have not been green lit * Special Purpose Vehicle discussions have been paused due to changes at TVCA. We hope conversations will restart June/July. There are complexities due to funding streams and procurement which may lead to VAT issues.   The Board thanked everyone for the update. | | |  | |
| 10. | **Annual Accountability Statement**  Dr Raby presented the Annual Accountability Statement update to the Board. The new statement reflects the new Strategic Plan and, at DfE’s request reference to the Industrial Strategy, which is currently a green paper.  Professor Rapley noted that some areas sound ambitious, however, there is confidence there if we have plans in place. Dr Raby noted that the OfS have raised the issue that some institutions are being over ambitious, we believe we have a measured approach.  The Board **approved** the Annual Accountability Statement | | |  | |
| 11. | **MAIN MEETING**  **Member’s Update**  Mr Hughes noted that he had a buddy meeting with Nina Yoxall to discuss the Northern Studios. | | |  | |
| 12. | **Confidential Item**  **Break 1128 - 1140** | | |  | |
| 13. | **SUSTAINABILITY**  **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 14. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 15. | **EXCELLENT STUDENT EXPERIENCE**  **Staff Voice**  Ms Hemmins advised that there had been a number of collaborations within faculties and across faculties which had gone very well. Everyone is now working towards the Degree Show, with the film set one of the main items. The banners to be used at the Darlington / Stockton Railway celebrations will also be on show.  The Board thanked Ms Hemmins for the update. | | |  | |
| 16. | **Student Voice**  Ms Golden advised that a recent Pride event had raised over £300 for charity. There has also been a number of bake sales and car boot events.  Mr Bailey asked how charities were chosen. Ms Golden confirmed it was a student vote.  Mr Bailey thanked Ms Golden for the update. | | |  | |
| 17. | **Academic Freedom / Freedom of Speech Policy**  Mr Waddington presented a paper on Academic Freedom / Freedom of Speech to the Board and asked for the Board to endorse the paper for Academic Board to approve.  The policy had been reviewed following the recent announcement from the OfS that the University of Sussex had been fined £585k following a breach in academic freedom of speech and governance. GuildHE are having a series of discussions to take this forward. However, we have reviewed our policy and the minor amendments have been highlighted in the documentation.  It should be noted that this is an evolving area and University of Sussex are considering challenging the decision.  Dr Dixon asked if forms for external speakers were completed in a timely manner and audited yearly. Mr Waddington noted that forms are approved in advance and covered as part of the Prevent approach. Ms Hemmins noted that nothing can be booked prior to receiving a completed signed form.  Professor Rapley asked if, following sector transfer, would this be applicable to FE. Mr Waddington noted that it should be a similar approach but will check with Mr Kane on his return.  The Board **agreed to endorse** the Policy for Academic Board’s approval, and asked for an annual list of requests to be produced to provide Corporation Board with assurance on the matter.  *\*\*\*POST MEETING NOTE – Mr Kane has advised that FE do not complete forms for external speakers anymore, however they are supervised and monitored whilst on the premises. A form could easily be reinstated and will be discussed further\*\*\** | | |  | |
| 18. | **GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE**  **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 19. | **Confidential Item** | | |  | |
| 20. | **OTHER MATTERS**  **OfS Reportable Events**  Dr Raby advised that there were no reportable events. | | |  | |
| 21. | **Confidential Items**  Item 8  Item 12  Item 13  Item 14  Item 18  Item 19 | | |  | |
| 22. | **Any Other Business**  None. | | |  | |
| 23. | **Review of Meeting**  The Board agreed that the meeting was robust with good discussion and deliberation. | | |  | |
| 24. | **Date and Time of Next Meeting**  The next meeting of the Corporation Board will take place on Monday June 30th, 2025 at the Hartlepool Campus, commencing at 1330hrs.  Lunch will be available from 1300hrs with a lunch briefing on safeguarding and E6 Conditions of Registration.  There will be a Governor dinner commencing at 1800hrs at Sambuca, Church Street  Graduation Ceremonies will take place on Tuesday July 1st at All Saints Church Stranton, Church Row, TS24 7QT  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 Chair asked all Independent Members to stay for an Independent Members only session.  The meeting closed at 1300hrs. All members of staff left the meeting | | |  | |

**Confirmation of the minutes of the May 2025 Corporation Board:**

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