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MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION BOARD MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2022

Present:

Governors:

Dolly Agoro	Emma Kirk
Antony Ball	Mick Lochran
Angela Briggs	Scarlett Littlemore
Ruth Brook	Paul Scanlon
Luke Cantrill	Lee Tillman
Peter Grant	Lee Walker
Karen Jackson	Andrea Ward

The quorum for the meeting was nine members.

In attendance:

Jo Garrison	Director of Governance / Clerk to the Corporation
Sharon Smith	Principal / Deputy CEO
Barrie Shipley	Chief Finance Officer
Rachel Maguire	Chief People Officer
Jason Wilkinson	Chief Information Officer
Danny Fenwick	Deputy Principal FE
Karen Robson	Deputy Principal HE
Alison Gray	Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching & Learning
Jill Cooper	Executive Director, Employer Engagement & Projects

The meeting took place on MS Teams and started at 5.32pm.

Item	Minutes	Action
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1	Apologies	
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Apologies for absence had been received from Alan Rayment, Mark Swales, Richard Gravestock, Greg Clarke, and Tom Burton.

Prior to the Board meeting, HE students in Doncaster met with governors via Teams to interact in a HE student experience session. Members met with several HE students across multiple curriculum areas. A positive discussion was held, and different topics explored.

Members asked students about their first impression before they arrived on campus. Students overall were impressed with the enrolment process and help received along the way and the pastoral support from key staff which has been ongoing and most welcomed for some students with less confidence than others. One student shared his experience of moving from a one-year HNC to a HND qualification and the issues faced and overcome.

Members and students discussed the access to the local communities and promotion of the College as a University Centre and the access participation plan to support this activity. Students shared the view that more needs to be done to

make the College feel like a university experience and have its own communal social spaces for interaction and engagement. K Robson assured students this was a project she would be leading on to differentiate between the College and University.

Discussions also included the need to market degrees, what a degree is, how it works, the transferable skills and how this can enhance workability and life. A recognition that whilst the group showcases case studies, to promote the success of HE students to better market the offer. Students also suggested social media Student activity days to promote the group further.

All students were full of praise for the group's staff and thanked the academic enhancement team repeatedly throughout the discussions.

Members asked if the timetable was flexible. Students had mixed views of blended learning and on-site interaction which reflected the different degrees they were enrolled on. Some students felt online learning and timetabling enabled them to revisit lessons and tutorials, where other students welcomed and supported more face to face on-site learning. All students praised staff and said they felt safe on site during the pandemic.

Students raised the need and sought reassurance around the IT struggles and need for improved software in engineer as an example for CAD software and the practical applications that were not available. M Lochran assured students he and SLT members would action this urgently to ensure the software issues were resolved.

2 Declarations of Interest

Members should declare any personal or financial obligation, allegiance or loyalty which would in any way affect decisions in relation to the subjects under discussion.

3 Approval of CEO Appointment

This item is confidential and is kept as a separate record by the Clerk of the Corporation.

4 Policies for Approval

R Maguire presented three policies to members for approval, informing members that the policies have been reviewed in line with local authority procedures and other regulatory/legislative bodies as required.

i. Ant- Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy

Members were informed the Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy has been revised in line with the Office for Students (OfS) requirement to ensure the group's compliance to the OfS conditions, which have now been met.

Members were asked to approve the revisions to the policy.

ii. Safeguarding

Members were assured the Safeguarding policy had been revised in line with local authority procedures, LADO and other local authority processes and procedures to align the group's policy. Members were informed extensive work has been carried out to the policy and now meets all Ofsted requirements.

Members were asked to approve the revisions to the policy.

iii. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Members were presented with the revised EDI Policy and directed to the revision that there is an annual requirement to review the policy as a regulatory requirement from the ESFA and the ROATP submission.

Members were asked to approve the revisions to the policy.

Resolution: All three policies were unanimously approved by members.

5 Strategic Scene Setting

M Lochran informed members that the strategic plan should be reviewed in 2023 for three years. Members were informed that the strategic plan would be refreshed for a further year to enable the new CEO time for settlement and continuation office seamless strategy in his first year of appointment.

Members were advised that SLT have prioritised the steps full strategy. The SLT scorecard will enable the team to measure the strategy. The current position is now re-imagining "new normal". SLT has been restructured and is now more aligned to the strategic plan with the appointments of the CIO, CPO, and CFO along with the Principal/Deputy CEO.

Discussions took place with regards to the status of the FE sector and the marketplace, the skills and investment required to mitigate both Brexit and the pandemic. There was recognition of the visible social divide between working online and remotely compared to face-to-face learning. Significant resourcing is under way in the digital infrastructure of the group with accelerated investment on the arrival of the CIO. Members were assured that the diversity of the students and the staff, with regards to mental health and well-being, increased inflation and living wage requirements, that the SLT are leading projects to improve these issues.

Moving forward the environment sustainability become ever more at the forefront of the group's strategic planning, recognising these will be fast moving plans that will be dynamic and fluid. Recognition that policy for FE/HE/Adult and apprenticeship provision needs to be reviewed at a local and national level. M Lochran revisited presentational slides shared with members at the start of the pandemic and provided an update to the movement of the four scenarios presented. Members were informed adult and apprenticeship provision remains high, HE is a medium risk and education programmes for young people are currently a lower risk.

There is an understanding that 700 additional learners will be enrolled over the next three years which will generate approximately £3.5m. HE professions remain uncertain on the demand for learners. Apprenticeships have been challenging and staff retained to deliver this provision has been difficult to balance, with many employers having to furlough their staff. Over 600 apprentices were furloughed during the pandemic which has impacted on income and retention of the apprentices. There has been a lower demand for young people as more lenient

marks have been awarded to GCSEs and pupils have stayed on a school to do A Levels.

Members were informed of the government's L3 entitlement, boot camps and recognition that the group's local areas require good provision for L1 and L2 qualifications and a challenge to resourcing across the landscape. M Lochran presented the 9 priorities to members and assured them these are also underpinned by the values aspire and ambition since the merger. The restructured SLT has been aligned to meet these future needs and address the challenges across the landscape.

M Lochran assured members that there is also ongoing work for widening participation of the HE agenda and the technical requirements for work-based learning. Also ensure the digital platforms are robust and sustainable for the quality of the provision for staff and students to enable a structure to build growth.

S Littlemore, K Jackson and L Tillman left the meeting

6 Scorecard against Strategic Plan

Members broke into three sessions to review the strategic plan and scorecard. The groups were led by SLT members to support board members in the review of the strategic plan and launch of the Scorecard. The three sessions were:

Group 1: Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Student Programmes

Group 2: People and Transformation

Group 3: Estates, Partnerships and Sustainability

L Tillman re-joined the meeting

7 Feedback from Groups

Group One:

Members praised the fantastic work of SLT and their teams in producing the scorecard. Members looked at the possible revision to phraseology and further work to make the scorecard to be more rounded to incorporate the mindset good discussion. The use of tabs would be more inclusive to the wider perspectives rather than missing groups such as equality or too tunnel visioned. In terms of other comments and discussion points, members explored what really is meant by key targets and key performance indicators aligned to the critical success factors? Members wrestled with the terminology and further explained from a member's perspective there is a need to be clear what it is the curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment is expected to measure and set those aspirational targets.

A Ward asked SLT members "can you remember top 10 targets?" Members suggested there are possibly too many and the need to hone down to key targets measure and track those strategic targets. Suggestions that business as usual/operational target should not be in a target and should be normal excellent targets of the everyday activities for the group. There was also a healthy debate around the student experience and different levels of HE and FE and the need to further simplify what are HE and FE targets and the language needs to recognise that. R Brook added there was a discussion around student progression and not just academically but holistically, improving self-confidence and aspirations of the students. Also, the personal development to enable the group to unpick and obtain the whole picture not just linear.

Group Two:

Questions were asked throughout the presentation. Members enquired how SLT will use the Scorecard to support documentation presented to governors and how will the dashboard underpin the scorecard? Members were also eager to ascertain how the dashboard will be kept updated to ensure the data is current and accurate. Members were assured to hear the dashboard will include the group's risks and progress as well as barriers and challenges to achieving the KPIs through the strategic framework.

Members were informed that J Wilkinson has commenced work on building the package and shared dashboard. It was suggested to incorporate tabs to ensure it is easily accessible and be able to draw down to the underpinning data to seek assurance.

A Briggs raised concerns and asked if this created additional work for SLT and if KPIs would drill down to cover committee requirements and could this be considered. J Wilkinson further added the strategy will be a multi-year targeted approach, with roll on roll off targets and the dashboard will contain live information that will be readily available to access in the current timeframe. Members queried some of the language within the KPIs that was unfamiliar and for members not in education would require more explanation how the KPIs will be measured, those KPIs that are not data driven. Members' final points were the shared ownership of the group's risks across the committees and each committee's responsibilities.

Group Three:

The feedback from group three session informed members that the group has conducted a good review of the scorecard and the strategic plan and felt it was clear and easy to read and most helpful.

Members did not suggest any major revisions and that there were no surprises as sustainability and estates have only just been signed off in the strategy. Members advised the estates' targets and KPIs make sense but recognised that both estates and sustainability have key targets that are large and will not be delivered immediately and that members must consider and be mindful of long time frames. KPIs need to be underpinned with a key set of milestones for progress from the starting point to where the group needs to be. Carbon net zero by 2050 was discussed and the need to hit the right milestone and the KPI's will be critical to manage and track progress.

Members reviewed partnerships and noted no new strategy but the need to review how to measure success and it not become woolly as there are not many facts and figures to align to. Members discussed how do you measure how a partnership is progressing? And more about how the partnerships are nurtured and measure that progression to ensure they are succinct as they are quantifiable KPIs.

Members recognised and confirmed the targets have got to be ambitious but realistic and recognised this is hard to balance sometimes. A need to realise what are the baselines set for new KPIs and implement stretch, balance and be ambitious but achievable and there is need to further clarify those KPIs to achieve this. Members had also accepted it is a challenge to obtain the sustainability baseline to measure against.

A Ward raised the group does not have any targets in curriculum about carbon zero in teaching and learning. M Lochran gave assurance that both staff and students will be undertaking carbon literacy training, and this will also be implemented into student learning, raising awareness etc.

8 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Corporation Board is scheduled for Wednesday 30 March 2022, 5.30 pm at UCNL.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.

Jo Garrison
Director of Governance / Clerk to the Corporation

Signed: (Chair)

Date: