

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation Board of North Hertfordshire College held in Room B102, Hitchin, on Monday 1 February 2016.

PRESENT

Richard Alberg (Chair)
Matt Hamnett (Principal/CEO)
Nick Chesher
Adrian Hawkins
Paul Holgate

Vernon McClure
Ruth Orpwood
Karl Scott

IN ATTENDANCE

Kit Davies
Lucy Hann
Yvonne Laird
Robert Dale

Deputy Principal, NHC
Managing Director, Hart L&D
Finance Director
Clerk to the Corporation

- The Chair welcomed Yvonne Laird to her first meeting. Ruth Orpwood had agreed to be the Equality and Diversity lead for the Board. David Green had resigned from the Board; interviews for new appointments were taking place later in the week.

APOLOGIES

- Apologies for absence were received from Lynne Ceeney, Paul Harrison and Rob Irving.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- Minutes (including confidential Part 2 minutes) were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

ACTIONS

- Actions from the previous meeting had been completed or were on the agenda, apart from circulating a note on pension arrangements; Yvonne Laird would deal with this.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- The Quality and Innovation Committee had reviewed the first curriculum quality reviews; it was pleasing that the Quality team is now seen more positively. Governor participation in Learning Walks was vital as were written reports from them. Evidence that NHC added value to childrens' achievement was weak; this was disappointing.

NHC UPDATE

- Kit Davies briefed governors on year to date progress in NHC (the college activity for which he is responsible, as distinct from Hart L&D) covering curriculum quality, performance against key indicators (e.g. student attendance, retention and forecast achievement), student feedback, financial performance and the emerging picture on student recruitment for 2016/17. He also noted some good news stories which were contributing to improved external relations. Governors asked:
 - Was the reported year-to-date work placement figure (c1,100) relatively strong?
The team aimed to give meaningful work experience to all students by April, and is on track to meet this. Employer engagement in the student experience through

Robert Dale, Clerk to the Corporation

work experience placements and other activities is critical to our model.

- How effective was outreach in building Alumni relationships? *Historically, this had been costly and ineffective, but there are lots of opportunities and work would begin on this once the new MIS was successfully embedded.*
- About the focus on becoming a gateway to the world of work for students. *The relationship between NHC and Hart L&D will become increasingly important in securing positive outcomes for students.*

HART LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

- Lucy Hann reported on progress to date in establishing Hart L&D as a progressive emerging talent business – locally, regionally and nationally. She outlined a positive picture of in-year performance, whilst noting the steep incline in apprenticeship starts and revenue that would be required to deliver the full year plan. Governors asked:
 - How medical training was delivered? *Existing capability included several qualified nurses, but the team was looking to extend it, expecting that the NHS would need to develop a nursing apprenticeship if the forthcoming levy was not just to be a financial detriment. There were possible opportunities with the University of Hertfordshire.*
 - Why income was ahead of profile and what impact this would have at the year end? *At this stage, a better than expected year-end out-turn could not confidently be forecast because of the plan's steep upward curve. Bringing in new clients early would help with growth in future years, but would also bring forward costs.*
 - If the business plan included winning ESF and Herts CC bids this year? *The plan had made no allowance for either succeeding, but there was no chance of upside this year as any income from bids would fall into the new financial year.*

FINANCE UPDATE

- The financial position was in line with the cash forecast; there was growing confidence that the year-end forecast would be hit, albeit with material risks remaining on both revenue and cost. An increasingly firm forecast would be offered at the meeting in April. Governors asked:
 - How much confidence there was that the apparent underspending on costs year to date would be maintained at the year-end? *The team was confident that invoice processing was up-to-date and that there were no longer material costs unprocessed. It was not yet certain that this underspend would be a real saving, rather than a question of timing.*
 - If there was any prospect of material improvement in the Saudi contract? *Though action is now in hand to bring cost in line with revenue, it was hard to see a scenario in which the contract delivered a surplus over its five year life. Though a formal contract negotiation was now under way, the Executive was not confident of significant improvements in T&Cs.*

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- A training session on Safeguarding would be combined with a Board dinner involving Trustees and the senior management team on a date to be agreed.

Action: RD to agree date and make arrangements for training and a Board dinner at Hitchin.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Proposed dates for Corporation Board meetings for the rest of 2016 were Mondays: 4 April, 6 June, 5 September, 17 October, and 5 December, all at 18.00.

- The meeting concluded at 19.00.

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Signed as an accurate record of proceedings – Chair

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Date

CORPORATION ACTION LOG

Meeting	Minute Reference	Summary of Action	Lead/timing
Corporation, 30/11/15		Circulate a briefing note on pension scheme arrangements	Yvonne Laird 26/02/16
Corporation, 01/20/16	9.	Agree date, and make arrangements for training and a Board dinner at Hitchin.	Robert Dale 26/02/16