

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of the Corporation held on  
Tuesday, 28 July 2020 at 5:00pm in Bede Hall, Bede Campus**

- Present:
- John Barnett
  - Tom Crompton
  - Louise Doyle (via Teams)
  - Louise Farthing
  - Jeff Hope
  - Louise Kennedy
  - Rob Lawson (Chair)
  - Paul McEldon
  - Susan Pollard
  - Alison Shaw (via Teams)
  - Ralph Saelzer
  - Ellen Thinnesen, Chief Executive
- In Attendance:
- Nigel Harrett, Principal Northumberland College
  - David Howells, Chief Operating Officer
  - Vikkie Morton, Vice Principal Student Services and Registry
  - Iain Nixon, Vice Principal Partnerships and Commercial
  - Naomi Robson, Associate Principal Resources and Legal Services
- Clerk:
- Christine Stretesky, Head of Corporate Governance and Policy (present at Bede Campus)

The Chair welcomed everyone thanking them for attending the meeting and asking for introductions around the room for the benefit of new members.

**Bd/20-21/001 Apologies and consent or absence and declarations of interest**

Apologies were accepted from Derek Cogle.

Louise Doyle and Louise Kennedy declared a conflict of interest for item 004 as to the review and approval of high value contracts.

Louise Doyle and Alison Shaw declared a potential conflict for item 006 due to their contractual and employment (respectively) relationship with Newcastle University.

**Bd/20-21/002 Group Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure**

The Associate Principal Resources and Legal Services (AP R&LS) presented the policy stating the policy is a complete rewrite noting that the changes from the previous Sunderland College policy were contained in the table in the appendix to the paper. The AP R&LS stated that the policy covers

all colleges within the Group. Staff, ELT and the unions were consulted during drafting with the unions providing little feedback and no real disagreement with the content.

The Board noted that the report title uses the term 'staff' though the term 'employees' is used throughout the policy offering that the two should be consistent. The AP R&LS noted this.

The Board questioned the use of the equality impact assessment table within the policy as it contains categories relating to students and this is an employee policy. The AP R&LS discussed the equality impact assessment table stating that the decision had been made to use one for all policies. The Vice Principal Student Services & Registry noted that some of the additional characteristics reviewed the Group, such as 'carers' include both staff and students and we would want to include that in any review. The AP R&LS stated that she and the Head of Corporate Governance and Policy can review the efficacy of tailoring the equality impact assessment to the policy.

AGREED: to approve the proposed policy with an implementation date of 1 September 2020

### **Bd/20-21/003 Partnerships Plan**

The Vice Principal Partnerships and Commercial (VP P&C) presented the plan noting that the plan has been to both local boards who reviewed, provided feedback and recommended the plan for approval by the Board. The VP P&C shared the completed version of the plan noting that the plan aligns with the Group's Strategic Plan, links to our corporate values and contains imagery on how the Group engages with partners. The VP P&C explained that Governors can get a sense of how the plan will work in practice through reviewing the underpinning principles and the aims of the plan.

The VP P&C shared that conversations are occurring with partners and his team are working on a launch event, however that might look during these times.

The Board questioned whether senior leadership had plans to, through Goal 5 of the Strategic Plan, engage internationally. The VP P&C responded that whilst there were plans to engage in multicultural events, at the moment, there are no plans to recruit internationally.

The Board challenged the imagery used in the shared plan requesting that it be reviewed to ensure a showing of the diversity of the Group. The VP P&C acknowledged that this needed to be done, and that all college brands be represented.

The Board asked whether the plethora of government incentives to kick start skills training are reflected in the Group KPIs. The VP P&C explained that the KPIs need to reflect where we aim strategically and need to be reflective of the entirety of the plan, short term changes will always be responded to and the decision of whether the KPI is a strategic plan level or a departmental level is the question.

AGREED: to approve the Partnerships Plan

### **Bd/20-21/004 Supply Chain Subcontracting Policy and High Value Subcontracts**

This item was determined to be confidential with minutes recorded separately.

**Bd/20-21/005 Group Integrated Financial Model for Colleges 2019-20 and 2020-21**

This item was determined to be confidential with minutes recorded separately.

*Governors Doyle and Shaw left the meeting at this time*

**Bd/20-21/006 Update on Structure and Prospects Appraisal Gateshead College**

This item was determined to be confidential with minutes recorded separately.

**Bd/20-21/007 Any Other Business**

There was one item:

Learning Curve: The Board affirmed the decision made electronically to enter into a subcontract agreement with Learning Curve.

**Bd/20-21/008 Date, time and venue of next meeting: 06 October 2020, 5:00pm, Teams Conference**

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at: 6:55pm