

NCG – Corporation Meeting

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 21st July 2020 – 3pm to 6.15pm

Details			Attendance		
Full Name	Position	Initials	Attended	Apologies	No Attendance
Peter Lauener	Chair of Corporation	PL	X*		
Chris Roberts	Vice Chair of Corporation	CR	X*		
Mark Squires	Independent Governor	MS	X*		
Caroline MacDonald	Independent Governor	CM	X*^		
John Cuthbert	Independent Governor	JC		X	
Jeannette Strachan	Independent Governor	JS	X*		
Andrew Cunningham	Independent Governor	AC	X*		
Rob Holt	Independent Governor	RH	X*		
Chris McCourt	Independent Governor	CM	X*		
Matthew Otubu	Independent Governor	MO	X*		
Shirley Atkinson	Independent Governor	SA	X*		
Liz Bromley	CEO – Ex-Officio Governor	LB	X*		
Cameron Hartley	Student Governor	CH		X	
Jennifer Mitchelson	Staff Governor	JM	X*		
Visitors/ Presenters					
Chris Payne	Deputy CEO	CP	X*^		
David Balme	Executive Director Governance, Assurance & Risk	DB	X*		
Mike Wilmot	Chief Finance Officer	MW	X*		
Steve Wallis	Executive Director of Quality	SW	X*		
Scott Mulholland	Chief Information and Data Officer	SM	X*		
Grant Glendinning	Interim Executive Principal of the North	GG	X*		
Nicola Taylor	Assistant Director of Governance (minutes)	NT	X*		
Rachel Robson	Observer – Stone King	RR	X*		
Ron Hill	Observer – Stone King	RH	X*		
			X*^		

*Attended via Microsoft Teams / ^Attended for part of the meeting

1. Governor Training – Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent

SW provided the Board with a refresh of Safeguarding Training, noting that the new Corporation Governors were going to be asked to carry out the ETF Safeguarding in FE Training Module post-meeting, as part of their Governor Induction. SW covered the following:

- Relevant definitions.
- Different types of abuse.
- Wider Safeguarding concerns.
- Local risks.
- Key responsibilities under the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance.
 - Noting that the guidance is refreshed on an annual basis and confirming that NCG reviews its policies annually and in line with new guidance.
- The process for referring Safeguarding concerns.
- The current data comparison in the number of referrals between 18-19 and 19-20.
 - Noting the gap in the number of referrals opening from March. SW confirmed that this could be due to COVID19 as it becomes more difficult for staff to identify signs of concerns when they aren't with students on a face to face basis. SW confirmed that the gap is being monitored and additional measures are being implemented. SW also confirmed that Safeguarding leads are available 24hrs per day to deal with any concerns raised.
- How NCG responds and complies with the statutory guidance.
- Examples of good practice at NCG.
- Statistics around online safety.

SW noted that JS had agreed to be the Link Governor for the Corporation Board, and that he would be working alongside JS to provide assurance to the Board in matters relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection. JS will also be attending the Safeguarding Council going forward.

In terms of digital safety, SW confirmed that when learners were using their own devices, the Group are unable to use appropriate filters and therefore learners are being asked to work through the internal systems to allow monitoring. SW is working alongside SM and the IT team to provide additional training for staff around digital safety.

SW confirmed that a wellbeing keeping in touch survey had been undertaken with over 5000 responses being received. Any concerns were actioned by the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).

Governors asked if there was a process for regularly updating staff DBS checks. SW confirmed that some staff are re-cleared where there is a requirement (for example, Nursery staff), however there is no requirement for the re-check of the

majority of staff. There is a cost involved for clearance, and therefore the Executive Team are moving to a process whereby staff will be asked to complete an annual declaration to confirm that there have been no changes since their clearance.

Governors asked how Safeguarding was being contextualised. SW confirmed that local constabularies provide updates on local risks, which are different around the country. Information is shared at the Safeguarding Council meetings.

Governors asked how the gaps in referrals were being addressed. SW confirmed that staff were being given additional training and that students were being advised on the different resources available to them. Face to face conversations will be taking place with learners upon their return to their college.

Governors asked if learners know who to contact if they want to refer or highlight a concern regarding their peers. SW confirmed that this is part of their induction, but this information has been reiterated during COVID19.

The Board thanked SW for carrying out the training.

2. Meeting Administration

2.1. Opening of Meeting and Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. The Chair made specific welcome to the following:

- The 5 new Corporation Board Members (SA, RH, AC, MO and CM).
- GG, who would now be attending Corporation Board meetings as a visitor / presenter within his new role as Interim Executive Principal (North).
- SM, who would now be attending Corporation Board meetings as a visitor / presenter following his CIDO role being made permanent.
- RH and RR (from Stone King) who would be observing the meeting as part of the external governance review.

The Chair covered some basic housekeeping points and confirmed that the Vice Chair would take over if there were any connectivity issues.

2.2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from JC, CH and CP (for part of the meeting). The apologies were accepted, and the Board noted that the meeting was quorate.

2.3. Declarations of Interest

The Board were asked if they had any interests to declare in relation to the planned agenda items, and the following were noted:

- AC is a Commissioner at the Port of Blyth.
- LB is a Trustee of the Mulberry Schools Trust along with JF (EW).

The Board noted the declarations and agreed that the Board members could remain present for all agenda items.

2.4. Review of Minutes from the Previous Meeting – 2nd June 2020

The Board reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting and agreed that they were a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

2.5. Register of Board Actions

The Board reviewed the register of actions and noted that relevant actions were to be covered within the meeting agenda or closed as per the document.

The Chair noted he would like to encourage the creation of a range of different link governor roles and will explore this further over the Summer.

The Clerk noted that the paper relating to Project Damson (Confidential Item) had been added late. The document was included for information purposes and would be discussed further at the September Board meeting.

Action: NT to add to agenda.

The Board noted the updates.

2.6. Matters Arising

2.6.1. Project Damson - Confidential

This item has been covered under a confidential minute.

2.6.2. Lagged Funding – Lessons Learned

The Board were presented with a further update regarding the lessons learned from the issues with lagged funding.

The Board noted the update.

2.6.3. FE Fees Policy

MW presented the FE Fees Policy, noting that this had been approved earlier this year, however upon review by the Business Assurance Team a number of amendments were recommended which have now been made.

The Board approved the revised version of the FE Fees Policy.

2.6.4. Online Enrolment Update

SM presented an update of the progress made regarding the introduction of online enrolment. The project is complex but making steady progress toward a mid-August conclusion.

The Board noted the update.

2.7. Governor Activity

The Board were asked if they had any relevant activity to report, and the following were noted:

- AC, RH, SA, MO and CM had all attended the induction programme which was made up of 3 sessions (Strategy & Governance, Finance & Planning and Quality & Curriculum).
- JM attended the Strategy & Governance and Finance & Planning induction sessions.
- JS attended the Strategy & Governance induction session.

PL confirmed he had read the speeches of Gavin Williamson and Michelle Donelan on higher education and recommended these to the Board.

3. Substantive Items

3.1. Chief Executive Group - Report

LB presented the Chief Executive Group report, specifically noting the following points:

- The management of the business following COVID19 continues to be a top priority. The return of staff within Professional Services is a current focus, with non-classroom based staff not being expected to return to the workplace before January 2021. Between September – December, individual circumstances will be considered and responded to, which may include the opportunity to hot desk to allow a blended working approach. This will allow the continuation of cost savings, and MW and the estates team are currently considering alternative uses of the RHH building.
 - The Board discussed the issues around digital poverty and the potential funding for this. The Executive Team confirmed that they had met the demand for hardware from learners.
 - Governors asked about the plan for students returning from September, and it was confirmed that all colleges would be open from September for learners and guidance is being followed.
 - Governors noted the exemplary work following COVID19 and the continued high engagement with stakeholders during this time.
- The Strategy launch across the Group will be completed by the end of July 2020.
- Appointments have been made to drive forward progress in Newcastle College and across the North, including the HE offer. Grant Glendinning has been appointed to the role of Interim Executive Principal (North), overseeing Carlisle and Newcastle College, Scott Bullock has been appointed to Interim Principal of Newcastle College, Steve Salkeld has been appointed to Interim Principal of Carlisle College and Jon Ridley has been appointed to Interim Executive Director of HE.
 - GG provided the Board with an update on the work he had been undertaking since starting his new role, which included;

revisiting both college strategic plans (ensuring alignment to the NCG strategy and in light of COVID19), creating FE synergies across the North, exploring the potential of each of the Colleges in terms of their niche specialisms and becoming involved in the estates strategy at Newcastle College.

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- There has been a soft launch of the Leadership Hub in relation to preparedness for a return to a new normal in September; a review of the EDI policy and practice is also taking place.
- Further progress is being made in relation to the Digital Strategy.
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Action: NT to add to the September 2020 agenda.

- NCG have been invited to be a participant in the Newcastle Zero North Project, aiming to reduce our environmental impact.
- There is currently an internal vacancy for a Marketing and Communications Director, with interviews taking place within the next week. There is also a review of the Business Development leadership being undertaken.
 - Governors noted that they felt this was a good opportunity to identify funding and grants. Governors also noted the need for a fundraising plan to sit alongside the estates and technologies strategies.

Comments made / Questions asked via BoardPacks in advance of the meeting:

- *Governors asked if the sustained destination survey is a sector wide initiative or is it NCG specific.*

It was confirmed that this has become a sector norm. The DfE also publish a rate, although this data is lagging by some years (e.g. DfE currently have '2017 leavers' published) therefore there is a need to run an internal survey that largely mirrors their approach but is current.
- *Governors asked if the DfE CAPEX fund would allow the repair of the lifts in the Parsons Building at Newcastle College, and asked what other estate CAPEX could be prioritised.*

It was confirmed that the repair of the lift is being progressed from the 20/21 capital investment budget for £150k.
- *Governors asked if there were sufficient funds to support students who don't have access to a computer or the internet with the continuing shift to online learning, and if there was enough funding to support this going forwards.*

It was confirmed that the addressing of digital poverty was being done through a combination of grants (mainly London) and bursary funding.

It was noted that this would bridge the gap but there would inevitably be some learners who don't qualify for bursaries who may not have suitable equipment, so the process is being reviewed to address this.

The Board noted the report and updates.

3.2.

This item has been covered under a confidential minute.

3.3.

This item has been covered under a confidential minute.

3.4. KPIs

LB presented suggested KPIs following the feedback collected during the Governors Strategy Session on 23rd June 2020. The number of KPIs has been reduced as discussed, with a number of performance indicators now sitting alongside the KPIs.

Governors noted that they felt the 99% satisfaction target for learner resources for 2030 was very challenging. LB confirmed that she felt that this target was achievable and would prefer the targets to be challenging rather than not to aim high enough.

The Board approved the revised KPIs.

3.5. COVID-19 Update and Reflections of June Re-opening

LB presented the update report on COVID19.

The Board noted the update.

CP left the meeting.

3.6.

This item has been covered under a confidential minute.

3.7. Update on Local Strategic Plans – Verbal

DB provided an update, noting that all Local College Boards have met to discuss the initial draft of their local strategic plans (some within their usual meeting schedule, and some within additional Governor strategy sessions). The College Boards are due to locally approve the plans at the start of the new academic year, and they will then be brought to Corporation for final approval.

The Board noted the update.

4. Chief Finance Officer – Finance Report

MW presented the Chief Finance Officer Report, highlighting the following points:

Financial Performance

- P11 EBITDA is at £4.5m, £1.3m higher than the Q3 reforecast due to higher apps (£0.4m), commercial income being more than forecast (£0.7m) and due to higher pay and non-pay cost savings than forecasted.

- Small positive variances against Q2 forecast for all of the colleges.
- Apprentices (redundancy, break in learning or risk of redundancy) since March 2020 is now 10%. Furloughed apprenticeships are reducing and now at 28%. The trend suggests that the vast majority of apprenticeships are going back to work when leaving furlough as opposed to being made redundant.

Applications

- 16-19 applications trends are promising (14% up YoY). All college applications are up YoY with the exception of Carlisle (1% down YoY) which has been tracking behind last year's actual for a number of months – indications are that this is in line with other Cumbrian colleges. If starts are as high as estimated, an exceptional case for funding could be submitted to the ESFA.
- HE applications are steady at this stage versus prior year – 3% up.
- Adult applications are very concerning (although still small figures at present) at 15% down YoY. This downward trend is evident at all colleges except for Kidderminster. This only relates to full time courses, however a large majority of the provision is made up of short courses, such as, ESOL.
 - Governors asked if the shortfall in adult applications was the same across the sector and MW confirmed he would look into this.

Action: MW to report back regarding shortfall in adult applications.

Cash

- £22m cash at end of May – in line with forecast.

Covenant Compliance

- Q4 headroom expected. Possible technical breach of the debt: net assets test if the pension liabilities increase by over £12m (which is possible given the current equity values). A waiver letter has been received from Lloyds for this test for 31st July 2020.

Financial Health Score

- Letter received from ESFA with regards the 18/19 financial year confirming financial health grade of 'Requires Improvement'.
- The ESFA Financial Planning model included with the budget presentation calculates financial health in both 19/20 and 20/21 to be 'Good'. It should be noted that the categorisation is very tight and NCG could easily slip back to 'Requires Improvement' without continued sound financial control.

Capital Expenditure

- Due to delays in property expenditure because of the lockdown we have been able to reallocate capital expenditure:
 - £0.5m of laptops for staff and learners to allow for home working / study.

- £0.5m advance of IT capital budget requests for 20/21.
- £0.3m investment in STEM equipment for Newcastle HE.

Funding

- NCG has utilised both the Job Retention Scheme and the Post-16 Relief Fund (apprenticeships) during the lock-down. The second tranche of the Post-16 relief fund is being applied for.
- A successful claim from the GLA has been made, for funding laptops for students (£0.1m)
- Kidderminster College have submitted a bid of £0.5m to the Worcester LEP for their Construction and Automotive Academy. This would require £0.5m of NCG match funding.
- West Lancashire have submitted a £3m bid to the Lancashire LEP for an augmented reality health tech ward – requiring £0.3m of NCG match funding.
- The Government has announced £200m of capital funding for colleges to address the condition of estates. We understand this will be allocated on a formula basis to colleges, but no further details are available. A share of this fund will be welcome, and we are currently working up options which we will bring to the Corporation when the funding becomes available.
- The Chancellor announced £2,000 incentive payments to employers who take on an apprenticeship.

Estates

- Focus of the estates team is now around September reopening, consideration of home working arrangements and preparing for potential capital funding as noted above.
- The estates plan for Newcastle College is nearing completion, and this will be brought to the Board.

Comments made / Questions asked via BoardPacks in advance of the meeting:

- *Governors asked, regarding the Lloyd's waiver letter, when the next test would take place and how long the waiver would last.*

It was confirmed that covenants are quarterly so next test will be end of Oct 2020. However, the team are still hopeful that the pension liabilities do not impact the covenant. The waiver was a concern because the pension liabilities are not known until after the year end which means that if the results caused a breach and this could not be resolved by year end, NCG would be forced to show all current liabilities as short term. This would then cause a score of nil points re the 'current ratio' which would result in a financial health grade of inadequate and move NCG into the ESFA intervention process.

- *Governors asked if it was realistic for West Lancashire College to expect a turnaround in EBITDA within the next year and asked if any adjustments were being made to achieve this.*

It was noted that a large amount of the West Lancashire turnaround is being delivered through turnover growth - particularly through the group wide distance learning initiative and as a result there remains a performance risk.

- *Governors asked how much focus is being applied to the identification and realisation of surplus assets.*

It was noted that the Wigan sale is agreed subject to planning. The Newcastle estates strategy is being worked up with JLL which is expected to identify surplus assets, which will likely need to be reinvested into the estate. The Lewisham estates strategy requires the completion of curriculum strategy, but all excess assets will be required for reinvestment into the new college development.

- *Governors asked if there were any views as to why adult applications are down.*

It was confirmed that this is a trend seen over a few weeks, mainly for full year study programmes whereas most of our adult income comes from shorter courses. This is believed to be due to the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 situation.

The Board noted the report.

4.1. Business Plans and Budget

MW presented the business plan and budget for 20/21, noting the uncertainty of COVID19. MW confirmed the budget process is completed by the budget owners taking ownership and suggesting the funds they need. This is then checked and challenged by finance where appropriate. All college budgets have been locally approved by their Local College Board.

MW highlighted the following key points:

- Training providers are now closed, and companies being wound up – a significant factor in stabilising the Group's finances.
- COVID-19 presents a number of short-term uncertainties for 20/21 including:
 - Unpredictable HE recruitment.
 - Lower apprenticeship cohort at the start of the year and expected lower than 'Business as Usual' starts.
 - Reduced commercial income – catering, real work experience etc. due to social distancing.
- Likely to be opportunities for FE due to high levels of unemployment however due to continued uncertainty these have not been reflected within the budget. Similarly, the budget does not include any of the £200m college capital budget as the formula for allocation has not yet been released.
- Q1 reforecast likely to give a much clearer picture when recruitment numbers, apprenticeship recruitment trends and clearer government responses to the post COVID-19 economy are known.

- Total EBITDA forecast in 19/20 to be £6.3m, in line with the budget.
- Budget EBITDA for 20/21 of £6.3m which is in line with current year expectation.
- Only a small £2m capital budget is affordable at stage however further planned tranches of capital projects should it become affordable.
- Sufficient cash headroom throughout forecast period. The £5m revolving credit facility (RCF) is not forecast to be drawn.
- The budget has been designed to maximise capital expenditure as much as possible and as a result the banking covenants are tight but manageable. This will be reviewed again at the Q1 reforecast.
- The 19/20 forecast and the 20/21 budget should deliver ESFA Financial Health 'Good' in both years. Significant work to stabilise NCG's financial health remains ongoing however significant progress has been made.

MW further noted that the Q3 forecast is good news, with the Group expecting to come in on budget.

Included within the report, MW took the Board through an update of the 19/20 financial goals, as well as advising on the financial goals, SWOT analysis and key budget assumptions all relating to 20/21.

CR left the meeting.

Governors asked if there was any contingency built into the budget in case income targets are not met. MW confirmed that the numbers within the College Budgets are realistic, however there is contingency included within the Group moderation.

Governors asked if there was a long-term view of the Estates and IT / Technology spend. MW confirmed that whilst the Estates plans were in place, further work was needed to recognise the move to blended learning.

Governors suggested that the investment in technology and Estates looked low for the size of the Group. Governors noted that they would like to see an investment plan linked directly to the newly agreed strategy.

Action: NT to add to October agenda.

Governors reiterated that the strategies feel disjointed, and the investment position does not appear to tie into future planning. LB confirmed that plans have needed to be changed following COVID19 in terms of a blended learning model and this work is ongoing. LB informed the meeting that she was currently looking at the role of Principals and the feasibility of setting business development targets for their college.

Governors asked if surplus stock was sold, if the cash becomes freely available. MW confirmed that it depends on the asset, for example, some assets may have debt security over them, and some college buildings would require the money to be re-invested into the college.

Governors asked if bids needed to be made for the newly announced capital funding allocation. It was confirmed that this was being distributed via a formula, but the formula is not yet known.

The Board approved the budget for 20/21, noted the report, and made specific reference to the following:

- There is no pay uplift included within the budget.
- There is a need to reconnect the strategy with the financial plan.
- The Q1 review which will be reviewed in December 2020 will provide further clarity.
- The Financial Health score forecast for 19/20 and 20/21 is Good.

4.2. Subcontracting Plan 20/21 and Supply Chain Fees & Charges Policy

MW presented the subcontracting plan for 20/21 and the revised Supply Chain Fees & Charges Policy. It was noted that there are plans in place to reduce subcontracting provision gradually.

Governors asked if the plan was consistent with the new guidance, and MW confirmed it was.

Comments made / Questions asked via BoardPacks in advance of the meeting:

- *Governors asked if there is confidence around the 20% covering costs.*

MW confirmed that he believed this to be the case in most cases.

- *Governors queried the strategic aim of eliminating subcontracting as far as possible and suggested that the policy is written from the viewpoint of the supplier rather than the protection of the purchaser (NCG).*
- *Governors asked if there is satisfaction around the contractual performance expectations being rigorous enough within the policy, particularly in view of previous experience with sub-contractors and if NCG were happy to continue to subcontract with the two Red RAG rated suppliers.*

It was confirmed that there has been a further decrease in the reliance on subcontractors by £1m for 20/21 ESFA and there are no Red rated suppliers in the 20/21 plan. The red suppliers relate to the run-down of the 19/20 plan. The colleges have bypassed some of the processes that protect NCG, but there is now a rigorous process in place to avoid that for 20/21.

The Board approved the planned levels of Subcontracting for 20/21 and approved the Supply Chain Fees & Charges Policy.

Action: NT to process policy approval.

4.3. Tender Recommendation Report – Grocery, Frozen & Chilled Foods HE & FE

MW presented the Tender Recommendation Report for the Grocery, Frozen & Chilled Foods for HE and FE, noting the recommendation as follows:

- NCG awards a contract to Bidfood for a contract period of 2 years with options to extend for a further 2 x period of 12 months.

The Board approved the Tender Recommendation

5. Executive Director of Quality – Quality and Performance Report

SW presented the Quality and Performance Report and highlighted the following points (as per the Executive Summary):

- Retention has dipped marginally (from 95.1% to 94%) in the last 3 months.
- Learner engagement monitoring is now drawing to a close as courses complete.
- Achievement reporting will start to increase as certificates are returned from the awarding organisations. We continue to monitor those qualifications that are not in scope for a calculated grade, as they will require adjusted assessment, or in some cases delayed assessment.
- NCG continue to both participate with and monitor the outcome from Ofqual consultations, including arrangements for appeals and exams in autumn 2020.
- Apprenticeships: Predicted rates have slipped by 2%p as a result of COVID and are currently around the national rate for 18/19.
- Calculated grades for English & maths and A level were submitted on time. The GCSE results are unlikely to go unmoderated / unchanged by the awarding organisations.
- Great Place to Teach: communities of practice are now established in Health, English, Maths, Music Performance, Construction, Careers (sport, business, hair and beauty are just starting at time of the report).
- 4 'keep in touch' surveys (two for full time learners and two for apprentices) have yielded statistically significant responses.
- Ofsted have announced plans to conduct some short interim support visits from October, as part of a phased return to inspection. A letter after the 3-day visit will be published without grades or judgements. Inspections are intended to return from January 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-plans-from-september-2020>

The Board noted the report.

6. Items for Approval / Discussion

6.1. Corporation Matters

DB presented the Corporation Matters update and also confirmed an additional paper had been added to the meeting pack following interviews for a further Corporation Board member which took place earlier in the day. The Search Committee held interviews with two applicants and recommended the appointment of JW to the Board.

The Board noted the following:

- Appointment of 5 new Corporation Board Members which had previously been approved outside of the meeting.
- Resignation of the Chair of Carlisle College.
- Resignation of the Chair of Newcastle Sixth Form College.
- Resignation of the Staff Member of Newcastle Sixth Form College.
- Student Member vacancies across the Group (all except NSFC).
- End of Term of the Parent Governor at Newcastle Sixth Form College.
- End of Term of the Interim Chair at Lewisham College.
- End of Term of the Student Governors across the Group (all except NSFC).

The Board approved the following appointments:

- Appointment of Suzanne Crozier as an Independent Member of the Newcastle Sixth Form College.
- Appointment of Emma Stubbs as an Independent Member of the Newcastle Sixth Form College Board for a period of 6 months.
- Appointment of John Widdowson as Independent Governor of the Corporation Board.

Action: NT to process appointments.

6.1.1. Revised Instrument and Articles

DB presented the revised Instrument and Articles, noting that the requirement for a Parent Governor on the Corporation Board had been removed.

The Board approved the revised Instrument and Articles.

Action: NT to update the website.

6.1.2. Governor Risk Assessments

DB confirmed that all new governors undergo a risk assessment in advance of their DBS clearance being received. The risk assessments for the new Corporation Governors were included for information and it was noted that DBS clearance had been received for all.

The Board noted the update.

6.1.3. AOC Code of Good Governance

DB confirmed that the compliance with the AoC Code of Good Governance had been audited and a plan of action points derived from this.

The Chair asked for this to be brought back to the October Corporation meeting, along with updates, to sit alongside the report for the external governance review report from Stone King.

Action: NT to add to October agenda.

The Board noted the update.

6.1.4.

Action: NT to add to October agenda.

The Board noted the update.

6.1.5. Sub-Committee Membership Proposal

DB presented the Sub-committee membership proposal, confirming he had not discussed this with members but made the suggestions following the analysis of the skills audit. DB asked for Committee members to confirm if they would be happy to go with the proposal, and / or suggest other committees they would be interested in sitting on. The Chair confirmed he would be happy to help if there were any queries.

It was agreed that the Board would review the suggested membership, feedback to DB and the membership would be confirmed at the September meeting.

Action: NT to add to September agenda.

The Board noted the update.

6.2.

The Board noted the update.

7. Risk

DB confirmed that the revised risk management process was implemented around 18 months ago. Whilst this had been successful, opportunities for further improvement were noted and a v2 has recently been developed (working alongside West Lancashire and Kidderminster). The revised process has been reviewed by the Local College Boards, and further reviewed by Audit Committee.

The Board approved the revised risk management process.

8. Policies / Annual Reports / Terms of Reference

8.1. Audit Arrangements

8.1.1. Internal Audit Annual Plan

DB presented the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 20/21, confirming that this had been reviewed and approved by Audit Committee.

The Board approved the plan.

8.1.2. Data Assurance Annual Plan

DB presented the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 20/21, confirming that this had been reviewed and approved by Audit Committee.

The Board approved the plan.

8.2. Data Protection Policy

DB presented the refreshed version of the Data Protection Policy, confirming it had been updated as part of the standard policy review process.

The Board approved the Data Protection policy.

Action: NT to process policy approval.

9. Items for Note / Information

9.1. College Board and Committee Minutes

The Board noted the following minutes:

- Audit Committee Minutes - 17th March 2020.
- Audit Committee Minutes - 9th June 2020.
- Carlisle College Board Minutes - 12th May 2020.
- Kidderminster College Board Minutes - 7th May 2020.
- Lewisham College Board Minutes - 12th May 2020.
- Newcastle College Board Minutes - 24th February 2020.
- Newcastle College Board Minutes - 11th May 2020.
- NSF College Board Minutes - 14th May 2020.
- West Lancashire College Board Minutes - 5th February 2020.

Due to COVID, a number of the College Board meetings did not go ahead. Instead, Governors were asked to make comments on the prepared papers. Any decisions which were to be made or any items for approval were deferred to the following meeting. The comments of the Governors were collated and responded to and the notes were produced.

- Carlisle College – Meeting would have taken place on 23rd March 2020.
- Lewisham College – Meeting would have taken place on 31st March 2020.
- NSF College – Meeting would have taken place on 12th March 2020.
- Newcastle College – Meeting would have taken place on 23rd March 2020.
- Kidderminster College – Meeting would have taken place on 2nd April 2020.
- WLC had already had their meeting prior to COVID, and Southwark held their meeting via Teams (minutes included above).

9.2. NCG College and Student Updates

DB presented the NCG College and Student Updates report.

The Board noted the report.

9.3. Information Flows

Not applicable as no information flows were received.

10. Deferred Items

10.1. Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy

DB confirmed that the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy had been deferred to the September Board meeting, due to the changes required following the consultation period.

11. Any Other Business

N/A

12. Date and Time of Next Meeting – 8th September 2020

Signed:

Name:

Date: