

<b>Chair</b>	Rob Hull
<b>Corporation Members</b>	Vivien Bailey OBE, Marilyn Hawkins, Steve Hedges, Gerry McDonald, Cynthia Griffin, Neil Yeomans, Stephen Critoph, Jai Bhakar, Sue Williams
<b>Officers</b>	Deputy CEO: Suri Araniyasundaran Principal Tower Hamlets and Hackney: Alison Arnaud Principal Havering Colleges: Janet Smith Principal Redbridge and Epping Forest: Narzny Khan
<b>Director of Governance</b>	Elsa Wright
<b>Apologies</b>	
<b>Item No</b>	<b>Item of business</b>
	<b>PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS</b>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Chair's Welcome &amp; Opening Remarks</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for joining online. Members were aware that Diana Murray had resigned and the decision had been made to remove Kenye Karemo who had been unable to take up her appointment. There were now three vacancies to fill including one for a qualified accountant.</p> <p><b>1.1 Governor appointments</b> 22 students had applied for the roles advertised across the college. All forms had been anonymised and a shortlist of 7 had been drawn. 5 students had confirmed their interest and had been interviewed by Search committee members. The two recommended candidates were both first year A level students: one from Attlee and the other from Havering. The Board agreed the appointments and the students joined the meeting online with introductions to all Board members.</p> <p><b>Action – The Board agreed the appointment of Labib Aminullah and Lily Sims as student governors for their time as students at NCC</b></p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Apologies for Absences</b> There were no apologies for absence.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Declaration of Interests</b> Members were reminded of the need to declare any interest in any items on the agenda. The CEO confirmed that he had been appointed as a Board member at the ETF which he believed would offer ongoing benefit to the College..</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 4 November 2021</b></p> <p>The minutes were <b>APPROVED</b> with no changes and would be signed as an accurate record of the meeting online.</p> <p><b>ACTION – Minutes to be signed online</b></p>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising and Action Points from the Meeting</b></p> <p>The Corporation noted the action points.</p>

**STRATEGIC MATTERS**

**6&7 Group Principal & CEO's report and KPIs**

The Chair offered congratulations to the whole team at the College for the successful Ofsted visit. The result reflected the work that had been done over an extended period of time with thorough preparation. The CEO thanked the Board. It had been a collaborative process and the inspection team were keen to work with the College. They had come with an open-minded approach looking at how best to inspect such a large merged college. The Regional Director had observed one day and there had been a large number of HMIs with only 3 no HMIs and a number of people shadowing on one or more days.

It was important to note that they had validated the SAR and found it well written and very honest about areas for improvement. Leadership and management was very strong across the college. The College had receive valuable feedback at the final feedback meeting which would not necessarily feature in the final report. This had been fed back in detail to staff as the final report would only be 7 or 8 pages for the whole visit. Some campuses, such as Rainham, had a very intense inspection whereas others saw much less scrutiny. Over time the inspection team had come to understand the matrix and tested how it worked across the College. The College did not expect to be re-inspected before 2025 unless there were a notifiable event such as a further merger or if the CEO left. There was interest from other colleges in understanding the process and senior staff were already being approached about new roles. Governors had met the inspection team at the end of day 3 and the discussion had been very positive. Safeguarding had been found to be effective with praise for the case management and leadership across the merged group.

The CEO confirmed that Covid numbers had been low across the college with 20 staff and 61 students out of college when he wrote his report. This had now increased to 76 staff and 123 students. 72 staff who had tested positive were not showing symptoms. As a result a few curriculum areas such as ESOL at Hackney and performing arts at Redbridge had moved online for the final week of term.

The decision had been made to extend the college closure by an additional day on 4 January. This was a timetabled CPD day but given the Ofsted result it was a way to reward staff for their hard work. SMT would meet on 4 January to review Covid numbers and there was a meeting scheduled with the unions on 5 January to review health and safety.

There had been some helpful amendments made to the Skills Bill in the House of Lords including a one year delay to the BTEC changes. The adult funding rate was unchanged and a small increase was expected in the 16-18 funding rate. There would be more scrutiny of college's relationships with employers. The Board had discussed appeals and the moderation process at an earlier meeting. There had been no national moderation as in normal exam years.

The CEO updated the Board on the KPIs. Recruitment had been a challenge numbers down around 500 with more students staying on at school. This would impact funding in 2022-33. Marketing was key with increase digital methods being used. Recruitment and retention of staff was difficult with around 40 critical vacancies. Some colleges were offering large increases to move which was not good for the sector. Market supplements were being used in areas such as construction where salaries in industry were higher. The Board thanked the CEO for his report.

## **8 Committee Recommendations**

### **8.1 Finance and General Purposes**

The Chair explained that the committee had reviewed the business case for the Ilford site and that there had been detailed discussion about the management accounts and the challenges to keeping to budget. The Health and Safety report had been positive and the committee had heard about the marketing activity over the year. There were two items for approval:

#### **Tottenham contract**

The programme was successful and had grown over the last few years. Janet Smith confirmed that the staff followed NCC safeguarding policies and that any incident or disclosure would be followed through by the safeguarding team. In response to questions, the CEO explained that a recruitment event had been cancelled and that numbers were down slightly. There would be a further recruitment in January and the College was confident that numbers would be achieved.

The Board agreed to the contract as set out in the detailed report.

#### **Action – The Board agreed the contract with Tottenham Hotspur**

#### **Treasury Policy**

There were a couple of minor amendments which had been reviewed by the committee. There were greater freedoms in terms of investment but there were investment limits and institutional restrictions with a limit of £5m with one counterparty. It was agreed that the policy should be kept under review by the F&GP committee. The amendments were agreed.

#### **Action – The Board agreed the amendments to the policy and the committee would keep the policy under review.**

Governors asked whether there should be a specific governor with responsibility for Health and Safety. The committee would reflect on this.

### **8.2. Audit**

The Chair of Audit reminded the Board that it was being asked to approve the financial statements, approve the Chair to sign the governors report and governance statements, to approve the letters of representation and to confirm that all the relevant details had been disclosed to the auditors.

Katharine Patel from Buzzacott joined the meeting online.

This was the first year as external auditor. The process had run smoothly and followed the code of practice. Page 2 of the report set out the overall opinions on the financial statements and on regularity which was an ESFA requirement, confirming that funding was spent in accordance with the rules. Page 4 and appendix 3 confirmed that the college was in good financial health. Page 6 detailed the Corporation's responsibility to confirm that the College was a going concern, defined as being solvent for at least 12 months from the date of signature with adequate cash flow.

Governors asked how NCC compared with other colleges that Buzzacott audited. The post audit report was good with only a couple of housekeeping points. The adjustments identified were minimal. The letters of representation followed a standard format and were tailored to the college's accounting estimate. The board agreed that this was a positive outcome and agreed to the recommendations of the committee. The Board noted the annual report of the committee setting out the work of the committee and the internal audit processes which were in line with the audit code of practice.

#### **The Corporation hereby resolved to approve the Financial Statements and Accounts for the NCC Corporation for 2020/21**

**The Corporation hereby resolved to endorse the Annual report of the Audit Committee and note the Internal Audit Annual Report**

**The Corporation hereby resolved to approve the letter of representation to be signed by the Chair and CEO.**

The Whistleblowing policy had been reviewed against good practice in the sector. The Board agreed to the committee's recommendation to adopt the policy. The Director of Governance would check the word missing from 1.2

**Action – The Board agreed the policy with the revision as noted.**

It was noted that there had been £2m COVID costs and a decrease in income but the College had worked hard to target break even. There was a strong cash balance and financial strength. The Board thanked the team for their work in a difficult and changing year. The College was in a strong position. The accounts would be published in the new year. It was noted that the trading subsidiaries were making a loss but there were plans in place to improve this situation during the course of the year.

### **8.3 Curriculum, Quality and Students committee**

The committee had signed off the SAR just before the inspection and this had formed the basis of the inspection. As the Board had heard earlier in the meeting, the inspection team had agreed with the assessment and that it was a useful and honest document written with integrity. The Board formally agreed the document. The Chair of the committee thanked Janet Smith and the Quality Team for their ongoing work which provided the committee with assurance about the strong procedures in place.

**Action – The Board formally agreed the SAR for 2020-21**

The QIP set out the new plan for 2021-22 including KPIS and targets to reduce variance between the campuses. Janet Smith explained that the final report from Ofsted would be reviewed and any additional areas identified would be added to the QIP. The Quality team had reviewed the detailed feedback from the week and key themes would be incorporated in the new year.

**Agreed – The Board agreed the QIP for 2021-22**

The Chair updated the Board on the start of year survey on student opinions with students feeling safer and satisfaction improving. The committee had received an update on subcontracting and apprenticeships including quality assurance. The inspection team had touched on this with governors. Safeguarding arrangements were good. There had also been an update on HE provision.

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## **Committee Recommendations**

### **9.1 Finance and General Purposes Committee**

There were a number of reports to note from the committee which were all included in the document folder for the meeting. The management accounts for Q1 identified two challenges: fee income and HE income. The Deputy CEO was confident that they were manageable and that breakeven could be achieved. At the November meeting, the Board had remitted the committee to agree the details on the Ilford lease. Temporary occupation had been agreed from 17 January with the final lease to be agreed for work to begin in March or April.

The Health and Safety specialist inspections were now back on track with a specialist firm supporting the internal team. There were no RIDDOR incidents and all incidents

	<p>were reviewed with the curriculum teams and safeguarding teams, where appropriate.</p> <p><b>9.2 Property Committee</b></p> <p>The committee had met earlier in the week with an update on the Poplar development. Work on the Green Strategy was taking shape with the current carbon footprint now established. There would be short term aims to bring this down and longer term projects to reduce the College's dependence on gas. The College wanted to be ambitious but changes such as stopping the sale of bottled water had led to a kickback from students and the college caterer. Further work on individual campuses would continue and there had been an offer from LBTH to install a heat pump at Attlee. The Deputy CEO confirmed, in response to questions, that the college had moved to a green supplier but there was more the College could do with funding.</p> <p><b>9.3 Search Committee</b></p> <p>The Search committee had not met since the last Board. They were awaiting the final guidance on board evaluation before making a proposal for the review. A research report by the DFE on school and college board meetings had been published looking at how online and hybrid meetings could be managed and this had been shared with the committee Chair.</p>
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>10.1 Written resolutions</b></p> <p>The Director of Governance reported that the appointments to the Havering Board had been approved by written resolution with 9 members agreeing the proposal.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the students for their participation in the meeting and hoped that the next meeting would be in person.</p>
<b>11</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>The next Corporation meeting would be on 31 March 2022</p>

Signed.....

Dated.....