

East Coast College Corporation Meeting 12th January 2021 9am Video/telephone Conference

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| Present: | Roger Cracknell (RC) Albert Cadmore (AC) Mike Dowdall (MD) Tina Ellis (TE) Rob Evans (RE) Jane Fermor (JF) Gemma Head (GH) David Hill (DH) Peter Lavender (PL) David Blake (DB) Giles Kerkham (GK) Saul Humphrey (SH) Lucy Pryor (LP) and Stuart Rimmer (CEO/Principal) |
| In attendance: | Wendy Stanger (Director of Governance) Urmila Rasan (Deputy Chief Executive) Ann Wall (Director of People and Wellbeing) and for the presentations Rachel Bunn (Assistant Principal – Apprenticeships and Employer Engagement) Kerry Payne (Assistant Principal Higher Education and Access) Adri Van der Colff (Project Manager) and Paul Warmington (Energy Skills Development Manager Suffolk County Council) |
| ECC/21/01/1 Apologies and membership | |
| Action | |
| <p>Apologies Apologies were received from Alan Debenham (AD) and Debbie Pring (DP)</p> <p>Membership Alan Debenham (AD) Tina Ellis (TE) Rob Evans (Chair - RE) David Hill (DH) Stuart Rimmer (CEO & Principal - SR) Saul Humphrey (SH) Albert Cadmore (AC) Debbie Pring (DP) Jane Fermor (JF) Peter Lavender (PL) Roger Cracknell (RC) Andrew Timberlake (AT) Gemma Head (GH) Mike Dowdall (MC) Giles Kerkham (GK) David Blake (DB) Lucy Pryor (LP)</p> | |
| ECC/21/01/2 | Declarations of Interest |
| <p>There were the following declarations of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Dowdall as an employee of the LEP • Stuart Rimmer, Jane Fermor, Wendy Stanger and Ann Wall in relation to agenda item 13 <p>It was agreed that this declarations did not preclude full participation in the meeting.</p> | |
| ECC/21/01/3 | Strategic Update Presentation |
| <p>The Principal gave a brief presentation on the main strategic items facing the College.</p> <p>The strategic areas were discussed and it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategic developments would require management capacity • Pay as a % of income was high and needed review • A leadership review was required in order to ensure that high quality could be delivered for the resource invested and that we had the right people in the right posts • Curriculum planning was not planning growth and this had implications for financial planning | |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T level development was ongoing and would require resourcing • Strategic Options Review would require resourcing for the feasibility studies to be produced • The capital refresh required completion by end of March 21. Planning permission applied for to move the entrance at the GY campus • Financial forecasting has been reviewed due to the lockdown • Guidance awaited for delayed and adapted assessments • Improvement in Apprenticeship provision must continue <p>Governors challenged how the move to virtual learning had progressed. The Principal advised that the move had been a lot smoother than the previous lock down. However, there remained concerns about digital poverty and the quality of the offer. Quality had not progressed since the Ofsted inspection and in some areas had eroded due to virtual learning. There was a need to achieve a structured and higher standard of digital learning.</p> | | |
| <p>ECC/21/01/4</p> | <p>EDF Approach Presentation</p> | |
| <p>The Assistant Principal – Apprenticeships and Employer Engagement, and the Energy Skills Development Manager Suffolk County Council both gave a presentation on Sizewell C and working with EDF. This updated the Board on the project timeline, skills opportunities, desired outcomes and the potential and opportunities for ECC.</p> <p>Governors noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and training needed to be timely • Training had to have an impact • Skills and training needed to also service the supply chain and contractors • There was a need to increase the College’s STEM work and link it to the job opportunities • The curriculum offer and the skills and resources analysis was being based on that required at Hinckley • The College needed to work closely with the skills lead to shape the skills structure required and identify the gaps • There was a need for jobs to have a legacy after the project was complete • There was a need to ensure that apprenticeships completed even if the project had ended • The College needed to continue skills pipeline model for FE students • Project specific courses to be paid for by the project • Energy White Paper included the commitment to one major nuclear power station • Wider opportunities for the College in energy such as heat pumps development and offshore infrastructure • There was a need to ensure Governance oversight over the project <p>Governors challenged what the main obstacles were to success. The Assistant Principal advised that this was ensuring that current staff were fully trained and new</p> | | |

specialist staff recruited to ensure a high quality offer and that forward investment planned.

Governors challenged if local jobs were guaranteed. The Energy Skills Development Manager advised that work was ongoing to understand the job roles required and the gaps that needed filling. The funding model for Sizewell was likely to include significant government funding and this would increase the ties in for skills and jobs. The Assistant Principal advised that the College needed to plan master classes that would give the students the best chance of securing jobs.

PL left the meeting

ECC/21/01/5 **GY HE Centre Presentation**

The Project Manager gave a presentation supported by the Assistant Principal HE. This included an update on the project aims, partners, stakeholder engagement, governance, business case, costs and funding, risks and curriculum offer.

Governors noted that:

- The HE centre was part of a wider regeneration of Great Yarmouth
- The project was a Higher Education Learning Centre and new library
- Aim was to increase HE participation and to provide basic skills for adults
- Skills and jobs would help regenerate Great Yarmouth
- Partnership project overseen by the GY Place Board
- Community project so key that stakeholders involved
- Funding has not yet been secured
- The curriculum proposed was being informed by labour market research
- There may be tension around who provides the adult education provision and this would need to be resolved
- HE Centre and IOT curriculum offer linked

Governors challenged what the main risks to the project were. The Project Manager advised that this was securing the funding. To mitigate other funding sources being explored. There was also the risk that the proposed building would not be secured. To mitigate this alternative buildings being considered.

Governors challenged if the project had national political support. The Project Manager advised that the local MP was supporting.

Governors challenged if the College was incurring financial risk in developing the project. The Project Manager advised that there was no cost liability. The Norfolk Strategic Fund had funded the feasibility study.

Governors challenged if the HE offer would remove provision from the GY Campus. The Principal advised that HE curriculum would move to the proposed HE Centre, a lot of this provision currently used poor accommodation. This accommodation to be considered as part of the re-configuring of the GY campus.

Governors challenged who would own the building. The Principal advised that GY Borough Council were purchasing but ownership would need to be considered as this could affect ability to secure funding.

Governors commented that there was a need to promote the College's key role in the project and it was disappointing that the first press launch did not include ECC.

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| ECC/21/01/6 | IOT Update Presentation | |
| <p>The Assistant Principal HE presented an update on the New Anglia IOT. This included partners, area covered, business case, governance, funding, stakeholders, curriculum offer and risks.</p> <p>Governors noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 bid submitted if this is successful move to stage 2 where more detailed decisions would be required • Stage 2 would require a more formalised structure • Ownership of the proposed limited company will need to be determined • Risk of not receiving the required nuclear accreditation • Risk of not achieving the student numbers • Curriculum offer would link to the proposed HE Centre, GY Kier for engineering, Lound for civil engineering, Energy Centre for maritime and clean energy and to L6FC for science and business/computing. <p>Governors challenged if ECC would be paying increased transactional costs. The Principal advised that it had not yet been quantified but would need to be considered against the capital dowry.</p> <p>Governors challenged if the College had the teaching base for the provision. The Principal advised that staff would need recruiting; for successful recruitment, it is likely that the College would need to reassess its pay structure and contracts. The Director of People and Wellbeing was looking at this.</p> <p>The Chair commented that all the presentations had a common theme of financial and human capacity and this was without considering the implications of the Strategic Options Review.</p> <p>Governor agreed the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on management capacity <p>The Assistant Principals, Project Manager, and Energy Skills Development Manager left the meeting.</p> | | SR |
| ECC/21/01/7 | To approve the Minutes of the meeting 15 12 20 and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the Agenda | |
| <p>The minutes for the Corporation meeting minutes of 15 12 20 agreed as a true record of the meeting.</p> | | |
| ECC/21/01/8 | Rolling Action Log | |
| <p>The rolling action log was noted and no queries were raised.</p> | | |

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| ECC/21/01/9 | Principal's Report - Covid Update | |
| ECC/21/01/9.1 | Covid Data Update | |
| ECC/21/01/10 | Risk Register - Covid | |
| <p>The Principal presented the update and advised that a Covid Test site was being set up on both GY and Lowestoft Campuses and referred to the lateral flow risk register and action plan. The College was fully online which, as a minimum would continue to the February half term. The College needed to consider which curriculum areas were a priority to return to site and how this would be phased.</p> <p>Governors challenged if the lateral flow tests were voluntary. The Principal advised that they were voluntary and were self-administered.</p> <p>Governors discussed staff morale and agreed that this needed monitoring. The Principal advised that it was too early to tell how the latest lockdown was affecting staff. Support materials to support wellbeing have been shared with staff and regular pulse surveys will be carried out to assess morale. HR is supporting all staff identified as being vulnerable.</p> <p>Governors noted the Covid Data update and the Covid Risk Register. No queries were raised.</p> <p>Governors noted the report and agreed that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards Committee review the quality of online provision and student wellbeing • Finance and General Purposes Committee Corporation review the financial implication of the lockdown, Covid and testing costs together with the related health and safety implications and that • People Committee review online provision in relation to staff performance and staff wellbeing. | | |
| ECC/21/01/11 | Management Accounts - November 20 | |
| <p>The Management Accounts were noted and no queries were raised.</p> | | |
| ECC/21/01/12 | College Financial Forecast January 21 | |
| <p>The Deputy Chief Exec presented the forecast, which used as a base the November management accounts and reviewed the financial effect of covid and the current lockdown. This forecast would be shared with the Bank and ESFA. The forecast included an analysis of effect by income line and the mitigation being taken together with the effect on pay and non-pay expenditure.</p> <p>Governors discussed the forecast by income line.</p> <p>Governors challenged if staff were being furloughed. The Deputy Chief Exec advised that the College is currently reviewing posts that could be furloughed. The current furlough scheme is not as generous and the College will still bear 20% of basic pay and 100% of on-cost. Canteen staff furloughed as the provision shut.</p> <p>Governors challenged if ECETA was able to provide commercial courses during lockdown. The Principal advised that the courses provided were those essential ones that provided a legal ticket to work.</p> <p>Governors challenged if the covenants would be met. The Deputy Chief Exec</p> | | |

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| <p>advised that discussions were ongoing with the bank over the covenant calculations.</p> <p>Governors challenged if the forecast was the worst-case scenario. The Deputy Chief Exec advised it was the worst case based on the current knowns but if lockdown continued or was tightened there would be additional detrimental effects.</p> <p>Governors noted their concerns about the financial position. There were significant uncertainties and risks that required careful stewardship.</p> <p>SH left the meeting.</p> | | |
| <p>CC/21/01/13</p> | <p>Confidential until released</p> <p>Pay Review</p> | |
| <p>The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the revised pay review paper, updated to reflect the current financial position. The Senior Team were not recommending an overall pay rise but instead were recommending an increase for those on the lower pay band to move them to the living wage.</p> <p>The Corporation noted that the Chair of the People Committee supported the recommendations of the pay review paper. He remained concerned about the College's pay strategy and this would be considered at February's People Committee.</p> <p>The Chair of Finance and General Purposes commented that he did not support option 3 due to business reasons and would prefer to use the resources available to increase lecturer pay (Option 4).</p> <p>Governors discussed the business perspective of increasing pay at the lower end when the posts were easy to recruit to. The Principal advised that staff at the bottom of the scales were visiting food banks and had inadequate facilities to work at home.</p> <p>Governors challenged what pay provision had been provided for in the budget. The Principal advised that a 1% provision had been allowed for but the financial position had worsened as set out in the Financial Forecast.</p> <p>Governors considered each option set out in the pay review paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1 A guaranteed pay award of 1% - not agreed • Option 2 No pay award at all – not agreed • Option 3 Pay award to lower paid - agreed • Option 4 FE lecturers scales increased – not agreed • Option 5 Recruit new starters to fixed points – not agreed • Option 6 Consult on freezing increment progression – not agreed • Option 7 Make no change to the incremental pay progression currently offered – agreed • Option 8 The SFCA cost of living will continue to be applied – agreed as a contractual obligation. <p>Governors agreed the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to the Unions from the Corporation setting out the pay review outcome. • Financial forecast to be revised to reflect the pay review • Curriculum plan to identify savings. It was essential that the plan | | <p>Chair</p> <p>UR</p> |

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| | <p>encouraged and delivered improved efficiency through larger class sizes, less groups and higher contribution.</p> <p>The Corporation resolved that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 3 be adopted from 1st January 2020 (and backdated as required) as this moves us in the direction of the 10 year strategic plan. Staff at the lower end of the pay scales would be moved onto the National Living Wage. This is also in line with the AoC direction of travel. This will increase the costs of increments (by £20k) in year but this increase will remain static as staff will be at top of scale for subsequent years. With on costs £50k • option 7 regarding no change to increments is adopted as at this time it may be significantly disruptive to staff morale to make changes to this current term. • option 8 is adopted. The overall sixth form pay bill is currently unsustainable and the uncertainty of the SFCA annual pay increases may lead to forced restructuring/headcount reductions if a sustainable pay envelope is not achieved. With on costs £50k | PP |
| ECC/21/01/14 | Review of Meeting | |
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confidential Items – items 13 until pay review announced 2. Risk Management: any issues discussed which may require an additional Assessment – as noted. 3. Equality & Diversity: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment – no additions 4. Health & Safety: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment – Covid H&S to be considered by F&GP. 5. Media: any issues discussed to inform local media – none 6. How did the meeting go – Good discussions of detailed reports. | |