

Approved Minutes

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FE CORPORATION

Held on Friday 19th May 2023, at 10.15 am in the Skills Park and via Teams

Present: Chris Muller (Chair), Nick Vaughan-Barratt (Vice-Chair), Julie Kapsalis (CEO/Principal), Martin Butterfield, Angela Cross-Durrant, Simon Enoch, Felicity Fletcher, Nadine Guy, Charley Johnson, Margaret Martin, Asa’ah Nkohkwo, Lynn Reddick.

In Attendance: Andy Cowan (Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality), George Jenkins (Chief Finance Officer), Donna Patterson (Assistant Principal HR & OD), Dario Stevens (Deputy Principal Planning & Information), Susanne Wicks (Head of Governance), Sean Ahearne (Governor Designate), Jeremy Williams (Governor Designate), Louise Punter (Chief Executive, Surrey Chambers of Commerce).

22.61	Welcome and Apologies for Absence
	The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Apologies for absence were received from Paul Ford, James Knowles and Sylvia Ofei-Kwatia.
22.62	Declarations of Interest
	The CEO/Principal declared that she is an unremunerated Director of Nescot Enterprises Ltd. (NEL).
22.63	Presentation on the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for Surrey
	On behalf of all present, the Chair and CEO/Principal thanked Louise Punter (Chief Executive, Surrey Chambers of Commerce) for attending the meeting. Louise Punter delivered a presentation on the LSIP for Surrey. Her PowerPoint presentation is available on GovernorHub and covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nescot’s region = “EM3 + Rest of Surrey”. • What are Local Strategic Improvement Plans (LSIPs)? • The partnership approach to LSIPs. • Why LSIPs matter to Colleges. • Methods of engagement with employers. • Insights emerging from consultation with employers. • Key sectors and cross-cutting skills needed in the EM3 + rest of Surrey area. • An overview of the draft priorities for change. And she made the following key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Surrey Chambers of Commerce is relatively small, so collaboration and partnership with many other organisations was key in drafting the LSIP, but

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this was supported by positive and well-developed relationships already in place.

- One of the aims has been to articulate employer needs in the region, but it's recognised that they will change.
- The LSIP feeds into the Accountability Statement, and how a provider meets local skills needs now forms part of the Ofsted Inspection Framework.
- There will be opportunities to bid for funding, which Nescot can do as part of a group of providers, hopefully with support from the Surrey Chambers of Commerce.
- The data emerging from consultation with employers was collected through a range of methods, including deep dives carried out by researchers. All key sectors were covered and a lot of qualitative data was collected.
- The 'green' skills agenda is very strong and becoming increasingly so.

Survey Insights

- A common theme was barriers to engagement. It was clear that shorter and modular courses would be welcomed.
- 82% of employers surveyed were already or planning to take on apprentices.
- The challenge in finding the relevant information about available learning came up quite a lot.

Key Sectors and Cross-cutting Skills

- There is no dominant sector in the region but those included in the slides are important in terms of contribution to GDP and employee numbers.
- Sales, Marketing and Business Development skills are in high demand across all sectors.
- Data Analysis skills are becoming increasingly in-demand by employers.

Summary

- Colleges are encouraged to collaborate with other providers and stakeholders as much as possible to identify and share best practice.
- Real innovation can happen when colleges come together. There is enough demand for all colleges in the region to thrive, and the demand will increase as time goes on.

Louise Punter and the CEO/Principal welcomed comments and questions.

The Deputy Principal Planning & Information advised that colleges can find it challenging to offer the courses that employers want due to lack of take-up by learners, but this could be mitigated by collaboration across colleges to achieve economies of scale. The Innovation Fund for Adults, which should be introduced

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next year, will enable them to offer smaller, shorter courses. Louise Punter advised that throughout the consultation it has emerged that there is real opportunity for growth in older learners.

The Vice-Chair asked if all colleges in the region are as keen to collaborate as Nescot. Louise Punter responded that this is a very positive region in that regard and commended the work done by the CEO/Principal in bringing colleagues together. The CEO/Principal advised that colleges in Surrey are working together more than ever, with the Principals of Nescot, East Surrey, Guildford and Brooklands Colleges meeting and communicating regularly.

The Chair noted that the presentation raised some issues meriting further investigating, such as the demand for numeracy, as opposed to maths, and barriers to training. Louise Punter advised that employers are prepared to invest time and money in staff training, but feedback suggests that they want to be able to find the information about what's on offer quickly and easily. An employer seeking a training solution may not be aware of Nescot so would not think to look on the website; one of the suggested ways to mitigate this is via the creation of a business portal, with all of the separate colleges' information in one place

The CEO/Principal agreed that sales and marketing of the offer is key and acknowledged that Nescot is often associated with 16-19 provision and may not be considered by an employer seeking training for their workforce. She agreed that the market is large enough to accommodate all colleges in the region and it may be worth exploring the development of a joint sales and marketing function across a number of colleges.

MM asked about the size of the businesses surveyed and Louise Punter explained that there were a few sole traders, some larger companies (e.g. Taylor Wimpey) but most have between 10-100 employees. MM suggested that small businesses may find it challenging to release staff for learning and development and Louise Punter pointed out that in small business, staff often cover multiple roles, so training is even more critical.

ACD observed that adults are more likely than younger people to have already developed some of the cross-cutting skills identified and asked if any colleges have already identified within their region where one provider is better placed to offer a specific course, rather than all of the colleges trying to offer all of those in demand. Louise Punter advised that this is part of the recommended collaboration and suggested that offering some training in Sales would be a very good place to start given the high demand for those skills in the workplace.

LR asked how much consideration had been given to people with SEND and those studying up to Level 3. Louise Punter reassured her that there was no intention to focus on any particular level of learning, and from the outset, the project looked at the data around hidden pools of labour (such as neurodiverse people, returners to work, and those with disabilities) and it is clear that there are people who could be working. However, she agreed that this issue must be addressed and employers must be better informed about the support available to them when looking to recruit those who may find it more challenging to seek and gain employment.

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	The Chair thanked Louise Punter for her engaging and useful presentation.
22.64	Accountability Statement
	<p>The CEO/Principal presented the final draft of the Accountability Statement which was shared prior to the meeting for review and comment. She acknowledged that the deadline for submission set by central Government was challenging due to the parallel development of the LSIP, but confirmed that the findings of the LSIP had informed the Statement as some information had been shared early.</p> <p>The CEO/Principal advised that the draft had been informed by the versions shared by those colleges that participated in the pilot project and that she had shared it with counterparts in other colleges in Surrey and the Principal of West Thames College, due to Nescot's proximity to South London.</p> <p>In line with DfE guidance, the Statement includes some objectives for the coming year, but they are SMART and achievable and will develop further in future years, drawing on the data available to set appropriate challenge.</p> <p>ACD commended the document as easy to follow and comprehensive.</p> <p>The Chair asked when the Statement would be reviewed again and the CEO/Principal confirmed it would be reviewed and updated each year. She highlighted the need to ensure that Governors review progress on objectives, which will be built into the work of committees.</p> <p>Governors approved the Accountability Statement for submission to the DfE by 31st May 2023.</p> <p>Governors thanked Louise Punter, who left the meeting at this point.</p>
22.65	Workshop on Nescot Strategic Plan
	<p>The Chair encouraged Governors to focus on the learners when thinking about the mission, vision, values and Strategic Plan, all of which form part of the culture of Nescot.</p> <p>Prior to the workshop, the CEO/Principal delivered a short presentation and the PowerPoint slides are available on GovernorHub.</p> <p>The CEO/Principal advised Governors that the final version of the Strategic Plan would be presented for their approval on 7th July, but encouraged them to scrutinise and challenge the proposed objectives and KPIs. She reminded the Corporation that the current Strategic Plan was drafted in 2020 and a lot has changed since then. She set out the context to the revised Plan and described some of the current and future challenges facing Nescot and the sector generally.</p> <p><u>Vision</u></p> <p>Governors discussed the suggested Vision in depth:</p> <p><i>To be the local College of choice that enables every learner to achieve their goals</i></p> <p>Comments included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the word 'learner' or 'student' be used?

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should it be ‘maximise their potential’ which goes beyond achieving their goals as they may not see the extent of their potential. • Could we say ‘empower’ rather than ‘enable’? • Should we say something about instilling self-belief? • Shall we remove the word ‘local’? <p><u>Mission</u></p> <p>Governors discussed the suggestion Mission in depth:</p> <p><i>Place the learner at the heart of everything we do</i></p> <p><i>Serve our local Community</i></p> <p>Comments included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we need to focus on employability? Is that implied in the ‘local community’? • Should we say ‘local and regional’? • Do we need to say ‘local’ community? <p><u>Values</u></p> <p>The CEO/Principal advised that the proposed Values were in evidence every day at Nescot and had been tested by Ofsted. They have been discussed at every staff briefing since the start of the academic year with no negative feedback received. The Deputy Principal Planning & Information suggested that future Staff Awards could include an award for each Value.</p> <p><u>Strategic Plan</u></p> <p>At this point, Governors broke into three groups to consider the Strategic Plan in depth and provide comments on feedback.</p> <p>After the workshop session, the Head of Governance set out plans to share a draft Scheme of Delegation with the Search & Governance Committee prior to presenting it to the Corporation on 7th July 2023.</p> <p>Governors approved the suggested Values.</p> <p>The CEO/Principal undertook to revise the Mission and Vision in the light of the comments made.</p> <p>The CEO/Principal and ELT colleagues undertook to amend the draft Strategic Plan in the light of comments made during the workshop session and bring the final version to Corporation for approval on 7th July 2023.</p>
22.66	Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising
	The Corporation approved the minutes of the meeting held on 31 st March 2023.
22.67	Governance Matters Sean Ahearn and Jeremy Williams left the meeting at this point.

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	(i) <u>Membership</u>
a	Noting the recommendation from the Search & Governance Committee, the Corporation agreed to appoint Sean Ahearne and Jeremy Williams for a two-year term commencing 20 th May 2023.
b	Martin Butterfield, Angela Cross-Durrant and Asa'ah Nkohkwo left the meeting for this item. Noting the recommendation from the Search & Governance Committee, the Corporation agreed to re-appoint Martin Butterfield, Angela Cross-Durrant and Asa'ah Nkohkwo for a four-year term commencing 28 th May 2023.
	(ii) <u>Corporation Calendar of Meetings 2023-24</u>
	The Corporation approved the draft calendar of meetings. The Chair noted that there has been very positive rates of attendance at this year's meetings and encouraged Governors to continue this.
22.68	Date and Time of Next Meeting
	Friday 7 th July 2023.
22.69	Confidential Items
	Discussion of confidential matters is contained within a separate minute.

The meeting closed at 12 pm.

Decisions:

The Corporation:

- Approved the Accountability Statement for submission to the DfE by 31st May 2023.
- Approved the suggested Values.
- Appointed Sean Ahearne and Jeremy Williams for a two-year term commencing 20th May 2023.
- Re-appointed Martin Butterfield, Angela Cross-Durrant and Asa'ah Nkohkwo for a four-year term commencing 28th May 2023.
- Approved the calendar of meetings for 2023-24.

Actions:

- The CEO/Principal to revise the Mission and Vision in the light of the comments made by Governors.
- The CEO/Principal and ELT colleagues undertook to amend the draft Strategic Plan in the light of comments made during the workshop session and bring the final version to Corporation for approval on 7th July 2023.



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- The Head of Governance to share a draft Scheme of Delegation with the Search & Governance Committee (by email) prior to presenting it to the Corporation on 7th July 2023.