**The Corporation of Newham Sixth Form College**

**Minutes of the Special Meeting held on 13 September 2023**

**Members**

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| Martin Rosner(Chair) | Independent Member | Present |
| Chris Foloruso | Independent Member | Present |
| Mandeep Gill | Principal & Chief Executive | Present |
| Kofo Ladele | Independent Member | Apologies – work commitments |
| Jane Lofthouse | Independent Member | Present |
| Ebby Maps | Parent Member | Present |
| Avnesh Pandya | Independent Member | Present |
| Mandeep Sahotay | Independent Member | Present |
| Elizabeth Scott | Independent Member | Present |
| Julia Shelton | Independent Member | Present |
| Kate Towner | Independent Member | Present |
| Federico Valori | Independent Member | Apologies – work commitments |
| Yolanda Valery | Independent Member | Apologies – work commitments |
| Graham Willson | Independent Member | Present |

**Non-Members in attendance**

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| Robin Jones | Head of Governance | Present |
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**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Corporation NOTED that the majority of Members were present on this occasion from the beginning and the meeting was quorate.

Three Members were not able to join the meeting arranged at short notice due to the urgency of the main matter to be considered due to work commitments:

* Kofo Ladele
* Federico Valori
* Yolanda Valery

**2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Members confirmed that there were no declarations of interest to be recorded on this occasion at this stage of the meeting based on the published Agenda.

**3 PURPOSE OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CORPORATION**

The Chair welcomed all those present to this Special Meeting of the Corporation and thanked them for making the time to attend at short notice.

Members were reminded that at the meeting of the Corporation on 12 July 2023 it had been agreed to proceed with the SPA and, therefore, possible merger discussions unless the NEU ballot about to take place did not result in a vote for strike action or if it was voided. As reported subsequently to Members on 17 July 2023 the outcome of the then latest NEU ballot resulted in a vote for strike action.

The Chair of the Corporation then asked the Principal and Chief Executive on recent discussions with NEU which was why this Special Meeting of the Corporation had been called so that the future approach of the Corporation to the SPA and a possible merger could be discussed and agreed.

**4**  **STRUCTURE AND PROSPECTS REVIEW**

The Principal & Chief Executive outlined the recent discussions with NEU and the willingness to sign an Agreement which would end the industrial action on condition that the College would take certain actions which were all possible from the College perspective subject to the Corporation ending the SPA and merger discussions.

The Corporation agreed after discussion:

1. To APPROVE unanimously the Agreement with NEU as set out in the document produced after discussions between ACAS, NEU and representatives of the College SLT meaning that the industrial action by NEU would end with immediate effect and the College and NEU each acknowledges that the dispute is resolved
2. That the Chair, on behalf of the Corporation, would write to the FE Commissioner to advise of the agreement with NEU and that it was the wish of the Corporation to stop the SPA and merger discussions meaning that the interviews with potential merger partners would not take place.

**5 VICE PRINCIPAL CURRICULUM & QUALITY**

The Corporation APPROVED the recommendation that, given the decision taken immediately before with regard to stopping the SPA and merger discussions, it was appropriate to progress the national recruitment for the Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality.

**6 COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT – 2022/23**

The Principal & Chief Executive took the opportunity of the Special Meeting of the Corporation to provide Members with early notice of the work being undertaken on the College Self-Assessment for 2022/23 and the associated Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2023/24. Whilst these would be major items for consideration later in the term (ie Curriculum, Quality & Engagement Committee on 16 November 2023 and Corporation on 13 December 2023 plus some coverage at the Planning & Development Session on 18 November 2023) it was apparent, based on recent student achievement, that the College might grade itself as a 4 “Inadequate” based on the Inspection Framework used by Ofsted.

Members asked for clarity as the grades used by Ofsted as set out in the Inspection Framework and the Principal & Chief Executive explained as follows:

* Grade 1 – Outstanding
* Grade 2 – Good
* Grade 3 – Requires Improvement
* Grade 4 – Inadequate

In response to questions from Members the Principal & Chief Executive confirmed that the possible 4 or “Inadequate” was based on more factors than student achievement which was around 10% below the national averages with poor attendance, punctuality and behavioural issues also being of fundamental importance when viewing the overall performance of NewVIc at the present.

Members asked for what was being done by the College in response to the current disappointing situation which could be attributed, at least in part but possibly in whole, to the industrial action by members of the NEU over the last 2 years and, in particular, during 2022/23. A focus for the College had been on providing catch up classes and revision workshops but attendance had been low. A key statistic to be taken into account was that many students had lost 22% of their learning time in 2022/23 due to the industrial action and for many students this was a crucial factor in their end of year performance.

Looking to the future and the need to see improvements the Principal & Chief Executive reported that induction in the current year just underway went well and to set the scene for what was expected attendance warnings have already started to be given to students and parents/carers.

A crucial factor was recognised to be the morale of staff. In the view of the Principal & Chief Executive he believed that there had already been a recent shift in how staff felt about the College and, of course, it was important to recommend that there were a large number of staff who had not supported the industrial action by NEU including some members of NEU. This was evidenced by 102 members of staff signing a petition calling on the NEU to end the industrial action.

The Corporation agreed after a wide ranging discussion on the College Self-Assessment Report for 2022/23 and related matters:

1. To NOTE the view of the College SLT, as explained by the Principal & Chief Executive, that it was possible that the College could Self Assess as being “Inadequate” based on the initial consideration of the College SAR and the provisions of the Inspection Framework
2. To recognise that, whilst it would be possible to put forward an argument to say that the College “Required Improvement” (ie a Grade 3 and not 4), it was thought that it was important to be honest and transparent in such an important assessment of the current performance and position of the College
3. To look forward to receiving and discussing via the Curriculum, Quality & Engagement Committee the College Self-Assessment Report for 2022/23 and the Quality Improvement Plan for 2023/24 plus other appropriate reports addressing student and staff views and performance
4. To note the intention to have a wide ranging discussion at the forthcoming Planning & Development Session on what was being done and needed to be done to provide a high quality student experience with a staff that was happy and hopefully proud to work at NewVIc.

**7 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS – 2023/24**

The Corporation NOTED the dates of the planned meetings to take place in 2023/24:

* Wednesday 11 October 2023
* Wednesday 13 December 2023
* Wednesday 27 March 2024
* Wednesday 10 July 2024

At this time it is planned to start meetings at 5.45pm.

It was recognised that other meetings will be arranged if and when thought to be appropriate to address issues.

The intention was for the meetings to be held in College but with an opportunity for Members to join online if they wished.

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