

West Lothian College

18 September 2018

Board of Governors

Minute of Meeting of the Board Governors held on **Tuesday 19 June 2018** at 4.30pm in the Barbour Suite.

Present: Alex Linkston (Chair)
Sue Cook
Mhairi Harrington
Graham Hope
Morag McKelvie
Simon Ashpool
Frank Gribben
Norman Ross
Lorna Reid
Richard Lockhart
Iain McIntosh
Colin Miller
Moiria Niven
Alan Morton

In attendance: Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise)
George Hotchkiss (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning)
Jennifer McLaren (Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services)
Jackie Galbraith (Observer)
Michelle Low (Observer)
Gemma Reynolds (Observer)
Karine McNair (Board Secretary)

18.18 Welcome/Apologies

The Chair welcomed Jackie Galbraith who was here to observe the meeting of the Board of Governors in advance of her taking up the post of Principal of the College.

The Chair also welcomed Michelle Low and Gemma Reynolds who are the newly appointed President elect and Vice President elect of the Student Association, stating that the Board are very supportive of the Student Association and encourage the representatives to play a full role in the Board.

Apologies had been received from Tom Bates, Angela Bell and Claire Probert.

18.19 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

18.20 Minute of Meeting of 20 March 2018

The Minute of the meeting of the Board of Governors of 19 June 2018 was approved as a correct record.

18.21 Matters Arising from Minute of Meeting of 20 March 2018

All actions were duly completed and noted.

18.22 Chief Executive's Report

The Principal & Chief Executive presented Paper 3 which had a number of themes.

i) College and Stakeholder Activity

It was pleasing to note that the Scottish Funding Council had recognised the College's growth strategy and allocated a 2% increase in 2018/19 activity. The Principal remarked that this was the 9th year the College had achieved and exceeded its credit target.

The Principal updated the applications figures which were now 2157 offers for 2268 places and commented that it was expected there would be an upsurge in applications once the school exam results were published in August. The Senior Team are reviewing the applications on a daily basis and the curriculum is being reviewed to meet demand from students.

While the External Verification visits were mostly successful, it was remarked that the SQA visits are very end of year intensive which has a drain on staff resources at an already busy time of the year.

ii) Learner Activity and Highlights

The Principal congratulated all students entering the "World Skills" competitions for Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy, highlighting that one student was the Scottish winner and will go on to represent Scotland at the next stage of the competition.

iii) Staffing Updates

The staff survey results were mostly positive although the Senior Team are aware of some recurring themes and will be focussing on how to help staff overcome these issues.

Special mention was made of a number of staff who were retiring after a considerable number of years with the College and the Principal and

West Lothian College

18 September 2018

Board passed on their thanks to the staff for their considerable service and contribution to the College over the years.

iv) Employer Association Update

The Principal updated the Board with the current situation of the Employer Association noting that there was not a great deal of new information to report.

Finally, the Principal reflected on the progress the College had made over the past 10 years highlighting that full time student capacity had almost doubled, the significant contribution the College makes to the local community as a sizeable employer and the reduction in the SFC loan from £6.5million to just over £2million.

The Chair of the Board thanked the Principal & Chief Executive for a very interesting and informative report.

18.23 Regional Chair's Feedback (verbal)

The Chair of the Board commented on the following:-

i) Colleges Scotland

Colleges Scotland are currently looking at some Colleges in financial difficulty and it has been noted that there is a significant financial challenge for College finances generally going forward.

ii) Board Business

The Chair has been enjoying the 1-2-1 review meetings with Board members and once these have completed he will bring back a report to the Board.

Action 1: Chair

The Chair also formally thanked all the Board members for their support and participation in the new Principal recruitment process.

18.24 Student Association Report

The Student Association Vice President presented Paper 4.

There will be considerable changes to the Sparkle format next academic year which should streamline the process. While still encouraging constructive feedback, the information should be easier to capture and review.

West Lothian College18 September 2018

The Student Association organised many mental health initiatives for staff and students including training and a Therapets visit which were well received. The Vice President confirmed to the Board that the Student Association Constitution had been changed following comments from the Learning & Teaching Committee and now reflected the new Student Association structure.

The Chair thanked the Student Association Vice President for her contribution to the Board, especially for stepping up when the President left their post, and wished her success in her continued studies.

18.25 Board Development: Report from the Board Secretary

i) Board Strategic Planning Day Report

The Board Secretary thanked the Principal, Elaine Brown and the Executive for their work in organising the Strategic Day and highlighted that there was a mix of students, staff and Board Members which led to some very interesting discussions.

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services commented that the feedback from benchmarking session had been very useful and a suggestion currently being explored is to allow individual teams to identify and use their own benchmarks, which will be rolled out in 2018-19.

ii) Self-Evaluation of Committees Report

The Board Secretary commented on the main action points identified at the Committees and noted that these action points have been incorporated into the Committee and/or Board Development Plans for 2018-19.

It was suggested that a calendar of events on the agenda for each Committee meeting would be useful to have at the previous Board Meeting in order that Board Members could plan an interesting meeting to observe another Committee.

Action 2: Board Secretary

iii) Board Development Plan

The Board Secretary presented the Board Development Plan for 2018-19 which the Board Discussed and noted as a live document going forward. The Board were keen to have a meeting with the Student

Association and it was requested that this be arranged once the new post holders had settled into their role, possibly in February. The Board Secretary undertook to meet with the Student Association to plan a suitable meeting.

Action 3: Board Secretary

- iv) Gender Equality on Boards: Shadow Board Member Recruitment

The Board Secretary highlighted that new legislation will come into force in 2020 requiring gender equality on Boards and noted a number of practical suggestions which had been raised at a recent workshop.

The Board recommended that the Nominations Committee consider recruiting a female shadow Board Member and this will be discussed at the next Nominations Committee meeting.

Action 4: Board Secretary

It was also commented that the Board should be actively considerate of other minorities to ensure that the Board is as diverse as possible.

- v) Notifiable Events: Board Members' Responsibilities

The Board Secretary presented Paper 9 as a reminder to Board Members of their responsibility to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. The Board noted the information and regarded it as a timely reminder.

The Chair thanked the Board Secretary for the update.

18.26 Finance & General Purposes Committee

- i) Update from the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee from draft minute of 14 June 2018

The Chair stated that the minutes had not been provided to the Board since the meeting had only taken place a few days ago due to the timing requirements of items on the agenda. However, the Chair of the Committee was pleased to have welcomed Jackie Galbraith as an observer to the meeting.

In summary, the Committee had discussed the Occupational Health provider issues, been very pleased with the Management Accounts and approved the reissue of insurance to Zurich Municipal. Mainly the

West Lothian College18 September 2018

Committee had reviewed the 2018-19 Budget in detail and this would be discussed at ii) below.

ii) Annual Budget 2018-19 for approval

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services provided a summary of the main points for the 2018-19 Budget noting that this had been discussed in detail at the Finance & General Purposes Committee and any further questions would be welcomed.

Of particular note, Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services pointed out that pension costs are almost 20% of the salary expense and that if the SFC were to announce an 'in-year' redistribution exercise for additional student support funds, the College would always bid in.

Regarding the Children's Hearing Scotland contract, the Board were informed that all original contracts and leases were timed to end with the contract and staff are under a TUPE arrangement so the only current financial exposure for the College would be for the interim period. Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise confirmed that the announcement for the interim contract was imminent and undertook to share the result with the Board as soon as possible.

Action 5: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, confirmed that the SFC loan is interest free and that no money is currently being paid into the Foundation since the College's policy is to invest in resources and maintenance of the College on an annual basis.

The Board remarked that there will be increased emphasis on non-grant funding for Colleges and it was important that the College did not overexpose itself to any individual contracts.

The Board praised the Finance Team on the balanced Budget for 2018-19 and approved the Annual Budget 2018-19.

iii) People Strategy for approval

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services presented the final version of the People Strategy which had incorporated the comments raised at the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The Board complemented the overall presentation and intention of the document and queried whether the College had pursued the Investors

West Lothian College

18 September 2018

in Diversity Award. Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning, confirmed that the College had had such an award but had not applied for it in recent years due to the cost of application.

The Board were keen that the objectives mentioned in the document had a correlating matrix against which success could be measured. It was thought that the success can be tracked across several existing reports and the Board suggested that it would be helpful to combine these reports into one so that the information was easier to access.

The Chair of the Board thanked the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee for their update.

18.27 Audit Committee

- i) Update from the Chair of the Audit Committee from draft minute of 7 June 2018

Chair of the Audit Committee directed the Board to the minutes and highlighted that the Committee had approved the external audit plan, scrutinised the interview process at applications and commended the Finance Team for their efficient work in streamlining the Audit Rolling Plan.

- ii) Health & Safety Quarterly Report for information

The Committee had discussed the training needs of staff and had sought reassurance for the next meeting that all mandatory training had been delivered.

The Board were content with the information received.

18.28 Learning & Teaching Committee

- i) Update from the Chair of the Learning & Teaching Committee from draft minute of 6 June 2018.

The Chair of the Learning & Teaching Committee reported that the campus visit to Student Support had been very interesting with staff explaining that they provide both emotional and practical support. Staff had commented that their main challenges are; poor information when the student transits to College, inconsistency across the College and lack of funding for mental health.

West Lothian College

18 September 2018

The Committee were very interested in an update to the applications progress and will be looking to have 'deep dive' into applications and recruitment at the next meeting.

ii) Draft Regional Outcome Agreement 2018-21

The Regional Outcome Agreement was scrutinised at the Learning & Teaching Committee and recognised as having stretch but attainable targets. Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning confirmed that the ROA had been slightly changed to remove the requirement for a Gaelic Language Development Plan since this requirement had been waived by the SFC.

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning, confirmed that the College is currently undertaking a long term review of the curriculum to ensure that the College is providing programmes where there are local employment opportunities. The College is also looking at short term programmes to move students into employment earlier.

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise noted that the Local Authority Curriculum Review Report for schools is due in December and this information will also be used to shape the future curriculum, since the College will need to make sure that they provide the right courses for students with qualifications.

The Board approved the Regional Outcome Agreement 2018-21.

18.29 Update from Chair of Remuneration Committee

The Chair of the Remuneration Committee noted that the Committee had met on Wednesday 9 May 2018 to discuss inviting Angela Cox, Principal of Borders College, to join the recruitment panel as the independent person. The Committee also discussed the implications of National Bargaining for certain post holders and unanimously approved a non-consolidated award to management in keeping with public pay sector policy.

18.30 Annual Review of Committee Remits for approval

The Board Secretary commented that all remits had been discussed at Committee level and were recommended to the Board for approval.

The Board approved the Committee Remits.

West Lothian College

18 September 2018

18.31 Any Other Business

The Principal tabled a supplementary paper detailing discussions that had taken place with the Dalyell family who were keen to work with the College to provide a scholarship for STEM related initiatives. The Principal noted the generosity of the family and the great opportunity for the recipient of the proposed scholarship and participants in the Skills Olympics.

The Chair noted that this was the Student Association Vice President’s last meeting and on behalf of the Board, thanked her for her excellent contribution to the work of the Board.

The Chair noted that this was the current Principal’s final Board Meeting and on behalf of the Board, wished her well in her retirement. The Chair praised the exceptional contribution the Principal had made to the College and the further education sector in general. The full Board extended their thanks and gratitude to the Principal.

There were no other items of business.

18.32 Review of Meeting, Supporting Papers and Development Needs

The Board of Governors was content with the meeting and supporting papers presented.

18.17 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 18 September 2018.

Note: There were no matters discussed during the meeting, during which Members declared any conflict of interest, or the Secretary to the Board was aware from the Register of Interests that discussion could give rise to such a conflict.

Signed
Chair, Board of Governors

Date