

Board of Governors

Minute of Meeting of the Board Governors held on **Tuesday 12 December 2017** at 9.30am in the Barbour Suite.

Present: Alex Linkston (Chair)
Mhairi Harrington
Graham Hope
Iain McIntosh
Richard Lockhart
Morag McKelvie
Alan Morton
Moira Niven
Claire Probert
Norman Ross

In attendance: Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise)
George Hotchkiss (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning)
Jennifer McLaren (Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services)
Karine McNair (Board Secretary)
Elaine Brown (Minute Secretary)

17.50 Welcome/Apologies

The Chair welcomed Claire Probert and Karine McNair to the meeting as this was their first meeting of the Board of Governors.

Apologies had been received from Simon Ashpool, Tom Bates, Angela Bell, Sue Cook, Frank Gribben, Sarah Kerr, Jo Mayes, Colin Miller and Lorna Reid.

17.51 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

17.52 Minute of Meeting of 19 September 2017

The Minute of the meeting of the Board of Governors of 19 September 2017 was approved as a correct record with one amendment on page 3 Agenda Item 17.38 – membership of the group to include Moira Niven.

17.53 Matters Arising from Minute of Meeting of 19 September 2017

All actions were duly completed and noted.

17.54 Chief Executive's Report

The Principal & Chief Executive informed the Board that the College had recently received a copy of the 2018-2019 Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) Letter of Guidance and in addition to the previous priorities there were more ambitious targets to progress on gender imbalance, DYW, STEM and Equalities and Widening Access to HE.

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning was leading on producing the ROA which would be presented to the Learning & Teaching Committee then the Board of Governors for consultation.

The new Strategic Board for Enterprise & Skills had been established to support the alignment of skills in the economy and the College continued to make progress with the new Flexible Workforce Development Fund which was very challenging. The ESECR City Deal arrangements continued to progress now involving Construction and Data Driven Innovation Skills Projects.

The Principal & Chief Executive informed the Board of the Learner Activities and highlights, which also included recent visits from the Head of Education Directorate in Moldova and a recent College Team visit to Ayrshire College.

The College was looking forward to Equalities week which started on 11 December with all sorts of initiatives and plans underway.

Staffing updates which included the Systems Manager departing with the promotion of Bill Dunsmuir (MIS Co-Ordinator) to this post; member of Finance staff who left to take up post with APUC and congratulations to the Bursary Officer who had been invited to sit on the National Board of CPAG (Child Poverty Action Group).

The Principal had previously informed all the Committees about the issue which had come to light with regard to the College's PIs for 2015-16. The issue related to the coding of "success" for Higher National Students and this was highlighted through a new process where the Scottish Funding Council matched results from the FES database with the National Articulation Database. The SFC had advised the Chief Statistician of the Scottish Government about the issue without prior consultation with the Principal.

After investigation into the issue it appeared that the College's Unit-e system had coded students as successful if they had achieved 70% of the units but not the Group Award. This had affected 27 students and the impact from removing these students resulted in a reduced Higher Education Full Time (HEFT) Success Performance Indicator reducing it from 70% to 66%. It was important to note that no students had actually graduated. The College was

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not the only one affected the SFC had identified 13 in total but due to the size of our College the impact on the results was greater.

There had been no falsification of records and none of the students identified had been awarded a certificate by SQA.

The Principal had contacted the SFC requesting a meeting as a matter of some urgency as this had the potential for reputational damage for the College which had taken place on 5 December.

The outcome of the meeting was that the PIs would be restated in January and that a form of words would be agreed when they were published. Further information was still being collated and would be presented to the SFC however there would still be a decrease in the PI for HEFT.

Discussion then took place on the impacts and future ways in which to ensure that this did not occur again.

The Board were content that the College had dealt with the matter in a very professional manner.

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

17.55 Regional Chair's Feedback (verbal)

The Chair of the Board commented on the following:-

Colleges Scotland had commissioned Fraser of Allander Institute to produce a report which focussed on the Scottish economy, this report was a very informative report and well worth a read if any board members were interested.

Colleges Graduation had been held in October and was a great success with over 800 attendance and 197 students graduating.

Board members had met with the Student Association recently and they had agreed that they would meet twice a year to ensure awareness of the student body, associated activities and provide any support required.

Colleges Scotland was working on a Strategic Plan 2018-2020 and they had also appointed a new Communications Manager who would take up post in January.

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Colleges Development Network had moved premises to Stirling University Campus and Colleges Scotland were also looking for new premises due to leasing issues.

Meetings had taken place with Ministers and it was noted that the Government would be focusing on gender balance on Boards; were also keen for colleges to focus on all learners not just young learners and looking at putting more funds into innovation through discussion with SFC on a different funding stream for new businesses etc.

The Chair advised members that an agreement in principle had been reached with EIS on the core conditions of service for lecturing staff subject to ratification however the EIS were now formally in dispute with the employers regarding the 2017/18 cost of living pay claim and the Employers Association were awaiting written confirmation of this dispute and would advise accordingly. The Chair stated that due to the cost of harmonisation Colleges were unable to meet the EIS pay claim demand.

A National Scheme of Job Evaluation was being worked on for Support Staff which should commence 1 September 2018.

17.56 Student Association Report

The above report was noted by the Board of Governors in the absence of the Student Association Representatives.

17.57 Board Development: Report from the Board Secretary

The Secretary to the Board of Governors provided a brief update on development issues which covered the following:-

Student Association – a number of Board members met with the team as part of their learning and development as stated previously by the Chair and another meeting would be scheduled for February or March 2018.

Moodle – the Whistleblowing Policy was being updated in line with comments raised at the Audit Committee and would be made available on Moodle.

Annual Review meetings – the Secretary to the Board would contact Board members individually between May and June next year.

The Secretary to the Board of Governors thanked members for completing their Registers of Interest and also thanked members for a very warm welcome to the Board.

17.58 Finance & General Purposes Committee

The Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee stated that the main item discussed was the Annual Report & Financial Statements for 2016-17 which had duly been recommended for the approval to the Audit Committee.

The Reconciliation of Final Outturn explained more detail of the final operating result for the College and the main reasons for variations were a small issue with the Holiday Pay accrual and the Lothian Pension Fund liability which was out with the College's control.

The Committee also noted and commended the excellent performance of the Commercial and Workforce Development Teams for exceeding their targets, reducing the College's reliance on SFC funding.

The Capital Report on Infrastructure showed the College's position in connection to the Cole Report – the main issue being review of the cladding – there were no concerns and the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee asked that the draft minute be amended to reflect this.

Action 1: Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum & Services

The Committee had also been updated on the position with the KPI's given by the Principal & Chief Executive.

No other issues or concerns were raised.

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

17.59 Audit Committee

- i) Update from the Chair of the Audit Committee from draft minute of 30 November

The Chair of the Audit Committee reported on the meeting of 30 November 2017. The Committee had been at full strength with five committee members attending.

Two internal Audit Reports had been presented to the Committee, Organisational Wellbeing and Student Support Funds and the Audit Committee were content with the information and recommendations put forward.

The College had delivered slightly over their target for the Credit Return and recommendations from the Auditors had been completed.

College Audit Rolling Plan – all recommendations had now been completed and the Chair of the Committee thanked the Management Team for finally resolving these.

Strategic Risk Register had been updated and was a very thorough report, the Principal had highlighted the variation in risks over the period and also the current situation with the Performance Indicators as previously stated.

Whistleblowing Policy had been updated in line with current legislations and the Secretary to the Board would review and update the section on Reporting of Outcomes.

A meeting took place without Management and the Internal and External Auditors stated that the Management Team demonstrated an open and helpful approach and were fully engaged in the audit process.

ii) Annual Report & Financial Statements for 2016-17 for approval

The Committee had discussed in detail the Annual Report and Financial Statements and had noted the changes to the presentation of the accounts in line with the requirements of the Accounts Direction and the impact of the interim valuations which had been incorporated into the financial statements. Colleges were also now required to include a statement at the foot of the SOCI and a note explaining the impact of the non-cash budget for depreciation.

Further discussion took place on the report and the complexity in conforming with government regulations and the reporting manual but were content that the Management Accounts gave assurances on the financial position for the College.

The Board of Governors approved the Annual Report & Financial Statements for 2016-17

iii) Annual Report to the Board of Governors and the Auditor General for Scotland 2016-17

The Committee had discussed the report from the External Auditors for the 2016-17. No major control weaknesses had been identified and the

conclusion of the report was that the accounting systems operated overall effectively.

The Board were content with the information presented.

iv) Audit Committee's Report to the Board

The above report was a requirement of the Financial Memorandum and consistent with previous years reports and the Committee was satisfied that the College's risk management, control and governance systems were effective.

The Board noted the report.

v) Letter of Representation

The Committee had considered the Letter of Representation and agreed to recommend that the letter be signed by the Chair of the Board of Governors on behalf of the Board.

The Board agreed the letter of representation and was duly signed.

vi) Health & Safety Quarterly Report for information

The above report highlighted the number of instances and accidents throughout the quarter and a few in particular in respect of self harm which the College was looking at arrangements on how to deal with this type of incident.

In respect of health and safety training and whether this required be mandatory it was agreed that the process of staff needs through the learning and development process would be reviewed.

The Board were content with the information received.

17.60 Learning & Teaching Committee

i) Update from the Chair of the Learning & Teaching Committee from draft minute of 29 November 2017

Board member, Iain McIntosh provided an update on the Learning & Teaching Committee meeting in the absence of the Chair.

A very innovative presentation took place from the Centre Head, Workforce Development on the experience as an observer over the last year which was very helpful and informative.

The Committee discussed the UCAS and Articulation Report which provided information on the number of students from the College who had articulated to University and noted that articulation on second and third years for advanced standing would be provided in the next report.

They had discussed the ROA Dashboard 2017-18 and had requested a more detailed commentary on actions and the rationale underpinning the assessment of progress, which would be presented at their next meeting.

The New Regional Outcome Agreement 2018-21 Summary had been presented and the Committee had requested that the draft ROA be presented as a summary report to the next Committee then final report be submitted to the Board of Governors.

The Board discussed the plan and it was suggested that the ROA be emailed to them before the Learning & Teaching Committee meeting.

Action: 2 Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning

Student Association Report was discussed which had outlined the new SPARKLE evaluative workbook and it was agreed that further work was required on the collation and feedback of the data.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Report covered work carried out across the Quality & Learner Services function, the new Quality Improvements which Learning & Teaching (QUILTS) and Teaching Observations.

The Committee had also discussed the current KPI situation as stated previously.

The Board noted the information presented.

ii) **Draft Evaluative Report & Draft Enhancement Plan for approval**

The Committee had noted that the Draft Evaluative Report and Plan had been submitted to Education Scotland and SFC 31 October with a further endorsement meeting scheduled for 14 December 2017. A detailed discussion had taken place and the Learning & Teaching Committee recommended that the Board of Governors endorsed the plan ahead of the scheduled meeting.

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After discussion the Board of Governors were content with report and the Chair agreed to endorse the plan.

The Chair thanked Board Member, Iain McIntosh for the information presented.

17.61 Any Other Business

There were no other items of business.

17.62 Review of Meeting, Supporting Papers and Training Needs

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

The Chair thanked members for their contributions and attention to what had been a very full set of papers.

Board Development Plan – the above plan had been updated and the Secretary to the Board stated that the Board Away Day scheduled to take place on 23 May had now been changed to **Thursday 17 May** starting with lunch through to early evening dinner.

17.60 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 20 March at 4.30pm.

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