

## West Lothian College

13 June 2019

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### Finance & General Purposes Committee

Minute of Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on **Thursday 28 February at 9.30am** in the Barbour Room, in the College.

Present:                   Moira Niven (Chair)  
                              Jackie Galbraith (Principal & Chief Executive)  
                              Richard Lockhart  
                              Claire Probert  
                              Frank Gribben  
                              Julia Simpson

In attendance:         Jennifer McLaren (Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services) to item 19.14  
                              George Hotchkiss (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning) to item 19.14  
                              Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise) to item 19.14  
                              Derek O'Sullivan – (Senior HR Business Partner) items 19.05 to 19.07 only  
                              Karine McNair – Secretary to the Board

#### **19.01 Welcome/Apologies**

Apologies were received from Morag McKelvie and Alex Linkston.

#### **19.02 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **19.03 Minute of Meeting of 22 November 2019**

The Minute of the meeting of 22 November 2019 was approved as a correct record.

#### **19.04 Matters Arising from Minute of Meeting of 22 November 2019**

The Committee noted all actions as duly completed.

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### 19.05 Financial Progress

#### (i) January 2019 Management Accounts

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, presented the management accounts for the 6 months to January 2019 and the forecast to 31 July 2019.

It was noted that Full Time fee income is down but the curriculum centres have been working hard to fill Part Time courses to make up any deficit in fee income. There is a current underspend in staff costs due partly to some courses which didn't run but mainly due to changes in teaching hours.

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services has recently met with Napier University to agree terms of a consultancy project for Napier University to implement the recommendations from their report reviewing the College's IT service.

The Committee noted that while immediate security of the IT system is an urgent priority, any future planning needs to take into account the wider ambitions of the College to upgrade their entire IT infrastructure.

The Committee noted the report.

#### (ii) Income Generation Report

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, presented paper 4 noting an overall positive position. Foundation Apprenticeships continue to present the biggest challenge however the FDWF now have 100% allocation.

The Committee highlighted that it was important to budget realistically for Foundation Apprenticeships while also having an ambitious target. It was also felt that the College should consider taking smaller but successful steps for delivery to ensure the quality of Foundation Apprenticeships which could more generate future interest.

The Committee were pleased to see that the delivery model used for the Children's Hearing Scotland contract was being used for other external tenders showing a more diverse approach for the College.

The Principal offered to circulate to the Committee members an

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evaluation report on Foundation Apprenticeships which was due to be published shortly.

**Action 1: Principal / Board Secretary****19.06 College Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2018-2019**

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, presented paper 5 and proposed a recommendation to streamline the presentation of KPI reporting between the Committees and the Board.

The Committee felt that it would be important to see both the financial KPIs and the early withdrawal figures since they have an impact on the financial position. It would also be useful to see the early withdrawal figures as actual number of students as well as the percentage to give a more accurate picture of the impact of the withdrawals.

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning, confirmed that courses with higher withdrawal rates are currently being investigated with employment and financial issues appearing to be some of the main reasons for withdrawal at this stage.

The Committee approved the following change to the presentation of KPI reports:

- Finance & General Purposes Committee = Financial KPIs + Early Withdrawal figures (shown as % and actual numbers)
- Learning & Teaching Committee = Non-Financial KPIs
- Board = Financial & Non-Financial KPIs

**Organisational Well-being****19.07 (i) Human Resources Report**

The Senior HR Business Partner presented the report covering the quarter to December noting that there had been a reduction in long term sickness absence.

The Committee requested further information regarding gender pay equality to obtain a more detailed understanding of the structure within the College drawing out management, support and lecturing staff as well as the age profile within each group.

**Action 2 – Senior HR Business Partner / Vice Principal Finance & Curriculum Services**

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The Committee noted the report.

### **(ii) Employers Association Update**

The Principal confirmed that further meetings were taking place regarding the on-going EIS industrial action and the College were discussing contingencies to ensure that students would not be disadvantaged by any industrial action.

### **19.08 Infrastructure Update**

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, presented paper 7 outlining the plans for reconfiguring the College buildings and some IT updates.

The Committee felt it was very important that students were learning up to date skills using modern technology which would be relevant and necessary for the workplace and encouraged the College to continue to source funding for a full scale modernisation project.

The Principal confirmed that the College was also looking to modernise the curriculum with a particular focus on engineering. Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning, offered to present a paper at the September meeting showing the curriculum plan and investment for engineering.

### **Action 3 – Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning (September)**

The Committee noted the report.

### **19.09 Infrastructure Strategy**

### **19.10 Financial Strategy**

### **19.11 Procurement Strategy**

### **19.12 Employer Engagement Strategy**

### **19.13 Income Generation Strategy**

Items 19.09 to 19.13 were discussed together.

The Committee felt that the documents presented a more internal operational view of what needed to be achieved in the short term rather than a long term strategic goal. It was agreed that learning and teaching should be the driving force behind all the College strategies and the

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Committee felt that it would be difficult to have a cohesive strategy until a college strategic plan had been developed.

The Committee advised that they would be interested to see a short paper outlining a long term strategy which would remain stable for multiple years. The documents presented at this meeting, would be the underlying documents showing the short term steps to achieving the long term goal to give more operational direction to management.

It was suggested that developing the long term strategy could be the agenda for the Board Strategy Day on 23 May.

### **Action 4 – Principal / Chair of the Board**

The Committee felt that papers 8 (Infrastructure Strategy), 9 (Financial Strategy), 11 (Employer Engagement Strategy) and 12 (Income Generation Strategy) were useful internal documents which did not require Committee or Board approval.

Regarding paper 10 (Procurement Strategy), the Committee recommended the paper to the Board for approval subject to an update to the mission statement on page 1.

### **Action 5 – Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services**

#### **19.14 Complaints Report**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning presented paper 13 and the Committee liked the addition of compliments to the complaints. The Principal confirmed that the positive comments are related to staff through her fortnightly newsletter.

#### **19.15 Self-Evaluation of Committee**

Management left the room and the Committee discussed the various prompts for self-evaluation. A separate paper will be produced showing the feedback from this exercise at the next meeting.

### **Action 6 – Board Secretary**

#### **19.16 Any Other Business**

No other matters of business were raised.

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## 19.17 Review of Meeting, Supporting Papers & Development Plan

The Committee were content with the meeting, the information received and the papers presented. The Committee requested a tour of the areas of the College campus which were benefitting from the infrastructure update over the summer.

### **Action 7 – Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services (September)**

## 19.18 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for 13 June 2019 at 9.30am.

**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, Finance & General Purposes Committee

Date .....