

## West Lothian College

21 November 2019

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### Finance & General Purposes Committee

Minute of Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on **Thursday 5 September at 9.30am** in the Principal's Room in the College.

Present:                   Moira Niven (Chair)  
                              Jackie Galbraith (Principal & Chief Executive)  
                              Frank Gribben  
                              Alex Linkston  
                              Richard Lockhart  
                              Lynne Hollis

In attendance:         Jennifer McLaren (Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services)  
                              Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise)  
                              Derek O'Sullivan – (Senior HR Business Partner) item 19.38 (i) only  
                              Karine McNair – Secretary to the Board

#### Tour of Street Building

The Committee Members visited the areas of the Street Building which had been reconfigured over the summer break. The Committee enjoyed meeting all the teams who were very positive about the changes.

#### 19.32 Welcome/Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting especially Lynne Hollis as it was her first meeting since becoming a Board Member. Apologies were received from Julia Simpson.

#### 19.33 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 19.34 Minutes of Meeting of 13 June 2019

The Minutes of the meeting of 13 June 2019 were amended to include Alex Linkston as attending and apologies from George Hotchkiss and Lynne Hollis. The reference to Scottish Futures *Trust* was also updated. The Minutes were otherwise approved as a correct record.

# West Lothian College

21 November 2019

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## 19.35 Matters Arising from Minutes of Meeting of 13 June 2019

The Committee noted all actions as duly completed.

The Chair noted that she had met with the Chair of the Audit Committee and Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services to discuss the possibility of a joint meeting of the two Committees for discussion of the accounts.

The Chair acknowledged that the discussion had been useful however it was concluded that the current arrangement of double scrutiny of the accounts was useful. Members of the Audit Committee would be encouraged to visit the Finance & General Purposes Committee and vice versa, especially for the accounts meeting which should allow some connection between the discussion of the accounts across the two Committees.

## 19.36 Financial Progress

### (i) FFR

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, presented paper 3 noting that the SFC guidance stated that all Colleges have to apply the SFC assumptions and achieve a break even position.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**West Lothian College**21 November 2019

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It was proposed that an informal Short Life Working Group (“SLWG”) be established to focus on the steps needed to be taken by the college to achieve a balanced budget over the 5-year period of the forecast as part of the overall long term College Strategy. The Committee agreed that the SLWG would comprise the Chair of the Board, Committee Chairs and Lynne Hollis who has relevant expertise. Any other Board members who were interested in participating would also be welcome to join the group.

The SLWG should consider scenario planning to help prepare the College for different situations. The financial plan should be considered in conjunction with the long term College Strategy which is currently being developed. The College needs to be able to prove to the SFC that it is spending wisely and demonstrating value for money.

The Committee recommended that Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services enhance the commentary in the current FFR to state that a SLWG has been set up by the Board of Governors to determine savings which can be made in line with the new College Strategic Plan. Subject to the amended commentary, the Committee recommended the FFR to the Board for approval.

**Action 1: Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services****(ii) June 2019 Management Accounts**

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, presented paper 4 noting the College had a successful year and managed to invest in new equipment and IT and partially refurbish the Street Building and Pavilion A.

The Committee repeated that the college should continue to engage with SFC with regard to writing-off the loan.

The Committee noted the paper.

**(iii) Income Generation Report**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise, presented paper 5 noting the successes in the FWDF. It was also highlighted that the International Work has been nominated for a CDN award.

The Committee were pleased to hear that the CHS contract has

## West Lothian College

21 November 2019

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been running smoothly with all KPIs being met.

It was commented that there is a difference between commercial income and alternative income as alternative income is usually matched to activity whereas commercial income can produce a surplus for investment in the College. It is generally more difficult for the College to access commercial income.

The Committee noted the paper.

### **(iv) Pre Audit Credit Report**

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, presented paper 6 commenting that although the figures were subject to final audit, the College was expected to have exceeded its credit target.

There was some discussion around the 'Plus 1' activity which the College delivers to enhance students' employability. The Committee encouraged such activity to continue however it was noted that the SFC may tighten their restrictions on allowing 'Plus 1' credits in the future.

### **(v) Infrastructure Update**

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, presented paper 7 and the Committee appreciated the opportunity to have seen first-hand the refurbishment of the Street Building during their visit at the beginning of the meeting.

## **19.37 College Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2018-2019**

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, presented paper 8, which the Committee noted.

## **19.38 Organisational Well-being**

### **(i) HRM Report**

The Senior HR Business Partner presented the report covering the quarter to 30 June 2019.

The Committee acknowledged that short term sickness was generally reducing and commended the HR team for their implementation of a new your attendance matters policy.

[REDACTED]

The Committee noted the report.

**(ii) Employers Association Update**

The Chair of the Board confirmed that the pay awards for all staff have been agreed to September 2020. The Job Evaluation process is underway but expected to take at least a year to move to the next stage. The next aim of the Employer's Association is to bring Principals and Senior Staff within collective bargaining and initial discussions have taken place to start this process.

**19.39 Complaints Report**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise presented paper 10. The Committee were disappointed to see a repeat complaint from a student with a disability and suggested that some staff development might help the situation.

The Committee recommended that staff should be offered British Sign Language training and a best practice model from Moray House staff could be looked into.

**Action 2: Principal**

The Committee were encouraged by the compliments in the paper and especially noted the West Lothian Volunteer Network which recognised the contribution of the College and Fiona Veitch in particular.

The Committee noted the paper.

**19.40 Any Other Business**

No other matters of business were raised.

**19.41 Review of Meeting, Supporting Papers & Development Plan**

The Committee were content with the meeting, the information received.

The Development Plan is to be updated to remove the suggestion of a joint meeting with Audit but to specifically recommend an 'exchange

# West Lothian College

21 November 2019

visit' of Audit and Finance & General Purposes Committee Members to each other's meetings when the accounts are discussed.

### Action 3: Board Secretary

#### 19.42 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for 21 November 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 .....

\* Redacted under s.33 Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act