

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minute of Meeting of the Board Governors held on **Thursday 30 April** at 2.30pm VIA Zoom

Present: Alex Linkston (Chair)
Sue Cook (Vice Chair)
Jackie Galbraith (Principal & Chief Executive)
Moirra Niven
Iain McIntosh
Frank Gribben
Richard Lockhart
Elaine Cook
Lynne Hollis
Sue Stahly
Neil Sinclair
Julia Simpson
Gemma Reynolds
Michelle Low

In attendance: Jennifer McLaren (Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services and Acting Board Secretary)
Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise)
Emma Marriott (Shadow Board Member)
Louise Byrne (PA to Principal)

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Simon Ashpool,

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no other declarations of interest.

3. Minute of Meeting of 10 December 2019

The Minute of the meeting of the Board of Governors of 10 December 2019 was approved as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising from Minute of Meeting of 10 December 2019

All actions from the minute of meeting of 10 December 2019 were noted as duly completed.

5. Regional Chairs Update (verbal)

The Chair of the Board informed that Colleges Scotland meetings are progressing monthly or more regular if specific issues require discussion. The Employers Association residential in May will now consist of two virtual half day meetings due to COVID-19.

The deadline for undertaking the Board effectiveness review has been extended to April 2021. The proposal is to start the review in November 2020 and conclude January 2021 with the report finalised at the Board meeting in March 2021. This will allow to meet the revised Scottish Funding Council deadline.

Committee self evaluation will be undertaken at the June committee meetings. One to one reviews will also be scheduled throughout the month of June and will take place VIA Zoom.

The Board strategy day has been postponed on 07 May 2020 and will now take place early June. A doodle poll will be circulated to members for their availability.

ACTION 1: PA to Principal

The National Code of Conduct for Board members will be circulated in the autumn.

6. Chief Executive Update on COVID-19

Members noted paper 3 circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Principal and Chief Executive provided an update on how the college is adapting to working from home and the extreme efforts from lecturers and support staff to support students online. The IT team have reconfigured over 100 laptops and distributed these to students. A virtual tea room has been set up for staff to communicate informally during this time and includes a weekly quiz. Staff are working hard to keep students engaged and coming up with innovative ideas for students to present their practical skills, these will continue to be included in Principal's Update.

The Principal and Chief Executive informed that it will be critical to plan for a very different academic year ahead. Virtual drop in sessions have been arranged for staff to share their ideas on what the campus will look like when we return. A meeting will also be set up with the Board in June to discuss scenarios that arise from discussions and drop in sessions.

ACTION 2: PA to Principal

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After achieving our best student outcomes the college was on track for a third consecutive year of improved student success and we have already met our credit target for this year. Withdrawals were down for full and part time HE students.

The campus is now being used as an NHS testing centre for COVID-19. PPE and hygiene products from the college have also been donated to the local hospital. New guidance is being developed daily in relation to COVID-19 and College Principals meet weekly to discuss. The Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science has occasionally joined the discussions along with the Chief Executive Officer of the Scottish Funding Council.

The sector faces a huge deficit as a result of reduced income from March to July and the Scottish Funding Council Chief Executive confirmed that there is no additional money in this financial year to address this. Colleges are being urged to access the Governments Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to furlough staff as a way of addressing the growing deficit. This will mean that the college can claim 80% of payroll costs through the Scheme and will help to reduce the deficit and ensure we have enough cash to pay all staff.

Members of the Board agreed the college should furlough staff where possible.

On behalf of the Board the Chair thanked the Principal, and requested to pass on thanks for the tremendous efforts being made to support our students, our communities and each other.

7. Student Association Report

The President of the Student Association informed members of how they are interacting and communicating with students during the COVID-19 crisis. The Student Association continue to meet with the Ambassadors once per week to highlight any issues that arise. To date there have been no major issues and feedback remains positive on how lecturers and staff within the college are supporting students. The student bursary team are also being responsive to requests that come in.

Part two of the SPARKLE report is currently on hold.

A tea and chat group has been established for vulnerable students in partnership with Neil's Hugs. Two Mental Health Counsellors have been recruited and are now in position. The college also invested in the Big White Wall and managed to get it up and running to staff and students before the college closure. This is available 24/7 and allows students and staff to raise any concerns about their mental health. Safeguarding issues are also being picked up on this platform.

The Student Association President and Vice President have also completed mental health first aid training.

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Campaigning for a new President and Vice President will start on 11 May, three candidates have applied, and two of them are Ambassadors. Students will vote for their preferred candidates through Moodle and the new Student Association will be announced on 27 May.

8. Finance & General Purposes Committee

i) Update from the Chair of the 27 February 2020.

The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was impressed by the Construction and Motor Vehicle team and the success of the hybrid car.

Terrace 1 & 2 refurbishment remains a priority and the planning application will be submitted. The tender will also be prepared and ready to be issued when appropriate to do so.

The Vice Principal for Finance and Curriculum Services provided an update on the college financial position. The deficit has increased and is due to providing cover to lecturing staff on long term sick absence and loss of income due COVID-19.

9. Learning & Teaching Committee

i) Update from the Chair of the Learning & Teaching Committee from draft minute of 4 March 2020

The Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee noted there was a good discussion on KPIs which showed signs of a healthy college. An update was also provided by Vice Principal Curriculum and Enterprise as a new process has been developed to progress applications. Neil Sinclair also highlighted that lecturers are continuing to interview students by phone and engaging with current student via Teams or Zoom.

School applications are down but there has been good work to progress from Education Services

ii) Draft Outcome Agreement 2020-23

It was noted that Outcome Agreement was written prior to COVID-19, Scottish Funding Council are also aware that current plans may be impacted.

A change to the text in page 18 will be amended to The Board of Governors and not Board of Management.

ACTION 3: PA to Principal

A request was also made for the key facts page to be snappier. The Principal and Chief Executive informed that the audience for the Outcome Agreement is the Scottish Funding Council and infographics are currently being designed to reflect key milestones.

ACTION 4: Principal and Chief Executive

The Board approved the Outcome Agreement.

10. Audit Committee

i) Update from the Chair of the Audit Committee from draft minute of 5 March 2020

The Chair of the Audit Committee informed of the recent visit to the Beauty Therapy and Hairdressing Centre to discuss mitigation.

The Health and Safety report informed the committee that, following consultation on the campus being smoke free, it was agreed that the college will not take this forward but the smoking bubble will be relocated. There has also been a reduction in verbal incidents due to Estate staff now wearing body cameras.

Coronavirus was added to the Risk Register as a specific task following the last Audit Committee meeting.

It was agreed that consideration be given to co-opting a qualified accountant onto the Audit Committee to increase the accountancy expertise on the committee. The Vice Principal for Finance and Curriculum Services/Acting Board Secretary will take forward recruitment for this position.

ACTION 5: Vice Principal for Finance and Curriculum Services/Acting Board Secretary

The Risk workshop has been postponed and will be rescheduled for later in the year.

Lynne Hollis was ratified as a member on the Audit Committee. An amendment will be made to the minute to correct the spelling of Lynne's name.

ACTION 6: PA to Principal

11. Remuneration Committee

i) Update from the Chair of the Remuneration Committee from draft minute of 17 and 18 March 2020

The Remuneration Committee took place through a series of individual telephone conversations with the Principal on 17 and 18 March 2020 as a result of COVID-19. Committee members were asked to agree the final management structure and the voluntary severance scheme for managers. Both were approved by the committee.

The Principal and Chief Executive met with the college management team to feedback the discussions from the Remuneration Committee and to seek their view on whether they wanted to proceed with the restructure during the COVID-19 situation. Managers agreed they wanted to proceed and interviews will commence from week beginning 11 May. Three members of staff applied for and were given voluntary severance.

The new leadership team will be in place by the end of May 2020.

12. Nominations Committee

i) Update from the Chair of the Nominations Committee from draft minute of 10 December 2019 and 02 April 2020

The Chair of the Nominations Committee updated on the Committee Membership Proposals that took place during the December meeting.

At the meeting in April Claire Probert's request to step down was discussed. The Nominations Committee also agreed and approached Scottish Government to request that Emma Marriot is be appointed to the Board of Governors. If the Scottish Government does not agree the Board will have to go through a full recruitment exercise.

ii) Secretary to the Board

The Chair of the Nominations Committee presented paper 10. This paper is to ask the Board of Governors to endorse the recommendation put forward by the Nominations Committee to appoint the Vice Principal, Finance and Curriculum Services as secretary to the board on an interim basis and review this arrangement on an annual basis.

Members discussed this in detail. Not all were supportive. The Board of Governors agreed that the Vice Principal for Finance and Curriculum Services would undertake the Secretary to the Board role on an interim basis to the end

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of the calendar year were given the opportunity to reflect on the role and feedback any options by the end of the calendar year.

ACTION 7: Board of Governors Members

The executive administration team will support the administrative tasks to allow the Vice Principal for Finance and Curriculum Service to focus on governance.

A suggestion was also made for the Board of Governors to make contact with Forth Valley College, Dundee & Angus College and City of Glasgow College who are currently using this model as more information on this position will enable the right decision.

13. Any Other Business

The Chair of the Board asked members if they had any preference for future meetings. The benefits of Zoom and Microsoft Teams were discussed along with the security issues recently reported with Zoom. Zoom is a popular platform as you can see more people on the screen at the one time, the college has purchased a license to make meetings more secure.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 16 June 2020.

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