

West Lothian College

20 September 2022

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minute of Meeting of the Board Governors held on **Tuesday 28 June 2022** at 4.30pm at West Lothian College

Present: Alex Linkston (Chair)
Frank Gribben
Jackie Galbraith (Principal and Chief Executive)
Richard Lockhart
Jeanette Dobson
Iain McIntosh
Moira Niven (via Teams)
Virginia Toyi
Sue Stahly
Abel Aboh
Neil Sinclair

In Attendance : Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement)
Sarah-Jane Linton (Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment)
Jennifer McLaren (Vice Principal, Finance and Corporate Services)
Louise Byrne (PA to Principal)

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed those in attendance. Apologies were noted from Sue Cook, Elaine Cook, Seonaid Crosby and Colin Miller.

1.1 Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1.2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minute of the meeting on 8 March 2022 was accepted as an accurate record.

1.3 Matter Arising

All matters arising were noted as completed or recommended to close.

2. Presentations

2.1 Overview of Colleges Scotland, Gavin Donoghue

Gavin Donoghue was in attendance to provide an update on College Employers Scotland which has recently rebranded from the Employers' Association. An overview of the current and proposed structure was provided,

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highlighting relationships with Colleges Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council.

Management side negotiators are made up of Principals, Chairs and other senior staff in the sector. They negotiate directly with the trade unions on the annual pay award for two staff groups in colleges, lecturers and support staff.

College Employers Scotland are leading on the sector's response to the government's lessons learned review of collective bargaining in the college sector. They are looking to improve the systems and processes of the National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC), as well as relationships with the trade unions to enhance industrial relations in the sector.

2.2 Cyber Security, Bill Dunsmuir and Jordan Schroeder

An overview was provided on the role of governance in cyber risk. Cyber attacks are increasing monthly in colleges and the role of the Board of Governors is becoming more important.

In response to global threats and changing expectations of Boards to provide cyber risk governance, there is a growing body of resources to support the journey in cyber risk governance maturity.

There is a need to prioritise which risks to treat and how much to spend to invest and support. In terms of the college business continuity a plan and checklist will be added to prepare for threats and ransomware. The Executive Leadership Team are working on this.

The cyber risk journey for the college was also presented along with investment made and resilience to cyber threats. A significant investment has been made to the infrastructure and the migration of servers. The college has recently upgraded the Microsoft 365 security license.

Following the presentation, the Board of Governors requested a cyber security workshop for members.

ACTION 1 – Vice Principal for Performance and Improvement to propose the format of a workshop

3. Matters for Attention

3.1 Student Association Report

Members noted the report presented by the Student Association President.

3.2 Chief Executive Report

The Principal presented paper 4 and highlighted key achievements. These included the great effort from staff in achieving the Gold Investor in People (liP) Award. The college celebrated staff success at an event on 22 June to showcase achievements and will celebrate the liP achievement at the August staff conference.

A case for growth was presented to the Scottish Funding Council following the publication of final college funding allocations. Our evidence-based argument for growth resulted in an increase in our core credit target by 1,143 credits with corresponding additional funding of £324,403. West Lothian was one of only two colleges to receive a consolidated increase in credits. This will be embedded for future years.

The Principal acknowledged the work of the Vice Principals in being proactive throughout the year and representing the sector at several events and meetings.

The Board thanked the Principal and staff for a remarkable year. The Chair also informed that the standard of applications for Celebrating Success was very strong.

3.3 Regional Board Chair's Feedback

The Chair advised he will step down as Chair of College Employers Scotland, The Principal and Sue Stahly will continue as representatives for the college.

College Employers Scotland is currently looking at refreshing the reviewed strategic framework to sharpen the following priorities:

- lead and influence policy
- make better use of current resources
- advocate for additional resources
- and to support and connect on membership and deliver value for money.

It is hoped this will enhance work within the sector.

3.4 Risk Register

The final risk register for 2021-22 was noted for approval. The Vice Principal for Finance and Corporate Services tabled the heat map. It was acknowledged that the position is stable and risk has been reduced with regional demand for additional credits as we have received these. Members approved the 2022-23 risk register and tolerance.

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4. Matters for Approval

4.1 Annual Budget

The Vice Principal for Finance and Corporate Services informed the college is now at a breakeven position in relation to the budget.

The chair acknowledged the balanced budget and thanked everyone involved in reaching this position which was challenging to achieve.

The Principal thanked the Vice Principals and managers, noting the extraordinary efforts that were made over the year. It was also acknowledged that the budget is tight but a positive line for investment has been built in. Next year will also prove difficult in relation to the pay awards and inflation.

4.2 Financial Forecast Return (FFR)

The interim Financial Forecast Return for 2021-22 and 2022-23 is based on the April management accounts and the annual budget. The Finance and General Purposes committee recommended the Board of Governors approval of paper 7.

The Board of Governors approved the Financial Forecast Return.

5. Committee Matters for Information

5.1 Learning and Teaching Committee Update

The Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee provided an overview of the latest meeting. Ian Beach from Education Scotland presented on the recent progress report which was satisfactory with no caveats.

The Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee recognised the incredible work from the management team in getting the college to this stage.

Recommendations from the full-time further education short life working group aim to improve full-time FE student success in 2022-23.

5.2 Finance and General Purposes Committee Update

The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee provided an update on the accounting policy that was approved. Funding for hybrid working was approved in the Infrastructure Update report.

There is good progress being made on generating alternative income and it was noted that this needs to continue.

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The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee acknowledged the excellent work from the HR and People Development team in relation to leading the process that led to the award of Investors in People Gold.

5.3 Audit Committee Update

Member of the Audit Committee were encouraged by the Internal Audit reports. It was highlighted that this will be Mazars last year as auditors for the college. Audit Scotland will be the new auditors going forward.

There was a discussion at the committee on sector-wide financial stability. The Principal provided an update on the £0.5 million spend updating digital devices and assets. The Board acknowledge this spend and how creative the Digital Infrastructure team has been.

5.4 Chairs' Committee

The committee met on 20 June. A member of the Board of Governors has resigned which leaves a gap in the Audit Committee membership. The recruitment process for this post will be advertised in the new academic session.

The Board Secretary and Governance Advisor post was advertised and interviews are expected to take place at the end of July.

6. Any Other Business

Special recognition was given to the current Student President as this will be her last meeting. Acknowledgement was made to the tremendous achievements made throughout her time in this post.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 20 September 2022, 4.30pm, West Lothian College