

## West Lothian College

7 December 2021

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### BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minute of Meeting of the Board Governors held on **Tuesday 21 September** at 4.30pm via Zoom

Present: Alex Linkston (Chair)  
Jackie Galbraith (Principal & Chief Executive)  
Richard Lockhart  
Jeanette Dobson  
Iain McIntosh  
Colin Miller  
Elaine Cook  
Moirra Niven  
Neil Sinclair  
Julia Simpson  
Tom Bates  
Sue Stahly

In Attendance : Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement)  
Sarah-Jane Linton (Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment)  
Jennifer McLaren (Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Services)  
Lesley Aitkenhead (Board Governance Advisor)

Agenda Item 8 Bill Dunsmuir (Head of Info Systems & Digital Infrastructure)  
Tom Thomson (Information Systems Manager)  
Cheng Hao Kao (Data Scientist)  
Aaron McKay (Information Systems Officer)

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Sue Cook, Lynne Hollis, Frank Gribben, Kirsti Clark and Seonaid Crosby.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no other declarations of interest.

#### 3. Minute of Meeting of 29 June 2021

The Minute of the meeting of the Board of Governors of 29 June 2021 was approved as a correct record. The list of members present was corrected to include Elaine Cook and Richard Lockhart.

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### 4. Matters Arising from Minute

All matters arising were noted as duly completed or on track.

### 5. Chief Executive's Report

The Principal presented Paper 3, highlighting the success of the college in receiving 4 award nominations, including the work of the Student Association and the Man Cave, promoting mental health.

The board commented on the recent TV, Radio and Social Media Coverage of the college, including interviews with the chair of the student association and former students. The board welcome this publicity as a positive reflection on the work of the college in supporting vulnerable students.

The Principal commented on the continued discussion on the matter of the instructor role, which has gone to the National Joint Council for further consideration.

The board noted the discussion at the Finance & General Purpose Committee in terms of the work on the Financial Forecast Return (FFR), and the plan to present a draft FFR for approval by the Board in October 2021. The Principal highlighted the potential impact of changes on future spending within the college section, and the importance of using 'hard facts', when lobbying Government Bodies.

Members noted the Chief Executive's Report.

### 6. Regional Chair's Feedback

The Chair updated the board on the work of Colleges Scotland and college representation at a number of meetings, including the Strategic Forum, which is aimed at enhancing relationships across the college sector.

### 7. Student Association Report

Board members noted the report from the student association and commented on the quality and insight provided, particularly from the observations of the Chair and Vice Chair. The Student Association advised the Board on the success of Freshers Week, with over 1,500 'hits' online, and the positive response to the creation of a LGBTQ+ community group, and use of the student larder, for students facing poverty.

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The board raised a point around the benefit of other community groups, including a BAME community group, which was acknowledged by the student association.

**Action 1 SA: The SA will explore the level of interest in creating other community groups, encouraging and enabling peer support.**

The student association noted the close working relationship with the Trauma Responsive Team, supporting vulnerable students. The board noted the work of the student association to recruit volunteers, and part time support, as cover for the vice chair who is on maternity leave. The board noted the report and thanked the Student Association for the quality of the report and update and continued enthusiasm.

### 8. Information Systems & Digital Infrastructure – Power BI

The Chair welcomed members of the Information Systems and Digital Infrastructure Team, to provide an update on the work to enhance the colleges information systems.

The board noted that the work to develop use of Power BI (MS Data Analytics Tool) has been ongoing since 2018, and this presentation is an update on a 5 year strategic plan. The board were advised of the benefits of Power BI in pulling together complex data sets, using internal and external data sources, as an integral part of decision making within the college.

The presenters were able to provide a live demonstration of the tool, using college Performance Indicators (PI's) as an example of the data that is available.

The board welcomed the presentation and live demonstration, noting the benefits of the tool, in providing quality insight across a range of topics.

The board raised a question on staff training, noting that this is often an area of challenge. The board were advised that training was being rolled out as part of the implementation of Power BI. The board highlighted the importance of data integrity, confidentiality and security, particularly in relation to personal data. The board were advised that this was an area of focus, and that access controls were in place and privacy policies had been updated, with oversight by the quality assurance team.

**Action 2 VP P & I: Present an update to the Board on the controls for data integrity and confidentiality and assurance.**

The board noted plans to develop predicative modelling to help identify areas of early intervention with students, who may benefit from additional support.

The board noted the benefits of this approach and were assured that predicative modelling would not be used to predict student success. The board thanked the presenters for a useful demonstration and discussion.

## **9. Strategic Risk Register**

The Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Services presented a revised Strategic Risk Register for approval of the risks and risk tolerance. The board were advised that, once approved, this would be used to capture the risk mitigations relative to the Board's assessment of risk tolerance.

The board discussed the risks noted for the board and committees and confirmed they were a fair reflection of the risks for the academic year 2020-21. The board discussed the risk tolerances, particularly in relation to the risks that are considered high inherent risk with a low risk tolerance.

**Action 3 VP F&CS: To review the definition of risk tolerance on the Strategic Risk Register to ensure the documentation is clear.**

The Chair asked each of the committee chairs to confirm agreement to the risks presented at each committee and it was confirmed that all the risks were considered to be a fair reflection. The Strategic Risk Register was approved.

## **10. Board Development**

The Board Governance Advisor presented the Board Development Plan as a consolidation of all Board and Committee Development activity. The board were asked to approve closure for all actions that were noted 'Recommend to Close' including the action to provide further insight on Cyber Security Arrangements to all Board Members, which was agreed by the Audit Committee. The board approved the closure of all actions and noted the paper.

## **Committee Business**

### **11. Learning and Teaching Committee: Update from Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee from 8 September 2021**

The presentation by the Trauma Responsive Team was noted as a highlight, enabling committee members to gain insight into the challenges facing the team and many students.

The committee noted the event of curriculum planning on 29 September and the presentation by the Workforce Development Team, highlighted as one of the best presentations from a staff team at the committee.

The committee chair noted the robust discussion on the sector performance, including the assurance provided from the actions already completed.

The committee chair welcomed guests to future committees, with positive feedback from board members who have attended as guests.

**12. Finance and General Purposes Committee: Update from the Chair of the Finance & General Purpose Committee from 9 September 2021.**

The presentation by the Children's Hearings Scotland team was noted as a highlight of the Committee, particularly around the ability to respond to changing demands. The speed of transition to a digital platform were noted as areas of best practice that has been shared across the college.

The committee noted the positive work of the Estates Team and highlighted the need for some additional information in the Business Development Report to aid discussion.

The committee chair highlighted the formation of the Financial Working Group to work through scenario's for the FFR.

The committee noted the complaints report and recommended that this report is presented to future Audit Committees, as an indicator of control effectiveness.

**13. Audit Committee: Update from the Chair of the Audit Committee from 24 June 2021.**

The presentation by the Students Funds Team was noted as a highlight of the Committee, sharing insight on the work that the team undertake.

The committee noted the Health & Safety Report and the work of the Health & Safety Team in keeping the college safe during COVID. The committee agreed to extend timelines for minor policy updates, to enable the team to focus on critical areas. An action was agreed to share PREVENT training with Board Members.

A report from the Head of Information Systems and Digital Infrastructure was welcomed and provided opportunity to discuss plans to achieve Cyber Essentials Plus. The committee agreed that the report provided by the Head of Information Systems and Digital Infrastructure met the objectives of the action raised at the Board Strategy Day in May 2021, and provided adequate insight into information security arrangements at the college.

The committee noted the required actions in the audit rolling plan and were given assurance on the revised deadlines.

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The committee noted the report from the Internal Audit Team on the Estates Plan and asked for the report to be amended for accuracy.

The Internal Auditor provided some insight on the sector update, with an action to investigate any possible lessons learned from a recent external event.

### **14. Nominations Committee: Update from Chair of Nominations Committee from 29 June 2021**

The committee noted plans to recruit 2 new Board Members, and recommended approval of the proposal to appoint Seonaid Crosby, pending approval from the Scottish Government and to complete further recruitment based on the needs identified in the skills matrix.

The committee approved the recommendation to combine the responsibilities of the Remuneration and Nominations Committees to create a new Chair's Committee. The responsibility to Chair the Chair's Committee will be shared with the Board Chair and Vice Chair, to ensure there is no conflict on matters of remuneration.

The Board approved both recommendations.

**Action 4 BGA: Applications will be sought from Non-Executive Board Members for a position on the new Chair's Committee.**

### **15. AOB**

There was no additional business noted.

### **16. Review of Meeting, Supporting Papers, Development Needs**

The Board of Governors were comfortable with the meeting and supporting papers presented.

### **17. Date of Next Meeting**

7 December 2021 at 4.30pm and noted plans to arrange the meeting at the college, pending confirmation that this complied with Scottish Government guidelines.