

**Board of Management Meeting
Held on Wednesday 24th March 2010**

Chair Jane McCartney

Present J Evans, I Todd, E Wu, B Johnstone, A Moyes, J Gallacher, E Wu,
J Gordon, D Burnett, T McDaid, C Ferguson, J McCartney.

Apologies T Matthews, C McDowall, J Heraghty.

Introductions

The Chair welcomed the new members to their first Board meeting and general introductions took place. Discussion then took place regarding which committee each member would join and how the meetings ran.

1. Declaration of Members' Interests

No declarations were received.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meetings held on 10th December 2009 and 3rd February 2010 were approved by the Board of Management.

3. Matters Arising

Board Training Information Day – the Chair expressed the hope that as many Board members as possible would attend the event on 23rd April 2010.

Additional Funding – the Principal stated that the College now had agreed places for up to 40 Indian students. He emphasised that all of these students would be paying full cost fees in advance of starting the course.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) – John Gordon asked for some more detail on VLE activity. Principal gave an update on what work was being done with the HMI on VLE improvement.

4. Principal's Report

Response to Consultation Curriculum in Glasgow City Centre – Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Proposals

Principal gave an update on the background to the merger underway to form a new city centre college. He added that the colleges in Lanarkshire had taken this opportunity to highlight the disproportionate allocation of WSUMs

between Glasgow and the Lanarkshire colleges. He then drew members' attention to the response received from the Funding Council.

Members then noted the graph highlighting the retention figures for the sector's fulltime college students. He stated that South Lanarkshire College had one of the highest success rates in the sector.

Ms Burnett asked if they could look at the students who drop out of the Glasgow Colleges who travel from Lanarkshire. She stated that the cost and length of travel may have impacted on these drop out levels. Further discussion then took place on methods of keeping Lanarkshire students in Lanarkshire.

Mr Todd asked if the Funding Council had given any indication that additional WSUMs may be released or was it purely a listening exercise. The Chair and Principal stated that the SFC had been in agreement at the meeting in regard to the disproportionate allocation of WSUMs. Members agreed it was still in the best interests of the College to continue this dialogue with the Funding Council.

Ms Evans asked what the maximum level activity would be for the current estate. The Principal stated that he estimated the College to maintain 64,000 WSUMs, if the accommodation was used properly and maximised through class size etc.

Partnership Actions for Continuing Employment (PACE)

Members were informed that the college had received an additional allocation of £130K to support activity associated with redundancies at the East Kilbride Freescale plant.

Scottish Parliament Motion

The Principal stated that Linda Fabiani had placed a motion before the Scottish Parliament in regard to the Aurora House constructed in partnership by South Lanarkshire College, Dawn Homes and a wide range of partner companies. The debate took place on Thursday 4th March 2010. Linda Fabiani led the debate, Andy Kerr, Margaret Mitchell, Alex Neil and Robin Harper participated. Martin Egan, Managing Director of Dawn Homes and college staff who participated in the project attended. The Principal outlined the positive effect that new technologies were having on the curriculum.

HMIE Activities

The Principal stated that the College had been very pleased to be asked to participate in two aspect reports and some sector leading practices would be published through this.

He added that South Lanarkshire College hosted a meeting between Ken Muir HMCI and the Lanarkshire principals to discuss concerns in regard to Curriculum for Excellence.

Investors in People (IIP)

Members were informed that the College had now been through review and the College had been awarded the Gold Standard. The Principal stated that only 2% of those who go forward for the IIP will achieve the Gold Award. He stated that 157 criteria were looked at over the week. The Principal stressed that it was important to note that this award was achieved from the work carried out in the College on a day to day basis and not a set of special presentations.

The Board then asked that their appreciation be noted and thanks be passed on to all those for the work carried out, with special thanks to Kirsten Oswald, Human Resources Management for the co-ordination of the inspection.

Discussion took place regarding the College newsletter and the use of social networking sites and what this would mean for the College.

Climate Change Action Plan

Update on the work done in this area. Ms Evans stated that this was an excellent document and was well presented. Members agreed and that the College was in a good position.

This will be forwarded to the Funding Council before the 31st March 2010.

5. Annual Report

Samples had been left on the table for members to consider. The Principal stated that the Student President would feature first in the document in line with the College's commitment to truly improving Student involvement.

6. Reports from the Committees

The Chair stated that the Committees would be presenting at the main Board on this occasion.

She then added that everyone had received the papers in advance and asked that Chair of each Committee take members through the business of their Committee.

Human Resources Committee

Ms McCartney drew members' attention to the content of the agenda of the Human Resources Committee.

The following areas were then highlighted -

Staff absence – the levels of absence have improved both for the quarter and over the yearly trend. The Board welcomed this.

Health Week had been very successful. Staff and students had participated in a wide range of events promoting a healthy life style.

Staff Development Days – update given. Members agreed that these training days were a real strength of the College and key that all staff were involved.

Recommendations –

It is recommended that the Human Resources Committee

- Note the ongoing staff training and development activity
- Note the staff absence figures for the fourth quarter period 2009, and the calendar year 2009
- Note the update in relation to staff wellbeing
- Note the staffing changes since the last meeting of the committee
- Note information in relation to staff grievance and disciplinary matters.

Members then agreed the recommendations.

Audit Committee

Mr Gordon drew members' attention to the content of the agenda for the Audit Committee.

The following areas were then highlighted -

Internal Audit reports – John Gordon explained that the Committee looks for points of interest and would be looking in detail at areas of medium or high risk.

EMA Audit - this report was less favourable than normal. Ms Evans stated that the Auditors needed to put these points into context so that the audit points are more understandable. It was agreed that the members of the Audit Committee would speak to the Auditors regarding the points which have been raised outside of the meeting.

Mr Gordon stated that the Committee was pleased with the way that audit was covered in the College.

Recommendations

It was recommended that the Audit Committee –

- Review the internal audit reports submitted by Messrs Wylie and Bisset and approve the management responses to the recommendation made in the reports as being appropriate.
- Review and note the audit document from Skills Development Scotland.
- Note the contents of the Technical Bulletin issued by Audit Scotland.

Members agreed the recommendations.

Finance Committee

Mr Gordon drew members' attention to the content of the agenda of the Finance Committee.

Mr Gallacher took members through the papers, he highlighted that this is an extremely well run college with a tight set of internal controls. He added that as a Board we should be aware that South Lanarkshire College was a financially healthy College which worked hard to stay within budget.

Management Accounts – Quarter and 6 months to January 2010 and forecast for year to July 2010

Mr McAllister explained the cycle of accounting in the College and how he presents the above document. He stressed that the salaries figure represents more than 70% of total college expenditure. To ensure salaries do not go over budget a monthly report was made to the SMT.

The Principal highlighted the challenges faced by the College and stressed that our core grant had dropped forcing the College to increase its alternative income. He stated that we had a healthy balance sheet but the main focus continued on the Profit and Loss Account. He pointed out that salaries had gone up against budget but this is because we were providing more alternative income classes.

For new members he highlighted ring-fenced monies received from the Funding Council and the way in which the College had to account for these monies. This included areas such as estates monies.

Mr McAllister highlighted that the College's great strength on the balance sheet. Members were reminded that some of the monies were ring-fenced for Lennartz and this money had to be kept in case it should have to be paid back at short notice.

Recommendations

It was recommended that members of the Finance Committee –

- Review and approve the Management Accounts for the 3 months and 6 months to January 2010 and the forecast for the year to July 2010.
- Review and approve the rate of depreciation to be utilised re the College's eco-friendly house and to add this to the accounting policies in force for the year.

The members agreed the recommendations.

Development Committee

The Principal drew members' attention to the content of the agenda of the Development Committee.

Quality Group Report

The Principal took members through the papers highlighting –

- Monitoring progress on self-evaluation action plans and how these are now embedded at CMT as part of the College quality enhancement processes.
- For the second year in succession the College won Scotland's Colleges: "College to Business award".
- Staffing of the Quality Unit has been increased by the secondment of an equivalence of 1.1 FTE.
- External Verification activity for session 2009/10.
- Internal Audit activity which monitors compliance has taken place.

- Profile the commitment to further improving learner engagement across the College continues to be a focus in session 2009/10.
- Development of the Lecturing Staff for assessor and verifier awards.
- HMIE visited the College as part of a sector aspect report on More Choices More Chances.
- Professional Discussion on enhancing Learning and Teaching has taken place.

Recommendations

It was recommended that members of the Development Committee –

- Support the use of the Action Plan by CMT to monitor progress on self-evaluation actions.
- Recognise the achievement of the College to Business Award.
- Note the increases to the quality unit staffing.
- Note the current external verification activity.
- Note the successful internal audits carried out to date.
- Support the promotion of improving learner engagement across the College.
- Support the planned staff development to provide currency in the areas of assessment and verification.
- Note the participation in the MCMC aspect report by HMIE.
- Support the PDLT process.

The members agreed the recommendations.

Marketing Report

The Principal took members through the papers highlighting –

Admission Policies and Procedures- members were taken through the changes made and the reasoning behind this. The Principal explained that an agreement had to be reached with students as to what was an appropriate level of support

and what the College was able to afford. The College solicitors had reviewed and approved the policy.

Events – The College is trying to find a balance between attending promotional events and ensuring a focus only on those courses which still have vacancies.

Learner Voice - now on display on the noticeboards showing how we have responded to their requests. “You said We did”

Ms McCarntey asked if the College is looking at the legislation in regard to vulnerable groups. Principal stated that mandatory on-line training takes place and all offers of employment are subject to disclosures being received.

Recommendations

It was recommended that members of the Development Committee –

- Approve the 2010 recruitment publications.
- Note the continuing increase in applications.
- Note the plans for the new International prospectus.
- Approve the publications.

The members agreed the recommendations.

7. Student Update

Mr Wu stated that the local Student Presidents would be meeting as a group. Members agreed that this would be a useful way of sharing ideas and best practice.

There being no further competent business the Chair closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance.