BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

DATE:	10th March 2022
AGENDA REF:	11-22
TITLE OF REPORT:	College Structures
AUTHOR AND CONTACT DETAILS	Stella McManus, Depute Principal Stella.mcmanus@slc.ac.uk
PURPOSE:	To inform the Board of potential structural changes in the college to provide structural stability and position the college to meet the external environment challenges.
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS/ DECISIONS:	The Board is asked to note proposed structure changes and area reshapes: • Not replace the current vacancies for the Associate Principal of Business and the Deputy Head of Business. Realign curriculum managers and their areas under the existing Associate Principals for Care and Construction. • Add resource to and reshape Quality, Student Services and Estates.
RISK	• That areas do not have the capacity to provide a good learning and working experience for staff and students, impacting on the operational running of the business.
RELEVANT STRATEGIC AIM:	• Successful Students • Highest Quality Education and Support • Sustainable Behaviours
SUMMARY OF REPORT:	• The external landscape has changed, and the college needs to adjust in order to deal with these challenges. • The college has substantial gaps in its structures, as well a very thin structure, which risks the operational running of the organisation should key staff leave or be absent for any length of time. In addition, senior college staff are unable • Key structure changes being proposed are to not replace the Associate Principal or the Deputy Head for Business roles, but instead align the Business Curriculum Managers under the Associate Principals for Care and Construction. • This would allow for curriculum area realignment, skills development opportunities for Curriculum Managers and more importantly allow for a further layer of support to be put in place at a course team leader level. The latter of which allows for a more responsive curriculum offer. • Business support areas such as Quality, Student Services and Estates will need to be reshaped and further resourced to ensure staff with the adequate skills are in place as well as stabilising the departments and allowing for innovation and growth.

	• Next steps include appropriate financial modelling of structure changes as well as consultation with all staff involved.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The College is now entering a new phase of development and challenges in light of changes to the external landscape. Opportunities and pressures exist to implement new methods of working and develop contemporary curriculum and service area structures to deal with a changing commercial landscape. This paper provides an overview of key structural changes that the college is likely to make following on from natural turnover of staff and recognising the need to stabilise structures as well as to allow capacity to further develop the college.

2 OUR CONTEXT

2.1 There are a number of challenges and opportunities emerging to which South Lanarkshire College must respond in order to secure, retain or even grow its share of the education and training market. These include:

- To continue to develop and diversify our curriculum offer and engage with employers regarding the design and delivery of our programmes and to deliver a costed curriculum. Develop skilled individuals that are employment ready and meet employer needs and the economic priorities of South Lanarkshire, Lanarkshire and beyond.
- To rethink our approach to how we work with employers through engaging, training and progressing their workforce, allowing us to respond more quickly to alternative income streams.
- To provide a robust approach to quality assurance and the development of teaching and learning whilst still retaining our track record of high-quality education and training.
- To re shape SLC's approach to student support and wellbeing in light of a greater need to be able to provide a wide range of guidance and support relating to recruitment, funding, careers, wellbeing and employability.
- To provide a digital infrastructure, which supports our staff and students, allowing us to improve performance through the interrogation of data, and ensures our business support services are robust.
- To provide a great learning environment for students and staff by continuing to improve our learning and social spaces through the development of an estate's masterplan, which supports our long-term curriculum offer and continues to ensure efficiencies.

2.2 SLC is a small college and relies heavily on key staff to perform both strategic and operational functions. Whilst the college mainly runs well operationally, there is not always space to develop, innovative and strategise. There is also a significant risk that should key members of staff leave or become unwell then it may impact on the operational running of the organisation.

2.3 Given the external context, identified annual priorities, Education Scotland feedback and recent staff turnover this would seem an appropriate opportunity to make small changes, in consultation with staff, which would seek to put in place additional operational support.

3 PROPOSED STRUCTURE CHANGES

3.1 Academic Management

3.2 There are currently vacancies for the Associate Principal of Business and the Deputy Head of Business, note the current Deputy Head is the interim Associate Principal and is retiring in June 2022. This faculty is the smallest both in terms of enrolments and credits, approximately 1,400 and 10,000 credits respectively. Construction has approximately 1,600 enrolments and 17,700 credits and Care is the largest faculty with around 2,000 enrolments and 20,000 credits.

3.3 It is proposed to not replace these roles, but instead incorporate the four Business Curriculum Managers and their areas under the two remaining experienced Associate Principals. There has already been change within the faculties as one of the Construction Curriculum Managers recently retired and another is going back into industry, which has already resulted in some curriculum realignment. In addition, areas like beauty and hairdressing in the Care Faculty have been in decline over the past four years so by reallocating areas it allows curriculum managers to increase their skills and portfolios.

3.4 Not replacing these senior roles would lead to financial savings (approximately £175k), which would allow for further support to be given at an operational curriculum level through introducing a formal course team leader role. Naturally further financial modelling and scenario planning would need to be done, however this structure would help us retain staff and support succession planning, as well as putting in place key operational support for the curriculum management team. This would also support our strategic aim of being able to diversify our income streams.

4 Quality, Learning and Teaching

4.1 The college only has one full time postholder in the Quality team. (Curriculum Manager for Quality). This role is very much centred around quality assurance and supports with assessment and evaluation. The significant gap is that there is no Learning and Teaching role nor a Digital Learning Technologist to support with developing teaching pedagogy and driving innovation. Work has already started on a Learning and Teaching Strategy, which is being done in consultation with the team.

5 Student Services

5.1 Whilst our students receive exceptional support through our student services team, the fragility of the service, which the team have been aware of for some time was highlighted by Education Scotland. A reshape would ensure the department had the appropriate resources and services in place to manage functional support areas and meet the needs of the College community effectively.

5.2 Current workload levels at senior levels are not sustainable with senior staff routinely delivering and supporting operational activity which impacts strategic and high-level activity. The identified changes focus on improved co-ordination and delivery of learner services, student recruitment and retention, mental health, safeguarding and welfare and

student engagement through the Student Association and our class representatives. In addition, it would formalise links with the support for learning curriculum team. This is something that the wider team have been consulted and involved in.

6 Estates

6.1 Recent issues with the campus as well as the need for a robust estate's strategy to support our future vision, has demonstrated that our current Estate's structure is currently not fit for purpose. It is proposed to have the area split into soft and hard facilities management, alongside health and safety and sustainability, which would put in place the right level of support for the team and the organisation as well as ensuring we meet our legislative reporting requirements.

7 TIMINGS AND NEXT STEPS

7.1 While some areas have already developed appropriate structures, such as Estates and Student Services, further work will need to be done on financial planning across the organisation to check the affordability of each approach. In addition, it is recognised that the "removal" of the Business Faculty may seem unsettling for staff especially in the current circumstances, so clear consultation and communication of the additional support that this would create would be needed, as this would potentially off set their main concerns. This additional line of support is also something both lecturers and curriculum managers have been requesting for a number of years.

7.2 The college is actively working on its budget now for 2022-23 and will conduct scenario planning as part of that exercise to ensure affordability, especially given the risks around credits and the "flat cash" budget scenario, and in that time will actively seek to find further efficiencies such as not automatically replacing vacant posts and reviewing non pay budgets. It is likely that the course team leader structure would not be in place until August 2023, to allow for full modelling and consultation.

7.3 Work has already started in mapping out the curriculum areas in business to see where they may fit best alongside existing areas in the Care and Construction Faculties. This will also involve the curriculum managers and lecturers in those areas. We would look to make announcements in April 2022 to the wider college regarding the non-replacement of those posts, by providing staff with the opportunity to consult on the integration.