

Minutes of the Board of Management meeting held on Tuesday 16 March 2021 at 1730 hours via Microsoft Teams

Present: A Kerr (Chair), J Carratt, P Donnelly, S Duffy, C Gibb, L Glen, R Harkness, P Hughes, P Hutchinson, Y Johnston, G McClarence, C McDonald, C McDowall, A McKechnie, R Smith

Apologies: S Dillett

In Attendance: K McAllister, S McManus, B Keegan, M Philp

1 Chair's Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone present to the meeting. It was noted that B Keegan (Interim Clerk to the Board) was attending for the first time and M Philp (external governance adviser) was supporting the meeting.

2 Declaration of Members' Interests

The standing declarations of interests of members, as available on the website, were noted as current. There were no specific interests declared with regard to the items on the agenda for the meeting.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 December 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

3.1 Matters Arising

It was noted that guidance on the Regional Outcome Agreement had been received and the interim Agreement had now been submitted to the Scottish Funding Council.

Full papers for each of the Committees had been circulated with the agenda. The Chair indicated he would request feedback on whether this was useful at the end of the meeting.

It was confirmed that the SLC Foundation Trust still required additional members and a volunteer Board member to support the work of the Trust.

Decision: Board members to contact P Hutchinson directly if interested in joining the SLC Foundation Trust.

Responsibility: Board members

Deadline: 8 June 2021

4 Chair's Update

The Chair provided an update on key issues including:

- A virtual Graduation Ceremony had been held on 2 February 2021 which had been well attended and had been covered on social media. It was hoped that this would return to being a live event in the future.
- Information was awaited from the Scottish Funding Council on dissolution of the regional arrangements. Further detail would be provided to Board members on an appropriate way forward as soon as this was known.

- The number of attempted CyberSecurity attacks was rising, which was increasing risk to colleges and businesses, particularly while there was reliance on virtual learning and home working. A recent survey had shown that 30% of students prefer online learning. A new system was being rolled out to replace ERASMUS.
- A meeting had taken place to discuss budget allocations for 2021-22.

5 Governance Matters

5.1 Reappointment of Members

The recommendations as set out in the paper that had been circulated were approved for onward transmission to NCL for approval.

Decision: To seek approval from the NCL for the reappointment of Board members as outlined in the paper that had been circulated.

Responsibility: Principal / Interim Clerk

Deadline: 31 March 2021

5.2 Templates for adoption to replace existing Constitution (Standing Orders; Scheme of Delegation; Election Regs for Staff)

Members approved the adoption of the templates as included within the papers with immediate effect. It was noted that these would replace the current Constitution and previous documents. Terms and conditions would also be rolled out to members over the coming weeks. Annual Development Meetings would be arranged between the Chair and each member and would follow the Framework set out by CDN for this.

Decisions:

- To approve the adoption of the Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation and Election Regulations for staff.
- To issue terms and conditions to Board members.
- To arrange Annual Development Meetings between the Chair and all Board members individually.

Responsibility: Interim Clerk

Deadline: 8 June 2021

5.3 External Effectiveness Review

The Scottish Funding Council had agreed an extension for the external effectiveness review for South Lanarkshire College to end of June 2021. Two bids had been received to undertake the review and the Chair and Principal would meet to agree who should undertake this. Members would be kept updated on progress. It was noted that the action plan from the previous External Effectiveness Review had been fully completed.

Decision: To agree on the successful bid for undertaking the External Effectiveness Review and arrange for this to progress in accordance with the extended timescale.

Responsibility: Chair / Principal

Deadline: 31 March 2021

5.4 Equality Monitoring Information

Members agreed to participate in the survey and to provide the information requested.

Decision: To issue the survey information to Board members for completion.

Responsibility: Principal

Deadline: 8 June 2021

6 College Business Report

It was highlighted that this was a new style report and feedback would be welcomed. Updates given included:

- Covid restrictions were gradually being eased by the Scottish Government, and there was a return to campus permitted for up to 5% of students (circa 250 students for SLC), with priority given to practical areas of study. The majority of learning and teaching continued to be online. A transition plan was in place to allow small numbers of staff to come into College to reconnect. Active discussions were taking place for learners who may be unable to complete their courses this academic year and may need to defer should restrictions not be eased quickly enough. It was noted that risks to learners were being reduced wherever possible and options such as delivery over the summer were being explored.
- Staff were increasingly feeling anxious about the situation and a return to campus and a phased approach was being explored. Support was being offered via initiatives such as classes and Teams coffees. An organisational stress survey would be issued over the coming year to better understand how staff were feeling and this had been discussed by the HR Committee.
- A refresh of marketing and brand was being progressed and would be considered by the Development Committee in due course.
- The EIS had announced 15 days national strike action between now and May, although the first strike day had been suspended. UNISON had now accepted a pay offer.
- Backlog maintenance estates works were discussed in detail with two capital contracts being put forward for approval. It was noted that there was a desire to have a contractual commitment to undertake the work prior to 31 March 2021 in order to avoid any potential risk of clawback. It was noted that the works had been identified by SFC as being essential and there was a requirement to undertake them in the near future.

Decision: To approve the award of the two capital contracts as outlined in the paper.

Responsibility: Principal

Deadline: 31 March 2021

7 Update from the Committees

7.1 Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee Chair provided an overview of the recent meeting. The expenditure and payables internal audit report had provided reassurance. A progress report on internal audit work for the year had been received and showed all activity was on track.

The risk register had been reviewed and current main risks were identified as:

- Keeping people on board as blended/remote working continues
- SFC uncertainty around funding
- Changes in regional arrangements

Last year the internal auditor appointment had been extended for one year due to Covid. The Committee had agreed that it was appropriate to tender for internal auditors now.

Members of the Committee had reviewed the remit and suggested changes were included in the Board papers.

Decision: To approve the proposed changes to the Audit and Risk Committee remit.

Responsibility: Interim Clerk

Deadline: 31 March 2021

7.2. Finance and Resources Committee

The Finance and Resources Committee Chair provided an overview of the recent meeting. The financial impact of Covid had been looked at and a monetary value attached to various risks. The mid-year financial forecast had been examined and this was included within the Board papers.

It was noted that some initiatives were referred to within the minutes. It was clarified that the only initiative currently being taken forward with the Young Person's Guarantee Fund. It was highlighted that it was important to focus only on the key initiatives for the college to maximise impact due to the tight deadlines involved.

Members of the Committee had reviewed the remit and suggested changes were included in the Board papers.

Decision: To approve the proposed changes to the Finance and Resources Committee remit.

Responsibility: Interim Clerk

Deadline: 31 March 2021

7.3 Development Committee

The Development Committee Chair provided an overview of the recent meeting. Two audits had been completed and there was one to complete. The performance indicator for attainment was at 78.1% which was a small drop. National PIs were not yet available and a comparison would be undertaken once available and it was anticipated that SLC would continue to be the top performing college.

There had been a discussion about learner engagement and a return to campus. It had been noted that the Block 1 learner survey had a response rate of 46% when previous response rates had been over 70%, probably due to the Covid situation.

The Students' Association Constitution had been considered and was recommended to the Board for approval. This was considered fully under item 8 of the Board agenda.

Members of the Committee had reviewed the remit and suggested changes were included in the Board papers. This included a proposal to change the name of the Committee to the Curriculum, Quality and Development Committee.

Decision: To approve the proposed changes to the Development Committee remit, including the name change to Curriculum, Quality and Development Committee.

Responsibility: Interim Clerk

Deadline: 31 March 2021

7.4 Human Resources Committee

The Human Resources Committee Chair provided an overview of the recent meeting which was held on 18 February 2021. Highlights included:

- Recent senior staff appointments were noted
- A new format of report had been introduced
- Absence management training had been rolled out, which empowered lower levels of staff to take on and give better support to team members
- Several health and wellbeing initiatives had been undertaken to support staff with the current situation and give some flexibility around working arrangements
- An HSE organisational stress risk assessment would be undertaken
- Investors in People reaccreditation was due for renewal at the end of the year

Members of the Committee had reviewed the remit and suggested changes were included in the Board papers. The Chair of the Committee asked for additional time to review this before circulating to Board members for final approval.

Decisions:

- To circulate the Human Resources Committee remit to Board members for approval by email once the Committee Chair had had an opportunity to fully review it.

Responsibility: Interim Clerk

Deadline: 31 March 2021

- To look at any benchmarking information that may be available in the sector on staff attendance levels and productivity levels since working from home.

Responsibility: Principal

Deadline: 8 June 2021

8 Students' Association Update

An update from the Students' Association was provided, which demonstrated significant levels of activity and support provided to learners including:

- Health and safety
- Student mental health and wellbeing
- Student engagement
- Training
- Awards
- Student support initiatives
- Recent and forthcoming events

Board members commented that it was pleasing to see such a positive report with so many initiatives taken forward to support and engage students.

Decision: To approve the Students' Association Constitution.

Responsibility: Student Board Members

Deadline: 31 March 2021

9 AOB

9.1 Review of meeting and papers

There was a discussion about the new format of some of the reports and the Committee reporting structure adopted for this meeting. Feedback included:

- The addition of links to strategic objectives within papers and the Committee remits was useful and could potentially be rolled out to other reports in the future
- Committee Chairs generally liked the move away from only having minutes to speak to, however the size of the papers for review was onerous. The use of hyperlinks to additional documentation may be useful. Preparing a summary paper at the same time as the minutes might be useful for Chairs and members to ensure relevant highlights are given to the Board
- Having all documentation available as one Boardpack rather than as several files may be easier for members
- The new business report may be enhanced with the addition of KPIs. Using less words and more visual documentation may also make reporting easier for authors in drafting as well as members in reviewing.

Decision: A commitment was given to continue to review the format of papers and Boardpacks and changes would be taken forward incrementally over a period of time, with feedback being taken at each meeting.

Responsibility: Interim Clerk **Deadline:** incrementally at each meeting

10 **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 8 June 2021 at 1730 hours

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