



**Board of Management Meeting
Principal's Update
Held on 4th October 2016**

Present J McCartney (Chair), J Carratt, S Dillett, S Duffy, C Gibb, R Harkness, I Johnstone, M Mitchell, S McKillop, P Robertson, J Smittth, G Stillie.

Apologies R Hutchinson, L McTavish, R Ralston, C McDowall, J Gallacher.

In Attendance A Allan, K McAllister, A Martin.

Presentation from – Andrew Brawley HMI, Education Scotland.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first full meeting of the new Board of Management of South Lanarkshire College. She then asked those members who had not been able to attend the Board Induction Day on 20th October 2016 to introduce themselves - (Gill Stillie, Stuart Dillett and Melissa Mitchell). These members had subsequently had an Induction Session with the Clerk to the Board.

2. Declaration of Members' Interests

Ms Martin, Clerk to the Board informed members that all Registers of Interest were now on the College Website.

No further declarations of interests were received.

**3. Catch-Up Discussion with South Lanarkshire College
Andrew Brawley HMI**

Mr Brawley took members through –

- College and Regional Update
- Faculty Discussions (Construction and Care)
- Learner Engagement – meetings with staff, learners, Student Association
- Quality Culture – Corporate Parenting, PREVENT, Safeguarding

He made the point that the College was a very high performing organisation.

Schedule of Meetings 2016/2017 -

Explanation given that these dates were, where possible, aligned to the Regional Strategic Body meetings to facilitate reporting mechanisms. Ms McCartney stated that all documentation would be approved by the SLC Board before going forward to The Lanarkshire Board.

Committee Meeting Dates and Membership -

Ms Martin stated that flexibility with dates and times of meetings would be accommodated and also members could join the meeting through teleconferencing or video conferencing.

Annual Activity Calendar 2016-2017 – Board of Management -

Ms Martin explained that this was a tool used by the College Management Team and that the Chair had asked that this be drawn up for the Board. She added that this was a first draft and would be an evolving document.

Discussion took place on this and additions and improvements that could be made. Ms Gibb stated that she would share information on planned and unplanned message and a communication matrix.

5. Principal's Update – October 2016

Visits to the College

The College has hosted a number of key visits over the past few months.

John Swinney, Depute First Minister – 8th August 2016

Mr Swinney was the key speaker at this year's All Staff Conference. This was an excellent start to the new academic year for the staff. As part of his visit, Mr Swinney presented the College with the Investors in People Platinum Award. Prior to Mr Swinney's address he had discussion with the Principal in regard to the impact that Brexit would have on the College finances.

Shirley-Anne Somerville, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science – 29th September 2016

Ms Somerville had requested this visit. She met with the Senior Management Team and received updates on the work of each Faculty. She also visited two classes and had open discussion with students.

Ms Somerville made it clear that the Government had no plans for further mergers or changes to the legislation. She also stated that she was of the firm view that the only way the South Lanarkshire College would be involved in a merger would be if the Board of South Lanarkshire College wished this to happen.

Mike Russell, Scottish Brexit Minister

Mr Russell has invited the Principal to meet with him for lunch to discuss the implications of Brexit on Further Education and funding. The date is still to be confirmed.

Recruitment

The Principal informed the Board that the credits for last year had been audited and signed off. He stressed that many Colleges would not meet the target set for this year and that yet again South Lanarkshire would experience unmet demand.

Discussion took place regarding the allocation of credits and the work that had and continued to be done to gain additional core activity from the Funding Council. Mr Dillett stressed that the matter of the value of credit also required to be addressed. Explanation was given the value of a credit varied across the sector and indeed in the Region. The Principal stated that work was ongoing to address this at least regionally. The Chair of the Regional Strategic Body had agreed in principle to move towards a common value of a credit within Lanarkshire.

Generated Credits - as at 21st September 2016 was 42,954 which is 4,063 short of the College's annual credit target of 47,017. Explanation was given on the growth in Construction Faculty over the year as students attend on block release. At this point the College is 6% up on the position at this time last year. The Principal stated that it was hoped that additional credits will be allocated by the Scottish Funding Council. Members questioned the issues faced with workforce planning and how this could be managed in relation to this format of allocation. The Principal stated that temporary FTE were allocated as required in line with the additional credits received. Any new permanent posts would be agreed through the Human Resources Committee.

ESF Activity – this remains an area of concern to the College both in terms of the level of funding and the likely withdrawal of activity. The Principal explained that at present the College was in year 3 of a 5 year project and this accounted for approximately 13% of the overall activity (£1.56 million each year).

Members discussed what the Principal could bring to bear with Mr Russell and the obvious requirement to seek agreement for protection of the College and sector as a whole. Ideas were given in regard to lobbying and the Principal asked that members await an update on this meeting with Mr Russell.

Ms McCartney informed members that this featured on the College risk register and that the College must plan for the worst case scenario.

College Leaver Destination Statistics 2014/2015

The Scottish Funding Council publish statistic for all colleges and regions in regard to the percentage of students who have a positive outcome on leaving college. This is measured by either securing employment or going into further study.

The Principal explained that South Lanarkshire sat third in this table with all other colleges having a lower success rate. South Lanarkshire College achieved a 91.7% positive outcome with the Scottish average being 82.6%.

Ms Johnstone asked if within these destination statistics did the College gather geographical information. **The Principal stated that this would be an excellent**

statistic to draw down and he would pass this on to the Quality Unit for the next data collection exercise.

Trade Union Activity

The Principal stated that the College had always maintained extremely strong relations with both trade unions. There had always been a one table approach, with support and teaching staff being awarded the same percentage pay settlement.

The sector has moved back to National Bargaining and although settlement has been reached with EIS, there is ongoing industrial on the part of Unison and its members.

Unison has had two days full industrial action and now are operating on 'short of strike action' as an ongoing programme – this involves the withdrawal of first aid, fire evacuation and personal evacuation plans. The College has managed to remain open for day classes but on both occasions closed for evening classes. This arose from the limited number of first aiders in the evening when the majority of teaching staff are off campus.

The Principal stated that whilst wishing to remain sympathetic, the management team must put the best interests of the student population to the forefront. To this end legal advice had been sought and the College is now employing an external agency to provide first aid cover but of course at a cost to the College. This does not breach any guidelines.

Members gave support to the required actions and noted the paper tabled by the Principal outlining the legal advice given.

6. Student Association Update

Jack Smith, Student President updated the members on the work and achievements of the Student Association since the last Board meeting –

NUS Strategic Framework for Effective Student Associations – busy working on the NUS Framework and Operational Plan. A lot of work in ongoing to ensure the South Lanarkshire College Student Association maintains and continues to strengthen links with New College Lanarkshire College's Student Association and NUS.

Induction Talks – the President and Vice President have been delivering induction talks to all classes. This is a ten minute update on the Student Association and the hopes for progression. Mr Smith and Ms Mitchell stated that these sessions had been well received and very beneficial in allowing them to meet new students.

Members agreed that this is an excellent opportunity to be afforded to both the Association and the student groups.

Freshers' Event – took place from 31st August till 4th September 2016. It was hailed a great success by the student body. A large number of exhibitors were on campus offering information, guidance and advice.

Capital Radio was on campus and lots of 'freebies' were handed out.

LGBT Charter Mark – the President and Vice President have undergone LGBT training and are proud to be working towards the LGBT Youth Scotland Charter Mark. The Student Association is part of the College's Champion's Group working on the Action Plan towards the Charter. Mr Smith stressed how much the Student Association had enjoyed marching alongside other students and staff in the Glasgow Pride March in August 2016.

Student Officers – nominations now underway. The polls are through Moodle, making it accessible to all. Most classes now have two class representatives in place.

Healthy Eating Campaign – meetings have taken place between Inspire, the College catering provider and the Student Association to work together to promote healthy eating and lifestyle.

Members highlighted the importance of health and wellbeing and its place within the Scottish Government's agenda. It was suggested that it would be useful to ask students what their main health issues are. **Mr Smith stated he would take this forward with Student Services.**

Discussion then took place regarding the overall health and wellbeing initiatives ongoing across the College. The Principal highlighted the subsidies to healthy options in the canteen, cycle to work campaign, cycle shelter and repair areas and a new cycle officer who will work with the Student Association.

Ms Harkness stated that wellbeing also encompassed mental health. The College has employed a counsellor for students and staff available 3 days per week. There has been a large demand for her services and already there is a waiting list. The Principal stressed that the College has always been acutely aware of the level of high risk groups within the student population and has over the years ran ongoing mental health campaigns.

The College also has Mindfulness classes once a week, free of charge for students and staff and the chaplaincy and humanist service is also available.

Hoodies – fabulous new selection of hoodies came in this year and have just as quickly been snapped up by students. Mr Smith highlighted that these hoodies were very popular and are subsidised by the College, selling to the students for £5. The Principal stated that these were excellent for the student body but also considered as a strong form of marketing.

Facebook – the Student Association is trying more and more to increase its profile on social media. The reach on line at this point is up by 81%. Mr Smith stated that this allowed the Association to communicate with students on a regular basis and promote the College profile further.

Members agreed that this was the way forward but enquired about the monitoring of posts etc. Ms Harkness stated that this was done in-house and so far no real issues had arisen. Mr Smith informed members that the Student Association have undergone social media training.

Mr Smith stressed the excellent relationship the Association had with staff across the College, receiving guidance and assistance from many. He stated that this support enhanced the work of the Student Association as a whole and the roles of the officers.

Members were heartened to see so many initiatives in place and to witness the obvious commitment of the Student Representatives to support and inform the student body in this delicate and important area.

7. Student Information System

South Lanarkshire College's Student Information Systems and Information Technology and Support systems are combined under the leadership and management of our Information Systems Manager. This gives the College considerable strength in terms of systems development.

The College carried out an analysis of requirements and solutions a number of years ago and decided that the most effective and efficient option was to develop systems "in-house" to best meet student, staff and stakeholder needs. Following consultation with students it was clear that systems had to be "phone-enabled" as 80% of students indicated that was their preferred mode of communication. The first major systems to be developed were the attendance and timetabling systems. All systems are developed on a platform with no annual licence fees and no purchase fees.

Key development principles are:

- Identify and meet user needs – students; staff, and external agencies.
- Ensure systems don't carry unnecessary redundancy.
- Integrate all systems.
- Have a single point of data entry.
- Configure systems to run on multiple formats – phone; tablet; PC etc.
- Help staff do their jobs better.
- Provide accurate and up-to-date reports.
- Avoid high initial capital charges and being "held to ransom" by software companies for annual licence fees based on student headcount.
- Minimise fees for integrating/modifying different systems.

All systems are accessible through the College's portal which is a "one-stop-shop" for information and data. Students' personal data is protected. College documents available through the portal are automatically part of a robust document control system.

Major systems developed so far: Attendance; Timetabling; Admissions; Curriculum Planning and Quality Assurance processes. Under development: Human Resources System; Bursaries; and On-line-applications.

Mr Allan took members through a presentation of the system live. Members were impressed by its versatility and the accessibility of both students and staff to live and current information. All agreed the impressiveness of this being created in-house and were not surprised that so many external bodies had shown an interest in the system.

8. Financial Forecast Return 2016/17

The Head of Finance, Mr McAllister, distributed papers covering the College budget for 2016/17. He explained that the Board had received and approved the Budget at the June 2016 meeting in its Management Accounts format. However it was only in draft, as the Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) had not been finalised at that time. He stated that the ROA was now agreed and that it had not been necessary to amend the original Budget. The Budget was thus being presented to the Board in both its Management Accounts format and in the Scottish Funding Council's Financial Forecasting Return (FFR) format. The latter had to be formally approved by the Board and for this approval to be communicated to SFC.

Members asked for assurances from the Chair that no changes had been made to the document since its presentation to the June Board of Management. This was given and after some discussion, approval was duly received.

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