

<b>Meeting:</b> Planning & Resource Committee	<b>Venue:</b> Virtual Meeting via Zoom	<b>Date:</b> Thursday, 17 December 2020	<b>Time:</b> 9.00am - 11.00am
<b>Minute Taken By:</b> Jackie Kane	<b>Sederunt:</b> Duncan Robb (Chair), Marian Docherty, Joyce Clark, Brian Lister, Gary Husband	<b>Apologies:</b> Tommy Angus, Dorothy Welch	<b>Absences:</b>

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No.	Agenda Item	Action	When	By Whom	Status
1.	Apologies	Apologies were received from Tommy Angus and Dorothy Welch.			
2.	Purpose of Meeting	The Chair of PARC advised the committee on the purpose of the meeting. The meeting was to review the revised Financial Strategy and accompanying cashflow and to recommend to the Board that PARC endorsed the application to seek a short-term cash advance from SFC.	17.12.20	PARC	Information
3.	College Finance:				
	Revised Financial Strategy Overview (Paper 1)	<p>The Principal spoke to the revised Financial Strategy and the following was noted:</p> <p><b>Curriculum Developments</b></p> <p>Newbattle has been successful over the past 10 years in expanding and enriching its curriculum, in partnership with a wide range of local and national agencies. We now plan to prioritise 3 developments, in collaboration with HE partners. Both are enhanced by the college's Forest College programme and residential facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In partnership with Queen Margaret University, we plan to develop and deliver an HNC Childhood Practice with Outdoor Learning, offering progression to an Early Years degree course. Response is awaited from QMU.</li> <li>- In partnership with the University of Edinburgh, we plan to develop and deliver an HNC Working with Communities, offering progression to the new MA Learning in Communities. University of Edinburgh are in the process of requesting a transfer of monies</li> </ul>	17.12.20	PARC	Ongoing

		<p>with SFC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Newbattle has developed a positive partnership with the Workers' Educational Association (WEA), a national voluntary organisation operating across Scotland. The WEA offers our Adult Achievement Awards to adult learners, who are typically marginalised and with few formal qualifications. We now plan to extend this partnership to enable our full-time Preparation for Further Education Course (SCQF Level 4) to be delivered across the country, with support from WEA staff. This course, devised in partnership with Midlothian Council, has proved to be a very successful transition route from community-based programmes to full-time college courses. By co-delivering the course with WEA, Newbattle would extend its national role and its income. The WEA also plans to offer Newbattle's Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards in the north east of Scotland.</li> </ul> <p>All the above curriculum partnerships will develop transition routes from community-based childcare and community development programmes. The HNC Childhood Practice is also central to Scottish Government's commitment to expand childcare places. We continue to explore the potential of developing an outdoor learning nursery, in partnership with Midlothian Council. As well as generating commercial income, the nursery would offer work placements for students on the HNC Childhood Practice with Outdoor Learning.</p> <p>Our online awards programmes (Adult Achievement Awards/Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards) have increased in popularity across Scotland since March 2020. With funding from Scottish Government, we have appointed a Forest College Co-ordinator, who is extending partnerships with the public and private sector. We have also received a grant of £20K from NHS Lothian, overseen by Midlothian Mental Health Strategic Planning Group, to support the mental health of vulnerable young people in the senior phase through outdoor learning programmes. The success of our Forest College programme was recognised in the 2020 RSPB Nature of Scotland Awards. Newbattle received a Youth and</p>			
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		<p>Education Award for its work supporting community involvement, particularly for disadvantaged young people. Given the national focus on the green agenda and the unique nature of our Adult Achievement Awards and Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards, we anticipate that income from both awards will increase to £40K by 2022.</p> <p><b>Cash Flow Forecast</b></p> <p>A Cash Flow Forecast up to December 2021 was attached to the strategy. This forecast was submitted to our auditors, Henderson Loggie. In view of this forecast, we wish to request a short-term cash advance from SFC, as discussed at our meeting on 12 Nov 2020. We anticipate that we may require £350K by late May 2021 but this will be dependent upon the programme of work related to our 2020-21 capital funding. We will continue to update SFC on our cash flow situation on a monthly basis.</p> <p>SFC advised that they would prepare a letter of comfort to provide our auditors that SFC support the college financially for the next 12 months and that the college is a going concern.</p> <p>The Board agreed the draft Financial Strategy at their meeting in November. PARC endorsed the amendments to the Financial Strategy which will be confirmed with SFC today. It is hoped that a decision from SFC will be received before the Christmas Break.</p>			
	<p>Commercial Activities/ International House</p>	<p>The Business &amp; Resource Manager spoke to the Financial Strategy and the following was noted:</p> <p>Despite the impact of the Coronavirus, Newbattle has several opportunities to develop corporate business in the next two years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- With support from our Trustees, the extensive residency refurbishment has now been completed. This offers the opportunity to extend options to corporate clients and increase annual income.</li> </ul>	<p>17.12.20</p>	<p>PARC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our international business, which constituted approximately 60% of our commercial income prior to the pandemic, amounted to roughly £200K annually. There has been no international business since March 2020. We are now in discussion with 2 international language schools to increase flexibility and generate additional income from summer 2021. Following discussion with International House, we propose that the existing summer contract is terminated and replaced by a year-round off-season contract. This would enable the college to respond more flexibly to booking requests for the residency from a range of partners. The second language school, UKLC is also keen to book off-season business. They have a different market from International House and the college is, therefore, well positioned to benefit from both partnerships from summer 2021.</li> <li>- The Business Park, which Newbattle manages for the Trustees, generates approximately £180,000 for the college every year. The Trustees have now committed to a major refurbishment of the Business Park in 2020-21. This will upgrade the roads, replace overhead cables and refurbish a disused unit. The unit in question will be subdivided into 9 units, each generating approximately £5K annually for the college. This will increase our total annual income from the Business Park to £225K and also afford the college the opportunity to increase rents for all units.</li> <li>- Newbattle's innovative Forest College programme and 125-acre estate offer corporate potential for a range of partners. Options include offering courses in: residential team-building; outdoor learning for people of all ages; outdoor cultural pursuits; heritage crafts; eco therapy; field craft. In collaboration with The Institute for Outdoor Learning and NHS Lothian, we are also exploring the potential of outdoor learning programmes to improve mental health and well-being. These include a range of therapies and outdoor counselling activities for both the public and private sector.</li> </ul> <p>University of Wisconsin have cancelled their programme in Scotland for</p>			
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		<p>the foreseeable future.</p> <p>PARC supported the decision to terminate the contract with International House and replace with a year-round off-season contract.</p>			
	Capital Programme	<p>With support from SFC and our Trustees since 2018, the college has undertaken a major refurbishment of the main building, residency and external teaching areas. This enabled Newbattle to extend course provision and corporate opportunities prior to the Coronavirus. We have now refreshed the condition survey completed 5 years ago and await the report in Jan 2021. This will enable us to finalise the project costs for our 2020-21 capital grant programme (£1.4m). We intend to prioritise the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The extension of online learning is now crucial to curriculum development and to the learning experience of students of all ages. We will prioritise the development of our ICT services in our 2020-21 capital programme. Our current ICT arrangements have been identified as high risk in the College Risk Register. Amongst other things, we need to develop a virtual learning platform to enhance the student learning experience and offer opportunities to deliver courses across Scotland and beyond. We will develop our ICT strategy following our Board Planning Day in Jan 2021.</li> <li>- We will complete essential repairs and refurbishment to the main building, as indicated in the survey report. These are likely to include roof work, masonry repairs and window refurbishment.</li> <li>- We will establish additional learning and teaching areas in the grounds to extend the curriculum and develop corporate opportunities for the college, as outlined above. This includes the establishment of a modular eco-building in the estate to house an outdoor nursery. This will be planned in partnership with Midlothian Council and Queen Margaret University.</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that Agenor, ICT Consultants, would give a presentation to the Board during their Planning Day on 21 January 2021. It was agreed that it would be helpful to involve Gordon Hope, Edinburgh College and</p>			

		Newbattle's ICT Technician. Their knowledge would help inform questions to Agenor.			
4.	AOCB	<p><b>CDN</b> It was agreed that the Principal would contact Jim Metcalfe, CDN to follow up on previous meetings that took place before lockdown. Gary Husband advised that he would like to be part of this follow-up meeting.</p> <p><b>Research Funding Councils</b> The committee agreed to contact in the New Year, Research Funding Councils as there is funding available for research projects.</p> <p>The committee expressed their thanks to SMT on efforts during a demanding few years and advised that they have the committee and Board's full support.</p>	17.12.20	MD	Ongoing
5.	Date of Next Meeting	Monday, 15 February 2021, 9.00am - 11.00am			