

Meeting: Board of Directors		Venue: Edwin Muir Room		Date: Thursday, 25 November 2021		Time: 4.30pm	
Minute Taken By: Jackie Kane		Sederunt: Brian Lister (Chair), Andy McGoff, David Hamer, Dorothy Welch, Duncan Robb, Gary Husband, Gill Hogg, Jan Polley, Joyce Clark, Lisa Angus, Marlene Gill, Neil Hargraves, Richard Butt, Richard Dockrell, Stuart Moir, Stuart Capperault; Roddy Henry from item 11.		Apologies: Tommy Angus, Pete Smith, Michael Gillam (Student Representative)		Absences:	
No.	Agenda Item	Action	When	By Whom	Status		
1.	Apologies and Welcome	The Chair welcomed the Board to the final meeting of 2021.	25.11.21	BL	Complete		
		Apologies were received from Tommy Angus, Pete Smith and Michael Gillam (Student Representative).	25.11.21	JK	Complete		
		Angus Donaldson has stepped down from the Board on 18 November 2021. The Chair and Principal will contact the University of Aberdeen to seek a replacement.	25.11.21	BL/RH	Ongoing		
		This is also Richard Butt's last Board Meeting. The Chair and Principal are in contact with Queen Margaret University for his replacement.	25.11.21	BL/RH	Ongoing		
2.	Minute of Previous Meeting held on 23 September 2021 (Paper 1)	The Minute of the Meeting held on 23 September 2021 was approved as an accurate record.	25.11.21	Board Complete			
3.	Matters Arising:						
	Proposed EIS Recognition Agreement - written response from EIS	No formal response from EIS re the suggested Board amendments has been received.	25.11.21	BL	Ongoing		
		The Learning & Teaching Representative on the Board advised that there had been no formal meeting this semester.	25.11.21	NH	Ongoing		
	Energy crisis to be considered in 2021-2022	The college has paid less compared to last year having changed suppliers to EDF. Prices have been guaranteed for the next year.	25.11.21	JC	Information		

	budget	Support going forward will be carried out through the APUC Framework.	25.11.21	JC	Information
	Commercial activity and long-term assumptions	This item is noted under agenda item 9.	25.11.21	JC	Information
FOR DECISION					
4.	Items from the Audit Committee on 16 November 2021:	The Chair of the Audit Committee reported on the following:	25.11.21	GH	Information
	College Financial Statements 2020-2021 (Paper 2)	<p>Year ending 31 July 2021 indicates a net surplus of £706K and reserves of £588K. Removing the actuarial gain on the pension scheme, the result was a deficit of £51K.</p> <p>The college has incurred a similar deficit to the prior year despite the challenges of the pandemic, with the college reopening in late April. Contingent funding provided by the Trustees remained unspent as of 31 July 2021.</p> <p>No issues arose from testing to indicate that income and expenditure had not been correctly allocated to appropriate funds.</p> <p>It was noted there is a gender unbalance and that an Action Plan would address this item. Other issues can be discussed during the Strategy Planning Day.</p> <p>SFC have agreed to provide a letter of comfort to allow judgement that the college is a going concern.</p> <p>The Board confirmed that the Chair and Principal would sign off the Financial Statements on behalf of the Board.</p>	25.11.21	GH	Information
			20.1.22	Board	Ongoing
			25.11.21	SFC	Ongoing
			25.11.21	BL/RH	Information
	College Annual Report on External Audit	The college has reasonable controls in place and there was no evidence of any management override over these controls, journal entries or in more subjective areas such as judgements and estimates including	25.11.21	GH	Information

2020-2021 (Paper 3)	depreciation and the assumptions used within the actuarial report of the defined benefit pension liability.	25.11.21	SMT/Board	Complete
	The previous year internal control points were noted and it was recommended that dual authorisation is implemented on the online banking facility. It was agreed that any payments over £3K would require dual authorisation.	25.11.21	Board	Complete
	Declaration of Interest Forms have been updated to include all potential related parties and now states the interests of spouse, partner or immediate family.	25.11.21	Board	Complete
Credits Audit Report 2020-2021 (Paper 4)	The Board endorsed the Letter of Representation included in the Annual Report on external audit 2020-2021.	25.11.21	Board	Complete
	There were no concerns.	25.11.21	Board	Information
Student Support Funds and Education Maintenance Audit Reports 2020-2021 (Paper 5)	The Board endorsed the Credits Audit Report 2020-2021.	25.11.21	Board	Complete
	Three recommendations were noted. The Auditors were content with management responses.	25.11.21	SMT	Information
Internal Audit Annual Report 2020-2021 (Paper 6)	The Board endorsed the Student Support Funds and Education Maintenance Audit Reports 2020-2021.	25.11.21	Board	Complete
	The Internal Audit for 2020-2021 was on financial controls. In general, the results were broadly positive and reflected an established internal control environment where key responsibilities and required controls are understood.	25.11.21	Audit	Information
	The Internal Auditor was content with management responses to the four recommendations.	25.11.21	SMT	Information
	The Board endorsed the Internal Audit Annual Report 2020-2021.	25.11.21	Board	Complete
	As this was the last internal audit to be carried out by the University of Edinburgh. The Board thanked Ben Wood, Senior Internal Auditor, for	25.11.21	Board	Complete

		<p>the support over the past years.</p> <p>BDO have been appointed as Internal Auditors from 2022 and their first internal audit will be based on health and safety particularly around Covid. The audit will commence in January 2022.</p>	January 2022	Audit	Information
5.	Outcome Agreement 2021-2022 (Paper 7)	<p>The Board discussed the Outcome Agreement 2021-2022 and the following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference to co-deliver with the Workers Education Association Scotland an online Preparation for Further Education Course, the Board agreed that the wording should indicate that this course would only run subject to funding initiatives. • Attainment - the Board agreed that the college should include that they are addressing/acknowledging/reviewing and are actively monitoring attainment. • Credits - include the request to extend credits. Set realistic targets and work towards an aspirational target. • SIMD 10 - figures are low and the Board agreed that the focus should be on widening access for this group. The Board suggested that it would be helpful to see a trend over the past years. <p>The Board felt they were not in a position to accept the Outcome Agreement and agreed that it would be helpful for the Depute Principal to request an extension from SFC. This would give the Board an opportunity to email any comments.</p>	25.11.21	Board	Ongoing
FOR DISCUSSION					
6.	Principal's Report (Paper 8)	<p>The Business & Resource Manager and Depute Principal spoke to the Principal's Report and the following was noted:</p> <p>COVID-19 Restrictions and Impact</p> <p>The college continues to operate under the arrangements that have been in place since the start of the Academic Year to mitigate the risk of Coronavirus transmission. The need to continue to adhere to the arrangements has been reiterated to staff and students, along with the advice to wash hands regularly, clean communal equipment after use</p>	25.11.21	LA/JC	Ongoing

and undertake a LFD (lateral flow) test twice per week. LFD test kits are available from reception. The importance of being double vaccinated has also been reiterated to staff and students.

The measures in place have enabled all classes to be taught in-person this year, which has been welcomed and valued by the students. However, wider travel restrictions have resulted in a delay to the Wisconsin University visits. This will have an impact on the college's budget in the new year, as outlined in the Business and Resource Manager's report on commercial activity.

The message coming from Scottish Government is that COVID case numbers, although reduced, remain 'stubbornly high' nationally. As winter approaches, there is the prospect that flu and colds add to the strain on health and the NHS. The rising instances of infection moving west across Europe is also concerning the Government. The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills held a meeting with all college and university principals on 11 November and asked the sectors to maintain the restrictions and protections already in place.

The college Health and Safety Committee has a standing agenda item on COVID and the COVID-19 Group continues to meet regularly to monitor the situation and deal with any issues arising.

Capital Programme and Estates

The capital programme continues, and good progress is being made. The Estates and Facilities Manager is keeping SMT, staff and students updated and aware of any noise or potential disruption. The project is being managed well and disruption kept to a minimum.

The stonework and repairs to all except the south and front elevations of the main house should be completed before the end of the calendar year. The aim is to complete all these works by the end of February 2022.

The renovation of Unit 1G in the Business Park will also commence soon, with the aim of it being available for use as a teaching space by

the end of March 2022.

The management of the woodland remains an issue and a number of trees are, or will shortly be, in need of attention. The Chair of the Trustees is aware of the situation. The woodland is an important part of the college's character and, increasingly, its curriculum. The Community Woodland Ranger has developed a Woodland Management Plan with funding support from Scottish Forestry and aims to seek further financial support for priority works. The Director of LANTRA Scotland and the Deputy Chief Executive of CONFOR are visiting the college on 6 December 2021 to discuss and advise on potential curriculum developments. The management of the woodland will feature in that discussion.

Scottish Funding Council and Education Scotland

A meeting with the college's SFC Outcome Agreement Manager and the Interim Deputy Director (Access, Learning and Outcomes) took place on 22 November. Among other things, clarity was sought on the terms of the cash advance available to the college to mitigate the loss of income from the Wisconsin contract due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. SFC advised that they would discuss this with their Finance Team.

The college expects to receive an indicative funding offer for 2022/2023 by Spring.

The Board are keen to engage with conversations going forward and requested meeting dates be circulated.

HM Inspectors from Education Scotland will conduct a Progress Visit to the college, probably sometime in January, as part of the external quality assurance arrangements for colleges. The review team will explore the impact of the pandemic on the college and its learners, and how the college has responded and recovered. As usual, the visit will focus on the learners' experience and the effectiveness of the college's arrangements to ensure and maintain a high-quality learning

		<p>environment. The Depute Principal is leading the preparations for the visit. A written report will be shared with the college and SFC following the visit: the report will not be published. The visit provides a good opportunity to highlight the college's strengths and clearly identify areas for further development in support of our internal quality enhancement plans.</p> <p>Employers' Association and National Bargaining A meeting of the Employers' Association was held over 10 and 11 November. The national support staff pay and terms and conditions claim for 2021-22, and the pay claim for teaching staff for 2021-22 were discussed along with an update on job evaluation and General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) registration. Negotiations continue.</p> <p>A proposal and draft business case for a revised Employers' Association were also considered, and members requested more information before agreeing to the recommendations.</p>			
7.	Digital Transformation Project (Paper 9)	<p>It was agreed by the Digital Transformation Project Board Working Group to accept the Resource Telecom Group (RTG) revised quotation for the infrastructure phase of the project. There are delays due to the difficulties in the delivery time with desktops and laptops. However, RTG believe these will be delivered early January.</p> <p>Costs also include Agenor's consultancy fee and Datavita. Due to delays, there is an additional month's costs from Agenor. They have committed to this one additional month's time to include time in December and to complete this phase of the project to the end of January.</p> <p>Agenor have offered advice on the necessary upskilling of the college's IT Technician. This is essential to the project and a training and development programme will be put in place.</p> <p>The college used synchronisation manager to set up accounts, and this stopped working and was no longer supported by Microsoft. This cost</p>	25.11.21	JC	Ongoing

		<p>was to set up a new service with Azure and migrate the data.</p> <p>Additional costs include migration costs from Edinburgh College to the new infrastructure. The dependency on Edinburgh College will be removed by the end of December.</p> <p>Previous annual IT software costs, which had been discussed previously with the Board, have reduced. These costs will be revenue costs and not capital</p> <p>A VLE is being processed through the APUC framework and the Business & Resource Manager awaits a report. Gary Husband offered his assistance with this.</p> <p>It was noted that the Business & Resource Manager had put in a phenomenal amount of work and negotiating with Board members to drive down the initial costs presented by Agenor.</p> <p>Support has been sought from the College Development Network (CDN) to assist with staff development associated with the project. The response from CDN was very positive and an initial meeting is scheduled for 26 November 2021 to scope out the college's staff development needs and a programme of engagement.</p>			
8.	Curriculum and Student Activity (Paper 10)	<p>The Board noted the recruitment update and the following was highlighted from the Curriculum and Student Activity Report presented by the Depute Principal:</p> <p>Students have made a good start to their studies and are settling in. Those with support for learning needs are being supported and this is monitored regularly across the Learning and Teaching Team.</p> <p>Recruitment has begun for the Preparation for Further Education course starting in Semester 2 with information being shared on multiple social media platforms and across partner agencies.</p> <p>Forest College</p>	25.11.21	LA	Ongoing

It has been a busy and productive few months at Forest College. This has included:

Midlothian Community Mental Health Funded Programme has enabled a number of young people from local Secondary schools to participate in accredited Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards (FOLAs). In addition, you adults are currently taking part in awards, supported by funding from He in Mind and Community Mental Health projects.

During the October school break a family event *Magic in the Woods* took place with families selected by Midlothian Community Lifelong Learning.

There are a total of fourteen Approved Assessment Centres (ACCs) now delivering FOLAs. The college hosted a successful FOLA Standardisation Day on 30.10.21 which provided an opportunity to review the qualification and share good practice.

The Peter Wright Outdoor Learning Hub
The official opening took place on 05.11.21, bringing together family, friends and colleagues from across the outdoor learning profession.

Gaelic
The Early Years Practitioners' Gaelic Language Programme (2019-2021) had a successful immersion week at Ceòlas in South Uist, in September.

Beginners Gaelic has started as an opportunity for all SWAP students. The second online Gaelic language programme has commenced for beginners and intermediates, for learners in the Midlothian community and the central belt.

Adult Achievement Awards (AAA)
There are now seventeen AAA partner organisations across Scotland. The college continue to host training sessions for new tutors. Future plans include hosting a AAA Standardisation Day for partner organisations.

		<p>A level 6 AAA has been added to all SWAP courses as an additional opportunity.</p> <p>Partnerships In partnership with the Workers Education Association (WEA) Scotland, the college had submitted a proposal to SFC to co-deliver the Preparation for Further Education (SCQF level 4) in selected areas throughout Scotland. This proposal was unsuccessful but has been shared with Scottish Government to identify other funding opportunities.</p> <p>The proposal submitted to Midlothian Council for funding from Young Person's Guarantee Employability Fund was unsuccessful. A proposal has been submitted to Foundation Scotland PHP Community Impact Fund to work in partnership with Newbattle Medical Centre to provide Social Prescribing options. A response is expected by 17.12.21. Early discussions have taken place with Midlothian Council around providing another Unpaid Workers Project in April/May 2022.</p> <p>Information Care Experienced Week 2021 provided an opportunity for a small group of care experienced students to raise awareness. This included the creation of a poster and a lunchtime panel session, all organised by the students.</p> <p>A delayed Students Awards Ceremony will take place on 27 November 2021 in college for all students who successfully completed in 2020/21.</p>			
9.	Commercial Activity (Paper 11)	<p>The Board noted the Commercial Activity Report presented by the Business & Resource Manager and the following was highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afternoon teas and tours are not being actively promoted due to restrictions. • Conferences, events, weddings, residential, funeral teas are proving a good source of income. • A member of staff is providing services for the Job Evaluation 	25.11.21	JC	Information

		<p>exercise and we have been invoicing Colleges Scotland, and this is the main source of income from general sales in 2020 and 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 2019 was the last language school stay. No income for 2020 and so far none for 2021. • Office rent was not paid in 2020. • There is only one student in the residences. • The launch of our new commercial website in 2020 has brought in enquiries, and even with restrictions, conferences etc., compare well with 2019. However, student board and accommodation will see a significant decrease in income. The main focus will be on Wisconsin and language schools. <p>Wisconsin Wisconsin River Falls remain in contact with us on a regular basis and a meeting is being set up to introduce the new Principal.</p> <p>Wisconsin Stout are almost at the stage of signing a contract.</p> <p>Wisconsin Eu Claire have booked 14 students for five nights. They are part of the Wisconsin University groups that visited Dalkeith Palace and we hope to have a continuing relationship with them going forward.</p> <p>It is unlikely Wisconsin White Water will visit in 2022. A meeting is set up to with a view to 2023.</p> <p>Arkansas University have enquired about three weeks in May/ June with 45 students. This booking came through Queen Margaret University. They have received costs and we await a decision.</p> <p>Language Schools International House have visited the college and are still keen to work with us. However, their main market is China and Chinese students will not be visiting in 2022.</p> <p>UKLC and St Andrew's are in competition with each other for the same market - Spanish, Italian and Hungarian. At present, these countries</p>			
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		are planning to travel and there is interest from agents for Newbattle. However, this will be depended on travel restrictions. Business Park A rent increase is planned for 2022.			
10.	Risk Register (Paper 12)	Key issues were highlighted in the Business & Resource Manager's Report. A separate IT Project Risk Register has been requested by the Board and the Audit Committee. The Business & Resource Manager agreed process this request for the next meeting.	25.11.21 25.11.21	JC JC	Information Ongoing
11.	Strategic Planning Day - 20 January 2021 (Paper 13)	The Board noted the proposed timeline and process for the Strategic Planning Day.	20.1.22	Board	Ongoing
FOR INFORMATION					
12.	Chairs Committee Report from meeting held on 18 November 2021 (Paper 14)	The Minute from the Meeting held on 18 November 2021 was noted and the following was highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair of Trustees continues to attend the Chairs' Committee Meetings to receive an overview on the college's finance and to update the committee on any Trustees' issues. A draft letter of agreement is still awaited from the Trustees. The Chair and Principal agreed to follow this up at the Trustees meeting in January 2022. Jan Polley joined the Chairs' Committee Meeting in relation to the review of sub committee's self-evaluation. The Chairs supported Jan's general approach and asked that the detail be set out in a paper for discussion at the next committee meeting on 13 January 2022. The committee recommended to the Board the need to appoint Vice Chairs to support committee infrastructure. 	25.11.21 January 2022 13.1.22 13.1.22	Board RH/BL Chairs/JP Chairs	Information Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
13.	Learning & Teaching Committee Report from	The Minute from the Meeting held on 10 November was noted and the following was highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee discussed the purpose of standardisation and quality 	25.11.21	RD	Ongoing

	meeting held on 10 November 2021 (Paper 15)	assurance and the positive feedback received from FOLA partners. The committee looked forward to receiving regular updates on FOLAs and AAAs. It was agreed that quality assurance plans would be presented at the next Learning & Teaching Committee meeting and be a standard agenda item during certain times of the year. This would include outcomes of external verification and standardisation with centres who deliver the Newbattle awards.			
14.	Planning & Resource Committee Report from meeting held on 1 November 2021 (Paper 16)	The Minute of the Meeting held on 1 November was noted and the following was highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the highlights had been covered by the Business & Resource Manager however policies remain outstanding and the need to produce an Energy Policy looking at the college's carbon footprint. • Inflation on the capital costs are being monitored. 	25.11.21	DR	Ongoing
15.	Health & Safety Committee Report from meeting held on 4 November 2021 (Paper 17)	The Minute of the Meeting held on 4 November was noted and the following was highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The college continues to adhere to the Scottish Government guidelines in relation to Covid. 	25.11.21	RH	Ongoing
16.	AOCB	There was no other competent business.	25.11.21	Board	Complete
17.	Date of Next Meeting	Thursday, 20 January 2022, 9.00am - 12.30pm, Strategic Planning Day	20.1.22	Board	Information