

**MINUTES of the MEETING of the BOARD OF MANAGEMENT held via Skype,  
on Tuesday 30 June 2020**

- PRESENT:** Sarah Burton, Robyn Kennedy, Innis Montgomery, Chris O'Neil, John Wilson, Kelly Mackenzie, George Gunn, Vivienne Mackie, Leanne MacKenzie, Gillian Galloway, Samantha Cribb, Andy Gray, Sally Blyth, Donald MacKenzie, Fiona Neilson, Tina Stones, Tom Speirs
- CHAIR:** Sarah Burton
- APOLOGIES:** None
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Depute Principal Planning and Student Experience  
Depute Principal Academic Development  
Director of Finance  
Director of External Relations  
Director of Student Experience  
Director of Curriculum  
Director of Research and Innovation  
Board Secretary  
Barbara Nelson, Education Scotland  
Ruth McFadyen

**Presentation – Progress Visit Report, Education Scotland**

The Chair welcomed Barbara Nelson from Education Scotland who is providing the Board of Management with an update on the Progress Visit Report. It was noted that although there is still work to be done by the College on the whole this report was positive and improvements have already begun. The Board of Management were advised that this report focused on 4 enhanced themes which were discussed in depth. At the end of the presentation it was noted that a copy of the full report is available on the Education Scotland website and that the Board Secretary will arrange circulation of this to all Board Members. The Chair expressed her thanks to Barbara for the update.

*Barbara Nelson left the Meeting at this point.*

*Samantha Cribb joined the Meeting at this point.*

**Welcome**

The Chair extended a welcome to Ruth McFadyen the new HISA President and advised all that Hazel Allen had stood down from the Board of Management. Thanks were given to Hazel for all her work over the years on both the Audit Committee and the Board of Management.

**Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were noted.

## 1. **MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING HELD ON 30 APRIL 2020**

The minutes of the Board of Management Meeting held on 30 April 2020 were **AGREED** as a correct record and were **APPROVED**.

## 2. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

- GDPR – The Board Secretary will continue to liaise with those who still require to complete the GDPR training.
- Minutes of Board of Management Meeting – 20 February 2020 – The Board Secretary has been able to gain access to the building to retrieve her notes and the minutes of the meeting will be available for approval at the Board of Management Meeting scheduled for 6 October 2020.
- Meeting Calendar 20-21 – this item is on the agenda.
- Governance of Financial Recovery Plan – it was confirmed that the PR&R Committee formed a core part of this governance and that the paper previously presented would not require amendment. It was **AGREED** that this can be removed from the list.
- Committee Representation – The Chair advised that discussions with HISA over representation on other Committees would continue following the External Effectiveness Review being completed. This action will remain on the list.
- ALF Monies – It was confirmed that it is believed that the unrestricted funds discussed previously were the funds which were put into the ALF. It was **AGREED** that this can be removed from the list.
- Sports Pitch – to remain on the list.
- OSCR Return – to remain on the list.

## 3. **GOVERNANCE MATTERS FOR BOARD APPROVAL**

### 3a. **Approval for Appointment to the Board of Management**

The Board Secretary sought approval for the following appointments to the Board of Management:

- Appointment of Donald MacKenzie as a full Board Member – The Board of Management **RATIFIED** this appointment.
- Appointment of Donald MacKenzie as Chair of the F&GP Committee – The Board of Management **APPROVED** this recommendation.
- The Appointment of John Wilson as Vice-Chair for the HR Committee – The Board of Management **APPROVED** this recommendation.

### 3b. **Meeting Calendar 2020-2021**

The Board Secretary advised the Board of Management that the proposed schedule for Board and Committee Meetings is in line with the EO timescales for receipt of Annual Accounts and that it has been updated to ensure that there are no conflicts for the Finance Director in his shared capacity with North Highland College and ourselves.

The Board of Management requested that there be definitive end times for all early morning meetings to ensure that Board Members can adapt their schedules accordingly. It was **NOTED** that the Board Secretary will liaise with all Chairs to ensure that timings are allocated for each agenda item to provide guidance to all attending.

The Board of Management **APPROVED** the Meeting Calendar for 2020-21.

#### 4. **POLICIES FOR DECISION**

**a. Data Protection Policy** – This policy was approved by the Audit Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020. The Board of Management **APPROVED** the policy.

**b. Secure Handling, Use, Storage and Retention of Disclosure Information Policy** – This policy was approved by the Audit Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020. The Board of Management **APPROVED** the policy.

**c. Food Safety & Allergen Management Policy** – This policy was approved by the Audit Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020. The Board of Management **APPROVED** the policy.

**d. Sustainable Procurement Policy** – This policy was approved by the F&GP Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The Board of Management **APPROVED** the policy.

**e. Student Support Funds Policy** – This policy was approved by the F&GP Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The Board of Management **APPROVED** the policy.

**f. FE Fee Waiver Policy** – The Board of Management advised that this policy had been approved by the F&GP Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Due to the delay in the Policy coming to a Board of Management meeting for final approval a copy of the minutes of the F&GP Committee for 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019 had been attached to the Policy within the papers. The Board of Management **APPROVED** the policy.

**g. Safeguarding Policy** – This policy was approved by the LT&R Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The Board of Management **APPROVED** the policy.

**h. PVG Policy** – This policy was approved by the LT&R Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The Board of Management **APPROVED** the policy.

**g. FE Guidance Policy** – This policy was approved by the LT&R Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The Board of Management **APPROVED** the policy.

#### 5. **AUDIT COMMITTEE MATTERS – CONFIDENTIAL**

##### **Extension to BDO Contract**

The Director of Finance advised the Board of Management that the Audit Committee would like to request approval of an extension to the BDO contract for a further year. Approval from the Audit Committee was given on

2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020. A joint process for appointing Internal Auditors is being discussed within the Audit Committee. The Board of Management noted that we would expect to see procurement of Internal Audits taking place at the beginning of 2021.

The Board **APPROVED** the one-year extension to the BDO contract.

## 6. **F&GP COMMITTEE MATTERS – CONFIDENTIAL**

### a. **Revenue Budget 20-21**

The Board of Management were advised that approval was being sought for the Revenue Budget for 20-21. This budget has been subject to F&GP scrutiny and the F&GP Committee have recommended it for approval by the Board of Management.

The Director of Finance gave the Board of Management a brief background to the budgets.

Following a confidential discussion the Board of Management expressed their thanks for the amount of work and effort which the finance team had put into the budgets.

*The Depute Principal Planning and Student Experience and the Director of Curriculum joined the meeting at this point.*

The Board **APPROVED** the Budgets for 20-21.

### b. **Capital Expenditure Plan 20-21**

The Director of Finance advised that the Capital Expenditure Plan for 20-21 gave an indicative idea of the likely spend on capital items. This Plan was recommended for Board approval by the F&GP Committee.

The Board of Management **APPROVED** the Capital Expenditure Plan for 20-21.

### c. **Financial Forecast Return**

The Director of Finance gave his apologies for the lateness of the circulation of this forecast to the Board of Management.

The Financial Forecast Return was **APPROVED** by the Board of Management.

## 7. **ANNUAL EVALUATION EXERCISE – BOARD CHAIR**

At this point the Chair left the meeting along with the Co-opted Board Member and the Director of Finance, Director of External Relations, Director of Student Experience, Director of Curriculum and the Director of Research and Innovation and the Board of Management undertook the annual evaluation exercise.

All members who left the meeting for the evaluation exercise returned to the meeting.

## **8. FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE – CONFIDENTIAL**

The Board of Management were advised that this paper had been discussed at the Chairs Meeting held on 25 June 2020. Within the paper the Principal captured the history of why the plan was needed. Confidential discussions took place.

The Financial Recovery Plan now includes red, amber and green columns and highlights what targets have been achieved. Savings are shown as annualised savings.

The Board of Management highlighted that the Financial Recovery Plan does not reference the student experience and that there is a risk that by reducing staff that students will not receive the expected student experience however it was noted that the SMT will continue to monitor feedback from students to ensure that they are not adversely impacted.

A lengthy confidential discussion took place with regards the ELCC.

With regards the VSS scheme the Board of Management were advised that all applications to the scheme are being looked at on a case by case basis and the Principal confirmed the protocol for all applications.

## **9. REPORT ON STUDENT NUMBERS**

The Depute Principal Planning and Student Experience advised the Board of Management that FE Credits is currently 3.4% down due to Covid-19. The SFC have advised that Colleges will not be penalised for not meeting targets.

With regards applications, the Board of Management noted that although applications are down in both FE and HE; acceptance of places has increased compared to last year. Offers of places are being accepted quickly although there are still concerns over teaching moving online.

Whilst Covid-19 is proving challenging for delivering teaching in the campus it has allowed us to explore opportunities for efficiencies.

The Board of Management **AGREED** that the Learning, Teaching and Resources Committee would discuss and look at the impact which mergers within the Central Belt may be having with regards FE.

## **10. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Principal advised that some areas of his report have already been discussed and that the main points were confidentially discussed with the Board of Management.

A further lengthy confidential discussion surrounding the VSS took place.

## **11. PROPOSED FEES 2020/21**

The Board of Management noted that a paper which is being prepared by the Director of Finance will be circulated to all F&GP Committee members for approval. Once the F&GP Committee has given their approval the paper will then be sent out to the Board of Management for their approval to be given online.

## **12. RISK REGISTER**

The Principal advised the Board of Management that our risk register has been updated to include risks posed by Covid-19. The register has been reviewed thoroughly and all mitigating actions updated where required.

A further discussion regarding Covid-19 took place focusing on student concerns such as:

- Hot Meal Service
- Inequalities due to social backgrounds
- Worries over when the campus may be open and whether they will be learning online or in person.

The Board of Management noted that the SMT are continuing consultations with unions over phase 3 of lockdown and a working timetable should be available at the end of the week however it is thought that most HE students will be online for semester 1 with them hopefully able to attend campus for semester 2. However, we remain cognisant that it is thought that a spike may be seen in November and are continuing to build contingencies if this is the case.

## **13. DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF BOARD COMMITTEES (CONFIDENTIAL)**

The Board of Management noted the following draft minutes of meetings:

- a) Chairs Committee – 28 May 2020
- b) Longman Disposal Committee – 28 April 2020
- c) Longman Disposal Committee – 27 May 2020
- d) New Campus Committee – 27 May 2020

## **14. ESTATES REPORT**

The Depute Principal – Academic Development gave an update to the Board of Management which highlighted and reiterated our plans around Covid-19 including the possible adjustments of rooms to allow teaching within campus.

## **15. PARTNERSHIP CONSOLIDATION**

The Chair gave the Board of Management a brief verbal update regarding the consolidation of accounts within the partnership, referring to a recently circulated independent report on this matter.

## **16. CONTRACT VARIATION – MONTAGU EVANS**

The Board of Management noted the contract variation to Montagu Evans.

**17. MINISTERIAL LETTERS OF GUIDANCE**

The Board of Management noted the contents of the following:

- a) Interim Letter of Guidance to SFC
- b) Letter to SFC – Regarding the Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability.

**18. AOCB**

The Chair of the Board of Management offered her thanks to the outgoing HISA president for all his input over the past year.

The Chair of the Board of Management also offered her thanks to the Director of Organisational Development for all her work supporting the Board.

**19. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Date of Next Meeting: 6 October 2020 at 4.30 p.m.

*Sarah Burton*

Signed by the Chair:

Date: 06/10/2020