

Board of Management

Minute of the Meeting of the Board of Management, Dumfries & Galloway College held on Tuesday, 8 December 2020 at 13:00hrs, Remote via Microsoft Teams.

Present:

Hugh Carr (Chair)	Ann Hill
Delia Holland (Vice Chair)	Naomi Johnson
Janet Brennan	Pat Kirby
Bronwyn Brown (Student Association)	Susan Livermore
Joanna Campbell (Principal)	Karen McGahan
Amy Farley (Student Association)	Rob Orr
Ros Francis	Ian White
John Henderson	

In Attendance:

Douglas Dickson, VP Learning, Skills and Student Experience	Dorothy McMinn, PA to the Principal (Minute taker)
David Eardley, Director of Audit & Assurance, Azets	Keith Ross, HR Consultant
Lorraine Grierson Secretary to the Board	Steve Uphill, VP Finance & Commercial Services
Professor Ron Hill, External Evaluator, CDN	

Apologies:

Robbie Thomas and Andy Glen.

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Professor RH, as external evaluator and DE, Azets (External Auditors).

Apologies were received on behalf of Andy Glen and Robbie Thomas.

2. Declaration of Interest

Members agreed to indicate declarations of interest as appropriate throughout the meeting.

3. Minute of the Meeting held on 20 October 2020

The Minute of the meeting held on 20 October 2020 was approved.

4. Matters Arising:

No matters arising.

Items for Approval:

5. External Audit Annual Report and Financial Accounts

and

6 Financial Accounts

These items were taken together.

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DE spoke to the Draft External Audit Annual Report for 2019/20 which had been issued and advised that it was anticipated that 'clean' or unqualified opinions would be issued.

It was agreed that wording around the Governance Statement would be amended, following comments from internal auditors, and sign off on the Statement was expected by 11 December 2020.

... Once the Statement had been finalised by the Chair and Chair of the Audit Committee, this would return to the Audit Committee for finalisation and be circulated electronically to the Board of Management for approval. The deadline for submission was confirmed as 31 December 2020.

ACTION: Final statements are to be provided to Board members for approval.

It was agreed that the Governance Statement would be amended to show the Vice Chair and SIM as separate positions.

ACTION: LG is to liaise with VP Finance to amend the Governance Statement and detail the separate positions.

AH asked for clarification around the change of pace detailed within the Transformation Plan. JC confirmed that digitisation requirements would be accelerated to produce cost savings more quickly.

...

DE and SU agreed to clarify the composition of student Board members as at 1 August 2020.

ACTION: SU is to check start date of Student Association Representatives for use in the Annual Report.

DE confirmed that he had sight of internal audit documentation and the external auditors would take cognisance of any comments provided to them by the internal auditors.

7. **Appointment of Senior Independent Member**

The Board discussed the nomination of Ros Francis to the post of Senior Independent Member (SIM). JB proposed the appointment of RF for a tenure of three years, and this was seconded by PK and DH, and approved by the Board

Items for Discussion:

8. **Principal's update**

JC provided an update on key areas. Redacted – confidential to the board ...:

9. **COVID-19 update**

JC provided Board members with an update regarding COVID-19 measures:

- An announcement relating to Tiers in Scotland was expected later today.
- School students attending College would not be required to wear masks in class.
- An SQA announcement was expected on 9 December 2020 relating to the examination diet.

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- IT equipment had been provided to staff working remotely.
- Additional funding had been received from SFC in order to increase counsellor support to students.
- Curriculum portfolio reviews had recently been completed.
- A student PULSE survey had taken place and comments had been received regarding online engagement and assessments. AF stated that the flexibility offered around online learning was appreciated by students.

RF asked what plans were in place for the continuation of online teaching longer term. D D explained that there was a strategic project being developed. Staff training had so far involved the use of systems rather than pedagogy. The strategic project, expected to run for circa 18 months, would focus on how to deliver online and also how to assess online.

It was agreed that newly appointed senior staff would be given the opportunity to meet with Board members as part of their induction process.

ACTION: On appointment, senior staff would be provided the opportunity to meet with Board members. LG to liaise with HR to have this linked to the induction process.

The Chair thanked the ELT and other staff for their work on COVID procedures for both staff and students, and for the College's response to Covid-19.

10. Transformation Plan Update

Redacted – confidential to the board ...

11. Chair's Update

HC provided a verbal update to members:

- Fiona Armstrong, Lord Lieutenant of Dumfries, had visited the campus to bestow a British Empire Medal on A Martin, Princes Trust Team Leader.
- Board Member appraisal meetings were being progressed.
- The recruitment campaign for new Board Members continued, with 26 applications having been received. The recruitment panel would consist of HC, D H, AH, IW and EA, Chair of Borders College.
- Professor RH would observe both Board and Committee Meetings in January 2021 as part of his review of Board Effectiveness, with a report by April 2021.
- The College HMI Inspector would be invited to attend a future Board Meeting.
- A review and objective setting meeting had taken place with the Principal and once the objectives were agreed, they would be presented to the Remuneration Committee for approval.
- It was agreed that DH would Chair the Learning and Teaching Committee on the current Chair's departure until a replacement is found.
- A skills assessment for each Committee would be carried out.
- A Board/Committee annual agenda cycle is being developed by LG in conjunction with Committee Chairs.

12. Board Development Day Update

HC gave a verbal update on the recent virtual Board Development day which had taken place on 12 November 2020 and it was agreed that a further event would be scheduled on completion of the Board member recruitment process.

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13 **Strategic Risk Register/COVID**

The content of the Strategic and COVID Risk Registers was noted and it was confirmed that the registers had been reviewed by individual Committees.

It was agreed that the auditors would be given sight of the registers to ensure that a robust framework was in place and correct review processes were in place.

LG would review the scoring for Item 2.3 (Failure to achieve credits).
RF stated that as the Transformation Plan Phase 1 had now completed she would have expected the scoring on Item 2.1 to reduce, however, the scored remained the same. It was agreed that LG would take to F&G Committee for review.

The Strategic/COVID Risk Registers would be presented to the next cycle of Board Committee meetings.

NJ left the meeting.

Items for Noting:

14. **Committee Minutes for Noting:**

Members noted the content of the following Minutes:

- 14.1 F&GP Committee (17 November 2020)
- 14.2 HR Committee (10 November 2020)
- 14.3 Learning and Teaching Committee (17 November 2020)
- 14.4 Remuneration Committee (10 November 2020)

LG and PD will carry out a full review of the Terms of Reference for Board of Management and Board Committees.

HR Committee

The ELT are keen to support staff with their mental health and wellbeing at this particularly difficult time and it was confirmed that the College had initiated an I Matter Forum to explore a variety of support methods/events.

...

Janet Brennan left the meeting.

Learning and Teaching Committee

Plans were being developed to increase the number of students on campus in the New Year, which is hoped will improve engagement.

A high number of member apologies were noted for the Learning and Teaching Committee. The Chair noted that strengthening the Committee was a priority following the Board recruitment process.

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Remuneration Committee

A self-assessment questionnaire had been distributed to Board members for completion and once all questionnaires were returned this would form part of a performance review framework process.

15. **College Policies and Procedures**

A review of College policies and procedures had been undertaken and these had been agreed by senior management and the College LJNC. It was noted that a Recognition Procedures Agreement (RPA) had also been agreed.

The HR Team would provide a summary to staff, which gave detail of the policies and procedures and directed staff to the complete version of the policy/procedure if required.

- 15.1 Organisational Change Policy
- 15.2 Redeployment Policy
- 15.3 Remote Working Policy
- 15.4 Homeworking Policy
- 15.5 Travel and TOIL Policy
- 15.6 Training Agreement Procedure

JC left the meeting.

This would be KR's last Board meeting, and the Chair thanked him for his work during the last 14 months.

16. **Outcome Agreement Process**

DD advised that the Scottish Funding Council had recently published guidance around Interim Outcome Agreements for Colleges and Universities AY 2020-21. The guidance aims to outline steps required to ensure an interim agreement is in place, which provides assurance on use of allocated funding. D informed members that there were no targets for the current academic year, which was considered an "emergency year". Outcome information should be submitted by early February 2020 and would be endorsed by the Board of Management prior to submission.

The second strand to the guidance was around an Evaluative Report Enhancement Plan (EREP). There had been no plan produced last year, however, the sector was being asked to develop an interim evaluation of activities.

17 **Any Other Business**

It was noted that EIS FELA had an indicative ballot out to its members relating to the use of instructors rather than lecturers. The ballot was due to close during December 2020.

LG would carry out a full review of Board access to Admincontrol.

ACTION: LG is to review Admincontrol access for Board members.

With regards future Board/Committee meetings, consideration would be given to holding meetings early evening.

ACTION: LG to ascertain whether evening meetings would be acceptable to Board members.

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- 18 **Date and time of next meeting**
The next Board of Management Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday,
26 January 2021.