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BORDERS COLLEGE REGIONAL BOARD



Actions from the
Meeting of the Regional Board held at 5.30pm on
Thursday 3 December 2020

Item	Action	Responsibility and Date	Action Status
94/20	It has been agreed to add up to two informal strategic sessions each term to the Board calendar	I Earp/S McColm	Complete
74/20	A response to the SFC review Phase 1 report to be discussed at next meeting	A Cox	Complete
101/20	Contact auditors to find out why last minute change occurred and provide feedback from the Audit Chair	H Robertson	Complete
	Renewal costs of the Infrastructure contract will be queried with APUC	H Robertson	Complete
	Typos on pages 5 and 6 of the Sustainability Strategy will be amended	A Cox	Complete
	Include an update re savings in the Principal's Report to the Board in addition to providing updates to the F&GP	H Robertson	Complete
	Query point 4 of the Letter of Representation being in the first person while the remainder is not	H Robertson	Complete
	The date in Section B of the SPA will be amended to 2020-21	A Letham	Complete
102/20	A draft ROA update will be circulated to the Board for comment in early January	A Cox	Complete
108/20	Provide feedback to Secretary re proposals for Chair and Board development by 22 January	All	
	Possible under reporting of accidents will be investigated and a spell and grammar check of the report requested.	H Robertson	Confirmed that reporting is accurate, report reviewed
	Highlighted areas in Audit report will be amended in line with the changes to the Annual Audit Report and Letter of Representation	H Robertson	Complete

<p>97/20</p> <p>74/20</p>	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>A response to the SFC review Phase 1 report has not yet been requested. This will be discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: AC</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
<p>98/20</p>	<p>DECLARATION OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST/REGISTER OF INTERESTS UPDATE</p> <p>The Board Secretary was previously notified of the Interim Chair's position as Director of Colleges Scotland and the Register of Interest was updated accordingly.</p>
<p>99/20</p>	<p>INTRODUCTION TO EER (Paper B)</p> <p>B McLeish provided some background on his career in FE and his experience in conducting External Effectiveness Reviews. He explained that it is a requirement of SFC to have a review every three years and gave a brief overview of the process.</p> <p>The review has four phases, the first of which is to collect papers and these have already been provided. Individual sessions will now be arranged with the Chair, Principal and Committee Chairs, followed by group sessions with other Board members. The report is to be submitted by end April.</p>
<p>100/20</p>	<p>ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2019-2020 (Paper C)</p> <p>The VP Finance and Corporate Services presented the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2019-2020. The accounts have been through the normal approvals process for the year end, having been considered and approved by firstly the Finance & General Purposes Committee and then the Audit Committee.</p> <p>The year end performance is very good with an improved deficit of £86k due to the impairment of the Melrose Road site, staff restructuring and the impact of COVID-19 on income and expenditure. The returns demonstrate a very successful year for the College not only in financial terms but also in terms of outcomes.</p> <p>The Board accepted the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Audit Committee to approve the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2019-20.</p>
<p>101/20</p>	<p>LETTER OF REPRESENTATION (Paper D)</p> <p>The VP Finance & Corporate Services presented the Letter of Representation which is required to be signed at the same time as the Annual Report and Financial Statements.</p> <p>Unfortunately, feedback was received from the external auditors the previous evening around a required adjustment to the accounts relating to the Heriot-Watt University's contribution to the sinking fund. This does not affect the bottom line and the recommendation from the auditors was to treat this as an unadjusted amount. A new letter of Representation was subsequently issued which has</p>

	<p>this additional adjustment for £44k in both income and expenditure. This solution allows the Letter and the annual accounts to be signed today. The Finance Business Manager has acknowledged that the change is acceptable.</p> <p>The Principal highlighted that this matter was not raised by the auditors in the Audit or F&GP Committee and the College was unaware this was outstanding.</p> <p>The Audit Committee Chair agreed with the change being made but provided feedback for the auditors that it was not ideal to discover this last minute change and asked why it had not been spotted sooner.</p> <p>The VP Finance & Corporate Services reported that the sinking fund is a particularly complex area of accounting which should be simplified with this change. She advised that the auditors' performance has been satisfactory this year until now and she will need to contact them to find out why this occurred. ACTION: HR</p> <p>Board members queried the tracking of progress in delivering the savings. It was agreed to include an update in the Principal's Report to the Board in addition to providing updates to the Finance & General Purposes Committee. ACTION: HR</p> <p>The Principal advised that this is a national issue and the College is in a better position than many of its counterparts. Colleges are only funded one year at a time and are not permitted to build up any cash reserves; however the College is confident that the required efficiencies will be made this year and the necessary income generated.</p> <p>It was noted that point 4 of the Letter of Representation is in the first person while the remainder is not. This will be queried with the auditors. ACTION: HR</p> <p>The Board agreed to sign off the updated Letter of Representation.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the VP Finance & Corporate Services and the PA to the Principal for working through these last minute changes.</p>
<p>102/20</p>	<p>REGIONAL OUTCOME AGREEMENT UPDATE</p> <p>The Principal reported that revised guidance was received from SFC on 1 December in relation to the update against the Regional Outcome Agreement.</p> <p>The focus is on post COVID-19 recovery and reports are due for submission by 20 January 2021. A draft will be circulated to the Board for comment in early January and the final version will need to be agreed electronically. ACTION: AC</p>
<p>103/20</p>	<p>DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME – NEXT STEPS (Paper D)</p> <p>The VP Finance & Corporate Services presented the paper to request approval to award the infrastructure contract to the preferred supplier.</p> <p>She reminded Board members that the Digital Transformation Programme established in the summer consisted of three phases; discovery, design and delivery. The project is currently reaching the end of the design phase and it has been agreed to prioritise infrastructure, MIS and VLE. The procurement process for infrastructure and MIS is due to complete this week. The infrastructure contract will exceed £250k over a number of years and therefore requires approval of the full Board.</p>

	<p>The programme is taking the College on a great leap forward and other organisations, including colleges have expressed an interest in being involved after implementation, which would provide a contribution to the College.</p> <p>The APUC procurement team were engaged for their expertise and advice on procurement process, compliance and scoring. The mini competition was completed and the most competent bid was recommended to the Board.</p> <p>Board members requested clarification around future maintenance of the system, i.e. can it be maintained with the skills set in the College or will there be a risk of reliance on external expertise.</p> <p>The VP Finance & Corporate Services advised that the College is purchasing a cloud-based service which will be maintained externally and further consultants should not be required. The current skills set of staff will not be required going forward and the team will need to be upskilled in a service management approach. Onsite support in cyber security will be required but these skills are already within the team. A future structure will be presented in due course and will include detail of skills required.</p> <p>A 3-year contract will be awarded initially. Renewal costs will be queried with APUC.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: HR</p> <p>The Board agreed to support the proposal to award the DTP contract to the recommended supplier.</p>
<p>104/20</p>	<p>COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE – CHAIR’S COMMITTEE (Paper E)</p> <p>The updated Terms of Reference for the Chair’s Committee was approved.</p>

<p>105/20</p>	<p>SUPPORTING STRATEGIES FOR STRATEGIC AMBITION (Papers F,G,H)</p> <p>The Principal presented the newly developed Sustainability Strategy 2020-2025 for approval.</p> <p>The focus of the strategy has moved from infrastructure changes into behaviours and cultural change. It is an outward facing strategy with challenging but achievable targets which will be measured going forward. Discussions are ongoing with Edinburgh University and Zero Waste Scotland to be part of a research project to measure the impact of changes.</p> <p>Typos on pages 5 and 6 will be amended.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: AC</p> <p>Board members commended the Strategy which they consider is excellent for a College of this size and which makes them proud to be Board members.</p> <p>The possible danger of overstating the positive impact of electric vehicles due to disposal of batteries was queried. The Principal advised that the College is nationally involved, along with eight other colleges in a green energy change project with ESP which understands the negatives in terms of battery disposal but is also looking at hydrogen.</p> <p>There will be considerable opportunities around biodiversity and conservation through the talent of some middle managers within the College.</p> <p>With regard to performance measures, the intention is for all supporting strategies to be reflected in the Annual Priorities document agreed at the beginning of each year. The Sustainability Committee within the College will</p>
	<p>focus on detailed action plans.</p> <p>The Sustainability Strategy will be launched using the same approach as the launch of the Strategic Ambition 2020-2025.</p> <p>The Board approved the Sustainability Strategy 2020-2025.</p> <p>J MacKenzie left the meeting at this point.</p> <p><u>Asset Management Strategy</u></p> <p>The Board accepted the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee to approve the Asset Management Strategy.</p> <p><u>Workforce Strategy and Annual Monitoring Report</u></p> <p>Reference to Healthy Body, Healthy Mind will be removed as the College no longer has involvement.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: AC</p> <p>With this amendment the Board accepted the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee to approve the Asset Management Strategy and the Workforce Strategy.</p>

<p>106/20</p>	<p>BORDERS COLLEGE STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (Paper I)</p> <p>The Student Member presented the Student Partnership Agreement 2020-2021 and explained that this agreement is required to be completed and signed off each year.</p> <p>Section A, the Agreement remains unchanged. Section B sets out the priorities for the year ahead; to improve communication, increase student wellbeing and develop the community.</p> <p>She advised that improvement in communication is required, e.g. there had been no consultation with the Students' Association in relation to the Sustainability Strategy.</p> <p>The Principal advised that the Strategy was considered by the Sustainability Committee, including student members and she is therefore comfortable that students have been involved.</p> <p>The date in Section B will be amended to 2020-21.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: AL</p> <p>Board members approved the Student Partnership Agreement 2020-2021.</p>
<p>107/20</p>	<p>PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Paper J)</p> <p>The Principal presented her report and provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An additional allocation of £107k in Flexible Workforce Development funding has been awarded to support micro businesses. • A meeting with Roxburgh Estate was very successful. A number of potential partnership opportunities have been identified with the College and SDS. • 26 applications were received for the Executive Director of Enterprise and Business Innovation role, 10 of which have been selected to attend virtual meetings with the Principal and with Senior team members on 9 December.
	<p>A shortlist will then be drawn for interview on 11 January.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two outstanding redundancies for this academic year have been concluded. • A 2% support staff pay offer has been made. <p>The External Effectiveness Reviewer was assured that the Board is regularly updated and provided with information from the Principal between meetings.</p>

<p>108/20</p>	<p>CHAIR AND BOARD DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>The Senior Independent Member provided a verbal update from the paper provided at the Board Strategy session on 12 November.</p> <p>Emerging issues had arisen around the Chair and Board development and, as part of the process, several key questions were identified in relation to each of the key pillars. The potential to work together in small groups to address these questions was considered. It is now proposed to form one group per pillar of the framework and to hold development sessions each term. The possibility of using this approach to engage with the Board on the three new strategies and relating them back to strands of the Corporate Strategy could be explored.</p> <p>Board members were asked to provide feedback to the Board Secretary by 22 January on the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement to move forward in this way; • Agree four working groups; • Agree a timescale (possible starting point of Spring 2021) ; • Develop a programme of working in these groups to consider these critical strategic issues. <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: All</p>
<p>109/20</p>	<p>COVID-19 UPDATE</p> <p>The VP Finance and Corporate Services provided a verbal update on COVID-19 related matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College is required to report statistics on a weekly basis and there have been very few positive cases or cases of self isolation of staff or students. • On only two occasions since returning to campus in August has it been necessary to close and deep clean an area. • A Strive to Thrive approach is now being taken and more staff and students are being encouraged onto the campus within safety guidelines. • A services directory of support services available on campus has been created. • New guidance has been issued around face coverings but the College is already implementing the recommendations. • Discussions are ongoing regarding the Xmas break. A cautious approach is being taken the first week back to have fewer staff and students on campus. • Students with home addresses outwith the region were identified and offered testing. <p>The Chair advised that she was truly impressed with the amount of work undertaken and the collaborative effort within the College to ensure everyone's safety.</p>

110/20	<p>STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER (Paper K)</p> <p>The VP Finance & Corporate Services presented the Risk Register which had been discussed at recent meetings of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Audit Committee.</p> <p>Two risks were recommended for closure and the views of the committees differed in relation to Risk 5m. The F&GP Committee had agreed the risk should remain while the Audit Committee considered it should be removed.</p> <p>F&GP members now agreed to accept the majority decision to remove Risk 5m.</p> <p>Strategic risk workshops are being held on 13 and 21 January for Board members.</p> <p>No further strategic risks were identified for consideration.</p>
111/20	<p>BOARD SECRETARY'S UPDATE (Paper L)</p> <p>The Board received the update from the Board Secretary. A response to the recommendation for the appointment of three new Board members has not yet been received from the Scottish Government.</p>
112/20	<p>HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT (Paper M)</p> <p>The VP Finance & Corporate Services presented the annual Health & Safety Report 2019-20 in the absence of the Health & Safety Manager.</p> <p>The low number of accidents was queried and possible under reporting will be investigated. A spell and grammar check of the report will also be requested.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: HR</p>
113/20	<p>BCSA UPDATE (Paper N)</p> <p>The Student Member presented an update of activities since the last meeting.</p> <p>She reported a greater level of engagement than expected in all the Xmas events. Plans are now underway for the Recharge week in January.</p>
114/20	<p>REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS INCLUDING ANNUAL REPORTS</p> <p><u>Finance & General Purposes Committee</u> The Board received the F&GP Annual Report 2019-20 and draft minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2020.</p> <p><u>Audit Committee</u> The Audit Committee Chair presented the draft Annual Report of activities over the year. The highlighted areas will be amended in line with the aforementioned changes to the Annual Audit Report and Letter of Representation.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: HR</p> <p>A brief verbal account of the Audit Committee meeting on 26 November 2020 was provided.</p> <p><u>Curriculum & Quality Committee</u> The CQC Chair presented the Annual Report of activity over session 2019-20 together with draft minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2020.</p>

	<p><u>Chair's Committee</u> The Chair presented the Annual Report providing an account of the various meetings held throughout the year, the most significant of which was around the Covid-19 job retention scheme.</p>
115/20	<p>STANDING ITEMS</p> <p><u>Health & Safety</u> No items were raised.</p> <p><u>Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</u> No items were raised.</p> <p><u>Environmental & Sustainability</u> No items were raised.</p>
116/20	<p>AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Any suggested agenda items should be forwarded to the Board Secretary.</p>
117/20	<p>BOARD PAPERS FOR PUBLICATION</p> <p>Only those papers marked for publication will be posted on the website. No drafts or anything commercially sensitive.</p>
118/20	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no further business for discussion.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the external reviewer for attending the meeting. Board members were thanked for their contribution and best wishes were conveyed for the festive season.</p>
119/20	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting of the Regional Board will take place on Thursday 4 March 2021.</p>

Signed:.....
Chair

Signed:.....
Board Secretary