

A

BORDERS COLLEGE REGIONAL BOARD



Actions from the
Meeting of the Regional Board held at 5.30pm on
Thursday 3 March 2022

Item	Action	Responsibility and Date	Action Status
01/22	The final Education Scotland report will be circulated	HMI	
07/22	The dates within the Student agreement and Mental Health documents will be reviewed and amended where required.	S Prentice	
08/22	Read Code of Conduct	Board	
	The Financial Regulations will be reviewed to ensure that any relevant points are carried over	H Robertson	
09/22	Review cyber security risk	H Robertson	
	Further context on risks that have changed will be added to the narrative going forward	H Robertson	
	An incorrect date in the final column of the strategic risk management reports will be amended	H Robertson	
13/22	A nomination form for Vice Chair will be circulated	I Earp	
14/22	J McBeath offered to provide linkages to online materials for the sex education forum	J McBeath	
	The forum will be discussed out with the meeting to ensure that expertise is involved in taking this forward	A Cox/S Prentice	
17/20	Consider emerging items to produce an agenda for the next meeting	R McCowan/A Cox/I Earp	

BORDERS COLLEGE REGIONAL BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting of the Regional Board
on Thursday 3 March at 5.30pm in the Board Room, Scottish Borders Campus

ITEM	MINUTE
<p>Present:</p> <p>In Attendance:</p> <p>Microsoft Teams</p>	<p>Ray McCowan (Chair) Angela Cox (Principal) Elaine Acaster Liz Parkes Jess McBeath Paul Cathrow David Peace Dave Black (Academic staff member) Ann McKerracher (Support staff member) Bryan McGrath Sally Prentice (Student member) Karl Davy (Student member)</p> <p>Heather Anderson (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Student Services) Hazel Robertson (Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Services) Jane Grant (Exec Director, Enterprise & Business Innovation) Ingrid Earp (Board Secretary) Sheila McColm (Minutes) Jayne Gracie (AP, Quality & Development) – item 01/22</p> <p>Nuala Broderick David Johnson Carol Gillie John Bowditch (Education Scotland) – item 01/22 Margaret-Rose Livingstone (Education Scotland) – item 01/22</p>
01/22	<p>EDUCATION SCOTLAND PROGRESS VISIT – FINAL REPORT</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced John Bowditch and Margaret-Rose Livingstone of Education Scotland.</p> <p>The Inspectors provided feedback from the Progress Visit on 2 November 2021 and highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five themes which related to the Covid-19 recovery and linked to the College’s enhancement plan were agreed as the focus of the visit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning, teaching and assessment • Learner engagement and wellbeing • Outcomes for learners • Future skills • Sustainability • The report is very positive with only a few areas identified for improvement, all of which have already been identified by the College. • It is important to put on record the hard work that colleagues have undertaken in responding to Covid-19 and continuing to support students with their learning. The Inspectors were very impressed with the creativity of lecturers

	<p>in preparing activities to engage learners in remote learning. Some of these learning and teaching approaches will continue going forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCSA undertook an evaluation of learner engagement and implemented changes, including the appointment of wellbeing representatives. • Inspectors are impressed with the achievement coach role. • Student outcomes are very good. Sector data has not yet been published. • The College has engaged with local partners to inform their Future Skills Strategy. • The College's Sustainability Strategy is very ambitious and sets a clear ambition in the advance to Net Zero. <p>The final report will be circulated.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: HMI</p> <p>A sector summary will be produced once visits to all colleges are completed. Reports will not published but any areas of good practice will be shared.</p> <p>The HMI officers were thanked for their presentation and left the meeting at this point. The AP Quality & Development also left the meeting.</p>
02/22	<p>CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS</p> <p>The Principal made some farewell presentations on behalf of the Board at this point.</p> <p>She thanked the VP Curriculum & Student Services for her long service to the College, her contribution to the Board over the years and for producing the recent Future Skills Strategy.</p> <p>The PA to the Principal and Chair was also thanked for her support to the Board over the years.</p> <p>The Board wished them both a happy retirement.</p> <p>E Acaster was thanked for stepping in as interim Board Chair over the past two years and her work was recognised.</p> <p>The Chair advised that E Acaster has agreed to extend her time on the Board by becoming a co-opted member. As such she will attend the Curriculum & Quality Committee. She has also agreed to act as mentor to new Board members.</p> <p>The Chair informed the Board that he is delighted to join Borders College and to have the chance to meet colleagues face to face. He also welcomed the Board members attending the meeting on Teams.</p> <p>The challenges facing the College sector and education in general were noted. It is important that the Board and College management work together to deliver the best outcomes possible for students.</p>
03/22	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Lynn Mirley.</p>
04/22	<p>MINUTES OF REGIONAL BOARD MEETING HELD ON 2 DECEMBER 2021 (Paper A)</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>

05/22	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>All actions from the previous meeting have been completed.</p>
06/22	<p>DECLARATION OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST/REGISTER OF INTERESTS UPDATE</p> <p>The Principal reported an update to her Register of Interest following her recent appointment to the Board of Interface.</p> <p>The Chair reported that he is CEO of Workers Education Association (WEA) in Scotland, a member of the Education Scotland Board, and his wife's is a Director of SFC for his Register of Interests.</p>
07/22	<p>STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AGREEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (Paper B)</p> <p>The Student member presented the Student Partnership Agreement 2021-22 and the Student Mental Health Agreement 2021-22 for approval and highlighted the main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new wellbeing representative role is similar to a buddy system. • BCSA work with other departments of the College, in particular the mental health team with a focus on students that meet the vulnerability category. • An effort is being made to get back to on-campus events. • BCSA priorities are first and foremost on students and their wellbeing. • There is a focus on Borders College alumni and learning from the past. • Communications have improved to ensure everyone within BCSA is aware of their role. • Mental Health First Aid training will be made available to all staff. <p>The following points were clarified in response to questions from Board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Student Services team is responsible for recruitment of mental health officers. Two mental health officers have been recruited and the wellbeing officer has recently returned from maternity leave. The work of BCSA and Student Services is integral to each other. • The mental health training will raise awareness of symptoms of poor mental health in order to signpost students to the appropriate place. The mental health officers employed by the College are not counsellors. • Impact will be measured through the quality of feedback from students and the number of students withdrawing and declaring mental health as the reason. • Feedback has been more qualitative since becoming anonymised. • Communication with students is primarily through social media. • The dates within the documents will be reviewed and amended where required. <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: SP</p>
08/22	<p>REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT (Paper C)</p> <p>The Board Secretary presented the revised Model Code of Conduct for acceptance and reminded Board members of their responsibility to read and comply with the Code.</p>

	<p>The Board accepted the revised Code of Conduct and agreed to read the Code. ACTION: Board</p> <p>The Financial Regulations will be reviewed to ensure that any relevant points are carried over. ACTION: HR</p>
09/22	<p>STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER (Paper D)</p> <p>The VP Finance & Corporate Services presented the Strategic Risk Register.</p> <p>Risk 4b has been added around governance arrangements but with a low rating.</p> <p>Some other changes which were made through the various Board committees will be incorporated for the next round of meetings.</p> <p>The most significant risks relate to cyber security and the financial plan. A pessimistic scenario and most pessimistic scenario were modelled; however, confirmation has now been received of funding for Foundation Apprenticeships and an inflationary uplift. An optimistic scenario will now be constructed.</p> <p>The Covid impact risk has increased slightly but remains a medium risk. Student outcomes are more optimistic this year than in 2020-21.</p> <p>There are concerns around increasing cyber security attacks and an awareness session with staff and students will be considered. The risk will be reviewed. ACTION: HR</p> <p>Further context on risks that have changed will be added to the narrative going forward.</p> <p>An incorrect date in the final column of the strategic risk management reports will be amended. ACTION: HR</p>
10/22	<p>MAPPING COLLEGE STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES TO COMMITTEE STRUCTURES (Paper E)</p> <p>The Board Secretary presented the paper which maps the College strategies and performance measures to committee structures.</p> <p>The document was produced following feedback from Board regarding the implementation of the Strategic Ambition and seeking clarity that all the underpinning strategies allow this to be achieved.</p> <p>Further to discussion, the following points were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Asset Management Strategy will sit with the Finance & General Purposes Committee instead of the Audit Committee. • The Business Growth and Engagement Strategy is mapped against the Curriculum & Quality Committee but may sit better with the Finance & General Purposes Committee. This will be reconsidered once it has been fully developed.
11/22	<p>PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Paper F)</p> <p>The Principal presented the report which was presumed as read by Board members. The following points were highlighted:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance remains strong but is becoming more challenging across outcomes and ensuring that all income and finance targets are met. • Stakeholder engagements are increasing. Feedback from the visit by senior staff from Scottish Government was really positive. The visitors were very impressed by the range and quality of the programmes on offer. Staff and students joined the meeting for a discussion on mental health. • The College was mentioned in the House of Commons by Alok Sharma MP in relation to Net Zero and the Community Renewal Fund. • The dispute with Heriot-Watt University is resolved but dialogue is ongoing. • Unison and EIS have voted to strike around the pay offer. There is real concern across the sector around affordability, not only this year but in future years when dealing with flat cash. • There is an opportunity around the Young Person's Guarantee allocation of £10m to support a range of measures around apprenticeships. • None of the funding to support mental health has been guaranteed past this year. This is a cause for concern and was raised by the Principal in a recent conversation with Jamie Hepburn MSP. If this support is to continue, it will be necessary to make efficiencies elsewhere. • The PA to the Principal and Chair will retire at end March. Due to unknowns around funding it has been decided not to replace this role until the summer. • The CLM for Rural Skills post is on hold at this time along with several other CLM roles. It is not the intention to remove these roles from the structure. <p>Board members commended the achievement of a Great Place to Work for Wellbeing award.</p>
12/22	<p>BOARD COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE 2022-23 (Paper G)</p> <p>The Board Secretary presented the Board committee meeting schedule for session 2022-23 with a caveat that dates may change.</p>
13/22	<p>BOARD SECRETARY'S REPORT (Paper H)</p> <p>The Board Secretary presented the update.</p> <p>She advised that the Board recruitment led by Aspen Recruitment is now live and Board members are asked to promote the vacancies within their networks. There are four vacancies in total. No specialisms have been targeted but the preference would be a background in accountancy, audit, rural industries, tourism, economic development, sustainability and cyber security/technical.</p> <p>The Board Enhancement Plan has not progressed as much as anticipated and any feedback or comments will be welcomed.</p> <p>Board members were reminded of the current vacancy for Vice Chair of the Board, which can be on a fixed term basis if preferred. A nomination form will be circulated.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: IE</p> <p>Volunteers for the position of Audit Committee Chair and Nominations Committee member will also be welcomed.</p>
14/22	<p>BCSA UPDATE (Paper I)</p> <p>The Student member presented an update on activity and progress made by the Students Association.</p>

	<p>J McBeath offered to provide linkages to online materials for the sex education forum.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: JMcB</p> <p>The forum will be discussed outwith the meeting to ensure that expertise is involved in taking this forward.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: AC/SP</p> <p>The VP Curriculum & Student Services reported that the number of safeguarding officers within the College has increased and additional training is being provided. In addition, WLT recently received training in gender based violence.</p>
15/22	<p>REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS</p> <p><u>Finance & General Purposes Committee (Paper J)</u> Minutes of the 18 November 2021 meeting were received and a verbal account of the meeting of 24 February was provided. The Chair reported that the operating surplus looks healthy; the receipt from the Melrose Road site remains secure as it is treated by SFC as an internal cash management issue; an interesting account of the work of DEBI was received and the Asset Strategy was discussed.</p> <p>The Committee has put forward a recommendation to transfer up to £250k to the Borders Further Education Trust (BFET) by end March.</p> <p>The Board agreed with this recommendation.</p> <p><u>Audit Committee (Paper K)</u> Minutes of the 25 November 2021 and draft minutes of the meeting held on 3 February were received. The Interim Chair reported that the ToR was discussed and revised, a strong internal audit on IT systems was reported and a cyber security update was received. Low level recommendations around passwords will be implemented as soon as possible.</p> <p><u>Curriculum & Quality Committee</u> The Chair gave a verbal account of the meeting held on 17 February. The Committee received a presentation on the work of the Sustainability Academy, a progress report on the Equality Outcome Action Plan, an update on quality and development and looked at current KPIs.</p> <p><u>Nominations Committee (Paper L)</u> The Nominations Committee met on 20 December 2021 to discuss an approach to mentoring new Board members. Some good ideas were put forward, e.g. to invite new members to attend at least one of each committee meeting as an observer. All Board members will be encouraged to consider the Strategic Ambition in its approach to meetings. E Acaster has volunteered to mentor some of the new members.</p>

16/22	<p>STANDING ITEMS</p> <p><u>Health & Safety</u> There were no items for discussion.</p> <p><u>Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</u> There were no items for discussion.</p> <p><u>Environmental & Sustainability</u> The College has received confirmation of £50k in funding to provide some development in the Galashiels campus.</p>
17/22	<p>AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING</p> <p>It was agreed to take a different approach to the upcoming meeting on 21 April. The Chair, Principal and Board Secretary will consider emerging items to produce an agenda.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: RMcC/AC/IE</p>
18/22	<p>BOARD PAPERS FOR PUBLICATION</p> <p>Only those papers marked for publication will be posted on the website. No draft papers or those that are commercially sensitive will be published.</p> <p>The Student member confirmed that paper B is for publication.</p>
19/22	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>D Peace was thanked for his contribution as interim Vice Chair which he has undertaken in addition to his role as Senior Independent Member.</p>
20/22	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting of the Regional Board will take place on Thursday 21 April 2022.</p>

Signed:.....
Chair

Signed:.....
Board Secretary