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REGIONAL BOARD REPORT

Subject: College Sector Statement of Ambition	**Purpose:** **For Approval** ☐ **For Discussion** ☒ **For Information** ☐
Prepared by: Executive Team	**Date:** 27 October 2022

Purpose: To update the Regional Board on Borders College's contribution to the achievement of the College Sector Statement of Ambition

Linked to Strategic Ambition: Take a leading role in enabling an inclusive, resilient and sustainable Scotland

Performance Measures: Influential & collaborative Partner

Linked to Strategic Risk Register: 1a - External Partners

New Risk Commentary:

Executive Summary:

In 2021, Colleges Scotland published the College Sector Statement of Ambition 2021-2026, available here: -

https://collegesscotland.ac.uk/documents/briefings-and-publications/publications/1794-college-sector-statement-of-ambition-final/file#:~:text=Nationally%2C%20we%20will%20be%20a,for%20the%20stakeholders%20around%20us.

Publication was intended partly to detail the college sector's response to the COVID-19 pandemic but also, more generally, to demonstrate the hugely beneficial socio-economic impact of colleges in Scotland and our ambition to support our stakeholders in meeting their own ambitions and aspirations.

There are five themes to the Statement of Ambition: -

- Supporting and Innovating
- Supporting Students
- Supporting Scotland
- Supporting Industry
- Supporting Communities

The attached report identifies Borders College's contribution to the first of those themes, Supporting and Innovating. Future reports will focus on each of the following themes.

Recommendation: Paper is for discussion		
Previous Committee Approvals: n/a		
For publication ☒	**For publication with redactions** ☐	**Not for publication** ☐

BORDERS COLLEGE

REGIONAL BOARD

College Sector Statement of Ambition

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In 2021, Colleges Scotland published the College Sector Statement of Ambition 2021-2026, available here: -

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1.2 Publication was intended partly to detail the college sector's response to the COVID-19 pandemic but also, more generally, to demonstrate the hugely beneficial socio-economic impact of colleges in Scotland and our ambition to support our stakeholders in meeting their own ambitions and aspirations.

There are five themes to the Statement of Ambition: -

- Supporting and Innovating
- Supporting Students
- Supporting Scotland
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1.3 This report identifies Borders College's contribution to the first of those themes, Supporting and Innovating. Future reports will focus on each of the following themes. The paper is for discussion.

2.0 BORDERS COLLEGE CONTRIBUTION

2.1 The college sector defines the theme as follows: -

"College Sector Ambition Theme: Supporting and innovating*. Supporting a green economic recovery with innovation, excellent education and teaching, skills training, and smart investments.*

Our ambition is that colleges will support economic recovery with innovation, excellent education and teaching, skills training and smart investments. Emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic, colleges will play a vital role in Scotland's education-led recovery and we will work to make an impact on every part of the system to help achieve economic stabilisation, community wealth building and growth."

2.2 **Table 1** below describes the desired impacts from the statement of ambition, with the contribution from Borders College shown alongside.

Table 1: Borders College contribution to College Sector Statement of Ambition Theme 1

How Colleges Will Make an Impact	Borders College Contribution
Playing a vital part in Scotland's Covid-19 recovery. We will influence and advocate for the best learning and working experience at college, while adhering to public health guidelines and keeping people safe. We will be influential in the discussion about economic recovery, as providers of the skills and training that are required to revitalise Scotland's post-pandemic economy, and we will be active in promoting colleges as a solution to the many harms brought about by the pandemic. Colleges will repurpose the knowledge and expertise garnered in the pivot to digital learning – expertise will not be lost. Scotland's colleges will be a key partner by supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Regional economies are key to achieving this ambition, and colleges as regional partners will be active and visible. Colleges will add to community wealth building and be strong contributors to wellbeing in our communities.	The College is fully engaged in supporting the regional economy and skills requirements, with members of Executive Team and Strategic Leadership Team attending the Regional Economic Partnership and Community Planning Partnership at main Board and Committee levels. We also lead the Learning and Skills Partnership and work closely with schools in supporting smooth transition to college to ensure the learners needs are imparted and met. We have realised a 100% increase in school pupils undertaking Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) in the Region. We work closely with business, public sector and the third sector to understand and meet Regional skills needs. We are part of the South of Scotland Regional Tertiary Pathfinder project, ensuring a coherent approach to the delivery of our regional priorities We have delivered on new and innovative projects such as Natural Capital Entrepreneurship Skills Training.
Thriving in a system, not a hierarchy, and we will work with decision-makers on the need and opportunity to deliver a coherent, flexible and integrated tertiary system – in driving economic recovery we need a seamless skills system.	We work with South of Scotland Enterprise to establish practical solutions to the need to upskill the workforce in the drive to meet net-zero (ground/air source heating solutions) We deliver a curriculum where it is difficult to deliver in schools. We continue to offer the breath of curriculum where numbers may be low however there is a within our region. We work with local authorities in the upskilling of employees.

	We have introduced new short courses to reflect the cost-of-living crisis such as Local Food production.
Advocating for fair funding for institutions. Our ambition is to move to a simplified and streamlined funding landscape under new ways of working with the Scottish Funding Council. Our ambition is to reform the relationship between student headcount and qualifications. We will highlight the need for flexibility across the system.	Through attendance College Principals' Group (CPG), College Sector Finances Committee and the College Funding Model Review Group, the Principal & CEO represents the sector in discussions with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). The Vice Principal – Finance and Corporate Services represents the College's interests at Finance Director level and the Vice Principal – Student Experience at the Vice Principals' Group, both influencing national policy-setting. The Executive Director of Enterprise and Business Innovation, together with Assistant Principals and other Strategic Leadership Team members represent the College and Regional interests across a wide range of national groups.
Capitalising on the sector's Digital Ambition, which has the potential to transform future college estate requirements as well as bringing innovation and creativity to teaching, learning and vocational study. Colleges will continue to be leaders in the national conversation on digital transformation – with a very sharp focus on ensuring students across Scotland can reap the benefits no matter their location or rurality – working strategically and collaboratively with partners to achieve this.	We have maximised potential with City Regional Deal, in Insulation and building treatments, Climate Smarter projects, EV charging projects, Retrofit, Waste and circular Economy We have a Borders College Digital Transformation Project that has delivered the following success: - • We have worked in partnership with South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) in the development and implementation of South of Scotland Hub & Spoke Networks for areas where transport can be an inhibiting factor to learning; • Decommissioned old servers and migrated data to a more efficient and effective solution; • Retired Unit E and invested in a complete suite of Pro-solutions to enhance, staff and students experience and improving compliance; • Invested in new online learning platform of Canvas for a better online learning experience for our students; • Implemented management dashboard reporting tools to enhance decision-making; and

	• Helped to explore use of technology in landbased industries to improve efficiency and workflows. i.e. the agri-tech weather station.
Delivering innovation. Colleges will investigate the potential to create a national or open college which could provide open access to world-class learning, reflecting the swift changes to work and learning which have taken place. To drive proactive and innovative policy development, Colleges Scotland will scope the creation of a new policy think tank. Colleges will increasingly work with universities to shape the innovation landscape.	We are involved in two key 'Pathfinder' projects for the South of Scotland: Digital and Landbased. These pathfinders will provide clear routes for progression for the population of our region with a focus of delivery within the region to retain our talent. We recently opened new Digital Health Hub and are continuing to enhance digital transformation by enhancing our Management Information Systems, We are investing in our Online learning platform with the introduction of 'Canvas'. We have introduced 'Carbon Literacy Training' not only for staff but also students, along with a wide range of community-based courses. We have created the Immersive Learning classroom
Making smart investments with limited resources, to deliver long-term sustainable financial investment for colleges. We will advocate strongly and visibly for appropriate resources to provide high standard facilities for our students and our workforce in a refreshed conversation about funding for estates. Colleges will continue to be efficient and provide an excellent return for investment. We will work with the Scottish and UK Governments to rebalance the loss of funding to colleges because of the UK's exit from the European Union.	We work collaboratively with key stakeholders to address the short and long term needs of the Region we serve. We have leveraged funding via the Community Renewal Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund to develop new skills for the Region and have also htilised the Turing fund as a replacement for former Erasmus-funded student experiences.

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1 As indicate above, Borders College continues to make a significant contribution to achievement of the sector's ambition. Regional Board members are invited to discuss the contents of the paper.

P D SMITH

Principal & CEO

17 October 2022