REGIONAL BOARD REPORT

Subject: Board Secretary's Report	**Purpose:** **For Approval** ☐ **For Discussion** ☐ **For Information** ☒
Prepared by: Ingrid Earp	**Date: 23 Nov 2021**

Purpose: To update Members with Board Secretary activity and any general updates relevant to the Board.

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

Performance Measures: Recogise nationally as a progressive organisation

Linked to Strategic Risk Register: New Risk (outwith themes)

New Risk Commentary:

Executive Summary:

There are five main parts to the Board Secretary's Report for this meeting.

1. Chair recruitment
2. Training
3. Board Planning and Strategy Day
4. Board Member Recruitment
5. Board Secretaries Network (BSN) meeting

Chair recruitment is still ongoing as far as we know.

Members are reminded that a number of training events are available to them. The College Development Network hosts the majority of these and the Board Secretary will circulate them, and other opportunities, as they arise.

The Board Planning and Strategy Day went very well on 11 November, with lots to think about as a result.

A new round of Board Member recruitment will get underway shortly.

The first BSN meeting of the AY took place which was well attended and covered lots of topics relevant to college governance and the role of the Board Secretary.

Recommendation: Board to note the content of the report.

Previous Committee Approvals:

For publication ☒	**For publication with redactions** ☐	**Not for publication** ☐

Board Secretary's Report

Chair Recruitment
I contacted Scottish Government for a progress report on our Chair recruitment. I was told on 16 November that interviews have concluded and that they will be in touch with us re the outcome. This is as much as we know at the time of writing (23 Nov).

Training
The College Development Network (CDN) continue to run their training and offer a wider variety of options than ever before. There are courses on 'Financial Management for Board Members' and 'Supporting Effective Risk Management', among others, that are self-directed learning, and others like 'College Sector Policy and Funding' which are scheduled, interactive online sessions. You need to be registered with CDN and you can access the list of courses here
https://professionallearning.collegedevelopmentnetwork.ac.uk/course/index.php?categoryid=51

I attended the 'Using Reflective Tools to Support Governing' on 23 November. This was aimed at Board Secretaries and explored the use of a professional journal and the concept of Critical Incident Analysis. It was run by Prof Ron Hill and we worked through an example of a table ranking Governing Themes against Governor Behaviour using RAG coding. Once we'd worked through our own example and discussed the outcomes it became clear that this could be a very useful tool and in particular, once Board Secretaries are comfortable with it, a version of it could be particularly helpful to Staff and Student Members.

Board Strategy and Planning Day
This was a successful and enjoyable day and the first opportunity that the Board had to be together for 20 months or so. Jim Metcalfe, of CDN, was a great facilitator and lots of useful ideas and suggestions to follow up came out of the day.

Board Member Recruitment
Following the Nominations Committee meeting and agreement to begin the search for new Board Members Elaine and myself met with ASPEN recruitment agency on 23 November. We currently have one vacancy and two terms of office coming to an end in July 2022. We have contracted ASPEN to lead the recruitment search with a focus on identifying candidates from tourism, economic development, rural economy and audit backgrounds. Sustainability/green economy or property backgrounds would be a bonus.

The recruitment campaign will start in the next few weeks and run through to end of January 2022 in the first instance. As well as working with ASPEN we will also be doing lots to promote these vacancies ourselves.

Board Secretaries Network (BSN) Meeting
We had the first BSN meeting of the academic year October.

Ken Milroy joined the meeting. He's stepping down as the Chair of the Good Governance Steering Group (GGSG) from March 2022. He reported that the legislation re the inclusion of Trade Union (TU) members on College Boards is still waiting to go forward.

Claire Jamieson from the Scottish Government College Policy Team also joined the meeting, and talked through the remit of her team. The TU legislation is on their agenda, as are chair appointments and chair appraisals. The merger of Shetland colleges under UHI is well underway and they are waiting for the

response to the SFC review which they feel will be impactful. They have employed some external consultants to carry out a 'lessons learned' review of the national bargaining process.

Frances Harrower from Colleges Scotland joined to talk about the GGSG. They have held a meeting for the first time in many months.

We also discussed interpretation of the Code of Good Governance, difficulties around Board Member recruitment, a new Code of Conduct and hybrid meetings. Hybrid meetings produced a lot of discussion and we will continue to share our experiences and what we find does/doesn't work, with CDN planning another piece of research on this early next year to follow on from the first one published last AY.