

Board of Management

Minutes

Meeting Reference Board2011-12/05
Date and Time Wednesday 27 June 2012 at 5.30 pm
Location Room 030, Brahan Building
Purpose Scheduled meeting

Board Members Present Mark Bell, Penny Brodie, Derek Forgan, Ian Jackson, Ian Marr, Ian Mathers, Dr Thomas Moore (Principal), Dr James Urquhart and Norman Wilson

Apologies Allan Clow, Bill Duncan, Alistair Napier and June Wilson

Co-opted John McDonald

By invitation Dr Harold Gillespie
 Xander McDade, Chair, Student Representative Council
 Jane Edwards, Student Engagement Officer (for item 7)
 Sheila Page, HMI Lead Inspector (for item 2)

In attendance Susan Bald, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development
 Iain Neilson, Director of Finance
 Pam Wilson, Learning and Teaching Director

Chair Penny Brodie
Minutes Kirstie Graham, Clerk to the Board
Quorum 8

Summary of Action Items

| Ref | Action | Responsibility | Time line |
|-----|--|----------------------|--|
| 6.1 | The Chair to congratulate Bernadette Malone on her CBE | Chair | July 2012 |
| 7.2 | To approve the interim arrangements for the Student Association with immediate effect and a revised constitution to be prepared for Board approval | Students Association | Revised constitution to Oct 12 Board meeting |
| 7.3 | To authorise the Students Association to apply for a permanent bar licence. This not to be used until there has been Board oversight and approval of the operational arrangements. | Students Association | Update to Oct 12 Board meeting |
| 8.1 | To approve the budget for 2012/13, the figures to be used to populate the Financial Forecast Return to SFC | Finance Director | 30 June 2012 |
| 8.2 | To approve the Regional Outcome Agreement 2012/13 for the Highlands and Islands Region for submission to SFC | Principal | 30 June 2012 |
| 9 | To convey the Board's congratulation to Professor Wallace | Principal | July 2012 |

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|----|--|-----|--------------------------------|
| 11 | To clarify subscription date and keep membership of Scotland's Colleges under review | SMT | Update to Dec 12 Board meeting |
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1. **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. She welcomed Dr Harold Gillespie, who it was proposed to co-opt to the Board with a special interest in research and development and Xander McDade who had recently been elected Chair of the Student Representative Council. Jane Edwards, Student Engagement Officer, had been invited to speak to items relating to the Student Association. Pam Wilson is currently acting up for Assistant Principal Margaret Munckton and was attending in her stead.

Sheila Page Education Scotland (HMI) – Lead Inspector, had been invited to the meeting to present on the recent Education Scotland report which members had received. It was agreed that Sheila would present her report before the main business of the meeting.

The Chair informed the Board that Owen Ford, who received this year's Student of the Year Award for Painting and Decorating, was found dead whilst on holiday in Ibiza. The Board expressed sympathy for his family at this sad news.

2. **HMI Report 2012**

Sheila Page, the lead inspector for the Education Scotland review which took place 20-24 February 2012 spoke to the report, which Board members had received.

Sheila spoke to the approach adopted, which was intended to be more learner focussed than previously. She reminded members that Education Scotland focussed on quality in Further Education, with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) being responsible for Higher Education. This could feel artificial in a college such as Perth College, but this was the remit in which they must work.

The report contained confidence statements that expressed the review team's overall evaluation of high quality learning, learner engagement and quality culture and the College had received four clean confidence statements with no caveats. The detail behind the confidence statements was discussed, including key strengths and areas identified as sector leading innovative practice (SLIP) and examples of excellence. Thanks were expressed to Pam Wilson, Learning and Teaching Director, for her work in preparation for and throughout the review visit.

The Board welcomed the review report. The future shape of quality reviews was discussed in light of the new Regional Outcome Agreements which suggested the need for a quality review mechanism at a regional level. The College will continue to work with Education Scotland to ensure the high quality of the learning experience for its students in any new arrangements.

The Chair thanked Sheila Page for attending the meeting.

Sheila Page left the meeting at this point.

3. **Additions to the Agenda**

There were no additions to the agenda.

4. **Declaration of Interest in any agenda item**

There were no declarations of interest.

5. **Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Management held on Wednesday 21 March 2012**

The minutes, circulated prior to the meeting, were **approved**.

6. **Actions arising from previous minutes**

6.1 **Letter to Provost on City Status**

The Chair had sent a letter to then Provost John Hulbert on behalf of the Board congratulating him on the achievement of City status. A reply had been received thanking the Board and noting 'the successful application for University title was an important element of our successful bid'.

It was noted that Bernadette Malone, Chief Executive of Perth & Kinross Council was recently awarded a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List and it was agreed the Chair would write on behalf of the Board to congratulate her.

7. **Students Association**

7.1 **Verbal update on Students Association Election**

Pam Wilson updated Board members on issues surrounding the recent Students Association elections. Elections had taken place for three paid positions: Student President and two Vice Presidents. As the elections progressed, concerns were expressed about some candidates' behaviour in relation to electronic voting. It was noted that this issue was mirrored in the UHISA election process.

Perth College undertook an investigation into its election and there was sufficient evidence to cast material doubt on the integrity of the process. As a result the election was declared null and void. Also as a result of the investigations three student officers were suspended from their office but not suspended as students. The investigation into these three students remained ongoing. Therefore the College did not currently have a Student President or Vice Presidents in post.

7.2 **Students Association Constitution Update**

As a result of the election irregularities outlined by Pam Wilson, a proposal had been put forward to implement an interim structure for 2012-13, with no President or Vice

Presidents. In their place would be five paid posts, each with specific duties and portfolios. The elected Chair of the Students' Representative Council (Education portfolio) would be the Board of Management member.

Draft operating procedures and representational structures had been developed and would be agreed with the Chair of the SRC, and a group including the Principal, the Chair of the Board of Management and the Chair of the Engagement Committee before the end of August 2012 for session 2012-13. A revised constitution incorporating this structure would come to the Board for approval at its next meeting in October 2012.

Approved: the interim constitutional position as set out in Enclosure 3 with a revised Students Association constitution to come to the Board for approval in October 2012.

7.3 Bar Proposal

The Students Association put forward a proposal for a permanent bar licence. This was discussed by the Senior Management Team and recommended to the Engagement Committee for approval. At its meeting on 10 May 2012 the Engagement Committee recommended the proposal to the Board for approval. Jane Edwards, Student Engagement Officer spoke to this proposal.

She informed members that there was student demand for a bar and that the long term aim of the Students Association was to have a bar comparable to Dundee University Union. There was a belief that it contributed to attracting students and a strong commitment to getting this right and building incrementally was included as part of the proposal. The proposal was therefore to apply for a full licence, but to roll out slowly, in consultation with the Senior Management Team.

Members recognised the desire for a bar in the Union as part of the Higher Education culture and that learning to drink socially and responsibly was part of the student experience. Nonetheless, the range and vulnerabilities of students on the campus must be recognised along with the College's responsibilities to the local community.

Members identified a number of operational issues they would require reassurance on before implementing this proposal. These included: more detail on pricing; more information on the mechanisms and processes for ensuring effective controls that are not reliant on individuals currently in post; a detailed risk assessment of the proposal including reputational risk.

Further issues would emerge through the process of applying for a licence. The Board wished to support the direction of travel but required a project plan outlining the operation processes before this could be implemented.

Agreed: To approve the Students Association licence application, noting that this would not be implemented until further Board approval of the detailed project plan.

Jane Edwards left the meeting at this point.

8. Financial Information for 2012/13

8.1 Perth College Budget 2012/13

Iain Neilson reported that the budget had been considered by Finance and General Purposes Committee on 19 June 2012 and is recommended to the Board for approval. The figures in the budget would populate the Financial Forecast Return to the Scottish Funding Council.

Ian Mathers, Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee confirmed the budget had been fully discussed by the committee. The Committee commended the budget, which was a budget for growth, largely due to the additional student numbers through UHI. There were associated risks in securing these numbers, but the Committee was assured that the Principal and Senior Management Team recognised and were managing the risk.

Approved: Perth College Budget 2012/13

8.2 Regional Outcome Agreement 2012/13 for the Highlands and Islands Region (Further Education)

The Regional Outcome Agreement 2012/13 for the Highlands and Islands Region was considered by the Board at its away day on 9 June 2012. The Principal updated the Board that there may be some additions based on feedback from the SFC Regional Manager. In addition, the document required to be approved by the other academic partner Colleges, but it was anticipated that the basic tenets in the document would be unchanged.

Approved: Regional Outcome Agreement 2012/13 for the Highlands and Islands Region

9. Principal's Remarks

The Principal spoke to his paper on the restructure of the Senior Management Team. Members noted the paper and commended the new post of Innovation and Enterprise Director.

The Principal informed members that The Cabinet Secretary for Education, Michael Russell, was making a Parliamentary Statement on progress on the reform of Post 16 learning tomorrow. There were issues for the College in the non-funding of non-award bearing qualifications and the focus on 0% attrition, which impacted on the College's social inclusion role.

The Centre for Rural Childhood had been assessed for devolved research supervisory powers for PhD students and had been successful. The Board asked that the Principal pass on its congratulations to Professor Rebecca Wallace and her team.

John McDonald left the meeting at this point.

10. Chair's Report

The Chair reported that the UHI Working Group convened by the Cabinet Secretary had held a pre meeting on 19 June 2012 to set the remit and agenda for its first full meeting on 5 July 2012. This group was chaired by Dr Michael Foxley, Chair of West Highland College and secretariat support was to be provided by the Scottish Funding Council.

Court had met on 19 June 2012. It had agreed to establish the Transformation Implementation Group (TIG) to move forward the recommendations in the Capita report. The Board was informed that the University had a higher education outcome agreement as part of the sector changes, however this had not been received by Court for approval.

11. **Membership of Scotland's Colleges**

The Board considered its continued membership of Scotland's Colleges and whether this represented best value for money at the current time.

The outcome of the McCormick review in the Scotland's Colleges governance had been circulated and members expressed their concern about the proposed new structure, particularly in relation to the two separate boards, the size of the boards and the consequent lack of clear focus on its primary role in the sector.

Nonetheless, it was recognised as important that there was a voice in the sector and there were concerns about sitting outside the organisation at this time.

Agreed: to clarify the subscription period and to keep membership under review.

12. **Board Away Day – 9 June 2012**

The Chair and Principal informed members that the outcomes from the away day had been very useful in informing discussion with the FE academic partner Chairs and Principals at the meeting on 13 June 2012.

Approved: Notes from the Board away day on 9 June 2012.

13. **Minutes of Standing Committees (unconfirmed)**

13.1 **Academic Affairs Committee – 6 June 2012**

Approved: Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2012

13.2 **Audit Committee – 20 June 2012**

Approved: Minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2012

13.3 Chair's Committee – Email circulation 1-7 May 2012

Approved:

- Minutes of the meeting held by Email circulation 1-7 May 2012;
- The appointment of Ian Marr, as Chair of the Engagement Committee from 1 July 2012;
- the co-option of Harold Gillespie to the Board of Management for an initial 12 month period from 27 June 2012;
- The appointment of John McDonald as a Board member for an initial four year period from 27 June 2012.

11.4 Engagement Committee – 10 May 2012

Approved:

- Minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2012;
- Revised Terms of Reference;
- Response to Scotland's Colleges Review of Governance.

13.5 Finance and General Purposes Committee – 25 April 2012; 19 June 2012

Approved:

- Minutes of the meetings held on 25 April 2012 and 19 June 2012;
- Treasury Management Policy;
- Budget 2012/13.

13.6 AST Board of Directors - 19 April 2012; 14 June 2012

Approved:

- Minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2012 and 14 June 2012;
- Revised Terms of Reference;
- Appointment of Mr Watson to the Board for an initial 12 month period from 1 August 2012.

14. Annual Reports to the Board

14.1 Attendance at Meetings 2011/12

Received: Members' Record of Attendance at Meetings of Board and Standing Committees for the period including the Board meeting on 22 June 2011; up to, but not including the Board meeting on 27 June 2012.

14.2 Schedule of Meetings 2012/13

Received: Schedule of Meetings for session 2012/13.

Noted: The schedule would be finalised and then circulated to Board members.

14.3 **Freedom of Information/Data Protection Requests**

Received: a summary of Freedom of Information/Data Protection and Environmental Impact Requests received by the College in the period June 2011-12, with the outcome.

15. **Review of Meeting**

Members made no comment on the meeting process.

16. **Documents uploaded on Board Portal**

Noted: documents uploaded onto the portal since the last Board meeting, as follows:

- Education Scotland External Review Report on Perth College, May 2012
- Scotland's Colleges Newsletter: Governing in a Regional Structure, Issue 1 and 2
- Standard's Commission for Scotland Strategic Plan 2012-16.