

Board of Management

Minutes

Meeting reference: Board 2020-21/01

Date and time: Thursday 08 October 2020 at 5.00pm

Location: Online

Members present: Brian Crichton, Board Member (Chair)
Andrew Comrie, Board Member
Heather Cormack, Board Member
Jim Crooks, Board Member
Katrina Hodgson, Board Member
Debbie Hutchison, Board Member
Ann Irvine, Board Member
Fiona Martin, Board Member
Craig Ritchie, Board Member
Linton Scarborough, Board Member
Charlie Shentall, Board Member
Graham Watson, Board Member
Margaret Cook, Principal & Chief Executive
John Dare, Staff Board Member
Alex Wilson, Student Board Member
Michaela Asisten, Student Board Member
Miranda Landale, Board Co-Optee

In attendance: Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal (Academic)
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)
Catherine Etri, Associate Principal (Curriculum)
Iain Wishart, Director of Finance
Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board of Management

Apologies: Sheena Devlin, Board Member (until Item 16)

Chair: Brian Crichton

Minute Taker: Ian McCartney

Quorum: 8

Summary of Current Action Items			
Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
6	Perth College Revised Budget 2020/21 & Financial Forecast Return Chair requested that an action plan for mitigating actions with outline timescales be prepared for Board to consider.	Director of Finance	Next meeting
8	Strategic Risk Register SMT & Clerk should conduct an in-depth review of the Risk Register and discuss revised version in detail at each subsequent sub-Committee before bringing back to next Board meeting.	SMT/Clerk	Next meeting
9	Health & Safety – Annual Report 2019/20 Health, Safety & Wellbeing Adviser to be invited to the next Board meeting to update Board on wellbeing issues.	Clerk	Next meeting
14			
16			

Summary of Historic Items			
	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
	Matters Arising from 20 July 2020 <u>Ref 7: AST Revised Budget 2020/21</u> Revisit budget to be presented to Board at earliest opportunity depending on external environment.	AST Chair	ASAP
	Matters Arising from 20 July 2020 <u>Ref 16: Business Development Strategy</u> Strategy to be tabled at December Board	Vice Principal	December Board
	Matters Arising from 18 March 2020 <u>Ref 24.6: Audit Committee – 10 March 2020</u> SMT to liaise with other Academic Partners prior to engaging external consultants to draw up a specification for an integrated finance/payroll/HR system that meets the College's current and future needs	SMT	ASAP
	Matters Arising from 10 June <u>Ref 17: Board Effectiveness Review</u> Chair, SMT and Clerk to generate action plan with appropriate timings to ensure recommendations are adopted	Chair/SMT/ Clerk	ASAP

MINUTES

Item		Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and noted apologies from Sheena Devlin.	
2.	Additions to the Agenda A verbal update on Voluntary Severance added to the Agenda, to be heard as Item 18	
3.	Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item There were no declarations of interest.	
4.	Minutes of Board Meeting held on 20 July 2020 Subject to some minor typographical errors, the minutes were approved as an accurate record.	
5.	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	
	<u>Current Actions</u> Matters Arising from Board Meeting of 20 July 2020 <u>Ref 7 - AST Revised Budget 2020/21</u> Action: Reviewed budget to be presented to Board at earliest opportunity depending on external environment. Action update: Work in progress, currently out for comment. To be tabled at December Board meeting <u>Ref 9 - UHI Investigation Report/SFC Review</u> Action: Chair requested that Board Members review draft document prepared for August meeting of Regional Strategic Committee and feed back to allow collated responses to be taken back to Committee. Action update: Completed. 2 nd Phase input now being sought. <u>Ref 12 - Strategic Risk Register</u> Action: Review register with regard to UK and China international relations. Action update: Completed, On Agenda under Item * <u>Ref 14 - Balanced Scorecard (Strategic Planning)</u>	<div>AST Chair</div> <div>Complete</div> <div>Complete</div>

<p>Action: Commence process of strategic planning prior to UHI plan being received.</p>	
<p>Action update: Scheduled within Board Development Sessions Calendar under Item 12.</p>	Complete
<p><u>Ref 16 - Business Development Strategy</u></p>	
<p>Action 1: Consultation session to be arrange before end of October.</p>	
<p>Action update: Scheduled within Board Development Sessions Calendar under Item 12.</p>	Complete
<p>Action 2: Strategy to be tabled at December Board</p>	
<p>Action update: pending</p>	Vice Principal
<p><u>Historic Actions</u></p>	
<p>Matters Arising from Board Meeting of 18 March 2020</p>	
<p><u>Ref 24.6 Audit Committee – 10 March 2020</u></p>	
<p>Action: SMT to liaise with other Academic Partners prior to engaging external consultants to draw up a specification for an integrated finance/payroll/HR system that meets the College's current and future needs</p>	
<p>Action Update: Item still a work in progress, deferred due to COVID</p>	SMT
<p><u>Matters Arising from Board Meeting of 10 June 2020</u></p>	
<p><u>Ref 8: Management Accounts to 30 April 2020</u></p>	
<p>Action: Staff Board Member requested a summary of key items noted by Interim Head of Finance within Executive Summary.</p>	
<p>Action Update: Completed</p>	Complete
<p><u>Ref 17: Board Effectiveness Review</u></p>	
<p>Action: Chair, SMT and Clerk to generate action plan with appropriate timings to ensure recommendations are adopted</p>	
<p>Action Update: Not yet complete – meeting organised for 15 October</p>	Chair/SMT/ Clerk
<p><u>Ref 21: Review of Meeting</u></p>	
<p>Action: Chair and Clerk review methods of Board working over the summer to ensure that decisions are made at the most appropriate level</p>	
<p>Action Update: Completed, but issue to be monitored subject to further suggestions from Board members</p>	Complete

	Audits & Financial Reporting	
6	<p>Perth College Revised Budget 2020/21 & Financial Forecast Return</p> <p>Director of Finance presented Paper 2, and highlighted trend information, percentage staff costs, fluctuations in income, and expenditure linked to tackling digital poverty.</p> <p>Director of Finance advised that focus was on looking at tackling longer-term issues to achieve break-even by 2021/22.</p> <p>Student Member queried which processes in particular were being improved. Director of Finance responded that improvements to processes were required across the board, but time would be needed to execute.</p> <p>Staff Member enquired as to effects of recent pay rise agreed for colleges. Director of Finance noted that a 2% increase had been assumed across all staff.</p> <p>Board Member asked what actions were supporting income growth. Vice Principal noted that it was difficult to generate new commercial contracts under current circumstances, however there is an Innovation Lab planned for the Aviation Academy building and the Young Person's Guarantee Fund should generate new income not in budget.</p> <p>Board Member enquired about whether a headcount review would be aligned with the strategic plan. Chair noted that the curriculum review had identified 80% of attendance arose from 20% of courses, which afforded the use of high-level strategic levers.</p> <p>Board Member asked about discussions regarding top-slicing. Principal advised that a request for a review of top-slicing had been rejected. There is a project looking at the Resource Allocation Model but it has yet to be clarified whether this will look at reduction of allocations.</p> <p>Chair requested that an action plan for mitigating actions with outline timescales be prepared for Board to consider at next meeting.</p> <p>Director of Finance provided an update on Cashflow, noting that, while the model isn't detailed enough, an updated model is being developed to provide more accurate phasing and historic modelling of actual figures.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether there are any concerns regarding Going Concern for the College. Principal noted that, while the Government and Funding Council were concerned about liquidity across the sector, indicators are that colleges will not be allowed to</p>	Director of Finance

	<p>go to the wall. Chair noted that 2019/20 audit should be okay in terms of Going Concern as College was within technical deficit range. Director of Finance advised that future Going Concern will be linked to plans to address and mitigate.</p> <p>Following this discussion, Board APPROVED the revised Budget for 2020/21</p>	
7	<p>Audits Action Plan - update</p> <p>Vice Principal presented Paper 3 for information, noting that the paper provides a summary update for the Audits Action Plan, with a detailed version provided to Audit Committee.</p> <p>Vice Principal highlighted that 66% of the 117 actions were either fully or partially complete.</p>	
	Compliance, Risk & Performance Monitoring	
8	<p>Strategic Risk Register</p> <p>Clerk presented Paper 4, noting recent updates.</p> <p>Chair expressed concern over levels of red/amber indicators and queried whether this demonstrated that material progress was being made on mitigating actions. Board member advised that static trends was an indication that more mitigations were required.</p> <p>Board AGREED that SMT and Clerk should conduct an in-depth review of the Risk Register and discuss revised version in detail at each subsequent sub-Committee before bringing back to next Board meeting.</p>	SMT/Clerk
9	<p>Health & Safety – Annual Report 2019/20</p> <p>Board received Paper 5 for information.</p> <p>Board member expressed surprise at lack of prominence of wellbeing within Report, particularly given the current climate, for example there is little in the Report about continued working from home matters, where there would be an expectation that reassurance had been sought.</p> <p>It was AGREED to invite the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Adviser to the next Board meeting to update Board on wellbeing issues.</p> <p>Chair noted that there were indicators within the Report that the College had not made the transition from an organisation that “does” Health & Safety to one which fully adopts a Health, Safety & Wellbeing culture.</p>	Clerk

10	<p>Balanced Scorecard</p> <p>Clerk presented Paper 6, the latest update of the Balanced Scorecard, for information.</p> <p>Clerk also advised Board that work had commenced on provision of some additional performance indicators as previously requested, and that proposals would be tabled at the next Board meeting.</p>	
	Policies & Strategies	
11	<p>Summary of Policies & Procedures scheduled for review 2020/21</p> <p>Clerk presented Paper 7, which had been produced by the Quality Manager.</p> <p>Board Member requested that the summary should also include a reference to the Anti-Racism project that was currently being worked on. This was AGREED.</p> <p>Student Board Member enquired as to how UHI Single Policy approach fit with local policies. Principal advised that the Single Policy roll-out has been proceeding for a couple of years, but each Board is a separate entity so has to approve each Single Policy when it arrives.</p>	
	Board Development	
12	<p>Board Development Sessions – Calendar 2020/21</p> <p>Board noted Paper 8, which was provided for information.</p>	
	Standing Reports	
13	<p>Chair's Report</p> <p>Chair summarised Paper 9, noting in addition that further meetings re options around academic alignment and UHI top-line strategy were scheduled over the coming few weeks.</p> <p>Chair advised Board that Regional Strategy Committee were due to review financial systems in November. Perth College's Director of Finance was preparing a paper as part of this process.</p> <p>Concern was recorded in respect of some of the language used in Appendix 2 of Paper 9 in respect of Perth College's position on the UHI investigation, particularly as Court minutes are public documents.</p>	
14	<p>Principal's Report</p> <p>Principal summarised Paper 10.</p>	

	Board expressed thanks to all staff on their extraordinary response over the summer period in response to COVID.	
15	<p>HISA Perth Report</p> <p>HISA Perth President presented Paper 11, which included the 2020/21 HISA Plan of Work & a draft of the new Perth Partnership Project.</p> <p>HISA Perth President noted that 109 applications to the Student Support Fund had been received.</p>	
16	<p>Quarterly UHI Partnership Update</p> <p>Board received Paper 12 for information.</p>	
17	<p>Minutes for Board Standing Committees</p> <p>Board received for noting Draft Minutes and Chairs' Reports for the following Committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement Committee (27 August 2020) • Academic Affairs Committee (02 September 2020) • Chairs' Committee (09 September 2020) • Finance & General Purposes Committee (21 September 2020) • AST Board (24 September 2020) • Audit Committee (28 September 2020) 	
	Any Other Business	
18	<p>Voluntary Severance Update</p> <p>Board received a summary of the outcomes of the recent online poll regarding a Voluntary Severance scheme.</p> <p>Clerk advised that 14 Board Members had expressed support for the measures, and that abstentions had been received from Student Board Members who advised that they were unable to approve due to lack of time to consider the options.</p> <p>Clerk clarified that online poll had therefore APPROVED the proposals, and the matter was now being progressed via UHI in order to receive appropriate SFC approval.</p>	
19	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday 14 December 2020 @ 5:00pm 	
20	<p>Review of Meeting</p> <p>Members AGREED the meeting had covered Board business.</p>	

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Notes taken to help record minutes are also subject to Freedom of Information requests, and should be destroyed as soon as minutes are approved.

Status of Minutes – Open ☒

An **open** item is one over which there would be no issues for the College in releasing the information to the public in response to a freedom of information request.

A **closed** item is one that contains information that could be withheld from release to the public because an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies.

The College may also be asked for information contained in minutes about living individuals, under the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018. It is important that fact, rather than opinion, is recorded.

Do the minutes contain items which may be contentious under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒