

Board of Management

Meeting of the Board of Management

MINUTE OF 2nd MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15 DECEMBER 2021 AT 1600 HRS
(BoM2) HELD VIA MS TEAMS

| Present | |
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| Alisdair Barron (AB) | Paul Little (PL) |
| Nicola Cameron (NC) | May Miller (MM) |
| David Cullen (DC) | Graham Mitchell (GM) |
| David Eaton (DE) | Stuart Patrick (SP) |
| Lorna Hamilton (LH) | Ronnie Quinn (RQ) |
| Paul Hillard (PH) | Bernadette Savage (BS) |
| Ewart Keep (EK) | Audrey Sullivan (AS) |
| Karen Kelly (KK) | Lesley Woolfries (LW) |
| Zahra Khan (ZK) | |
| In attendance | |
| Paul Clark (PC) | Mairi McIntosh (Minute) |
| Roy Gardner (RG) | Stuart Thompson (ST) |

| Item 1 | Apologies for Absence | |
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| Paper No: Verbal | Lead: Chair | Action Requested: None |
| Decision | The apologies were noted. | |

| Item 2 | Declarations of Interest | |
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| Paper No: Verbal | Lead: Chair | Action Requested: None |
| Decision | None. | |

| Item 3.1 | Minute of the previous Board of Management Meeting 1 September 2021 | |
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| Paper No: BOM2-A | Lead: Chair | Action Requested: Approval |
| Discussion | <p>The minute of meeting 1 September 2021 was approved with one amendment:</p> <p>Item 6.5.5 should state DE rather than DC.</p> <p><u>Matters arising</u> The Principal advised that an estates masterplan was in development, providing a strategic overview of the College assets over the coming 10 years. This was discussed in detail at the Finance and Physical Resources Committee (FPRC), with further planning to take place in January 2022. A comprehensive presentation will follow at the upcoming Board planning day.</p> | |

ST noted that the closing date of the Phoenix Centre sale was 27 January 2022, and the next meeting of FPRC will determine whether the College will show interest in the property.

Decision

The minute was approved with the above amendment.

Item 3.2 Annual Report & Financial Statements 2020-21 (DRAFT)

**Paper No:
BOM2-B**

Lead: S Thompson / P Clark

Action Requested: Approval

Discussion

PC noted that the report narrative was shorter compared to previous versions. The Report includes required sections - a performance summary, accountability report, and elements of audit assurances previously reviewed by the Audit and Assurance Committee.

ST reported that overall, finance performance in 2021 moved from an approved small loss to an end position delivering £72k underlying operating surplus.

Income has been reduced due to several factors:

- Recession and financial crisis across much of the economy.
- Covid restrictions impacting onsite teaching, local business closures, unemployment and international travel.
- Impact on student accommodation usage.

This was partially compensated by use of the furlough scheme, and additional one-off funding via the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). Longer periods of low/no activity on campus provided savings to running costs.

An asset valuation will take place in 2022, following the increase in College assets. The previous surveyor consultation was carried out in 2019, which covered up to 5 years; however the recent audit required a formal review of the estates plan of both campuses.

Decision

The Board approved the draft Annual Report 2020-21.

Item 3.3 Fraud Closure Report

**Paper No:
BOM2-C**

Lead: P Little

Action Requested: Approval

**Discussion/
Decision**

The Principal introduced the Closure Report, prepared by the Depute Principal, noting it brought to an end a challenging episode spanning several years. The report has been presented to the Audit and Assurance Committee, and now presented to the full Board for approval.

LW noted the usefulness of the expanded IT and Effectiveness Reports, both being notably improved with good practice identified. It was noted that detail should be included to advise when recommendations were implemented.

ST advised that all finance recommendations were complete.

One IT recommendation remains outstanding, with a new Helpdesk to be implemented by summer 2022.

GM reported that he had convened a closed session of the Audit and Assurance Committee (AAC) with the external auditor, producing a series of actions that will be progressed and tracked via the AAC.

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| Decision | The Board approved the report. | |
| Item 3.4 | Strategic Risk Review | |
| Paper No: BOM2-D | Lead: P Clark | Action Requested: Approval |
| Discussion | <p>PC introduced the Strategic Risk Review for the Board's approval. The review summarised the ongoing cyclic review of Risk via the Board committees. PC highlighted that there are currently only 2 red risks remaining.</p> <p>The Board noted that, since June, there has been an overall reduction of red risks and the average risk score continues to gradually decrease. There will be an increased focus on risk 27, relating to threats of Coronavirus outbreaks in 2022.</p> | |
| Decision | The Board approved the Strategic Risk Review. | |

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| Item 4.1 | Students' Association Update | |
| Paper No: Verbal | Lead: B Savage / Z Khan | Action Requested: Discussion |
| Discussion | <p>BS gave a brief overview of Students' Association (SA) activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class representatives have met KPI's after promotion via College staff, and class rep meetings have been well attended and engaging. • Timetabling, assessment, and blended learning feedback are the main focus of the SA. • 10 societies are now online, with over 120 members. • Events so far, such as Get to Know Your College, have been well received. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ESOL students in particular have been encouraged to attend these events. • A soft launch of the Essay Mills awareness campaign commenced last week, aligning with typical assessment times where students may be seeking support. • In partnership with Student Experience, the Mental Health agreement is to be revamped, using the student toolkit as a guide. | |
| Decision | Noted. | |

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| Item 4.2 | Chair's Remarks | |
| Paper No: Verbal | Lead: Chair | Action Requested: Discussion |
| Discussion | <p>The Chair recently attended the Winter Graduation, noting the event was an excellent validation of the momentous student effort throughout the challenging year.</p> <p>The Chair congratulated those who attended the CDN awards on behalf of the Board, noting the student body had made significant achievements.</p> | |
| Decision | Noted. | |

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| Item 4.3 | Principal's Report | |
| Paper No: Verbal | Lead: P Little | Action Requested: Discussion |
| Discussion | <p>The Principal provided an overview of the College's position, in particular highlighting the impact of prolonged disruption due to Covid, and the pressures on staff and students.</p> <p>The Principal noted that the College currently is averaging 85 staff absences per day (long term and short term). Around 25% of these absences are related to mental health/stress. September 2021 saw the highest number of College Covid cases since recording of these was commenced one year ago: of 536 cases to 28 September, 182 (34%) were recorded in September.</p> <p>PL highlighted that the College is experiencing the effect of anxiety and mental exhaustion of staff. In response to this, the decision to move all but critical learning and teaching online till mid-January was taken on 13 December. The College remains open online, and our buildings will be open for staff or students who need a safe place to work.</p> <p>The Board noted that the student experience was inevitably diminished in these circumstances, and especially with the high incidence of digital poverty. It is evident that students enjoy being on campus and that having a social learning experience, meeting fellow students, and being able to engage directly with staff is a vital part of the student experience.</p> <p>The Principal also pointed out that digital funding allocated to the sector was disappointingly low, which does not cover the £5M required by CoGC to carry out lifecycle replacement of IT equipment.</p> <p>The Principal noted that the impact of "Covid culture" would be apparent for many years to come.</p> <p>PC requested that the Board approve the publishing of the 5 supporting strategies internally via MyConnect. This was agreed.</p> | |
| Decision | Action: Locate College Supporting Strategies on MyConnect; PC | |

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| Item 4.4 | Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability of Glasgow College Region | |
| Paper No: Verbal | Lead: P Little | Action Requested: Discussion |
| Discussion | <p>The Principal noted that the Minister approved all recommendations set forth by SFC with one exception. SFC has produced a good report concerning the reclassification of Colleges, recently presented to the Scottish Government.</p> <p>The advances towards a digital world has been exponential since the emergence of the pandemic, producing an increasingly digitised workforce.</p> <p>PL highlighted that austerity has impacted upon the near-exhausted Scottish support systems, affecting institutions and vulnerable communities. Brexit has also played a significant role in this strain on the system, with inflation and migration and lack of consequential funding to Scotland.</p> | |

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| Decision | Noted. |
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| Item 4.5 | COP26 – College Review | |
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| Paper No: BOM2-F | Lead: R Gardner | Action Requested: Discussion |
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| Discussion | <p>COP26 provided a significant opportunity for CoGC to occupy a place in the global spotlight. The Riverside Campus became a prime destination, as it was transformed into the International Maritime Hub, launching days prior to the commencement of COP26.</p> <p>The range of events, held either by CoGC or in partnership with external companies, involved thousands of attendees, including VVIPs such as MSPs and HRH The Princess Royal. The public engagement was hugely successful, cementing the legacy of COP26 and CoGC’s presence on the global stage. RG will continue discussions with Glasgow City Council to strategise how best to maintain the momentum of the College legacy.</p> <p>The Board commended the College efforts in relation to the COP26 events, and complimented the video which captured this involvement, produced by RG and his team. AS suggested that a script would be a good addition to the video content.</p> | |
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| Decision | Noted. |
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| Item 5.1.1 | Annual Procurement Report 2020-21 | |
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| Paper No: BOM2-G | Lead: S Thompson | Action Requested: Approval |
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| Discussion | <p>The Board were asked to review and approve the Annual Procurement Report 2020-2021. The report had previously been approved by the Finance and Physical Resources Committee on 1st December 2021. The Annual Procurement Report provided an overview of Procurement Activity within the academic period 2020 – 2021.</p> | |
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| Decision | The Board approved the report. |
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| Item 5.2 | Reports from Board Committees | |
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| Item 5.2.1 | External Audit Annual Report 2020-21 | |
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| Paper No: BOM2-H | Lead: S Thompson | Action Requested: Approval |
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| Discussion | <p>GM provided context for the report, noting that the external auditor had new staff conducting the review this year, and that a different approach had been taken to previous years. The AAC had met with the EA to clarify some of the reportage and grading, which, after discussion had been agreed.</p> <p>The Principal had also met with SMT colleagues to refine the management responses. The Audit and Assurance Committee reported that it had recognised the efforts of College staff in maintaining performance over a difficult 12 months. .</p> <p>The report was approved, noting that the content and wording provided by the external auditors could not be further amended.</p> | |
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Decision The Board approved the External Audit Report.

Item 5.2.2 Azets Letter of Representation

Paper No: BOM2-I **Lead:** S Thompson **Action Requested:** Approval

Discussion ST asked that the Board approve the Azets Letter of Representation, noting the report was in the standard format with standard content.

Decision The Board approved the Letter of Representation.

Item 5.3 Committee Minutes

Item 6 Any Other Notified Business

Discussion PC advised that AdminControl offered free 30-minute training sessions for Board members to fully utilise the platform. Any interested parties should contact PC to arrange this.

Decision Noted.

Item 7 Disclosability of Papers

Discussion That the disclosability status of papers remain unchanged at this time.

Decision Noted.

Item 8 Date of Next Meeting

Discussion The date of the next meeting was noted as 21 March 2022.

Decision Noted.

ANNEX TO THE MINUTE

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

| Item | Description | Owner | Target Date |
|----------------------|--|-------|-------------|
| BoM2-4.3 15 12 22 | Principal's Report: Locate College Supporting Strategies on Myconnect; PC | PC | ASAP |

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

| Item | Description | Owner | Target Date |
|------------------------|--|-------------------|---------------------------|
| BoM6-4.1 16 06 21 | Property Disposals/Development Update: Full estates masterplan to be submitted to Board. | PL | By Dec 2021 |
| BoM6-6.1.2 16 06 21 | SA Constitution: Circulate MoU for approval via email. | Student President | Ongoing Updated |
| BoM1-5.1 01 09 21 | SA Constitution: Draft MoU will be circulated to the Board once finalised. | BS | ASAP |
| BoM1-6.3 01 09 21 | Stakeholder Positioning & Engagement Strategy: Provide advice on recording process and issue generic College briefing note for Board members. | WM | Ongoing |