

## Board of Management

### Meeting of the Board of Management

MINUTE OF 1<sup>st</sup> MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 AUGUST 2022

AT 1600 HRS (BoM1) HELD VIA MS TEAMS

Present	
Alisdair Barron (AB) (Chair)	Megan McClellan (MMcC)
Nicola Cameron (NC)	May Miller (MM)
David Cullen (DC)	Graham Mitchell (GM)
David Eaton (DE)	Stuart Patrick (SP)
Lorna Hamilton (LH)	Ronnie Quinn (RQ)
Ewart Keep (EK)	Lesley Woolfries (LW) (Co-Chair)
Paul Little (PL)	Rebekah Widdowfield (RW)
In attendance	
Ian Beach (IB) (Items 1-4 only)	John Laird, (JL) (Items 1-4 only)
Jon Gray (JG) (Items 1-4 only)	Stuart Thompson (ST)
John Gribben (JFG)	Ann Butcher (Minute)
Apologies	
Zara Grew (ZG)	Audrey Sullivan (AS)
Paul Hillard (PH)	

In the absence of AB, LW took the Chair.

Item BoM1-1	Welcome to New Student Board Members	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: L Woolfries	Action Requested: None
Decision	LW welcomed new student Board member Megan McClellan to her first meeting of the Board as Student President. New Board member Zara Grew was currently on annual leave.	

Item BoM1-2	Apologies for Absence	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: L Woolfries	Action Requested: None
Decision	Apologies were received from ZG, PH and AS.	

Item BoM1-3	Declarations of Interest	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: L Woolfries	Action Requested: None
Decision	EK declared an interest as a member of the Haywood Review of Scottish Qualifications Academic Consultation Group.	

*John Laird, Ian Beach and Jon Gray attended the meeting for item 1.4. AB attended the meeting during discussion.*

Item BoM1-4	Education Scotland: Progress Visit Report
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<b>Paper No: BoM1-A</b>	Lead: John Laird	Action Requested: None
<b>Discussion</b>	<p>JL introduced new College link HMI, Ian Beach and provided the Board with an overview on the outcome of the Progress and Safeguarding visit undertaken in May 2022. The visit was developed as part of a national programme of quality assurance mindful of the impact of the pandemic. Five overarching themes were explored with no major concerns raised on the delivery of learning and teaching. The overall outcome presented a positive reflection of the work done and areas of positive progress were highlighted, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the support, guidance and programmes offered by the Learning and Teaching Academy;</li> <li>• re-alignment of some aspects of the curriculum including developing a suite of micro-credentials and the provision of short, skill-based units to meet the current and future needs of employers;</li> <li>• the long-term work to move to more digital delivery to help learners cope with challenges during COVID helped ease transition to remote learning and ensure access to digital equipment, connectively and support for both staff and learners;</li> <li>• prioritisation and expansion of a range of wellbeing and mental health support to staff and learners;</li> <li>• the proactive work with partner organisation to enable community-based and ESOL learners to continue to access learning over the pandemic;</li> <li>• the wide range of evaluation methods and processes to help ensure the quality of provision.</li> </ul> <p>Six areas for further progress including communication and timetabling were noted. JG reported that appropriate actions relating to the visit are being taken forward in the ongoing College enhancement plan. Whilst acknowledging the areas for improvement raised, PL reminded that this progress visit (not a review) was a snapshot in time and any concerns should not detract or minimise the huge efforts made and extremely high standards achieved during the pandemic to optimise learning and digitisation and let learning flourish.</p> <p>AB congratulated the College on the positive outcome however given the excellent work undertaken by the Students' Association was disappointed to note the lack of understanding from the student body and encouraged increased communication. This is being addressed.</p> <p>The Board thanked JL for the presentation and all staff and students for their contribution from across the College.</p>	
<b>Decision</b>	To note the outcome of the 2022 Progress Visit by Education Scotland and the actions being taken forward in the Enhancement Plan.	

*John Laird, Ian Beach and Jon Gray left the meeting.*

<b>Item BoM1-5.1</b>	<b>Minute of the previous Board of Management meeting held on 15 June 2022</b>	
<b>Paper No: BoM1-B</b>	Lead: Chair	Action Requested: Approve

**Decision**

That the minute be approved. There were no matters arising.

Item BoM1-5.2	Financial Challenges and Solutions (Mitigations & Interventions)	
Paper No: BoM1-C	Lead: P Little	Action Requested: Approve
Discussion	<p>PL provided the Board with an update on the projected budget shortfall as increased cost pressures have significantly impacted the original 2022-23 budget as approved at the June Board meeting.</p> <p>Due to the current economic landscape and externally-driven factors, the College (and the sector as a whole) is facing a volatile operating environment. Combined with the lasting effects of Covid, significant financial challenges including a reduction in SFC funding; recurring restrictions on teaching delivery and other income streams and; upward movement on staffing costs are being further compounded by additional UK wide acute cost pressures of high inflation, rising energy costs, ongoing effects of Brexit and supply chain disruptions.</p> <p>PL reported that as expenditure is forecasted to exceed income, recovery will require substantial and sustainable income growth above baseline assumptions combined with cost controls to mitigate inflationary pressures, particularly on staff costs (which account for over 80% of the total operating expenditure). The College will strive to achieve maximum cost efficiencies without undermining growth in the longer term. New measures to increase income will be explored including additional fee income generated through the College Company and provision of short course micro-credential programmes.</p> <p>ELT/SMT have extensively discussed achievable levels of target savings and growth and the previous budgeted position was no longer considered achievable. A list of mitigations and solutions were proposed and the Principal stressed that all interventions will be exhausted prior to implementation of Voluntary and Compulsory Severance. Members noted that application for additional funding for VS from the Foundation would be considered on Friday (26 08 22).</p> <p>ST provided an overview on the impact of the unprecedented financial challenges on the College budget. He reminded Board members of the budget position approved at the June Board meeting with the 2022-23 budget set at 2.0m deficit (which included 3% improvements to achieve budgeted deficit). However, the transition to breakeven from 2023-24 onwards now required an increase in improvements of 8% (£5.6m). The forecast is now considerably more challenging than previously reported and delivery of the original budget would now require improvements of £5.4m (8%) in year 1.</p> <p>Budget assumptions have been updated and an improvement target of £4m resulting in a revised deficit of £3.4m and reduced cash reserves of £4.2m for 2022-23 was proposed.</p> <p>Detail of the revised deficit position was examined and members requested additional breakdown information on how the proposed cost savings and growth will be achieved. ST reported that detailed plans are evolving and innovative ways for income generation and further</p>	

mitigations and interventions to control costs are being put together with immediate effect. Some interventions have been put in place.

Members queried the revised 3-year timeframe to achieve a balanced budget by 2024-25 and suggested that additional improvements and cost savings should be implemented in year 1. PL advised that the proposal discussed by ELT/SMT was considered realistic and any further radical savings would negatively impact the student experience, morale and reputation of the College. The SFC and Scottish Government are fully aware that Colleges are working in 'crisis mode' and considered that the revised timeframe would be acceptable.

The proposed mitigations and interventions were reviewed. It was agreed that were possible greater targets for improvement on costs and income generation will be considered including increased use of the College assets. Members raised some concern regarding restricted Campus opening hours particularly during winter months as the buildings would provide a warm refuge for students. The need to safeguard the capacity for generation of income through the College Company was also highlighted.

DE commented that whilst he was aware of the financial challenges and the necessary mitigation measures, he was concerned how implementation would affect lecturing staff particularly given the recent industrial action taken by EIS in order to reach a low pay settlement which was well below the cost of living increase. Given the high levels of absenteeism amongst Curriculum Heads and turnover of Faculty Deans, he suggested that the current layers of management and levels of support staff were overinflated and that the current structure should be reviewed.

PL explained that the level of support positions was currently considered essential in support of both students and academic staff. The College is considering ways to avoid redundancy and solutions proposed will run concurrently with other aspects of organisational change such as the potential for restructure.

JFG added that the summary of mitigations and interventions was not an exhaustive list and clarified that compulsory redundancy was not a top priority. He further reassured that the College has a duty of care to all staff and if implemented, appropriate engagement and consultation would be undertaken with staff and Trade Unions.

To ensure a clear understanding of deliverability, the Board requested a more detailed route map, with priorities and confirmed plan of action. Members agreed that in the short term, appropriate dialogue would devolve through relevant Board Committees however any alternative positions and decision points would revert back to the full Board.

The Board noted that the summary of this financial briefing would be communicated to Trade Unions tomorrow (25 08 22) in advance of all managers on Friday (26 08 22). A subsequent Principal's Briefing will also be circulated to all staff.

**Decision**

- That a revised improvement target of £4m resulting in a revised end of year deficit of £3.4m and reduced cash reserves of £4.2m for 2022-23 was agreed.
- That a detailed road map and plan of action for mitigations and interventions be provided.

**Item BoM1-5.3****Strategic Risk Review**Paper No:  
BoM1-D

Lead: P Little (for S Lodge)

Action Requested: Approve

**Discussion**

PL provided an update on the College Risk Register as at 10 August 2022. Three highest-scoring RED risks remain with the average risk score rising to 10.8 which reflects the significant deterioration in financial outlook. As agreed at the recent PNC meeting, Risks 1 and 27 have now been reduced.

In light of discussion under item 5.2, it was agreed that ST would update and reflect on the current Risk Score for Risk 15 – *Failure to achieve operating surplus via control of costs and achievement of income targets*.

**Decision**

To approve the Risk Register as at 10 August 2022.

**Item BoM1-6.1****Students' Association (SA) – Plan of Work**Paper No:  
Verbal

Lead: M McClellan

Action Requested: Discuss

**Discussion**

MMcC provided the Board with an overview of the SA Plan of Work for 2022-23 and update on the new Student Presidential Team and the current focus on creating creative spaces on Campus. Over 3500 students attended the recent Freshers 2022 on 16-19 August which was embedded with the induction week. Significant positive feedback has been received however increased course information and cross collaboration with Faculties will be further enhanced.

MMcC reported on the ongoing development of the Student Partnership Agreement and Student Parliament and continued engagement with external groups including involvement with the NUS Cost of Living Crisis campaign.

*Socials and Activities* – a Society Awards Framework will be introduced. Convener support and training will continue and development of SA and student events including facilitation of sports opportunities will be progressed.

*Diversity and Wellbeing* – work continues on for the LGBT Charter and support for the NUS nationwide Student Mental Health Agreement is ongoing. The SA is also working towards a White Ribbon Pledge. Events are being created to highlight intersectionality of all liberation campaigns.

*Learning and Teaching* – the Class Rep system continues with increased engagement between Class and Faculty Reps. Further support and contact time will also be provided. Class Rep communications will be enhanced.

DC advised on his involvement with the 'Colleges of Sanctuary' initiative and welcomed further discussions with the SA which was agreed.

AB further highlighted Education Scotland's concerns and encouraged the Team to increase awareness and communication of all the excellent work being undertaken. MMcC confirmed that the SA operational plan will address this issue particularly through the Class Rep system.

LW thanked MMcC for her contribution and informative presentation.

**Decision**

To note the update report.

**Item BoM1-6.2 Chair's Remarks**

<b>Paper No: Verbal</b>	Lead: Chair	Action Requested: Discuss
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<b>Discussion</b>	<p>AB updated members on his recent attendance at College Chairs' meetings and highlighted the September Colleges Scotland event which will allow Chairs and Principals to reflect on the opportunities and future destiny of the College sector.</p> <p><b>GCRB Investigation</b>          AB provided the Board with an update on the outcome of the investigation undertaken by GCRB. The outcome report is not currently being made available for publication.</p>	
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**Decision**

To note the update.

**Item BoM1-6.3 Principal's Report**

<b>Paper No: Verbal</b>	Lead: P Little	Action Requested: Discuss
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<b>Discussion</b>	<p>PL reported that students have now been welcomed back with 91% timetabled on campus this year. Over 7000 FT HN and FE course places are expected with applications down by 4% on the same period last year. This is a dynamic picture which will fluctuate until the end of September. The College has also moved to full implementation of the new VLE Canvas system.</p> <p>The Dean of Nautical and STEM has recently announced his retirement with a recruitment process planned shortly. Interviews for the Dean of Creative Industries are scheduled for September.</p> <p>Approximately 570 students from Italy, Spain, Germany and Saudi Arabia have taken part in a Summer School with accommodation provided on Riverside Campus. The College worked in partnership with St Andrews Language School to offer 70 Ukrainian child refugees' free meals and use of College facilities within the Programme.</p> <p>PL provided the Board with an update on additional permanency requests and the Learning Support and Development Advisor role dispute. The review of hybrid working arrangements is still ongoing and an update report will be provided to the Board by December. Members</p>	
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	noted that ELT/SMT are currently on Campus 5 days per week during September.
	PL further advised on the UK Shipbuilding Skills Task Force meeting to be held in College on 13 September.
<b>Decision</b>	To note the update report.

<b>Item BoM1-7.1</b>	<b>Public Affairs</b>	
<b>Paper No: BoM1-E</b>	Lead: P Little	Action Requested: Note
<b>Decision</b>	To note the College's approach to public affairs which is viewed as a component of the wider Stakeholder Engagement Plan.	

<b>Item BoM1-7.2</b>	<b>College Secretary Arrangements</b>	
<b>Paper No: Verbal</b>	Lead: P Little	Action requested: Note
<b>Decision</b>	PL reported that the shortlist and interview process for the position of College Secretary has now been undertaken. Members will be informed of the outcome during September.	

<b>Item BoM1-8</b>	<b>Reports from Board Committees</b>	
<b>Item BoM1-8.1</b>	<b>Committee Minutes</b>	
<b>Item BoM1-8.1.1</b>	<b>Performance and Nominations Committee</b>	
<b>Paper No: BoM1-F + BoM1-G</b>	Lead: L Woolfries	Action Requested: Note
<b>Decision</b>	<p>To note the minutes of the Performance and Nominations Committee meetings held on 23 May and 8 August 2022.</p> <p>LW informed Board members that due to staff annual leave commitments, the self-evaluation report was delayed and will be submitted at the next meeting of PNC for further review by the full Board at the next meeting.</p> <p>LW further advised that the new College Secretary will canvas members regarding intentions on tenure. Recruitment of current vacancies will also be considered. Expressions of interest for Convener of the Finance and Physical Resources Committee will be sought.</p>	

<b>Item BoM1-9</b>	<b>Any Other Notified Business</b>	
<b>Decision</b>	<p><b>Charles Oakley Building</b></p> <p>LW requested that a summary of increased costs for the COB options appraisal be submitted at the next meeting of the FPRC.</p>	

<b>Item BoM1-10</b>	<b>Disclosability of Papers</b>	
<b>Decision</b>	That the disclosability status of papers remain unchanged at this time.	

<b>Item BoM1-11</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	
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**Decision**

Board Planning Day – Wednesday 2 November 2022

*The meeting closed at 1900 hours.*



## ANNEX TO THE MINUTE

### ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
BoM1-5.2 24 08 22	<b>Financial Challenges &amp; Solutions:</b> Provide a detailed road map and plan of action for mitigations and interventions	PL/JFG	ASAP

### ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
BoM4-3.1 15 06 22	<b>Matters Arising - Strategic Partnerships:</b> A briefing paper will be submitted at the next meeting.	PL	24 08 22 <b>Complete</b>
BoM3-3.4 30 03 22	<b>New Model code of conduct 2022:</b> Arrange Model Code of Conduct development opportunity for members.	MC	Ongoing <b>Complete</b>
BoM3-3.7 30 03 22	<b>VS Proposal:</b> Submit for approval from GCRB and SFC.	JFG/ST	Ongoing <b>Complete</b>
BoM3-3.7 30 03 22	<b>VS Proposal:</b> Seek appropriate funding from SFC and College Foundation.	JFG/ST	Ongoing <b>Complete</b>