



EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 19 JANUARY 2016

1400hrs, Boardroom, Milton Road Campus

Present: A Johnston (Acting Chair); J Van Herk; I Young

In attendance: P Davis; D Robertson; M Walker (Clerk); C Wilson

1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

- 1.1 The Acting Chair informed members that the former Committee Chair, Jan Cutting, had stepped down from the Board in January 2016. On behalf of the Committee, the Acting Chair thanked Jan Cutting for her service to the Committee and the Board.
- 1.2 The Committee NOTED that the Acting Chair would fill the vacant role until committee membership was considered by the Board on 09 February.
- 1.3 The Committee NOTED that apologies had been received from Kellie Bradford.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 No declarations of interest were received.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 3.1 The Committee APPROVED the External Engagement Committee minutes of 02 November 2015 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 Actions from the previous meeting were complete, overtaken or on the agenda.

5 BRAND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

- 5.1 The Committee NOTED that a proposal to launch the College brand in three phases: Pre-launch activity; launch plan implementation; post launch review and management. The Head of Marketing, PR and Communications outlined the three phases in further detail, and informed the Committee that it was expected that the proposed plans would evolve and expand over time.
- 5.2 The Committee NOTED that it had previously recommended that the Senior Management Group should consider rationalising centre names and sub-brands as a matter of priority (*minute 6.7/02.11.15 refers*). The Head of Marketing, PR and Communications advised the Committee that such work would need to be completed prior to the launch of the brand, to enable style guides to be developed.
- 5.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the following in relation to the College's nomenclature:
- (i) Recent discussions held at the Policy & Resources Committee and Board relating to the importance on standardised nomenclature;
 - (ii) the nomenclature and hierarchical structures used within other colleges and universities;
 - (iii) the need for simplicity and clarity across all centre names and sub-brands;
 - (iv) the wider impact of the Business Transformation Plan and the curriculum strategy;
 - (v) students perceptions of the current centre names, and the possible wider implications for name changes within the College
 - (vi) the historical naming of centres based on management capacity, rather than as specific area of practice;
 - (vii) the financial implications of reconfiguring sub-brands within the College.
- 5.4 The Committee AGREED that the standardising and clarity of centre names and sub-brands was a matter of urgency, and should be taken forward by the Executive. Further to this, the Committee AGREED that an update on the development of the required style guides would be provided by the Head of Marketing, PR and Communications at its next meeting. The Acting Chair informed the Committee that appropriate nomenclature would be an output of the Business Transformation Plan.
- 5.5 The Committee DISCUSSED the proposed timescales for each phase of the launch, and their dependency on the finalised Business Transformation Plan. Members AGREED that a realistic aim would be for the 'pre-launch activity' to have concluded by April/May 2016.
- 5.6 The Committee NOTED the limited budget available for external brand marketing, and DISCUSSED the following points:
- (i) the need for a scaled and targeted approach to marketing activities;
 - (ii) the Committee's role in monitoring the cost-effectiveness of the brand roll-

- out;
- (iii) the Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) process and the importance of putting forward a robust case for funding.

5.7 The Committee commended the approach of the Head of Marketing, PR and Communications, and looked forward to reviewing progress at its next meeting.

6 CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLAN UPDATE

6.1 The Committee NOTED a paper outlining the current provision for communicating with key stakeholder groups during crisis situations. The Head of Marketing, PR and Communications outlined the Business Continuity Plans (BCP) currently in-place across the College, which covered:

- (i) Incident management;
- (ii) extreme weather;
- (iii) loss of utilities;
- (iv) loss of site or access to site;
- (v) terrorist attack or threat;
- (vi) contagious disease.

6.2 The Committee NOTED that each BCP had its own communications plan, but no single overarching template that could be used to create plans for future BCPs. The Head of Marketing, PR and Communications informed the Committee that a general crisis communications plan would be developed to provide this template.

6.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the proposal to develop a new general crisis communications plan, including:

- (i) the need to include a serious injury element to the communications plan;
- (ii) the idea of semi-permanent teams (consisting of key role holders within the College) coming together in crisis situations;
- (iii) the inclusion of guidance within the plan indicating when a situation should be escalated;
- (iv) the appropriate training of the Communications Team to deal with such situations.

6.4 The Committee AGREED that a proposal should be presented at its next meeting, outlining a timescale for the development of a Crisis Communication Plan.

6.5 Further to this, the Committee DISCUSSED the need for appropriate staff to be media trained. The Acting Chair advised the Committee that for an organisation of its size, the College should have at least six members of media trained staff. The Committee AGREED that a schedule for media training and staff/Board briefings should also come forward to the next meeting of the Committee.

7 EMPLOYER COUNCILS REPORT

Ray McCowan, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality, joined the meeting

- 7.1 The Committee NOTED a report on the active engagement of the College with the regions employers through Employer Councils. The Vice Principal informed the Committee that the role of the Employer Councils was to advise curriculum teams and the Executive on 'what industry wants' from the College, and how best these needs can be met.
- 7.2 The Committee NOTED a terms of reference for Employer Councils, which aimed to nurture a level of standardisation and consistency across each curriculum area.
- 7.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the following matters regarding the role and format of the Employer Councils:
- (i) the use of a structured approach to maintain employer engagement;
 - (ii) the division of Employer Councils into curriculum areas, and the benefits of bringing together diversified employer groups;
 - (iii) the future involvement of ECSA in Employer Councils, and the engagement of students through the proposed student employment accreditation scheme;
 - (iv) the 'lead in time' for employer engagement to result in curriculum change.
- 7.4 The Committee commended the Employer Councils initiative and recommended that the Vice Principal and Board members utilise and share existing links as a gateway to forging new employer links.

Ray McCowan left the meeting

8 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT SUB-GROUPS

- 8.1 COMMERCIAL & INTERNATIONAL SUB-GROUP
- 8.1.1 The Committee NOTED the Commercial & International Sub-Group minutes and actions from the meeting of 14 December 2015. The Acting Chair informed the Committee that the Sub-Group had made positive progress in the development of the College's only flexible source of income.
- 8.1.2 The Committee NOTED that the College appeal against the UKBA's revoking of its Tier 4 Status was upheld, thus allowing current Tier 4 students at the College to complete their studies to June 2016. The Acting Chair welcomed the outcome, and informed the Committee that the Sub-Group would continue to monitor matters related to the College's sponsor license.
- 8.1.3 The Committee NOTED that the Sub-Group's membership had been reviewed at its request. The Acting Chair informed the Committee that, whilst it welcomed and valued the input of ECSA, it was the Sub-Group's opinion that student representation on the External Engagement Committee provided an appropriate

mechanism for feedback and discussion. The Committee AGREED that the Commercial & International Sub-Group would seek to inform student Board members of matters arising on future Sub-Group agendas, which may impact directly on students.

- 8.1.4 The Committee NOTED that the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee had approved the revised delegated financial limits recommended by the Committee. The Clerk advised the Committee that the College's Financial Regulations had been appropriately updated, and a draft proforma for future cases of delegated financial authority would be considered at the next meeting of the Sub-Group.

8.2 BOARD ENGAGEMENT SUB-GROUP

- 8.2.1 The Committee NOTED an update from the Chair of the Board Engagement Sub-Group following an initial meeting held in December, with the Head of Marketing, PR & Communications and representatives from the Events and Governance Teams in-attendance. The Committee NOTED the informal approach of the Sub-Group, in comparison with the Commercial & International Sub-Group, which aimed to utilise its Chair (and Board representative) in a 'coordinator' role.

- 8.2.2 The Committee NOTED that the Sub-Group were awaiting the finalisation of the draft External Engagement and Alumni Strategies, before a follow-up meeting was arranged.

- 8.2.3 The Committee NOTED the role and engagement of Board members in both the internal and external workings of the College, and DISCUSSED the following:

- (i) the need to be proactive towards Board engagement;
- (ii) the fact that Board engagement activities would encompass non-executive, staff and student Board members;
- (iii) the 'ambassadorial' aspect of external Board engagement;
- (iv) the benefits of internal engagement in terms of Board and staff mentorship;
- (v) the involvement of ECSA in the development of internal and external links.

- 8.2.4 The Committee AGREED that the Chair of the Sub-Group should accelerate the development of a mentorship model for the College with the Chair and the Governance Director.

9 ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

- 9.1 None

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 10.1 The next meeting would be held at 14:00hrs on 22 March 2016 at the Milton Road Campus

Meeting closed at 15:40