



EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 22 MARCH 2016

1400hrs, Boardroom, Milton Road Campus

Present: K Bradford; B Downie; A Johnston (Chair); Azra Sharif-Qayyum; J Van Herk; I Young

In attendance: P Davis; S-J Linton; I McKay; D Robertson; M Walker (Clerk); C Wilson

1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

1.1 No apologies were received

1.2 The Committee Chair welcomed Bob Downie and Azra Sharif-Qayyum, new Non-Executive Board members, to their first meeting of the External Engagement Committee.

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 19 January 2016 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Actions from the previous meeting were complete, overtaken or on the agenda, with the exception of the following:

4.1.1 *MEDIA TRAINING (Minutes 6.5/19.01.16 refers)*

The Committee NOTED an update on the scheduling of media training for members of the Senior Management Team and the Board. The Head of Marketing, P&R Communications informed the Committee that the Communications Team were working with colleagues in Organisation

Development to finalise a programme of training for the Executive, the Chair and the Vice Chair. The Committee endorsed the 'best value' approach of the Communications Team towards training senior members of the College's management team and the Board.

5 COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP (CPP)

- 5.1 The Committee NOTED an update on the ongoing review of the College's CPP engagement, and an overview of recent activity conducted by the College to fulfil its statutory obligations under the 'Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015'.
- 5.2 The Committee NOTED the College's strategic leads for the Midlothian, East Lothian and Edinburgh City Partnerships, and the membership of related sub-group and forums. The Deputy Principal and the Head of Performance & Planning advised the Committee that the College's Business Transformation Plan aimed to develop existing relationships with CPPs, and (over the next three months) steps would be taken to confirm College staffs continued involvement.
- 5.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the following matters related to the College's current engagement with CPPs and the opportunities these linkages present:
- (i) The general nature of the relationships between each CPP and the College;
 - (ii) the opportunities available to the College in terms of business links and other initiatives such as Developing the Young Workforce (DYW);
 - (iii) the complexities and interdependencies of the various CPPs relationships and the communication/reporting structure in place with the College;
 - (iv) the amount of staff time attributed to engagement with CPPs.
- 5.4 The Committee AGREED that in light of the ongoing review of the College's relationship with its partners, a CPP standing item would be added to future Committee agendas. The Committee Chair informed members that through regularly reporting to the Committee a clearer picture of the internal structures and reporting lines would emerge.
- 5.5 The Committee NOTED that representatives of East Lothian Partnership would attend the next meeting of the Committee for an agenda item entitled; '*East Lothian Partnership and Edinburgh College achievements and opportunities*'. The Governance Advisor informed the Committee that a full briefing would be provided in advance of its meeting on 24 May. The Committee AGREED that the briefing should include feedback from the Senior Management Team on any topics that it may be advantageous to discuss with the East Lothian Partnership.

Sarah-Jane Linton left the meeting.

6 MARKETING, PR & COMMUNICATIONS

6.1 MARKETING, PR & COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

- 6.1.1 The Committee NOTED a high-level report on the major projects taking place across the College's Marketing, PR, Communications and Events functions. The Head of Marketing, PR & Communications outlined the structure and size of the Directorate, and the remits of the Marketing, PR & Communications and Events & Stakeholder managers.
- 6.1.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the following projects and activities highlighted within the report:
- (i) The Marketing Team's work to support the achievement of students recruitment and credit targets, and the monitoring of applicant contact now that individuals may only apply for one course;
 - (ii) the use of the 'Inception' tool to allow managers to track their course's performance against agreed targets, and the Marketing Team's ability to identify and promote underperforming courses;
 - (iii) the work of the Events & Stakeholder Management Team towards developing an External Stakeholder Strategy, and the need to accelerate this important piece of work;
 - (iv) the number of significant projects going on across the Directorate and the process of planning and prioritising projects;
 - (v) the success of the Directorate in winning four awards at the College Development Networks' Marketing Awards 2016.
- 6.1.3 The Committee AGREED that the Vice Chair, through the Board Engagement Sub-Group, should oversee the development of the External Stakeholder Strategy. The Committee Chair highlighted to the Committee that a coherent Strategy could have a role in streamlining the complex links the College maintains with its CPPs (as discussed under minute 5.3).
- 6.1.4 The Committee welcomed the report provided by the Head of Marketing, PR & Communications, and acknowledged the financial and staffing pressures faced by the Directorate. The Committee AGREED that, for a future Committee meeting, the layout of the report should be reconsidered to focus less on the risks associated with each project and more on the opportunities which may arise.

6.2 BRAND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

- 6.2.1 The Committee NOTED an overview of the brand architecture, as part of the wider 'brand pre-launch activity', provided by the Head of Marketing, PR & Communications.
- 6.2.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the following aspects of the brand architecture and style guides:
- (i) The general support of the Committee and the wider Board for the proposed design concept;

- (ii) the need for standardisation and clarity around the centre names and sub-brands;
- (iii) the inclusion of the Development Trust logo in the same 'family' as the College, and the need to draw clearer distinctions between the two.

6.2.3 The Committee NOTED that no decision had been taken by the Senior Management Group on the standardising and clarity of centre names and sub-brands. Members DISCUSSED the ongoing restructuring process, and AGREED that the Executive should progress this as a matter of urgency – prior to the finalisation of style guides for review by the Committee.

6.2.4 The Committee AGREED that the Executive should also reconsider the positioning of the Development Trust logo within the College's brand architecture, due to the political sensitivities around colleges and ALFs.

6.3 CRISIS COMMUNICATION REPORT

6.3.1 The Committee NOTED a first draft of the Edinburgh College Crisis Communication Plan, which outlined a procedures for coordinating communication in the event of an emergency of crisis situation. The Head of Marketing, PR & Communications informed the Committee that robust Business Continuity Plans were in place at the College to guide the management of the institution's operations in emergency and crisis situations.

6.3.2 The Committee welcomed the opportunity to comment on the draft and DISCUSSED the following areas of the crisis communications plan:

- (i) The potential involvement of the Committee, the Board and ECSA in developing the draft;
- (ii) the circulation of a subsequent draft to the Chair and committee chairs for comment;
- (iii) the current templates and guidance on developing a crisis communication plan within the college sector.

6.3.3 The Committee AGREED that its members should provide a further comments on the draft document to Governance Advisor, who would forward any feedback to the Head of Marketing, PR & Communications. Further to this, the Committee AGREED that the draft should be considered by the Senior Management Team and refined further before coming back to the Committee for consideration.

7 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT SUB-GROUPS

7.1 COMMERCIAL & INTERNATIONAL SUB-GROUP

7.1.1 Minutes 10.03.16

The Committee NOTED the Commercial & International Sub-Group minutes and actions from the meeting on 10 March 2016. The Committee Chair informed the Committee that a recurring theme at the Sub-Group had been the importance of commercial and international income to the College, as SFC funding remained

'flat' in the sector, and hoped that this would be acknowledged within the Business Transformation Plan.

The Committee NOTED that the College's appeal against the UKVI's proposal to revoke its Tier 4 Status had been upheld, and the licence fully reinstated with a 3-month action plan (to 06 April 2016) to address outstanding matters. The Deputy Principal informed the Committee that the International Team had reviewed its procedures, policies and documentation, and would undertake a 'practice' internal audit, prior to the UKVI's follow-up audit.

The Committee NOTED an update on income from the Heads of the Business and International Development Teams. The Committee Chair highlighted that the Sub-Group welcomed the setting of 'challenging' commercial and international targets with the Heads of Curriculum Centres, to enhance future performance.

The Committee NOTED that following the Board's approval of limits on financial delegated authority, a proforma had been created to assist the handling of future instance of financial delegation. The Committee Chair confirmed that the Sub-Group were content with the proforma, but had requested that its 'Expenditure' section be expanded to outline income exposure and upfront costs/commitments.

7.1.2 Terms of Reference

The Committee NOTED a draft Commercial & International Sub-Group remit, which outlined its purpose, remit, membership and frequency of meetings.

The Committee APPROVED the proposed remit, and acknowledged the need for the Sub-Group to take a proactive approach to developing networks, partnerships and collaborations to assist the growth of non-SFC income at the College.

8.2 BOARD ENGAGEMENT SUB-GROUP

- 8.2.1 The Committee NOTED that the Board Engagement Sub-Group, consisting of members of the Marketing, PR & Communications and Governance Teams, had met on 22 March to plan the development of the College's Board Engagement Strategy (a sub-strand of the External Engagement Strategy). The Vice Chair informed the Committee that, as agreed under Minutes 6.1.3, he would progress the development of an External Engagement Strategy in liaison with the Chair and the Principal.

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 24 May 2016 at the Milton Road Campus

Meeting closed at 15:40