



For the future you want

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 25 JANUARY 2017

14:00 Boardroom, Midlothian Campus

Present: Bruce Cassidy; Bob Downie; Alan Johnston (Chair); Azra Sharif-Qayyum; Ian Young.

In attendance: Alex Craig; Michael Jeffrey; Annette Lang (Midlothian Council); Alasdair Mathers (Midlothian Council); Marcus Walker (Clerk); Richard Whetton.

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Neal Black.
- 1.2 The Committee Chair welcomed Bruce Cassidy, the newly appointed Support Staff Board Member, to his first meeting of the Committee.
- 1.3 The Committee Chair welcomed Alasdair Mathers, Community Planning Partnership Manager, and Annette Lang, Education Manager, from Midlothian Council to the meeting for agenda item 3.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 No declarations of interests were received.

3 MIDLOTHIAN COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP (CPP)

- 3.1 The Committee NOTED a presentation on the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership, provided by the CPP and Education Managers from Midlothian Council. The CPP Manager highlighted to the Committee that Midlothian was the fastest growing local authority in Scotland, following a significant increase in the construction of new homes in the area.
- 3.2 The Committee NOTED an overview on the Midlothian CPP structure, and Edinburgh College's engagement with the CPP Board, the Community Planning

Working Group, the Improving Opportunities in Midlothian Group and the Sustainable Growth Group.

3.3 The Committee welcomed the presentation provided by representatives of Midlothian Council, and DISCUSSED the following points:

- (i) The factors driving growth in Midlothian, and the development corridors running through the region;
- (ii) the historical and forecast demographics within the region, and areas where further skills development was required;
- (iii) the links and engagement that exists between Midlothian and other CPPs, including East Lothian;
- (iv) access to courses at the College's Midlothian Campus, and the potential to conduct non-specialist course elements on site;
- (v) the support provided by Midlothian Council to local STEM organisations, and the restrictions placed on Modern Apprenticeship numbers;
- (vi) the need to support early years workforce developments needs and school/college progression routes;
- (vii) the limited collaboration which exists between the College and Midlothian Council for work experience places, and ways to develop this area;
- (viii) the strategic objective of Midlothian CPP to close the socio-economic gap between areas on the multiple deprivation index.

3.4 The Committee NOTED that partnership, access and progressiveness were key strategic aims for the College and the Midlothian CPP, particular with regards to developing a curriculum that is fit for purpose, student recruitment/retention and the development of the College estate.

3.5 The Committee NOTED a number of minor operational developments, raised during discussions, which could significantly benefit the partnership going forward. The Committee AGREED that senior management should consider areas where its coordination with the Midlothian CPP could be improved, and report back to a future meeting on progress.

3.6 The Committee Chair thanked the CPP Manager and the Education Manager for engaging with members in their discussions, and emphasised the need for the College and its partners to continue to work towards their shared strategic goals in a progressive manner.

Annette Lang and Alasdair Mathers left the meeting.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The Board APPROVED the minutes from 08 November 2016 as an accurate record of the meeting.

5 MATTERS ARISING

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

5.1.1 Media Training (*Minute 6.5/19.01.16 refers*)

The Committee NOTED that media training for selected members of senior management and the Board would be developed through the Business Transformation Plan, under the Leadership Development project led by the Assistant Principal (Income & Product Development). The Committee AGREED that this action would remain on the Matters Arising Report until its completion.

6 COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP REPORTS

- 6.1 The Committee NOTED three individual reports on Edinburgh College working as part of the Midlothian, City of Edinburgh, and East Lothian CPPs. The Head of Corporate Development advised the Committee each report aimed to provide a 'baseline' for continued CPP engagement, and a point of reference for members of the Committee.
- 6.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the potential benefits and opportunities arising through CPP engagement across the three regions. The Head of Corporate Development highlighted the complexity and breadth of engagement, and provided reassurance around the development of the College's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system going forward.
- 6.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the need for the College to maintain a focussed level of engagement, in order to achieve its key strategic objectives and not overstretch its limited resources. The Committee NOTED that the College estate provided a substantial community resource and, where appropriate, the College should continue to maximise the use of such facilities with its partners.
- 6.4 The Committee AGREED that, in order to maintain a holistic overview of CPP engagement, future reports should be provided as a single document with individual strands relating to each CPP. Further to this, the Committee AGREED that it would welcome high-level information on the membership of key CPP Board and working groups with which the College engages.

7 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

- 7.1 The Committee NOTED an update on the development of the External Engagement Strategy, which outlined the College's external engagement priorities for 2017. The Head of Corporate Development advised the Committee that a draft of the External Engagement Strategy would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee on 28 March.
- 7.2 The Committee welcomed the opportunity to review the external engagement priorities and DISCUSSED the following matters:

- (i) Stakeholder mapping during the first quarter of 2017 and the establishment of CRM reporting;
- (ii) the engagement of academic and support staff through an internal consultation process;
- (iii) the engagement of staff with external stakeholders, particularly in the Faculty of Creative Industries, and how this could be used to enhance local engagement;
- (iv) the utilisation of Board expertise and contacts to develop and enhance relationships across the region.

7.3 The Committee NOTED the need for the College to improve its position with stakeholders, and acknowledged the progress made towards this through the strategic planning demonstrated to the Committee.

8 MARKETING REPORT

8.1 The Committee NOTED an overview of prospectus activity for the academic year 2017/18, as presented by the Assistant Principal. The Assistant Principal highlighted that as the curriculum remained under review, prospectus brochures continued to be updated and therefore a full and formal launch was not feasible.

8.2 The Committee NOTED that a review of promotional materials for the College's curriculum portfolio had taken place, which considered the costs associated with producing hard copies of the prospectus and the ways prospective student viewed the portfolio. The Assistant Principal informed the Committee that the information gathered had informed the decision around the courses on offer.

8.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the online guides and prospectus examples presented by the Assistant Principal, focussing on the following points:

- (i) The move to an online prospectus, and the continued printing of documents for dissemination to schools within the region;
- (ii) the agreed prospectus format used by departments and the information provided;
- (iii) the promotion of the prospectus through advertising campaigns, and the feedback collated by the College on the effectiveness of such advertising.

8.4 The Committee Chair welcomed the opportunity to consider the prospectus and, on behalf of the Committee, commended all those involved in its development and presentation.

9 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT SUB-GROUPS

9.1 COMMERCIAL & INTERNATIONAL SUB-GROUP

9.1.1 The Committee NOTED that the next meeting of the Commercial & International Sub-Group would take place on 02 March.

9.2 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT SUB-GROUP

9.1.2 The Committee NOTED that the Vice Chair of the Board would continue to liaise with Head of Corporate Development on the development of the External Engagement Strategy. The Vice Chair advised the Committee that once the Strategy had been approved, the position of the Sub-Group going forward would be reviewed.

10 ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

10.2 CITY REGIONAL DEAL

10.1.1 The Committee NOTED a verbal update on the City Regional Deal from the Depute Principal, the Edinburgh College representative on the City Regional Deal FE/HE Group.

10.1.2 The Committee AGREED that the City Regional Deal should become a standing item on its agenda. Further to this, the Committee AGREED that the Depute Principal should provide a report on developments in this important area to the next meeting of the Committee.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11.1 The next meeting of the External Engagement Committee is scheduled to take place on 28 March 2017, in the Boardroom, Milton Road Campus.

Meeting closed at 16:10