



For the future you want

EDINBURGH COLLEGE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 12 JUNE 2018

14:00 Boardroom, Milton Road Campus

Present: Beth Anderson; Neal Black; Annette Bruton; Bruce Cassidy; Mike Cowley; Sir Ian Diamond (Chair); Lesley Drummond; Sam Hogrefe; Ann Landels.; Niki McKenzie; Fiona Riddoch; Judith Sischy; Jeanette Stevenson; Ian Young.

In attendance: Jon Buglass; Alex Craig; Nick Croft; Michael Jeffrey; Sarah Hay (Observer) Jonny Pearson; Marcus Walker (Clerk); Alan Williamson.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Bob Downie, Stephen Dunn, Nigel Paul and Azra Sharif-Qayyum.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed Sarah Hay, the newly elected ECSA Student President to the meeting as an observer. The Board NOTED that the new ECSA sabbatical team would officially come into office on 01 July, and that Sarah Hay and Beth Anderson (the incumbent Vice President, Welfare) would act as Student Board Members for the academic year 2018/19.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 The Board NOTED declarations of interest from Ann Landels and Ian Young in relation to Item 8, in light of their position as a members of the Edinburgh College Development Trust.
- 2.2 The Board NOTED a declaration of interest from Fiona Riddoch in relation to the consideration of her tenure as a Non-Executive Board Member under Item 7.5.1.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 3.1 The Board APPROVED the minutes from 20 March 2018 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 following exceptions:

4.1.1 APPOINTMENT OF A NEW PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Board NOTED the appointment of Audrey Cumberford as the new Edinburgh College Principal & Chief Executive following an open recruitment process overseen by the Board. The Chair advised the Board that the new Principal, who had a wealth of experience in the sector and was currently Principal of West Scotland College, would take up the post on 03 September.

4.1.2 REGIONAL OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2018/19

The Board NOTED that prior to the signing off of the Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) 2018/19 an exception report had been circulated to the Board outlining amendments to the document following its approval on 20 March. The Chair advised the Board that the ROA 2018/19, as signed by the Chair and the Principal, had been submitted to the SFC on 07 June.

The Board NOTED a summary document outlining the funding, priority outcomes and priority outputs contained within the ROA 2018/19, as provided by the Assistant Principal (Curriculum Design and Development).

5. BOARD DEVELOPMENT DAY

- 5.1 The Board NOTED an overview of matters considered at the Board Development Day on 01 May, and potential areas requiring further action. The Chair highlighted the key points of discussion raised at the Development Day on Brexit, Student Experience, Granton Waterfront Development and the Future Economy of Edinburgh and the Lothians.
- 5.2 The Board NOTED proposals put forward by the Chair; to provide greater opportunity for strategic discussions to take place at Board-level, to incorporate points of discussion into existing college business and to further develop forecasting and internal/external intelligence as part of a Horizon Scanning Report.
- 5.3 The Board DISCUSSED the importance of the ROA and the Blueprint, and how key strategic matters considered at the Board Development Day aligned with both documents. The Chair advised the Board that it was important that elements of the ROA and Blueprint were considered, in sufficient detail, by members on a regular basis

- 5.4 The Board DISCUSSED the proposal to focus on a single strategic matter of business at each Board meeting in 2018/19 in further detail. The Chair of the Academic Council advised the Board that an opportunity to discuss the strategic positioning of learning, teaching and the curriculum, and more broadly the work of the Academic Council, would be welcomed. The Board supported greater opportunity to focus on key strategic matters in this manner, and AGREED that a presentation and discussion on the matters outlined by the Chair of the Academic Council should come forward to the next meeting.

6. EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (ECSA)

The ECSA Director joined the meeting

6.1 ECSA QUARTERLY REPORT

6.1.1 The Board NOTED a report from ECSA covering a range of activities at the college since the last Board meeting.

6.1.2 The Board NOTED that ECSA had delivered its fourth and final Class Rep Conference of the academic year, over two weeks in the month of April. The Student President advised the Board that the Conference had focused on student achievement and progress, and provided Class Reps with an opportunity to reflect on their experiences throughout the year.

6.1.3 The Board NOTED that staff from across the college had gathered at the Sighthill Campus on 17 May, with students and external guests, for the ECSA-Excellence Awards Ceremony 2018. The Student President advised the Board that the third annual awards provided students with a great opportunity to show their thanks for the efforts of teaching and support staff.

6.2 ECSA END OF YEAR REPORT 2017/18

6.2.1 The Board NOTED an overview of activities conducted by ECSA in 2017/18, including an update on the Students' Association's progress against measures outlined in its Operational Plan. The Student President provided a presentation to the Board highlighting ECSA's achievements over the year, including winning the College Students' Association of the Year for the second time running.

6.2.2 The Board welcomed the detailed end of year report provided by ECSA, and DISCUSSED its successes and future strategic aims. The incoming Student President, Sarah Hay, advised the Board that ECSA would continue to engage with the college going forward to tackle key challenges, including those faced by parents accessing further education.

6.3 ECSA STRATEGIC PLANNING & FUNDING 2018/19

6.3.1 The Board NOTED a 2018/19 ECSA Funding Bid, which included an overview of the Students' Association's strategic aims for the academic years 2018/19 and 2019/20.

The ECSA Director left the meeting

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.1 POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

7.1.1 MINUTES 25.05.18

The Board NOTED the Policy & Resources Committee minutes from the meeting held on 22 May 2018. The Committee NOTED that the development of an Edinburgh College Corporate Performance Report had been considered by the Committee. The Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee advised the Board that the corporate performance report would continue to be developed further, and reviewed by the Board at its next Development Day in October 2018.

The Board NOTED that at the NJNC on 19 April, a fifth dispute meeting was held regarding the lecturer pay claim effective from April 2017. The Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee informed the Board that both sides were unable to reach an agreement and, following a final offer from the employers, a failure to agree was recorded. The Board NOTED details of the final offer from the Employers Association in comparison to the EIS pay claim.

The Board NOTED that a fourth round of voluntary severance had concluded with 69 applications received, 19 of which were approved. The Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee advised the Board that the net savings from approved applications equated to circa £640k. The Board welcomed the overall achievement of the target agreed with the SFC as part of the Business Transformation Plan.

7.1.2 STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND CREDITS DASHBOARD

The Board NOTED an update from the Assistant Principal (Recruitment and Retention), on the performance of the college against its 2017/18 credit targets. The Assistant Principal informed the Board that the credit position of the college (as of 24 May) was 192,023.

The Board NOTED that the current position of 2018/19 full-time recruitment following the opening of applications on 22 January 2018. The Assistant Principal advised the Board that there had been a 4.2% increase in the number of offers accepted by the college in comparison to last year.

The Board NOTED the performance of the college in achieving its student recruitment targets, and the importance of improved student retention going forward. The Board DISCUSSED the credits target set out in the Regional Outcome Agreement 2018/19 and, given the performance of the college over the past two years, the future opportunities to explore an increase in credit activity with the SFC. The Chair advised the Board that it was essential that the college continued to meet its current credits target and provide a stable base for any future growth.

The Board NOTED the aim of the college to improve its 'completion/partial completion' success rates, and DISCUSSED current quality assurance arrangements. The Teaching Staff Board Member informed the Board of his concerns that curriculum capacity had reduced as part of the Business Transformation Plan and placed additional pressures on teaching staff. The Committee NOTED the impact of historic underfunding in the college sector and the role of the Principal and Chair in lobbying the Scottish Government for further financial support. The Principal advised the Board that the college recognised the concerns of staff and had organised an all staff day on 21 June focusing on health and wellbeing.

7.1.3 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO APRIL 2018

The Board NOTED the financial performance of the college as highlighted in the financial accounts to April 2018.

The Committee NOTED that the April year to date operating position was a deficit of £266k, but £143k favourable compared to the phased budget. The Chief Operating Officer advised the Committee that the main positive variances related to staffing costs and SFC grants, whilst adverse variances related to various tuition fees and commercial income.

7.1.4 COLLEGE BUDGET 2018/19

The Board NOTED a College Budget for 2018/19 as endorsed by the Policy & Resources Committee, along with a supporting presentation by the Chief Operating Officer, which outlined the budgeting pressures, additional costs and savings, impact on cash-flow, risks and mitigations, and sensitivity analysis.

The Board NOTED that the documentation provided covered all known matters likely to affect the 2018/19 College Budget. In particular the £1.15m within the SFC grant towards national pay bargaining, harmonisation of pay increments and a provision for cost of living increases. The Chief Operating Officer advised the Board that the College Budget 2018/19 also highlighted the outcome of the Phase 4 voluntary severance scheme.

The Board DISCUSSED the following matters related to the College Budget 2018/19:

- (i) The change in financial focus of the SFC and Audit Scotland, from the statutory income and expenditure account, to focus on colleges' underlying financial position (a 'bridge' between government accounts and statutory accounts).
- (ii) The forecast repayment of £500k to the SFC in 2018/19 for advanced Business Transformation Plan cash required to meet liabilities in 2016/17 following a reduction in credits;
- (iii) The need to invest in the Strategic Blueprint going forward;
- (iv) the achievement of the commercial budget through the enhancement of the college's bespoke commercial offer;
- (v) the significant work undertaken of the Senior Management Group to ensure that a balanced budget was presented to the Board.

The Board DISCUSSED the 2018/19 ECSA Funding Bid, as considered under Paragraph 6.3, and AGREED an increased budget figure of £248k (up £5k from 2017/18).

The Board APPROVED the College Budget 2018/19 for implementation in the upcoming academic year.

7.2 AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

7.2.1 MINUTES 18.04.18

The Board NOTED the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee minutes from the meeting held on 18 April 2018.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had reviewed the Edinburgh College Resource Return to 31 March 2018 which showed an underspend of £0.8m against the Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL) figure, in comparison to an initial annual projected over-spend of £0.5m.

7.2.2 MINUTES 30.05.18

The Board NOTED the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee minutes from the meeting held on 30 May 2018.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had received the 2016/17 Audit of Edinburgh College as prepared for the Public Audit & Post Legislative Scrutiny (PAPLS) Committee by the Auditor General for Scotland, under Section 22 of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. The Principal advised the Committee that the PAPLS Committee had considered the report and that no further action had been requested of the college at this time. The Board NOTED that the Section 22 Report was in the public domain following its publication, and that a communications plan had been implemented by the college.

7.2.3 SUMMARY TOP RISK REGISTER

The Board NOTED a Summary Top Risk Register (TRR) to May 2018, and the emerging risk of 'Non-Compliance with Standard HR Processes'. The Head of Corporate Development advised the Board that the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee were currently in the process of reviewing the Edinburgh College Risk Appetite Statement, and that an updated Statement would be brought forward to the Board at a future meeting.

7.3 ACADEMIC COUNCIL

7.3.1 MINUTES 25.05.18

The Board NOTED the Academic Council minutes from the meeting held on 25 May 2018.

The Board NOTED that the Academic Council had received a presentation on improvements made by the Student Experience Department over the past year, which highlighted key developments to the student funding process, mental health and wellbeing, corporate parenting, student support/guidance and frontline services. The Chair of the Academic Council advised the Board that a standalone report on work currently being undertaken across the college to promote and support positive student mental health and wellbeing was also considered, and actions agreed to continue monitoring developments in this important area.

The Board NOTED that the Academic Council had reviewed the results of the 2017/18 Learning and Teaching Survey, which was designed to assess students' opinions regarding key aspects of their experience at the college. The Chair of the Academic Council advised the Board that, in comparison with 2016/17, the college-wide satisfaction rates had increased marginally across 11 of 20 comparable questions. The Board NOTED that progress against recommendations arising from the Learning & Teaching Survey would be monitored at future meetings of the Academic Council.

7.4 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

7.4.1 MINUTES 29.05.18

The Board NOTED the External Engagement Committee minutes from the meeting held on 29 May 2018.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had received a presentation on the East Lothian Community Planning Partnership (CPP) and the key themes of the East Lothian Plan 2017-27, which focused on the continued development of a region which was 'Prosperous, Community-minded and Fair'. The Acting Chair of the External Engagement Committee advised the Board that the East Lothian CPP had taken a number of positive actions to rationalise its partnership and governance structures to support the delivery of its strategic plan.

7.5 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

7.5.1 MINUTES 30.05.18

The Board NOTED the Nominations Committee minutes from the meeting held on 30 May 2018.

Fiona Riddoch left the meeting

The Board NOTED that the Committee had endorsed an extension to Fiona Riddoch's tenures for an additional three year term. The Board DISCUSSED and APPROVED the proposed extension to the Non-Executive Member's tenure, subject to approval by Scottish Ministers.

Fiona Riddoch returned to the meeting

The Board NOTED that the Committee NOTED that Ian Young, a Non-Executive Board Member and Vice Chair of the Board, would step down from the Board on

01 March 2019. The Chair advised the Board that the position of Vice Chair would therefore become vacant from March 2019, and inline with the Code of Good Governance the Board must appoint one its non-executive members to become Vice Chair.

The Board DISCUSSED the remit of the Vice Chair and the various governance arrangements adopted across the college sector, and AGREED the roles of Vice Chair and the Senior Independent Member remained the responsibility of a single post holder. Further to this, the Board AGREED that the Senior Independent Member role should be reaffirmed by the Board on an annual basis. The Chair advised the Board that the process for appointing a new Vice Chair would be considered by the Nominations Committee at its next meeting and a further update provided to the Board at its meeting on 18 September.

The Board NOTED the temporary position of Ian Young as Acting Chair of the External Engagement Committee. The Board AGREED that the Clerk should circulate an open call to Non-Executive Board Members for nominations to act as Chair of the External Engagement Committee.

8. MEMORANUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND SERVICE SUPPORT OFFER BETWEEN THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AND THE EDINBURGH COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT TRUST

8.1 The Board NOTED a revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), including a new Service Support Offer (SSO), between the Board of Management and the Edinburgh College Development Trust - covering the period 01 August 2018 to 31 July 2019. The Head of Corporate Development advised the Board that the MOU agreed by the Board in late 2015 had been reviewed to provide further detail on the SSO provided by the college to assist Development Trust activities.

8.2 The Board DISCUSSED the draft MOU and SSO and NOTED that the Development Trust had reviewed the document at its meeting on 24 May, and were content with the proposal. The Board APPROVED the MOU and SSO between the Board of Management and the Edinburgh College Development Trust for the academic year 2018/19.

9. PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

9.1 The Board NOTED a report from the Principal covering a range of activities at the college since the last Board meeting.

The Chief Operating Officer left the meeting

9.2 The Board NOTED a verbal update from the Principal on a motion put before Scottish Parliament by Neil Findlay MSP on 11 June regarding the threat of compulsory redundancies at Scotland's college. The Principal notified the Board that an appeal for the individual staff member affected at Edinburgh College had not yet been heard, however, every effort had been made to find the staff member suitable alternative employment within the college. Further to this, the Principal advised the Board that

she would write to Neil Findlay directly to explain the position of the college on this matter.

The Chief Operating Officer returned to the meeting

- 9.3 The Board NOTED an update on recent international visits and opportunities included a visit to the college from a group of senior officials from the Bahrain government as part of a study visit organised by the Department of International Trade, and a recent visit to Saudi Arabia by the Assistant Principal (Income and Development) to discuss future collaboration. The Board DISCUSSED the ethical framework of the college for dealing with international partners and the lead taken by universities and colleges from the UK Government Home Office, Scottish Government and British Council.

10. GOVERNANCE REPORT

10.1 GOVERNANCE REPORT

- 10.1.1 The Board NOTED that under the guidance of the Chair of the Board it was proposed to the Nominations Committee on 30 May that externally facilitated review of governance take place in 2019. Further to this, the Chair outlined a proposed schedule for the external governance review.
- 10.1.2 The Board NOTED that the Nominations Committee had agreed to the formation of a working group to consider the requirements for an external review of governance arrangements and its initial timescale. The Chair advised the Board that the Nominations Committee had recommended that the Governance Review Working Group consisted of Sir Ian Diamond (Chair), Beth Anderson (Student Member), Nick Croft (Head of Corporate Development), Marcus Walker (Clerk and Governance Advisor to the Board) and two non-executive members of the Board.
- 10.1.3 The Board DISCUSSED the requirements of the governance review and AGREED that non-executive members of the Board wish to join the working group should contact the Chair directly. The Chair advised the Board that the Governance Review Working Group would meet in due course and report back to a future meeting of the Board.

10.2 BOARD & COMMITTEE SCHEDULE 2018/19

- 10.2.1 The Board NOTED that the schedule for the Board and its committee in 2018/19 had been agreed with the Executive Team and the Board. The Clerk to the Board advised members that 20 meetings of the Board and its committee had been scheduled, along with two Board Development Days in October 2018 and May 2019.

11. NATIONAL REPORT

- 11.1 The Board NOTED that the Chair and the incoming Principal & Chief Executive, Audrey Cumberland, had been confirmed as representatives of Edinburgh College at the Employers' Association in 2018/19.

12. RIDDOR REPORT

- 12.1 The Board NOTED that no RIDDOR reportable incidents had taken place in Quarters 2 & 3 of the academic year.

13. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

13.1 DEPARTURE OF STUDENT BOARD MEMBER

13.1.1 The Board NOTED that the tenure of ECSA Student President and Student Board Member, Neal Black, would end on 30 June, following two years as a sabbatical officer. The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked Mr Black for his significant contribution to the development of key aspects of the student experience during his tenure as Student President and the considerable work he (and the ECSA team) had done to raise the profile of the college and the Students' Association nationally.

13.1.2 Mr Black thanked the Board and Executive for their support since he joined the college as Student President in July 2016, and welcomed the significant progress made by the college in recent years.

13.1 DEPARTURE OF PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE

13.2.1 The Board NOTED that Annette Bruton would be standing down as Principal & Chief Executive on 31 August 2018. The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked the Principal for her significant contribution to Edinburgh College over the past three years.

13.2.2 The Principal informed the Board that it had been a privilege to serve on the Board of Edinburgh College as Principal & Chief Executive. Further to this, the Principal wished to thank both Board and Executive colleagues for their continued support during his period of tenure.

14 CLOSED ITEMS OF BUSINESS

The Depute Principal and Assistant Principals left the meeting

- 14.1 Items of business were considered by the Board as part of a closed session. Closed items were recorded under a separate minute (Closed Minutes 14/12.06.18 refers).

15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

15.1 The next meeting would be held at 12:00hrs on 18 September 2018 at the Milton Road Campus

Meeting closed at 16:50