



For the future you want

EDINBURGH COLLEGE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 19 SEPTEMBER 2017

14:00 Boardroom, Milton Road Campus

Present: Beth Anderson; Neal Black; Annette Bruton; Bruce Cassidy; Bob Downie; Lesley Drummond; Ian McKay (Chair); Niki McKenzie; Nigel Paul; Fiona Riddoch; Judith Sischy; Azra Sharif-Qayyum; Jeanette Stevenson; Ian Young.

In attendance: Alex Craig; John Gribben (Colleges Scotland Employers' Association); Michael Jeffrey; Jonny Pearson; Marcus Walker (Clerk); Alan Williamson.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Apologies were received from: Colin Arthur; Stephen Dunn; Alan Johnston; and, Ann Landels.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed Beth Anderson, the newly elected ECSA Vice President (Welfare), to her first meeting as a Student Board Member.
- 1.3 The Chair welcomed John Gribben, Director of Employment Services of the Colleges Scotland Employers' Association, to the meeting for agenda Item 5.
- 1.4 The Board AGREED that following the departure of the Head of Corporate Development from the college on 15 September, the Chief Operating Officer would temporarily assume the role of Board Secretary until a new Head of Corporate Development was appointed. The Principal informed the Board that the Head of Corporate Development position had been advertised with a view to an appointment being made in October 2017.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 The Chair of the Board advised members that as Chair he would leave the meeting for Item 12.3, Evaluation of the Chair, at which point the Vice Chair would act as convenor.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 3.1 The Board APPROVED the minutes from 20 June 2017 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. DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES OF THE COLLEGES SCOTLAND EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION

- 5.1 The Board NOTED a presentation from the Director of Employment Services of the Colleges Scotland Employers' Association on progress relating to ongoing industrial relations in the college sector. The Director of Employment Services advised the Board of his role as National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC) Joint Secretary, and the voluntary nature of national bargaining.

- 5.2 The Board NOTED an overview of the Employers' Association governance structures and the progress of the Association over the past year. The Director of Employment Services highlighted ongoing key NJNC review activity in 2016/17, and the next steps and challenges for the Employers' Association going forward.

- 5.3 The Board DISCUSSED the following points with the Director of Employment Services:

- (i) The national job evaluation process and the challenges of harmonisation;
- (ii) the proposed Scottish Government review of lessons learned from the NJNC and the mechanisms in place to feedback to the SFC;
- (iii) the long-term position of the college sector regarding greater control of workforce and pay;
- (iv) the roles of the Chair and the Principal in national bargaining, and the progress made over their respective tenures.

- 5.4 The Director of Employment Services thanked members of the Board for their support of national bargaining. Further to this, the Board NOTED the significant contribution of the Chair (the former Chair of the Employers' Association) and the Principal (a member of the NJNC support staff side) to the work of the Colleges Scotland Employers' Association.

- 5.5 The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked the Director of Employment Services for discussing the work of the Colleges Scotland Employers' Association with the Board. The Chair also highlighted the valuable contribution of the Director of Employment Services in fostering improved employment relations across the sector.

The Director of Employment Services of the Colleges Scotland Employers' Association left the meeting.

6. STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

6.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP 18.08.17

6.1.1 The Board NOTED the Strategic Planning Working Group minute from the meeting held on 18 August. The Vice Chair advised the Board that the Working Group had met to consider, in further detail, developments relating to the Edinburgh College Strategic Plan and Blueprint 2017-22.

6.1.2 The Board NOTED that stakeholder consultations on the Draft Strategic Plan had concluded and that comments received were largely supportive of the document. The Vice Chair advised the Board that an updated version of the Strategic Plan, with minor amendments, had been provided for members review under Item 6.2.

6.1.3 The Board NOTED that the Strategic Planning Working Group had considered an updated draft Edinburgh College Blueprint, with included a summary of the strategic plan and sections on the transformation portfolio 2017-22 and its management. The Depute Principal informed the Board that in light of the Working Group's comments further revisions had been made to the Blueprint presented to the Board under Item 6.2.

6.1.4 The Board NOTED that following the presentation of the Strategic Plan and Blueprint 2017-22 to members of the Board, for approval, the Strategic Planning Working Group would cease operation.

6.2 EDINBURGH COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN AND BLUEPRINT 2017-22

6.2.1 The Board NOTED an overview of the Draft Strategic Plan and Blueprint 2017-22, which included amendments requested by Strategic Planning Working Group. The Depute Principal advised the Board that the Strategic Plan included 19 strategic change programmes, across the following five areas: Curriculum Excellence; Student Experience; Value in Partnership and Communities; Effective and Efficient College; and, Supporting and Inspiring Our People.

6.2.2 The Board DISCUSSED the following matters in relation to the Draft Strategic Plan and Blueprint 2017-22:

- (i) The management and resourcing of 19 change programmes, and the important role of senior and middle management;
- (ii) the phasing of the change programmes over the five years of the strategy;
- (iii) the positive presentation of the college's aspirations within document;
- (iv) the proposed mechanism for monitoring progress against the Strategic Plan;
- (iv) the proposed internal and external communications to support the dissemination of the Strategic Plan.

6.2.3 The Board commended the Executive on the development of the Strategic Plan and Blueprint 2017-22 and APPROVED the document for publication, subject to minor presentational amendments.

6.2.4 The Board AGREED that the Policy & Resources Committee should consider an appropriate dashboard mechanism for the Board to monitor progress across the change programmes.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.1 POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

7.1.1 MINUTES 22.08.17

The Board NOTED the Policy & Resources Committee minutes from the meeting held on 22 August. The Vice Chair advised the Board that members had received an update on the Business Transformation Plan and the significant progress made, with 10 of the 19 projects within the Plan now closed.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had endorsed the winding-down of the Business Transformation Plan and its twin tracking with the new Strategic Plan. The Board DISCUSSED the proposal and AGREED that, subject to ongoing discussions around key financial aspects and reportage with the SFC, the transformation plan should stream into the Edinburgh College Strategic Plan 2017-22 and the associated Blueprint.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had approved a proposal to extend the recently agreed support staff pay award covered by the national pay agreement (NRPA) to staff on personal contracts not covered by the local RPA. The Vice Chair informed the Board that the award, in pay and benefits, would be implemented as soon as practically possible.

The Board NOTED that, in furtherance of a decision made by the Board at its last meeting, the Committee had considered a Draft Career Transition Policy and Procedures. The Vice Chair advised the Board that the Committee had agreed that a revised draft of the Career Transition Policy would come back to the Board for consideration at a future meeting.

7.1.2 STUDENT RECRUITMENT DASHBOARD

The Board NOTED an update from the Assistant Principal, Recruitment and Retention, on the performance of the college against its 2016/17 credit targets. The Assistant Principal informed the Board that the credit position of the college (as of 12 September) was 187,182.

The Board NOTED the reflections of the Assistant Principal on 2016/17 recruitment and retention, following the detailed analysis of recruitment data. The Assistant Principal advised the Board that the analysis had resulted in changes to the recruitment targets for 2017/18, including a 4% increase in the projected number of students and an 18% increase in the target number of students - to account for higher than anticipated drop-out levels.

The Board DISCUSSED the following matters relating to the Recruitment and Retention Dashboard:

- (i) The impact on student recruitment of post-1992 universities within the region lowering their entry requirements;

- (ii) the analysis of student demographics as part of the curriculum review;
- (iii) the college's approach to supporting part-time students in light changes to related funding mechanisms;
- (iv) the positive performance indicated in initial recruitment feedback in 2017/18.

The Board NOTED that although the recruitment and retention progress outlined was positive, it should be considered against a reduced credit target previously agreed as part of the Business Transformation Plan.

7.1.3 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO JULY 2017

The Board NOTED the financial performance of the college, as highlighted in the financial accounts to July 2017. The Chief Operating Officer advised the Board that the college's operating position to July showed a deficit of £175k, which equated to a total positive variance of £725k in comparison to the initial revised budget deficit for the year of £900k.

The Board DISCUSSED the considerable efforts made by the college to successfully reduce costs, and the potential long-term impacts of cost cutting measures on staff morale. The Board AGREED that the Policy & Resources Committee should consider the college's position as an employer of choice and the potential for a staff survey at an appropriate juncture.

The Board AGREED following an extended period of efficiencies and cost cutting, in line with Business Transformation Plan, the Principal should continue to make the SFC and Scottish Government aware of the efforts already made to reduce costs by the college since merger.

7.2 ACADEMIC COUNCIL

7.2.1 MINUTES 01.09.17

The Board NOTED the Academic Council minutes from the meeting held on 01 September.

The Board NOTED that the Academic Council continued to receive a presentation on best practice from each of the faculties in order to encourage the sharing and embedding of good practice across the college. The Committee Chair informed the Board that the third presentation of the series was conducted by the Head of Health, Wellbeing and Social Sciences.

The Board NOTED an overview of the ECSA Learning & Teaching Report 2017, which outlined details of the systems and processes put in place by the Students' Association to support improvements in the quality of learning and teaching at the college. The Committee Chair commended the report, and advised the Board that the Academic Council would seek to build such reportage into its academic cycle.

The Board NOTED that, at its request, the Academic Council had considered how to utilise the new Curriculum Strategy to ensure that performance data was effectively monitored, and that the college's curriculum offer remained under regular review. The Committee Chair

advised the Board that the Academic Council would continue to receive top line summary performance information from the Executive Team.

7.3 AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

7.3.1 RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Board NOTED a Summary Top Risk Register (TRR) to August 2017, which outlined six changes to the risk register since June. The Chief Operating Officer advised the Board that the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee had not met since the last Board meeting, and that the TRR had been reviewed internally by the Risk Management and Assurance Group at its meeting on 31 August.

The Committee NOTED that four members of the Board had joined senior management at the Risk Management and Assurance Group to consider risk tolerance and appetite. The Chair of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee advised the Board that a wider discussion on this matter would be held with members in due course.

7.4 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

7.4.1 MINUTES 29.08.17

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

The Board NOTED that the Chair of the Edinburgh College Development Trust, Alan Colquhoun, had attended the Committee to present the Edinburgh College Development Trust Strategic Plan. The Vice Chair advised the Board that the Committee had welcomed the proactive strategic vision as a means to target specific funding opportunities to support students and the work of the college.

The Board NOTED that the Committee continued to maintain positive relations with its three Community Planning Partnerships, and that representatives from each partnership had been invited to attend the three remaining meetings in the academic year - to discuss how engagement had progressed.

The Board NOTED that an update on progress relating to the City Regional Deal had been provided to the Committee. The Vice Chair that although the City Regional Deal was a welcome source of investment in the region, with a £1.1bn deal being secured from the UK and Scottish Governments, there was currently only a limited amount of Skills and Employability funding being directed towards the college sector.

7.4.2 EDINBURGH PARTNERSHIP LOCALITY IMPROVEMENT PLANS

The Board NOTED Edinburgh Partnership Locality Improvement Plans, and the request by the Edinburgh Partnership Board for statutory community planning partners to approve the proposals.

The Board DISCUSSED the college's alignment with the local authority improvements plans, and their significance to the college's own strategic

plan and blueprint. The Board AGREED to endorse the Edinburgh Partnership Locality Improvement Plans and asked the Clerk to the Board to feedback its approval to the Edinburgh Partnership Board.

The Board AGREED that, as a point of governance, it would delegate the responsibility for future locality improvement plans to be signed off by the Executive Team.

8. CLOSED ITEM OF BUSINESS

8.1 CLOSED MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

8.1.1 The Board APPROVED the closed minutes from 20 June 2017 as an accurate record of the meeting.

9. HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

The Health & Safety Manager joined the meeting

9.1 ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2017

9.1.1 The Board NOTED an Annual Health & Safety Report 2017, as presented by the Health & Safety Manager, which included an updated Health & Safety Policy.

9.1.2 The Board DISCUSSED the Health & Safety Teams targets for the current academic year, and APPROVED the amendments to the Health & Safety Policy. The Chair thanked the Health & Safety Manager for his report and wished his team success in reach its annual targets and improving health & safety awareness across the college.

9.2 RIDDOR REPORT

9.2.1 The Board NOTED RIDDOR reportable incidents between 01 July and 31 August 2017.

The Health & Safety Manager left the meeting

10. PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

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

10.2 The Board NOTED that staff and students were preparing to celebrate five years of Edinburgh College on 02 October 2017. The Principal informed the Board that a number of events, including a 'bake off', had been arranged as part of the celebrations.

10.3 The Board NOTED that as part of the college's energy efficiency project to deliver significant upgrades to existing energy infrastructure, a number of measures were implemented across the campuses over the summer break. The Principal advised the Board that this included LED lighting replacement across

all campuses, the Milton Road boiler replacement, and other improvements across the College.

- 10.4 The Board NOTED that Edinburgh College's electric vehicle project had won the Green Fleet of the Year title at the UK-wide Business Car Magazine Awards. The Chair, on behalf of the Board, commended the award winning team, and advised members that he hoped the college would continue to develop a more strategic approach to entering national awards.

11. EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT

11.1 ECSA REPORT

- 11.1.1 The Board NOTED a report from ECSA covering a range of activities at the college since the last Board meeting.
- 11.1.2 The Board NOTED that a Freshers' week had been held over all four campuses on the week commencing 04 September. Further to this, the Student President advised the Board that ECSA had also launched an activities week to encourage greater student participation in physical activity and sports clubs, with an emphasis on 'fun and accessibility'.

11.2 ECSA ANNUAL PRIORITY OBJECTIVES 2017/18

- 11.2.1 The Board NOTED the ECSA Priority Objectives for 2017/18, based around the 'Pillars of Actions' outlined in the ECSA Strategic Plan 2017-20.
- 11.2.2 The Board welcomed the clear and concise report and DISCUSSED the priority objectives outlined. The Board AGREED to endorse the key measures outlined, and wished ECSA well in achieving their targets over the course of the year.

12. GOVERNANCE REPORT

12.1 GOVERNANCE UPDATE

- 12.1.1 The Board NOTED progress against its Development Plan to September 2017, including an update on proposed improvements around succession planning and Board induction.
- 12.1.2 The Board NOTED that the college would be participating in a research project led by the Commission for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland and the Scottish Government, which sought to review the difference that diversity, in its broadest sense, was making to the governance of Scotland's public body boards. The Clerk to the Board advised members that further updates on the research project would be provided to future meetings of the Board.

12.2 BOARD DEVELOPMENT DAY 01.11.17

- 12.2.1 The Board NOTED proposed arrangements for the Board Development Day on 01 November. The Principal confirmed that the theme for the event was 'innovation for the future', with the main focus on emerging policy drivers across the college sector.
- 12.2.2 The Board DISCUSSED arrangements, and the wider themes of community and shaping places, as put forward by the Principal. The Board AGREED that it was content with the arrangements outlined by the Principal and welcomed the opportunity to receive a full itinerary in due course.

12.3 CHAIR EVALUATION 2016/17

The Chair left the meeting. The Vice Chair assumed the role of Acting Chair.

- 12.3.1 The Board NOTED that in accordance with good practice, and as part of the overall evaluation of the Board, an in-depth evaluation of the Chair was conducted by the Vice Chair. The Vice Chair outlined to the Board the methodology used and a summary of the results.
- 12.3.2 The Board DISCUSSED the written report provided by the Vice Chair and were content with its positive and constructive findings. The Board welcomed the formal, and thorough, process of evaluation conducted by the Vice Chair which was considered in line with best practice.
- 12.3.3 The Board NOTED that the Vice Chair's evaluation report would be submitted to the Scottish Government in due course.

The Chair returned to the meeting.

- 12.3.4 The Board NOTED that the tenure of the Chair was due to terminate in March 2018.
- 12.3.5 The Board AGREED that in order to safeguard governance arrangements, during this transitional period, the Vice Chair and the Depute Principal should attend the monthly meetings of the Chair and the Principal. The Chair highlighted the important role of the Vice Chair during this period, and the need for his continued involvement in long term decision-making processes.

13. NATIONAL REPORT

- 13.1 The Board NOTED that Alex Linkston, Chair of West Lothian College, had been appointed as Chair of the Employers' Associations.

14. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ANNUAL REPORT

- 14.1 The Board NOTED a report outlining the volume of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received by the College between July 2016 and June 2017.

The Chief Operating Officer informed the Board that the College had received more FOI requests during this period than any other college in the sector.

- 14.2 The Board NOTED the total estimated cost of responding to 97 FOI requests and four Subject Access Requests during the period. The Chief Operating Officer advised the Board that the college had decided to publish all FOI responses on its website.

15. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

15.1 COLLAB GROUP MEMBERSHIP

15.1.1 The Board NOTED that the college had held initial discussions with the COLLAB Group, an organisation which represents leading UK colleges and college groups, regarding its potential membership. The Principal advised the Board that although membership of COLLAB would be an operational decision, the Executive sought the endorsement of Board members.

15.1.2 The Board DISCUSSED the college’s initial dialogue with the COLLAB Group, and were supportive of the direction of travel outlined by the Principal. The Chair advised the Board that whilst discussions remained ongoing, this matter should be treated as confidential by Board members.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16.1 The next meeting would be held at 14:00hrs on 12 December 2017 at the Milton Road Campus.

Meeting closed at 17:30

..... (Signature of Chair) (Date)