For the future you want

EDINBURGH COLLEGE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 20 MARCH 2018

14:00 Boardroom, Milton Road Campus

Present: Beth Anderson; Neal Black; Annette Bruton; Bruce Cassidy; Mike Cowley; Bob Downie; Lesley Drummond; Sam Hogrefe; Ann Landels.; Niki McKenzie; Nigel Paul; Judith Sischy; Azra Sharif-Qayyum; Jeanette Stevenson; Ian Young (Chair).

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

1.   **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

    1.1   Apologies were received from Sir Ian Diamond, Stephen Dunn and Fiona Riddoch.

    1.2   The Board NOTED the appointment of Professor Sir Ian Diamond as Chair of Edinburgh College Board of Management on 03 March 2018. The Vice Chair advised the Board that due to a prior commitment the new Chair could not be in attendance at the meeting, although it had been confirmed that the Chair would be present for the Board Development Day on 01 May 2018.

    1.3   The Chair welcomed Sam Hogrefe to the Board, as a Non-Executive Member, following confirmation of his appointment by Scottish Ministers on 05 March 2018.

2.   **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

    2.1   The Board NOTED that the Executive Team would be required to leave the meeting for Item 8, which related to the appointment of a new Principal & Chief Executive.

3.   **BOARD MEMBERSHIP & TENURES**

    3.1   The Board NOTED an update on the membership and tenure of Board members following recent appointments to the Edinburgh College Board of Management. The Vice Chair advised the Board that in addition to the appointments

highlighted under Paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3, Scottish Ministers had approved the reappointment of non-executive members Niki McKenzie and Nigel Paul on 01 March 2018.

3.2 The Board NOTED that the current gender balance of its membership was 50/50.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 The Board APPROVED the minutes from 15 February 2018 as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. MATTERS ARISING

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

6. REGIONAL OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2018/19

6.1 The Board NOTED a draft of the Edinburgh College Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) for 2018/19. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum Design and Development) provided an overview of the document, highlighting key areas of consideration and governance.

6.2 The Board NOTED the proposed funding that the college would receive from the SFC for the academic year 2018/19 to plan and deliver further and higher education in the region. The Chief Operating Officer provided an overview of the proposed funding breakdown, and the means by which the funding allocation was linked to performance against key indicators.

6.3 The Board DISCUSSED the following matters relating to the ROA 2018/19:

(i)   The overachievement of the college of its credits target for a second year, and the potential for future growth going forward;
(ii)   the Scottish Government's letter of recommendation to the SFC regarding funding allocations in the sector;
(iii)   the purpose of an annual ROA, and the potential benefits of a three year outcome agreement to support long-term planning;
(iv)   the arrangements for student support funding and the need to cover any shortfalls through in-year negotiations;
(v)   the 'hourglass' effect with regards to students' qualifications between SCQF Levels 5 and 7, and the need to support the continued development through the various levels;
(vi)   the capacity for innovation within the ROA, and the innovation project currently under development as part of the college's strategic Blueprint.

6.4 The Board NOTED that the ROA 2018/19 was a joint document between the college and the SFC. The Board AGREED that it would continue to robustly support the Executive in any future discussions with the SFC regarding increased funding, in light of the college's continued achievement of its credits target.

6.5 The Board APPROVED the ROA 2018/19 in principle, subject to further discussion with the SFC. The Board AGREED that, prior to the formal signing off of the ROA 2018/19 in May 2018, an exception report should be circulated to members (via correspondence) outlining any further amendments to the document.

7. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

7.1 POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

7.1.1 *MINUTES 20.02.18*

The Board NOTED the Policy & Resources Committee minutes from the meeting held on 20 February 2018. Nigel Paul, a Non-Executive Member of the Policy & Resources Committee, informed the Board that the majority of projects within the Business Transformation Plan had closed or were in the final stages of analysis. The Board NOTED that the closure of the transformation plan would be considered by the college and the SFC over the coming months, with a view to its formal closure at the first meeting of the Board in AY 2018/19.

The Board NOTED that the final round of voluntary severance (Phase 4) had been launched by the college, as funded by the SFC, and would remain open to staff until 03 April.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had considered matters relating to the college estate and the SFC's approach towards capital spending. The Vice Chair advised the Board that a draft public statement on the future of education in the west of Edinburgh corridor, outlining the need for a wider dialogue on this important matter, would be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

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 12 March) was 187,742.

The Board NOTED that the college had achieved its core credits target and exceeded its additional early years credits target and its ESF credits target. The Vice Chair, on behalf of the Board, congratulated the college on the exceptional progress made towards achieving its 2017/18 credits targets.

The Board DISCUSSED the potential impact of universities in the region reducing their entry levels to attract applicants, and the need to ensure that appropriate articulation agreements were in place to reassure college students seeking progression to university.

The Board DISCUSSED matters relating to the retention of students including the need to identify and react to key dropout factors including student financial support and mental health issues. The Assistant Principal (Recruitment & Retention) advised the Board that senior management were

cognisant of issues relating to mental wellbeing, and their impact, and would introduce a counselling service for students in the new academic year.

7.1.3 *MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO JANUARY 2018*

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

The Board NOTED that the full year forecast operating deficit, as of January 2018, was £46k adverse to the full year budget. The Vice Chair welcomed reassurances from the Executive Team that appropriate actions would be taken, if required, for the college to meet its agreed budget target.

The Board NOTED that the forecast revenue for student accommodation at Milton Road and Granton was below the full year budget, and the Chief Operating Officer outlined the contractual obligations of the college relating to both campuses. Further to this, the Assistant Principal (Income & Development) advised the Board that a review of accommodation had taken place and a report would be brought forward to the Policy & Resources Committee in due course.

7.2 AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

7.2.1 *MINUTES 21.02.18*

The Board NOTED the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee minutes from the meeting held on 21 February 2018.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had conducted risk 'deep dives' into information / cyber security and the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Chair of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee advised the Board that appropriate assurances were provided by senior management on both matters, and that the college had made significant progress towards GDPR compliance.

The Board NOTED that, in line with the APUC tender process, the college had appointed BDO LLP as its internal auditors from AY 2018/19.

7.2.2 *SUMMARY TOP RISK REGISTER*

The Board NOTED a Summary Top Risk Register (TRR) to January 2018, and the emerging risk of 'Impacts of Brexit on College Business' (TR26). The Head of Corporate Development advised the Board that a paper on the initial analysis of Brexit on Edinburgh College business had been considered by the Policy & Resources Committee on 20 February 2018.

The Board DISCUSSED the impacts of Brexit on the college and AGREED that the report provided to the Policy & Resources Committee should be circulated to members for information. The Head of Corporate Development informed the Board that further detailed analysis of potential financial impacts, and the effects on students and staff would be undertaken by the Risk Assurance and Management Group in March and April, and included in the next iteration of the TRR.

7.3 ACADEMIC COUNCIL

7.3.1 *MINUTES 23.02.18*

The Board NOTED the Academic Council minutes from the meeting held on 23 February 2018.

The Board NOTED that the Academic Council had considered the SFC's finalised key performance indicator (KPI) figures for Edinburgh College in 2016/17, which were published on 13 February. Jeanette Stevenson, a Non-Executive Member of the Academic Council, advised the Board that, in terms of KPIs, the Committee would continue to focus on improvements to 'completion/partial completion' success rates going forward.

The Board NOTED that the Academic Council had received a presentation from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on regional skills planning in Edinburgh and South East Scotland. Jeanette Stevenson informed the Board that the presentation, and discussions which followed, provided the Committee with greater context around the current/future skills and employability in the region.

7.4 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

7.4.1 *MINUTES 13.02.18*

The Board NOTED the External Engagement Committee minutes from the meeting held on 13 February 2018.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had received a presentation on the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership (CPP) and the key priorities within its Local Outcome Improvement Plan to reduce inequalities in health, learning and economic circumstances. Lesley Drummond, a Non-Executive Member of the External Engagement Committee, advised the Board that the college was currently in the process of restructuring its CPP engagement, with the Head of Corporate Development overseeing the process.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had agreed to conclude its Board Engagement Sub-Group, following the development of an appropriate Communications, Marketing and Engagement Strategy. Lesley Drummond advised members that, to ensure its appropriate review, Board engagement would become a standing item on the Committee agenda.

7.4.2 *COMMERCIAL STRATEGY 2017-22*

The Board NOTED the Commercial Strategy 2017-22 as approved by the External Engagement Committee on 13 February 2018. The Assistant Principal (Income & Development) advised the Board that recommendations from the Committee had been incorporated into the final document, including further detailed reference to income targets and ambitions in an edited Executive Summary.

The Board DISCUSSED the Commercial Strategy 2017-22, and NOTED that it would be monitored through the External Engagement Committee and further updates would flow back to the Board in due course.

8. CLOSED ITEM OF BUSINESS

The Depute Principal and Assistant Principals left the meeting

8.1   Items of business were considered by the Board as part of a closed session. Closed items were recorded under a separate minute (Closed Minutes 8/20.03.18 refers).

The Depute Principal and Assistant Principals returned to the meeting

9. EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT

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

9.2   The Board NOTED that ECSA had held its student elections to elect its full-time officers for the academic year 2018/19, with online voting taking place on the week commencing 05 March 2018. The Student President informed the Board of the outcome of the election, as follows:

(i)   Sarah Hay, ECSA Student President
(ii)   Shannon Young, Vice President (Sports & Activities)
(iii)   Beth Anderson, Vice President (Welfare)

9.3   The Board NOTED that newly appointed officer would come into post on 01 July 2018. Further to this, the Board NOTED that Sarah Hay and Beth Anderson had been nominated as Student Board Members, to join the Board from 01 July 2018 to 30 June 2019. The Vice Chair, on behalf of the Board, congratulated the newly appointed officers and invited all incoming sabbatical officers to attend the next meeting of the Board, as observers.

9.4   The Board NOTED that ECSA had won two awards at the NUS Scotland Awards, held in Dunblane on 15 March, including the 'College Students' Association of the Year' for the second year running for their role in shaping education and empowering individual. The Student President informed the Board that ECSA also achieve their first ever win in the Education category, an award given for a project or campaign aimed at improving access to or attainment in post-16 education. The Vice Chair, on behalf of the Board, congratulated ECSA on their success at the NUS Scotland Awards and their achievements over the past year.

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 the Principal had represented the Scottish Further Education sector at a House of Commons Scottish Affairs Select Committee, on 16 January, to provide evidence on its inquiry into immigration and Scotland. The Principal advised the Board that the Committee was keen to understand how the EU referendum results would affect international student and EU staff at Scottish universities and colleges.

10.3 The Board NOTED that the Depute Principal, on behalf of the college, had attended a Collab group members meeting in London on 07 March. The Principal informed the Board that Collab had won several commercial contracts in England within the construction and care sectors, with English college members enjoying the benefits of being part of consortium bids via Collab. It was hoped that this could be expanded throughout the UK and Scottish Collab members could benefit from similar bids north of the border.

10.4 The Board NOTED that Education Scotland were visiting the college on 21 & 22 March as part of the 'How Good is Our College' initiative. The Principal advised the Board that following the visit a report would be drafted by Education Scotland and reviewed in due course by the Academic Council.

10.5 The Board NOTED that the college had won three awards in the College Development Network Marketing Awards 2018, which honour the promotional work taking place in Scotland's colleges. The Vice Chair, on behalf of the Board, congratulated the Marketing Team on their success at the Awards, and the high quality of work they had consistently produced.

11. GOVERNANCE REPORT

11.1 GOVERNANCE REPORT

11.1.1 The Board NOTED that Edinburgh College would undertake an internal review of governance arrangements in discussion with the newly appointed Chair of the Board. The Head of Corporate Development advised the Board that further details of the internal review would be presented to the Board in June 2018.

11.1.2 The Board NOTED that following the departure of the Chair of the External Engagement Committee in March 2018, short-term considerations were required to ensure that appropriate governance arrangements remained in place. Further to this, the Board AGREED the following temporary arrangements until an internal review of governance had taken place:

(i) The Vice Chair would act as Chair of the External Engagement Committee at its meeting on 29 May 2018;
(ii) Sam Hogrefe would join the External Engagement Committee as a Non-Executive Member.

11.2 BOARD DEVELOPMENT DAY 01.05.18

11.2.1 The Board NOTED that a Board Development Day would be held on 01 May 2018 at Forth Sector, Duddingston. The Head of Corporate Development advised the Board that an itinerary for the event would be circulated once it had been agreed with the Chair of the Board.

12. NATIONAL REPORT

12.1 The Board NOTED a verbal update on progress relating to a national job evaluation scheme and ongoing employment relations through the Employers' Association.

12.2 The Board NOTED that, in a recent test case, an Employment Tribunal had upheld a decision that City of Glasgow College acted unlawfully in failing to consolidate a £100 pay award for the year 2015/16 for lecturing staff employed by the College. The Principal advised the Board that Edinburgh College now awaited further instruction of the implementation of this aspect of the 2016 National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC) Agreement to its own staff.

13. **ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

13.1 None.

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

14.1 The next meeting would be held at 14:00hrs on 12 June 2018 at the Milton Road Campus.

Meeting closed at 16:45

……………………………………………… (Signature of Chair) …………………… (Date)