



For the future you want

EDINBURGH COLLEGE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 20 JUNE 2017

14:00 Boardroom, Milton Road Campus

Present: Colin Arthur; Neal Black; Annette Bruton; Bruce Cassidy; Lesley Drummond; Stephen Dunn; Alan Johnston; Ann Landels; Ian McKay (Chair); Niki McKenzie; Nigel Paul; Fiona Riddoch; Azra Sharif-Qayyum; Judith Sischy; Ian Young.

In attendance: Beth Anderson (Observer); Jon Buglass; Alex Craig; Michael Jeffrey; Jonny Pearson; Marcus Walker (Clerk); Richard Whetton; Alan Williamson.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Bob Downie; Amanda Clark and Jeanette Stevenson
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed Beth Anderson, the newly elected ECSA Vice President (Welfare) 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 Neal Black (the incumbent Student President) and Beth Anderson would act as Student Board Members for the academic year 2017/18.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 The Chair of the Board advised members that as Chair of the Employers' Association he had been directly involved in matters relating to Item 4.2.
- 2.2 The Principal informed the Board that, in relation to Item 4.2, she had acted as a management side representative of the Employers' Association during recent negotiations.
- 2.3 The Academic Staff Board Member advised the Board, in relation to Item 4.2, he acted as a Campus Secretary for EIS-FELA.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT 02.05.17

3.1.1 The Board APPROVED the minutes from 02 May 2017 as an accurate record of the meeting.

3.2 EXTRAORDINARY BOARD OF MANAGMENT 30.05.17

3.2.1 The Board APPROVED the minutes from 30 May 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, with the exception of the following:

4.2 NATIONAL JOINT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE (NJNC) AGREEMENT

4.2.1 The Board NOTED that the Employer's Association had met on 31 May, and subsequently agreed to meet again on 19 June. The Principal outlined the outcome of the follow-up meeting, and the agreement to pay in July 2017 the first 25% of migration to the new National Pay Scale for un-promoted lecturing staff (backdated to April 2017). Further to this, an agreement had been reached by the Employer's Association to carry out job matching and a pay migration process for existing promoted lecturing staff by December 2017.

4.2.2 The Board NOTED that the Employer's Association had agreed in principle to ratify the May 2017 Agreement. The Chair advised the Board that the final ratification of terms & conditions would be subject to; further consideration of the funding available to the sector following the Scottish Government Spending Review, the positive conclusion of negotiations with the EIS-FELA and an Equality Impact Assessment.

4.2.3 The Board NOTED a letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, John Swinney to the Chair of Colleges Scotland, Ken Milroy MBE dated 09 June. The Chair highlighted to the Board that the letter indicated an awareness of the financial pressures placed on individual colleges, and a degree of assurance that financial support would be made available through future budget settlements.

4.2.4 The Board NOTED a letter from the SFC Interim Chief Executive, John Kemp, to college principals dated 12 June, which clarified the additional resources available to the sector to fund pay pressures in 2017/18.

4.2.5 The Board DISCUSSED the following aspects of the pay award, and the reassurances provided to the college sector by Scottish Government and the SFC:

- (i) The timing of the Scottish Government's comprehensive spending review, which was expected to conclude in February 2018;
- (ii) the comparative pay of college lecturers under the new pay deal, in comparison with university lecturers and school teacher;

(iii) the potential impact of the deal on future support staff negotiations.

4.2.6 The Board AGREED that the Executive should produce, for circulation to members, a briefing note on how the implementation of the NJNC Agreement would affect the college financially.

5. STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP

5.1 The Board NOTED the Strategic Planning Working Group minute from the meeting held on 06 June. The Vice Chair advised the Board the Working Group had met to consider in further detail developments relating to the Edinburgh College Strategic Plan 2017-22.

5.2 The Board NOTED that the Working Group had considered the current position of the college and national factors which would potentially have implications for strategic planning. The Vice Chair informed the Board that the Working Group had also considered a 'Blueprint for the Future' document, and highlighted the need to separate transactional initiatives from the transformational ones.

5.3 The Board NOTED that the Working Group would meet again in August 2017, following the end of the open consultation period, to consider an updated Draft Strategic Plan 2017-22.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

6.1.1 MINUTES 30.05.17

The Board NOTED the Policy & Resources Committee minutes from the meeting held on 30 May. The Vice Chair advised the Board that members had received an update on the Business Transformation Plan and agreed that an annual review of the second year of the Plan would be presented to its next meeting.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had received an update on Phase 3 of the Voluntary Severance Scheme which had closed on 02 May. The Vice Chair informed the Board that despite a large number of voluntary severance applications being accepted, the college had fallen short of its ambitious Phase 3 target. This meant that the financial target included in the Business Transformation Plan had not been met.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had received a report highlighting findings from a best value review of the Waterfront Nursery, conducted in April 2017. The Vice Chair advised the Board that following the implementation of a range of initiatives, outlined in the report, the nursery was expected to move into a small surplus position in 2017/18.

6.1.2 STUDENT RECRUITMENT DASHBOARD

The Board NOTED an update on the performance of the college against its 2016/17 recruitment and credits targets. The Assistant Principal, Recruitment

& Retention, informed the Board that, for the first time since merger, the college had achieved (and subsequently exceeded) its activity target.

The Board welcomed the achievement of the credits target for 2017/18, and DISCUSSED the need to ensure that the college aspires towards future growth. The Assistant Principal, Recruitment & Retention, advised the Board that student retention would be a central to the college's ability to exceed future credit targets.

The Board NOTED that full-time recruitment for 2017/18 had shown an improvement on the previous year, with (year to date) 1.6% more offers made and 0.7% more offers accepted. The Assistant Principal, Recruitment & Retention, advised the Board that a reduction in the number of applicants for 2017/18 was due to planned reductions in provisions relating two curriculum areas, Hair and Beauty and Social Sciences.

The Board AGREED that the Assistant Principal, Recruitment & Retention, should continue to develop the presentation of the student recruitment dashboard for review by the Policy & Resources Committee and the Board.

6.1.3 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO APRIL 2017

The Board NOTED the financial performance of the college, as highlighted in the financial accounts to April 2017.

The Committee NOTED the full year forecast deficit, and DISCUSSED an upcoming Audit Scotland report for the sector which was expected to highlight the financial challenges faced by other colleges.

6.1.4 COLLEGE BUDGET 2017/18

The Board NOTED a College Budget 2017/18 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 2017/18 College Budget. In particular the costs associated with the NJNC Agreement on the lecturers pay awards and the potential knock-on effect on support staff and management pay. The Chief Operating Officer advised the Board that the College Budget 2017/18 also highlighted the outcome of the Phase 3 voluntary severance scheme.

The Board DISCUSSED the following matters related to the College Budget 2017/18:

- (i) The projected cashflow position and the need for staff to be made aware of the importance of such figures;
- (ii) the flexibility around the rate of payback for funding provided by the SFC in relation to the Business Transformation Plan;
- (iii) the potential impact of the pay award going forward.

The Board APPROVED the College Budget 2017/18 for implementation in the upcoming academic year.

6.2 ACADEMIC COUNCIL

6.2.1 *MINUTES 02.06.17*

The Board NOTED the Academic Council minutes from the meeting held on 02 June.

The Board NOTED that the Academic Council would receive a presentation on best practice from each of the faculties, over its next four meetings, in order to encourage the sharing and embedding of good practice across the college. The Committee Chair informed the Board that the second presentation of the series was conducted by the Head of Engineering and Built Environment.

The Board NOTED the results of the 2016/17 Learning and Teaching Survey, which was designed to assess students' opinions regarding key aspects of their experience at the college. The Committee Chair advised the Board that the survey results had been positive, with college-wide satisfaction rates increasing across 17 of 19 comparable questions (in comparison with last year).

The Board NOTED that the Academic Council had received an overview of the student funding mechanisms in place for new starters in 2017/18, as provided by the Head of Student Experience. The Committee Chair advised the Board that the Committee were content with the arrangements in place and had recommended that the college continued to share its best practice with other colleges in the sector.

6.2.2 *CURRICULUM PLANNING & DESIGN STRATEGY 2017-20*

The Board NOTED a Curriculum Planning and Design Strategy 2017-20 approved by the Academic Council, which outlined the main drivers and processes for curriculum planning over the next three years. The Assistant Principal, Curriculum Design and Development, advised the Board that with a new college strategy imminent, and the approval of a new Regional Outcome Agreement (2017-20) it had been appropriate to review the extant Curriculum Strategy.

The Board welcomed the development of a new Curriculum Planning and Design Strategy, and DISCUSSED the need to ensure that the Academic Council and the Board effectively monitor performance against key measurable within the document.

6.2.3 *LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY 2017-20*

The Board NOTED a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTAS) 2017-20 approved by the Academic Council, and a summary of the five strategic pillars within the document. The Assistant Principal, Curriculum Design and Development, advised the Board that an initial draft of the LTAS had been reviewed by the Committee in January 2017, and members' feedback had subsequently been incorporated into the document.

The Board DISCUSSED the following aspects of the LTAS:

- (i) The role of Connect Groups in performance monitoring, and the use of these forums as a means to engage staff;

- (ii) the involvement of support staff within the strategic framework, and how non-academic staff could support the student learning experience;
- (iii) the wide ranging consultation held with staff and students from across the college.

The Board welcomed the LTAS and the use of Connect Groups in performance monitoring, and hoped that the Academic Council would be able to channel into these performance outputs.

The Board AGREED that the Academic Council should utilise the Strategy to ensure effective performance monitoring and the college's curriculum offer is regularly reviewed. The Assistant Principal, Curriculum Design and Development, advised the Board that key information from faculty-level operational plans would be provided to the Academic Council at future meetings.

6.3 AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

6.3.1 MINUTES 31.05.17

The Board NOTED the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee minutes from the meeting held on 31 May.

The Board NOTED that the internal auditors had presented two positive reports to the Committee relating to a recent Priority Based Budget (Phase 2) audit and a Financial Management audit. The Committee Chair informed the Board that low risk recommendations for improvement highlighted by the audit reports would be implemented by senior management in due course.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had received an update on the college's response to the raising of the UK terror threat level to 'critical' on 22 May, prior to it returning to 'severe' on 27 May. The Committee Chair advised the Board that on 22 June a meeting would be held to consider the college's arrangements in relation to the UK counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST), to which all Board members had been invited.

6.3.2 RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Board NOTED a Summary Top Risk Register to June 2017, which outlined five changes to the risk register since May. The Committee Chair informed the Board that the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee had reviewed the Full Top Risk Register at its previous meeting.

The Board DISCUSSED the recent Grenfell Tower fire and national concerns around building cladding. The Principal informed the Board that the college's estate met modern building standards and confirmed that the cladding at the Sighthill Campus was made from a non-combustible material. The Board AGREED that in order to provide further reassurance a report on the campus fire safety should go to the next meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee.

The Chair, on behalf of the Board, expressed his condolences with those affected by the Grenfell Tower fire, and wished to provide reassurances to staff and students at the college that the Board were actively concerned about their health and wellbeing.

6.4 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

6.4.1 MINUTES 23.05.17

The Board NOTED the External Engagement Committee minutes from the meeting held on 23 May.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had received an update on the college's engagement with local politicians over the course of the past year. The Committee Chair informed the Board that members had asked senior management to develop engagement further by partnering local councillors' interests with events taking place at the college.

The Board NOTED that the college had met its International targets for 2016/17, and that the Commercial Team were confident of meeting their targets before the end of the academic year. The Committee Chair congratulated the Commercial and International Teams, and welcomed the college's fresh approach to developing its non-SFC funding.

6.5 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

6.5.1 MINUTES 23.05.17

The Board NOTED the Nominations Committee minutes from the meeting held on 23 May. The Chair informed members that Board and committee succession planning arrangements had been considered by the Committee, and that it had been agreed that it would meet again in October 2017 to consider arrangements further.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had agreed to the adoption of a model letter of appointment and terms & conditions, approved by the Good Governance Steering Group, subject to the inclusion of an introductory paragraph welcoming new members to the Board.

7. NATIONAL REPORT

- 7.1 The Board NOTED that further to the lecturer pay award, discussed under Paragraph 4.2, negotiations were ongoing between the Employers' Association and recognised support staff trade unions regarding a 2017/18 pay offer.

8. PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

- 8.1 The Board NOTED a report from the Principal covering a range of activities at the college since the last Board meeting.
- 8.2 The Board NOTED that the SFC, in partnership with Skills Development Scotland and other partners, were in the process of developing a Gender Action Plan to address imbalances at a subject level within colleges. The Principal outlined the Edinburgh College Gender Action Plan to the Board, highlighting particular actions undertaken by the college to address gender imbalances and enhance provisions in a number of areas.

8.3 The Board NOTED that in November 2016 the Principal and Chief Operating Officer had given evidence to the Public Audit and Post Legislative Scrutiny Committee (PAPL). The Principal advised the Board that in March 2017, the Auditor General had laid a further Section 22 Report to the Scottish Parliament and presented oral evidence to the PAPL on 18 May. Following this appearance, the Committee had invited the Chair, the Principal and the Chief Operating Officer to attend the PAPL on 29 June to give further evidence.

9. EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT

9.1 ECSA REPORT

9.1.1 The Board NOTED that ECSA had held its second annual ECSA-Illence awards on 18 May, with over 120 guests in attendance. The Student President informed the Board that the awards had been received positively by students, staff, external partners and the members of the Board in attendance.

9.1.2 The Board NOTED that ECSA had finalised its training for the new sabbatical officers, which would take place at the end of June. The Student President advised the Board that the training had been coupled with the NUS 'Lead & Change' event, in order to provide a comprehensive induction to prepare officers for the year ahead.

9.2 ECSA END OF YEAR REPORT

9.2.1 The Board NOTED an overview of activities conducted by ECSA in 2016/17, including an update on the Student Associations' progress against measures outlined in its Operational Plan. The Chair advised the Board that prior to the meeting the Student President and the ECSA Director, Al Wilson, had presented an end of year report to members.

9.2.2 The Board welcomed the detailed end of year report provided by ECSA, and DISCUSSED its successes and future strategic aims. The Board AGREED that invitations to next year's Class Reps Conference should be sent to members, to ensure future representation from the Board.

10. GOVERNANCE REPORT

10.1 GOVERNANCE UPDATE

10.1.1 The Board NOTED that the schedule for the Board and its committee in 2017/18 had been agreed with the Executive Team and the Board. The Head of Corporate Development advised the Board that 20 meetings of the Board and its committee had been scheduled, along with two Board Development Days in November 2017 and May 2018.

10.1.2 The Board NOTED that, with the approval of the Board, the Chair and Board Secretary had submitted a Good College Governance consultation response on 02 June. The Head of Corporate Development informed the Board that a Colleges Scotland response had also been submitted on behalf of the sector, and that the Board would be briefed on any further outcomes arising from the consultation in due course.

11. RIDDOR REPORT

11.1 The Board NOTED RIDDOR reportable incidents between 01 April to 31 May 2017.

12. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

12.1 ENGAGEMENT WITH UK COLLEGES

12.1.1 The Board NOTED an update from the Principal regarding the college's aim to engage further with other UK colleges on a number of collaborative projects. The Chair advised the Board that the college was currently the eighth largest in the UK, and it was hoped that further work could be carried out to publicise this fact more widely.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13.1 The next meeting would be held at 14:00hrs on 19 September 2017 at the Milton Road Campus.

14. CLOSED BUSINESS

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 14/14.02.17 refers)

Meeting closed at 17:30

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