

## MINUTES

---

Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held on Wednesday 24 October 2019 from 3.30pm in the Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline.

**Present:** David C Watt (Chair), Jen Anderson, Jade Burnett, Hugh Hall, Carol Hunter, Joseph Harney, Tony Martin, Susan Mitchell, Bryan Poole, Zoe Thomson, Jim Trail OBE

**Apologies:** Bob Black, Shona Cochrane, Violeta Ilendo, Tina Vandermotten, Jen Walls

**In Attendance:** Wendy Brymer, Susan Dunsmuir, Kris Getchell, Dorothée Leslie, Sue Reekie, Marianne Philp

### 1 Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interests

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

### 2 Minutes of the

**2.1 Previous Meeting: 26 June 2019**

**2.2 Development Day: 4 September 2019**

The minutes of the previous meetings were approved as an accurate record.

### 3 Matters Arising / Actions Outstanding

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. Updates on progress were also given on the Development Day actions on pages 10 and 11 of the Boardpack.

### 4 Chair's Updates

The following updates were given:

- Annual Development Meetings had been held with almost all Board meetings with the two remaining meetings scheduled for the coming weeks. Any actions from these would be progressed by the Chair and Director: Governance and Compliance.
- The Scottish Government were recruiting three College Chairs and are keen to make progress with gender balance. The Chair had met with them to feedback on his appointment process and make suggestions for improvements.
- The Chair, Principal and Director: Governance and Compliance would arrange information sessions for various groups in due course.

### 5 Principal's Update Report

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were outlined and noted. Highlights included:

- Incremental improvements had been shown across all key performance indicators at the end of academic year 2018-19.



# Fife College

- The credit target for 2018-19 had been achieved and enrolments for 2019-20 was on target. Full-time higher education targets for Engineering and Business was disappointing and a range of solutions were being progressed to address this.
- The restructuring of the four academic faculties was almost complete and trainer/assessor posts were currently being filled. A new Director: Faculty of Care, Social Sciences and Education had been appointed and would take up post in January 2020.
- The College Graduation Ceremonies had been attended by over 500 students.
- A very successful Learning in a Custodial Setting Conference had been held which was attended by over 100 staff, the Chief Executive of SPS and Jenny Gilruth MSP.

There was a discussion about the differences between the roles of Lecturer and Trainer/Assessor and the introduction of three levels of Curriculum Manager. It was noted that the new structure gave increased capacity at Curriculum Manager level and allowed for more staff career progression. It was confirmed that the new structure would also allow for more flexibility for commercial delivery as this area of work required to increase in order to compensate for the ongoing reduction in core funding. It was confirmed that the formal grievance lodged by the EIS had slowed down progress but that the structural changes required had progressed. Relations with the Trade Unions were positive and it was anticipated that the grievance would be concluded upon soon.

A query was raised about whether the under recruitment in Engineering and Business was a local or national issue. It was confirmed that it was national. Various solutions were being explored, such as course design and product review. The needs of employers were noted as key for finding sustainable solutions.

It was noted that the employer engagement strategy was being reviewed and would be brought to a future Board meeting.

## **6 New Campus Update**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was confirmed that the Deputy First Minister was keen for work on the new campus to get underway swiftly. Discussions were ongoing with Fife Council and work was being undertaken by the College to refresh previous plans and to re-engage with professional advisors in order that progress could be made.

It was noted that the College and Fife Council had agreed that governance arrangements should remain separate and should be as closely aligned to existing arrangements, with touch points for higher approvals when these were necessary. It was noted that delegated authority had been given to the Finance, Commercial and Estates Committee to approve the Outline Business Case and Full Business Case for the project, and that strategic updates would be provided at each Board meeting for information. A separate Estates Project Board could be re-established if workload dictates this in due course.

There was a discussion about the benefits of having a joint campus and also previous learning taken from the Levenmouth Campus. It was noted that there were distinct differences between the Dunfermline and Levenmouth projects, in particular as the two schools involved required to remain separate.

Board members confirmed their agreement to support the direction of travel as outlined in the paper.



## 7 Business Report

The contents of the report that had been circulated were noted. Highlights included:

- In 2018-19 the College achieved increased student satisfaction, student attainment and student retention rates, and improved student destination data.
- For 2019-20, student full-time FE recruitment was ahead of target, but FT HE was behind. Part-time student recruitment was on track for this point of the year.
- Early withdrawals for 2019-20 looked positive but reports will be provided on this in due course.
- There continued to be issues with Universal Credit, despite raising issues with the Scottish Funding Council in 2018-19. The College was supporting students as required. Funding drop-in sessions had been well attended by students over the summer and information was available on the website. Guidance Advisers had also been meeting with students individually supporting financial concerns and were signposted to the Job Centre for any complex queries. Further information can be found <https://www.fife.ac.uk/studying-with-us/student-support-services/student-funding>.
- Modern Apprenticeship recruitment was ahead of target with the potential for additional £100k additional income should our projections realise and this be agreed with Skills Development Scotland.
- The year-end financial position was an underlying surplus of just over £200k. No significant issues had been raised in the year-end audit to date. It was noted that the adjustments to the accounts due to the land and building revaluation and the pension adjustment was outwith the College's control.
- Work on Job Evaluation was continuing as part of National Bargaining.
- A staff survey was planned for Spring 2020.
- Woodmill High School S5 pupils would return to school in January 2020 which mean the closure of Rosyth campus could continue as part of the overall Estates Strategy.
- Good progress had been made with Digital Services Projects and staff were congratulated on achieving the Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation.
- The Learning and Skills contract was ahead financially and in staffing terms, with a high degree of customer satisfaction.
- Good progress continues with regard to Sustainability.

Board members congratulated all staff involved on the improvements to KPIs and the financial year-end position and stressed the importance of celebrating success and ensuring internal and external stakeholders were aware of the improvements.

Jen Anderson, Carol Hunter and Zoe Thomson left the meeting.

## 8 Fife College Students' Association (FCSA) Update

The contents of the report that had been circulated were noted. Highlights included:

- Changes to staff members.
- FCSA Freshers Festival 2019 had been held across the five main College campuses during September 2019.
- Student Groups include the FCSA Book Club, FCSA Board Gamers Guild and FCSA Video Gamers.
- Feedback from the Board of Governors Development Day was noted.



# Fife College

- FCSA Awards will take place on 19 June 2020 in the Glen Pavillion. A list of awards was included.

Jade Burnett left the meeting.

## 9 Five Year Financial Forecast

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was noted that the assumptions had been updated since the last meeting, following on from information received from the Scottish Funding Council. The Finance, Commercial and Estates Committee had reviewed the information in detail at their meeting.

Members commented that a lot of work had gone into preparing this document and updating it. It was suggested that the effort put into this should be proportionate to the gain made. The Chief Financial Officer confirmed that the resources were proportionate and that preparing the document was useful.

**Decision:** To approve the document for submission to the Scottish Funding Council, and to agree scenario 1 for planning purposes.

**Responsibility:** Chief Financial Officer

**Deadline:** 31 October 2019

## 10 Strategic Risk Register 2019-20

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that the wording of risk 12 had changed to make it broader than previously, and a new risk 13 had been added. Concerns were raised about the high gross and net scores for risk 12. It was noted that information for this risk continued to be added, and that the risk would be monitored by the Audit and Risk Committee at each of its meetings.

**Decision:** To approve the Strategic Risk Register for 2019-20.

**Responsibility:** Chief Financial Officer

**Deadline:** 31 October 2019

## 11 Update on Governance Matters

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted.

**Decision:** To approve the proposed changes to the remit of the Chair's Committee.

**Responsibility:** Director: Governance and Compliance

**Deadline:** 31 October 2019

## 12 Summary of Committee Business

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. Links to the full minutes were included in the paper.

## 13 Performance and Effectiveness Review: Feedback

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted.

## 14 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 December 2019 at 3.30pm, Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline