

# MINUTES

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**Meeting:** Finance, Commercial and Estates Committee

**Date:** Tuesday 8 March 2022 at 3.30pm

**Location:** Microsoft Teams

**Present:** Gordon Mole (Chair), Drew Connelly, Hugh Hall, Phillip Thompson

**In Attendance:** Gail Dunn, Susan Dunsmuir, Kris Getchell, Iain Hawker, John Lewthwaite, Marianne Philp

**Apologies:** Jim Trail OBE, Emma Wallace

## 1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting. It was noted that a briefing session on Commercial Activity and Business Engagement had been held at the start of the meeting. A copy of the presentation is available on [Microsoft Teams](#). Iain Hawker, Miles Lagan and John Elliot outlined the current position and priorities moving forward with regard to commercial activity and how we engage with employers and businesses. It was noted that targets were on track to be met, despite the challenging environment, and that opportunities for growth were being actively explored. Improvements to processes were being made in order to free up capacity for external engagement. It was confirmed that targeted marketing activity takes place and a CRM system was in place to record activity and engagement. The importance of teams working together was also recognized. The Chair thanked the presenters for the informative presentation.

## 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting: 14 September 2021

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. It was noted that the presentation on Estates priorities had been deferred to the next meeting due to the volume of business on the agenda.

## 4 Strategic Update: Digital

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were outlined and noted. The approach and timescales for the development of the new Digital Strategy were noted by members.

Members were advised that an insurance policy had been identified which may give good levels of coverage for Cyber risks and appropriate due diligence was being carried out in this regard before a final decision was taken.

Good progress was noted on all projects, with one noted as being contingent upon SFC funding being made available.

There was a discussion about how projects were being used to make improvements and efficiencies, and about the impact on energy and sustainability. It was noted that a paper that had been prepared recently would be made available to members with the minutes ([link](#)).

## **5 Strategic Update: Estates**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were outlined and noted. An update was given on each of the projects in turn.

Members congratulated staff involved in the negotiations on the purchase of properties on the Dunfermline campus which would result in a rental saving and impact on the sale of the campus on due course.

An update was given on the Dunfermline New Learning Campus project and members were advised that there had been a delay in the contractor securing prices due to the current external environment. Further detail on the impact on risks, costs and timelines would be presented to the New Build Project Board at their next meeting and the Board of Governors would be kept updated.

### **6.1 New Build Project Board Update**

Links to the minutes of Project Board meetings held since the Committee last met were included for information.

## **6 Strategic Update: Financial**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that the college was £33k ahead of the year to date F1 position, and main variances were briefly outlined.

Attention was drawn to the cash position (page 29 of the Boardpack) which showed a projected £5.2m year-end position.

## **7 Commercial Activity Update**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was reported that there was a shortfall of £28k projected. It was noted that commercial income was in a similar position to this time last year, but the pipeline was £0.5m better than this time last year. The Business Development Team were working hard to close the gap and to schedule training wherever possible.

It was noted that various activity was ongoing to advertise training opportunities and to encourage employers to take up the levy available to them. There had been an increase in uptake of training by employers for the first time since Covid.

A brief update was given on the Scottish Prison Service contract negotiations and it was highlighted that this had been added as a new risk within the Strategic Risk Register, which had recently been discussed by the Audit and Risk Committee.

## 8 **Scottish Government Funding for Colleges and Universities 2022-23**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was confirmed that, since writing the paper, Colleges had been advised that an additional £9m had been made available. For Fife College, this would mean £400k-£500k depending how funding was allocated. This funding would only apply to 2022-23 and would not be available in future years.

It was confirmed that high level scenario planning exercises were being undertaken and all options were being explored and discussed with relevant budget holders. Members were reminded of previous discussions about the Coherence and Sustainability Review and that fundamental changes may be required for 2023-24 and beyond.

## 9 **Procurement Strategy and Recent and Forthcoming Tender Activity**

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

**Decisions:** To approve the four procurement projects as outlined in the paper, and the changes to the annual modern slavery statement.

**Responsibility:** Chief Financial Officer

**Deadline:** 31 March 2022

## 10 **Review of Meeting**

No comments were made on the format of the meeting. Members were invited to advise the Director: Governance and Compliance of any reflections after the meeting.

## 11 **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 7 June 2022 at 9.30am