

## MINUTES

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

**Date:** Wednesday 8 March 2023 at 9.30am

**Location:** Microsoft Teams

**Present:** Susan Mitchell (Chair), Drew Connelly, Hugh Hall, Gordon Mole, Phillip Thompson, Emma Wallace

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

### 1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

### 2 Minutes of the

**2.1 Previous Meeting: 17 November 2022**

**2.2 Joint Audit and Risk / Finance, Commercial and Estates Committee Meeting: 17 November 2022**

It was noted in the joint Committee meeting minutes that there was an error in the last paragraph of the first page. The word “red” should be changed to “green”. The minutes of the previous meetings were approved as an accurate record, subject to this change being made.

### 3 Matters Arising / Actions Outstanding

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

### 4 Strategic Update: Estates

The contents of the report that had been circulated were noted. The strategic highlights noted on pages 10 and 11 of the Boardpack were outlined and noted. Each of the projects were discussed in turn. The following main points were discussed:

- It was a significant step to have the funding now confirmed for the Dunfermline Learning Campus project. The handover date was scheduled for January 2025. New Build Project Board members would have the opportunity to visit the new campus on 13 March and further visits for Board members would be offered in due course.
- There was flexibility on termination of the lease with Babcock due to the involvement of partners in the Freeport development.
- Potential alternative funding routes using other partners should be considered with regards to the Glenrothes campus project. It was noted that the capital investment plan was due to be issued by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) in the autumn.
- The skills procured as part of the master planning exercise were outlined. It was requested that a timeline and interface with the Committee and wider Board be considered and communicated to ensure expectations were set and that a strategic approach be taken.

**Decision:** To map out the timeline and interface with the Committee and full Board in relation to the Master Plan exercise.

**Responsibility:** Director: Estates and Facilities

**Deadline:** 6 June 2023

#### 4.1 New Build Project Board Minutes

The contents of the minutes were noted for information.

### 5 Strategic Update: Digital Services

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were outlined and noted. The strategic highlights noted on page 16 of the Boardpack were outlined and noted. The projects were all highlighted as green. The following main points were discussed:

- The threat of CyberSecurity issues was growing exponentially, especially within the sector. Penetration was undertaken each time a change was implemented, and monthly, and twice a year external tests were undertaken by Jisc. It was suggested that more frequent external testing should be considered. It was confirmed that the last internal audit on CyberSecurity was undertaken approximately two years ago.
- Training for staff was in place, members of the Committee requested that and the development of mandatory modules and making training cyclical was being considered seriously.
- There were appropriate arrangements in place to cascade PCs and devices and a contract was in place to dispose of them once they had reached the end of their useful life.
- Links were in place with other institutions and with HEFESTIS in order to learn from others.

**Decisions:**

- To undertake a deep dive into Cyber Security at a future meeting.  
**Responsibility:** Chief Information Officer **Deadline:** 31 December 2023
- To add strategic risks that directly link to the work of the Committee to future agendas.  
**Responsibility:** Director: Governance and Compliance **Deadline:** 8 June 2023

### 6 Strategic Update: Finance

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that overall the College was £16k behind the year-to-date F1 position. Main variances (as detailed on page 22 of the Boardpack) were briefly outlined.

An underlying operating surplus of £87k was projected for the year-end. The income and expenditure assumptions as detailed on page 30 of the Boardpack were noted.

**Decisions:**

- To investigate the reason for the increase to non staff overheads (just under £1m compared to the last meeting) and email members to advise.
- To add a budget column in to future reports in addition to F1.

**Responsibility:** Director: Finance

**Deadline:** 6 June 2023

## 7 **Strategic Update: Commercial Activity**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. The summary on pages 32 and 33 of the Boardpack was outlined. There was discussion on the following main points:

- The timing of confirmation of Flexible Workforce Development Fund allocations makes it difficult to plan and creates uncertainty for employers. Feedback is being provided to SFC on this.
- A long-term approach is being adopted with employers to support them with workforce planning and training needs.

**Decision:** To add to future reports the contribution from each strand of activity which would help inform future planning and identification of priorities.

**Responsibility:** Vice Principal

**Deadline:** 6 June 2023

## 8 **Update on Procurement Strategy**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. There were four projects requiring approval, as detailed on page 36 of the Boardpack. The Modern Slavery Statement was presented for the Committee's approval, with no substantive changes having been approved.

There was a discussion about the requirement for the REMs system to be for ten years, with confirmation given on the rationale for this as well as exit points available to the College if appropriate.

**Decisions:**

- To approve the four projects as detailed on page 36 of the Boardpack.
- To approve the Modern Slavery Statement.

**Responsibility:** Director: Finance

**Deadline:** 31 March 2023

## 9 **Draft Strategies 2023-2028 and Action Plans**

The contents of the draft Strategies and Action Plan that had been circulated were noted. It was confirmed that the direction of travel of both Strategies was supported, and that the plans lacked richness and depth and required more detail to give clarity over what is meant by the ambitions, and how these will be realized. In relation to the KPIs, where stated, it was suggested that considering outcomes and outputs rather than activities and inputs might be useful. Specific comments were provided as follows:

### 9.1 **Digital**

- Increase explanation to describe what is meant by some of the stated ambitions and they are very general/ broad and open to variable interpretation.
- Ensure that any reader of the plan can easily understand what it means at a glance.
- Linkages to other partners and organisations to explore opportunities and develop our capability should be detailed
- Ambition to link to Codebase should be considered
- KPIs should be added
- Address questions of financial affordability and be realistic about what is achievable
- Address whether the proposed action plan addresses the range of the strategic ambitions

## 9.2 Commercial and Business

- Linkages and approach to sustainability should be included
- Reference to Fife Economy Strategy should be updated to 2023-28
- How we are going to do things, eg community wealth building and net zero approach should be added
- Scale of economic inactivity is growing and could be added
- Address questions of financial affordability
- Address whether the proposed action plan addresses the range of the strategic ambitions
- Further develop the KPIs

**Decision:** To undertake further work on the draft Strategies and bring these back to the next meeting for further discussion and approval.

**Responsibility:** Chief Information Officer/Vice Principal      **Deadline:** 6 June 2023

## 10 Budget Scenarios for 2023-24

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was confirmed that once the budget allocations had been confirmed, this paper would be updated and would be presented to the Committee again at its next meeting.

It was noted that alternative business models needed to be explored and opportunities for the Board to consider and discuss these would be available at the next Board meeting and the Board Strategy Day. There was an urgency to start to consider this. Timescales for legalities to be processed were also highlighted.

**Decision:** When reviewing the draft Strategies, to consider whether the level of investment is realistic in the current financial environment.

**Responsibility:** Chief Information Officer/Vice Principal      **Deadline:** 6 June 2023

## 11 Review of Meeting

It was noted that a few suggestions for future agenda items and changes to reports had been suggested and should be incorporated as outlined in the minutes.

## 12 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 6 June 2023 at 9.30am