Minute of the Board of Management Meeting
Held via Video Conference Using Zoom
on Thursday 24 March 2022

Present:

Fiona McQueen	Chair (Interim)
Steven Wallace	Non-Executive Board Member (Vice Chair, Interim)
Elaine Anderson	Non-Executive Board Member
Norman Bone	Non-Executive Board Member
Beth Clelland	Non-Executive Board Member
Steve Graham	Non-Executive Board Member
Matthew Wilson	Non-Executive Board Member
Sharon Morrow	Non-Executive Board Member
Mike Stewart	Non-Executive Board Member/SIM
Alison Sutherland	Non-Executive Board Member
Ellie Jamieson	Elected Student President
Steven Oliver	Elected Student Vice-President
Janette Moore	Elected Member, Curriculum Staff
Carol Turnbull	Principal, Ex-Officio

In attendance:

Pauline Donald	Board Governance Advisor
Yvonne Melvin	Board Administrative Officer (Minutes)
Michael Breen	Vice Principal – Finance
Anne Campbell	Vice Principal – Curriculum
David Davidson	Assistant Principal – HR&OD

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

The Chair, E Anderson and A Sutherland declared an interest in agenda item 3.1. M Stewart, Senior Independent Member, agreed to act as Chair for this item.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Non-Executive Board Member Mary McClung and Elected Member, Support Staff, Steven Fegan.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 8 December 2021 *(Paper 2) (P)*

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Mike Stewart   **Seconded:** Steve Graham

Board of Management Action & Decision Log *(Paper 1a) (P)*

BOM36:A01. P Donald advised on the steps taken to inform the Board of the revised Code of Conduct and the corresponding changes to the Code including email circulation of related correspondence and submission of a presentation at the Board Development Day on 16 February 2022. Given the importance of Board Member responsibilities in regard to the Code and limitation on time at the Board Development Day to consider the revised Code in detail, it was proposed that all relevant information was re-circulated to the Board by email for their further review. Board Members will then be requested to update their Register of Interests in accordance with the new Code. The revised Code of Conduct for Ayrshire College will then be submitted to the next Board meeting in June 2022 for approval. The Board agreed to the proposal set out.

No other actions remained outstanding.

Action: BOM37: A01: P Donald to circulate the revised Ayrshire College Code of Conduct to members accompanied with the presentation submitted to the Board Development Day in February 2022.

4. **Matters Arising**

There were no outstanding matters arising from the minutes.

5. **Student Association Report** (*Paper 2) (P)*

E Jamieson introduced Paper 2 as presented and summarised the following key highlights from the report:

- E Jamieson was appointed Chair of the Thriving Learners Research Advisory Group, a collaboration research project between Colleges Scotland and The Mental Health Foundation to gain understanding of the mental health and wellbeing of Scottish learners.
- This year's Student President Elections are scheduled to take place from 9 till 14 May 2022, with nominations opening on 28 March 2022. The successful elected members will be announced on 14 May 2022 and will take up their positions officially from 1 July 2022.

E Jamieson also provided the Board with additional information regarding My Health Scotland, advising that that a total of 70 students signed up and that approx. 120 applications had been received. The Board noted that a total of 45 students were progressing onto the second of a two-month programme and the students remained well engaged. E Jamieson was pleased to report that My Health Scotland are reporting that the project has been a great success so far and that testimonials and information regarding the students' progress and personal achievements would be available at the end of the programme.

In response to a query, E Jamieson confirmed that the study conducted by Thriving Learners Research Advisory Group in relation to the University sector had identified a high number of students reporting low wellbeing and this was likely due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and instances of social isolation. A Campbell further advised that the College sector also recognised that reporting of

low wellbeing in the student population was increasing and that colleges were actively identifying areas where they could provide assistance.

The Board acknowledged the breadth and extent of the work being undertaken, particularly during the continued pandemic, and thanked the Student President for an informative report.

6. **Chairs Report** *(Verbal) (P)*

The Chair reported on the following matters that had occurred since the previous meeting of the Board**:**

Interim Chair Position
F McQueen advised that the Scottish Government's Public Appointments Team had confirmed her appointment as Interim Chair and that she very much looked forward to leading the College in this role. As part of her initial induction programme, the Chair advised that she would arrange to meet with Board Members and the College's Senior Leadership Team.

Principal Recruitment Process
The recruitment process to identify a new Principal of the College was ongoing and that a positive response had been received so far. The Chair then highlighted key dates in the recruitment process as follows:

- Applications closed on 14 March 2022
- Shortlisting on 14 April 2022
- Formal Interviews on 21 April 2022

Colleges Scotland Residential Board and AGM
The Chair advised that she had attended her first meeting of The Colleges Scotland Residential Board Meeting which took place in Dunblane on 23 and 24 March 2022. The Chair provided the Board with an overview of the key items discussed, which included the Future of the College Sector and maximising the impact of colleges in the current economic environment. The Chair also advised that Wai-yin Hatton had been successfully appointed as the new Chair of the Colleges Scotland Board and that both she and the Principal would be meeting with Wai-yin in the coming weeks.

7. **Chairs' recruitment process: update** *(Verbal) (P)*

P Donald provided an update on the status of the Chairs' recruitment process.

As advised at item 6, formal approval had now been received from the Scottish Government Public Appointments Team on the appointment of F McQueen as Interim Chair. The Board noted that, in accordance with the decision by the Board on 8 December 2021 (BOM36:D06), the interim Board and Committee structure is now formally in effect.

P Donald advised that the formal recruitment process to appointment a substantive Chair would be taken forward by the Scottish Governments Public Appointments Team and that future updates would be provided to the Board.

8. **Board Matters**

Board Member Re-Appointments *(Paper 3.1) (P)*
F McQueen, A Sutherland and E Anderson declared an interest in this item and M Stewart agreed to act as Chair.

M Stewart introduced Paper 3.1 as presented, advising that the tenure of office for three Non-Executive Board Members would complete on 31 July 2022. The Board noted that the three members affected were Fiona McQueen, Alison Sutherland and Elaine Anderson. M Stewart further advised that the appointment period for the co-opted Committee members, Gillian Murray and Gordon Neil, was for 1-year and would complete on 31 July 2022.

The Board noted that, as per due process, the Search and Nominations Committee had considered the above re-appointments with the recommendation that the Board be asked to approve:

- re-appointment of the above three non-executive board members to the maximum four-year period of office with effect from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2026 [1]**Decision: SNC14: D01.**
- re-appointment of the current co-opted Committee Members with effect from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023.

P Donald advised that, in order to seek early approval from Scottish Ministers on the re-appointment of the above Non-Executive Board Members, the Board was asked to confirm their approval of these re-appointments by email **(Decision: BOM 17.02.22).** This approach was taken to support the Board to implement the interim Board structure as approved by the Board in December 2021 (**Decision: BOM36: D06)**. Approval was received from the Scottish Government Public Appointments Team on 28 February 2022.

Decision: BOM37: D01: The Board ratified the decision by email to approve the re-appointment of Non-Executive Board Members F McQueen, A Sutherland and E Anderson effective from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2026 (**Decision: BOM 17.02.22).**

Decision: BOM37: D02: The Board approved the re-appointment co-opted Committee members Gordon Neil and Gillian Murray for a further 1-year period.

Draft Board & Committee Meeting Dates 2022-23 *(Paper 3.2) (P)*
P Donald introduced Paper 3.2 as presented and asked Board members to consider the Board & Committee Meeting Dates for AY 2022-23. The Board was also asked to consider the platform to be used for Committee and Board meetings going forward.

C Turnbull provided the Board with and update on the ICT facilities available on campus, advising that SLT recently approved the upgrading of video conferencing facilities on the campuses to accommodate hybrid meetings.

The Board noted that upgrading was scheduled to be completed by June 2022 and members discussed their preferences for meeting methods going forward. It was agreed that remote Committee meetings would remain for June 2022 and that

a hybrid approach on Kilmarnock campus would be adopted for the Board meeting on 16 June 2022.

Decision: BOM37: D03: The Board approved draft Board & Committee Meeting Dates for AY 2022-23.

Decision: BOM37: D04: The Board agreed that Committee meetings would remain online for June 2022 and that a hybrid approach would be adopted for the Board meeting on 16 June 2022 and would take place on Kilmarnock campus.

Board Performance and Improvement Plan *(Paper 3.3) (P)*
The Chair introduced the Board Performance and Improvement Plan as presented and highlighted the key points raised for further consideration. The Board noted that further discussion on HR and wider people matters, as well as an improved Board Induction process, would be considered as part of a future Board Development/Strategy Day programme.

Decision: BOM37: D05: The Board approved the Board Performance and Improvement Plan 2022-23 for submission to SFC.

9&10. **2022-23 SFC Indicative Funding: Revenue & Capital** and **2022-23 First Draft SFC Funded Capital & Revenue Expenditure Programme** *(Verbal) (R)*

M Breen provided a verbal update, advising that indicative allocations and level of credits to be delivered for 2022-23 had been received from SFC on 24 March.

The Board noted the following:
- The College's core credit delivery target had been reduced by 2,270.
- Additional funding of £392,000 would be provided for Foundation Apprenticeships.
- Capital funding allocation for the college sector remained low. The allocation for Ayrshire College was £195,000.
- A total allocation of £207,000 of funding would be provided for Digital Poverty.

M Breen advised that, following receipt of the indicative funding from SFC, early indications suggested that the previously reported position of the College was likely to improve, but that SLT would require to look at this further. The Board noted that a final budget would be provided at the Board meeting in June 2022.

11. **Corporate Parenting Plan (2021-24)** *(Paper 5) (P)*

A Campbell introduced Paper 5 as presented, advising that the Corporate Parenting Plan (2021-24) had been considered by the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee at their meeting in March 2022 and had been commended to the Board for approval.

The Board noted:
- the College's responsibility to prepare, publish and review a Corporate Parenting Plan as a requirement of Part 9 (Section 58) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) 2014.
- the Corporate Parenting Plan (2021-24) builds on the progress made throughout the reporting periods 2016-18 and 2018-21.

- extensive consultation had taken place with the 3 Local Authorities and a number of care-experienced students.
- The Plan would be monitored and reviewed by the Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee going forward.

The Board commended the detail included in report and the number of actions identified.

Decision: BOM37: D06: The Board approved the Corporate Parenting Plan (2021-24)

12. **Digital Strategy (2022-25)** *(Paper 6) (P)*

D Davidson introduced Paper 6 as presented, advising that the Digital Strategy (2022-25) had been considered by both the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee and Business, Resources & Infrastructure Committee at their meetings in March 2022. D Davidson confirmed that both Committees had commended the Strategy to the Board for approval.

The Board noted:
- the Digital Strategy (2022-25) had been subject to rigorous consultation and replaces the previous Digital Skills Strategy.
- The paper was accompanied by a presentation by Russell Wilson, Head of Digital Learning Support, at the Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee.
- Delivery of the Strategy would be monitored through the College Operation and Enhancement Plan and annual updates would be provided to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee and Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee.

Decision: BOM37: D07: The Board approved the Digital Strategy (2022-25)

13. **Mainstreaming Equality & Equality Outcomes Progress Report (2022-25)** *(Paper 7) (P)*

D Davidson introduced Paper 7 as presented, advising that the Mainstreaming Equality & Equality Outcomes Progress Report (2022-25) had been considered by the Business, Resources & Infrastructure Committee at their meeting in March 2022. D Davidson confirmed that the Committee had commended the Report to the Board for approval.

The Board noted:
- The Mainstreaming Equalities and Equality Outcomes Progress Report (2022-25) is a new report which has been introduced to ensure that the College reports annually on equality and diversity.
- early indications suggest the College is making progress towards improving its workforce diversity. However, more stubborn trends remained, specifically in relation to gender, and would require a longer-term input and outlook
- The paper was accompanied by a presentation by Sara Turkington, Equality and Inclusion Adviser, at the Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee

- The Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee positively received the report and presentation
- Following discussions, a recommendation was made to incorporate benchmarking data for future analysis on mainstreaming equality.

Decision: BOM37: D08: The Board approved the Mainstreaming Equality & Equality Outcomes Progress Report (2022-25)

14. **Covid-19 Update** *(Verbal) (P)*

The Principal provided an update on the status as related to COVID-19 and the impact on the College and students. The following was noted:

- The number of staff and students on campus for face-to-face learning had increased.
- A degree of disruption remained and was primarily due to self-isolation requirements.
- Staff continued to work, when able, providing remote learning, however, there may still be deferred students this academic year due to disruption to face-to-face learning.
- The overall position was positive, but a caveat was provided that the College was not yet back to normal.

The Chair thanked the Executive Team and College staff for their continued resilience and commitment to supporting students throughout the pandemic.

15. **National Bargaining Update** *(Verbal) (P)*

J Moore declared an interest in her capacity as an EIS representative. The Chair was content for her to remain at the meeting in her capacity as an Elected Member of the Board of Management.

The Principal provided an update on the status of the National Bargaining negotiations, highlighting that the College was part of the National Joint Negotiations Committee (NJNC) with collective bargaining undertaken at national level rather than local level. The Principal also noted that the College had a strong relationship with local reps and promotes positive working relationships with both EIS and UNISON.

The Board noted the following:
- The pay offer made to EIS-FELA had been rejected and their members had been balloted for potential industrial action.
- The pay offer made to UNISON had also recently been disputed.
- A period of dispute was now expected at national level and may start following the Easter break. Communications would be drafted, and stakeholders would be updated.
- The offer made by the management side was considered respectable given the current financial situation for colleges.
- The potential period of dispute was concerning given the disruption to learning that students had experienced during the pandemic.

16. Committee Chairs Reports on 3rd Quarter Committee Meetings

- Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee 3 March 2022 *(Paper 9.1)*
- BRIC Committee 8 March 2022 *(Paper 9.2)*
- Audit & Risk Committee 15 March 2022 *(Paper 9.3)*

The Board received a written report from each Committee Chair outlining a summary of key issues considered by the Standing Committees since the last meeting of the Board*.*

- In the absence of A Sutherland, the LTQ Committee was chaired by M Stewart. The Acting Chair advised that the meeting had reflected the agenda items contained in the written report.

- The Chair of BRIC added to his report that the Committee had a stimulating discussion regarding the North Ayrshire Future Skills Hub.

- The Chair of the ARC highlighted that the Committee had discussed and approved the procurement process for the provision of Internal Audit services from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2025.

The confirmed minutes of these meetings will be received by the Board at its next meeting.

The Board noted the report from each Committee Chair.

17. Confirmed Minutes: Standing Committees *(Papers 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 and 10.4) (P)*

The following confirmed Standing Committee Minutes were received by the Board:

- *Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee 11 November 2021 (Paper 10.1) (P)*
- *Business, Resources & Infrastructure Committee 16 November 2021 (Paper 10.2) (P)*
- *Audit & Risk Committee 23 November 2021 (Paper 10.3) (P)*
- *Search & Nominations Committee 5 November 2021 (Paper 10.4) (R)*

18. Item for information: Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation *(Papers 11) (P)*

The Board received Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation for information.

19. Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 16 June 2022, at 4pm.

(C/P) Confirmed minutes will be published on College Website; (P) – Paper will be published on the College Website; (R) – Paper is reserved, because it contains data or information of a personal nature, which is restricted by legislation, or because it contains commercially sensitive information, and will not be published on the College Website

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