

Minutes of the Meeting of the Ayrshire College Board of Management held in Lecture Theatre 1, Kilwinning Campus, on Monday 2 September 2013.

Present:

William Mackie, Chairman
Nicki Beveridge
Kathryn Cole
Heather Dunk
Steven Fegan
Barbara Graham
Stephen Greenwood
Waiyin Hatton
Gordon James
Carol Kirk
Sharon Rennie
Alan Walker

In Attendance:

Michael Breen
Jackie Galbraith
Bernadette McGuire
Jane McKie
Gillian Cleland

Apologies:

Tom Wallace

1 Welcome and Introductions

Willie Mackie welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Board of Management, Ayrshire College.

WM announced the appointment of Gillian Cleland as Executive Assistant to the Board of Management and welcomed GC to her first meeting.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Ayrshire College Board of Management Meeting held on 5 August 2013

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and were proposed by Alan Walker, seconded by Kathryn Cole.

4 Matters Arising

WM advised on a couple of revisions regarding committee membership. Stephen Greenwood would now sit on the Audit Committee and Kathryn Cole would sit on the Finance Committee. Gordon James was now appointed as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.

The Board approved the proposed committee membership changes.

Heather Dunk gave a brief update on the College Transformation Fund. HD advised that she had met with Scottish Funding Council (SFC) in relation to voluntary severance for the Kilwinning Campus. On the basis that the voluntary severance cost had been incurred by only one region, both West College Scotland and Ayrshire College had agreed that £850,000 of funding was transferred to the West region. HD explained that this was an increase of £40k on the £810,000 approved by the Board of Management at the last meeting.

In addition, to support this request, West College Scotland would be closing the 2012/13 Annual Financial Statements for James Watt and this request would ensure that there was no requirement to include these costs or associated funding within the 2012/13 Annual Financial Statement for Ayr College (as the host college for Ayrshire). A further meeting had been organised with Alison Cook from SFC to discuss re-profiling the CTF for 2013/14.

5 Chairman's Report

WM gave an update on Regional Lead discussions and advised that the last meeting had taken place at Forth Valley College, Stirling Campus. A presentation had been delivered by Sir Ian Wood and Linda McKay, and WM noted that the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce would release both an interim report and a final report.

Interim Report – How colleges work and their interaction with stakeholders; and

Final Report – What are the requirements of businesses with colleges?

Sir Ian was very complimentary about the college sector. WM advised that the interim report would be published later in the week with the full report due in February/March 2014.

Other areas discussed at the meeting were:

- Office of National Statistics (ONS) Reclassification of Colleges;
- National Pay Bargaining;
- Colleges Scotland Strategic Forum; and
- Workstream activity.

WM highlighted the 'Scotland's Colleges 2013' report published by Audit Scotland. A link to the document had been attached with the Principal's weekly

update; however, it was agreed that a hard copy would be posted to all Board Members by GC.

HD advised that the period the report covered was 2011/12. The report noted the £5.5m claw back at Adam Smith College relating to ESF funding and the claw back at Barony College for issues relating to Extended Learning Support (ELS) WSUMs and there were lessons to be learned from these examples. The report was very positive from an Ayrshire perspective.

WM noted that a number of applications had been received for the position of Board Secretary to the Board of Management and these would be progressed.

WM advised that a number of applications had been received for board membership and these would be progressed.

6 Estates and New Campus Development

Duncan Baird gave a very informative presentation on the summer work that had taken place on both the Ayr Campus and Kilwinning Campus. Areas covered in the presentation were:

Ayr:

- New Ayrshire College signage has been installed including new directional signage. DB noted that Sharon Driver was instrumental in driving forward the Ayrshire branded signage for all campuses of Ayrshire College.
- Car Park – the car park had been levelled and efficiently redesigned to allow more parking spaces. There had previously been a lack of lighting, so new lighting had been installed
- Landscaping improvements outside the Riverside building had been completed including new hard landscaped areas. It was noted that these areas would have tables and benches installed so students and staff could sit outside, weather permitting.
- Coffee Shop – a new coffee shop had been installed within the ground floor of the Riverside Building. DB advised that the works had been completed except for the curved glass screen which had still to be installed.
- Classrooms and corridors – corridors had been freshly painted with the addition of new flooring in the Dam Park Building. A number of classrooms had been or were in the process of being modernised for the new curriculum year with some simple improvements, ie the addition of new blinds, freshly painted walls, new floors, desks and chairs. 'Bus stop' signage had been installed above the doors to clearly show room numbers.

It was noted that this type of signage would help new students navigate the buildings much more easily.

- Renewables workshop for wind turbines – a first class, modern, teaching facility had been created for wind turbine and renewable courses.

Kilwinning:

- New signage had been installed throughout the campus.
- The 'Hub' – the learning resource/flexible learning/library area had been repainted with bright colours and new furniture added to make it colourful and welcoming.
- Classrooms and corridors – doors had been repainted to give a fresh, new, welcoming look. In addition, a number of classrooms had been refreshed over the summer months.

Board members were extremely impressed by all the work that had been undertaken, especially the car park improvements. Steven Fegan paid tribute to DB and his team for all their hard work.

WM thanked DB for his presentation.

Michael Breen advised the Board that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) had given DP3a approval for the New Campus Development. A letter from Laurence Howells, dated 22 August 2013, advised that the SFC had confirmed their approval for Ayrshire College to close dialogue and issue an Invitation to Submit Final Tender (ISFT). MB advised that the closing date for the three Bidders to submit their final tenders was Thursday 12 September 2013.

HD thanked MB and his team (Andrew Baillie and Eileen Mackin) for their excellent work. MB noted that this was an exciting time and updates on the final Tender process and selection of a Preferred Bidder would be provided to the Estates and New Campus Development Committee at their meeting in September 2013.

7 Board of Management Terms of Reference

In line with the decision at the Board of Management meeting on 5 August 2013, a copy of the Terms of Reference for the Board of Management had been included as a paper for this meeting. The Terms of Reference were discussed and Barbara Graham asked that under 'Duties' additional wording be added to reflect that the Board of Management was the employer. The Board agreed unanimously with this amendment.

It was noted that each Committee in this cycle of meetings would also have the opportunity to review their Terms of Reference included within the Constitution and Governance Arrangement document.

Action: GC to update the Board of Management Terms of Reference.

WM confirmed that everyone would receive a copy of the updated Constitution and Governance Arrangement document within a comprehensive induction pack at the Board induction day.

Following the minor amendment, the Board approved their Terms of Reference.

8 Student Recruitment and Enrolment 2013/14

Bernadette McGuire explained that she was monitoring recruitment and enrolment on a daily basis. To-date, 6,600 full time students had enrolled. At present three separate Management Information systems (MIS) were running across Ayrshire which made the monitoring process more complex.

In order to enable members to monitor this key performance indicator throughout the year it was agreed that WSUMs reports would be presented a standing Agenda items to both the Finance and Learning and Teaching Committees for review and monitoring. .

HD noted it was very early in the new curriculum year and student enrolments were continuing to be added to the MIS systems on a daily basis .HD noted that this was a key area for Ayrshire College and enrolments and translation into WSUMs would continue to be monitored closely to ensure targets were achieved.

9 Institution Led Review of Quality and Governing Body Statement of Assurance for AY2012/13

HD introduced Paper 4 explaining that the paper was to inform the Board of the changes to the annual report and SFC requirement for a statement of assurance from the Ayrshire College Board of Management. Members discussed the matter in some detail. It was agreed that WM would write formally to the SFC explaining that due to the merger of the three colleges, the Board would be unable to provide a statement of assurance for the annual report and bespoke review at this time.

Action: WM to write to the SFC.

10 ONS Reclassification of Colleges Background and Initial View on Charitable Trusts

MB provided members with a very informative presentation, outlining the impact on Ayrshire College of the decision by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) to reclassify the college sector in Scotland as public bodies and part of central government accounting processes, effective from 1 April 2014. MB explained that this was currently a very significant topic nationally with both the Scottish Government and the SFC working together to establish some practical solutions which could mitigate some of the impacts of this decision. Areas covered in the presentation were:

- Background to the reclassification decision;
- Proposed 2013 developments;
- The main issues arising
- Moving forward and mitigation.

MB stated that the new financial year would run from April to March effective from 1 April 2014. Also, college sector income and expenditure would need to be reported and managed within wider Scottish Government financial budgeting and reporting arrangements. A consequence of this for Ayrshire College would be that the 2013/14 financial reporting period would be for the eight month period from August 2013 to the end of March 2014.

MB covered the main points around potential mitigation options relating to the reclassification. This included discussions around 'Arms-Length Trusts' and, in particular, the paper presented by the SFC which was included as part of the Board papers. A number of options had been noted by the SFC relating to the establishment of Arms-Length trusts, ranging from a Single Umbrella Trust, separate College Trusts or Geographical based Trusts.

General discussion and debate took place on both the reclassification decision and the various mitigation options. It was agreed that the Board of Management would like to receive further information on the creation of an Ayrshire College Trust.

Action: MB to prepare a paper on the creation of an 'Arms-Length Trust' for Ayrshire College for the Board of Management to consider at its October meeting.

WM thanked MB for his presentation.

11 Draft College Risk Register at August 2013

MB gave an overview of Paper 6 which was the 2013/14 draft Ayrshire College Risk Register (V1). MB explained that the Ayrshire College Risk Register going forward would be reviewed on a quarterly basis and would be a standing item at future Audit Committee Meetings with a summary presented to the Board of Management. MB asked the Board to consider the format and structure of the draft Risk Register presented.

WM stated that he was content with the way the first draft Risk Register for Ayrshire College had been structured. A number of positive comments were made by Board Members about the clarity of approach and how each of the Risk elements had been captured including the explicit links to Committees. Sharon Rennie raised her concern over the use of the word 'Failure'. MB acknowledged this point but explained the context. However, after some further discussion a suggestion was made by W Hatton to add the word 'potential' before the word "Failure". It was further agreed by Members that the Audit Committee at their meeting in September 2013 would receive the update risk register.

MB sought approval for the risk register format.

The Board unanimously agreed the format.

12 Financial Forecast Return (FFR) 2013/14/15

MB gave a brief background on the FFR return explaining that the purpose was for the Board to review and give their approval to submit the FFR return to the SFC. MB also reminded members on the context and reporting period covered by this return and the fact that the SFC acknowledged the challenges of providing the FFR this year due to both the merger activity and the ONS reclassification decision which would become effective from 1 April 2014.

MB explained that previously, all colleges were required to submit an FFR to the SFC by 30 June which covered:

- Historic College performance for the previous financial year (pre-populated by SFC);
- Forecast performance for the current financial year
- Budgeted performance for the next financial year

Due to the merger the SFC agreed that the FFR would return would be delayed until September 2013.

The FFR return included income and expenditure accounts, balance sheets and cash flows and other details together with a declaration by the College Principal that the return was in order and had been approved by the Board of Management.

MB explained that based on SFC guidance provided, the Finance Team had produced an outline budget for a 12 month period for the new 2014/15 April to March financial year which was noted in Paper 7. In response to questions asked MB provided some further details including the processes undertaken to complete the FFR return.

After further discussion the Board of Management approved the 2012/13 to 2014/15 FFR and its submission to SFC.

13 Student President Report

Sharon Rennie gave an update on events that had taken place around all three campuses. Inductions had now been completed and students had been given the necessary information on what support was available in the College and from partners. The students had also been briefed on the social networking and smoking policies. Induction week had gone well and SR and the Vice Presidents had been visible amongst the campuses advising students on how they can become involved in the Student Association. Information nights had been held and the Vice Presidents and SR were working closely with the funding teams to give feedback and help to students on any funding problems they had, as well as helping them with their applications. SR and the Vice Presidents were continuing to work on Freshers' Week and were in the process of arranging for external agencies/companies to come in and provide information on their services eg Sexual Health, Freshayrshire.

SR advised that she would document how many students the Association supported throughout the academic year. These statistics would then be presented to the Learning and Teaching Committee for their information.

Action: SR to prepare quarterly report for Learning and Teaching Committee re the Students Association activities.

WM thanked SR for her update and for the work that had been carried out over induction week.

14 Principal's Report

HD gave an update on various events and external meetings that she had attended. Vesting day had been a great success and provided an opportunity for staff from around the campuses to celebrate the achievement and creation of Ayrshire College. The staff event on the 16 August had been very positive and the attendance and participation by Cabinet Secretary, Mr Michael Russell had helped to make the day a great success. The event had attracted very positive press coverage and feedback from staff regarding the day was excellent.

The National Pay Bargaining Sounding Group had met to discuss progress to date with the Unions. It was noted that this group would continue to meet on a regular basis.

Members noted that Education Scotland had informed the College that they planned to undertake a full review in 2013/14. Due to the number of priorities facing the College at this time, the added dimension of a full HMIE review was not felt to be helpful. After discussion with WM and SFC agreement, the full review had been postponed for one year, with a potential review date of November 2014.

HD advised The East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Health Summit had highlighted the importance of the work the College undertakes with

vulnerable young people and forged some new opportunities for partnership working.

Scottish Enterprise had visited the College to discuss key priorities for Scotland and how the benefits of a regional college would help support key industry sectors.

HD explained how continued partnership working with Diageo was important and she had been given the opportunity to pitch some proposals to senior staff in Diageo, Edinburgh. The two main key areas were scholarships/awards for students and the new Diageo Learning for Life pilot in the UK. HD and BMcG would be meeting with colleagues from Diageo to discuss these issues further.

HD gave an update on some external presentations that she made. One had been for the Ayrshire Economic Partnership and the other was for TEDX-UWS, focusing on the work of Ayrshire College.

HD summarised by stating that August had been a very busy month for all staff preparing for students returning and that post-merger systems harmonisation continued to be a key priority.

15 Any Other Competent Business

Revised Board Induction date

WM advised that both he and HD had been asked to participate in an event for students involving Sir Tom Hunter on 30 September 2013. As this had been the proposed date for the Board Induction, WM asked members if an alternative date could be proposed for induction. It was agreed that the Board of Management Meeting would still take place on the evening of the 30 September commencing at 5.30 pm. HD explained that this would be an important Board meeting as the proposed Organisational Structure would be discussed.

Unfortunately, the proposed alternative date of the 28 October 2013 did not suit WH and BG. Alternative dates would be proposed and circulated to the Board Members for consideration.

Action: GC to propose alternative dates and report back to the Board.

Campus Graduations

Board Members were asked to notify GC if they would like to attend any or all of the graduation ceremonies that were taking place:

Ayr Campus – Friday 11 October 2013 at 11.00 am in Town Hall, Ayr.

Kilmarnock Campus – Saturday 2 November 2013 at 11.00 am in Grand Hall, Kilmarnock.

Kilwinning Campus – Friday 22 November 2013 at 11.00 am in

Kilwinning Abbey, Kilwinning.

Action: Board Members to notify GC.

16 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Board of Management would take place on Monday 28 October 2013 at 5.30 pm at Ayr Campus.

Signed by the Chairman _____

Date: 28.10.13