

**Minute of the Business, Resources and Infrastructure
Committee Meeting
Held via Video Conference Using Zoom
On Tuesday 8 September 2020**



Present: Steven Wallace (Chair)
Willie Mackie (Vice Chair)
Scott Cooley
Lauren Howieson
Mary McClung
Mike Stewart
Carol Turnbull (Principal)
Alan Walker

In attendance: Brendan Ferguson (Board Secretary)
Yvonne Melvin (Board Administrative Officer)
Michael Breen (Vice Principal – Finance)
Anne Campbell (Vice Principal – Curriculum)
Jane McKie (Vice Principal – People)
James Thomson (Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates)
David Davidson (Director of HR and Organisational Development)
Liz Walker (Head of Financial Services)
Nuala Boyle (Head of Business Growth) – *Item 15 Only*

1 Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Fiona McQueen.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 2 June 2020 (Paper 1) (P)

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Mike Stewart

Seconded: Willie Mackie

Action Tracker (Paper 1a) (P)

Action 4 - The Committee agreed this would now be a standard agenda item and that the commentary should be updated to reflect this.

Action 9 - The Committee agreed this be marked as Completed.

Action 16 - The Committee noted that this would be covered in the main agenda.

Action 4 - The Committee agreed this be marked as Completed.

Action 24 - The Committee noted that this would be covered in the main agenda.

4 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising not covered in the main agenda.

5 **Terms of Reference and 2020-21 Work Plan (Paper 2) (P)**

The Board Secretary took the Committee through Paper 2 as presented, advising there were no changes to report from AY2019-20. In response to a query, the Committee agreed that the Cashflow Projections report should be returned to the 2020-21 Work Plan as a standing agenda item in light of the current Covid-19 related uncertainties.

The Committee noted and approved the Terms of Reference and the 2020-21 Work Plan subject to the addition noted above.

6 **2020-21 Budgets for the academic year ending 31 July 2021 (Verbal) (R)**

M Breen provided a verbal update. The Committee was reminded that in June 2020 due to significant uncertainty related the Covid-19 pandemic, members agreed to accept and approve a 'business as usual' baseline budget, in the first instance, pending the provision of further funding information and which would be updated at the next scheduled Committee meeting in September 2020.

In order to permit the maximum amount of time to prepare an updated budget based in the most recent information available, it was now proposed that an extraordinary meeting of the Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee be held on 24 September 2020, at which the updated 2020-21 Budgets for the academic year ending 31 July 2021 would be presented to members for consideration, prior to the scheduled Board meeting later on the same date. M Breen advised that this would allow the time required to refine the budgets in line with most recent information.

The Chair advised that he had discussed the proposal prior to the Committee meeting and agreed with the logic for delaying the updated 2020-21 Budgets. The Committee unanimously agreed this position.

The Committee approved the proposal and looked forward to receiving the presentation of an updated 2020-21 budget at an Extraordinary BRIC Meeting to be held on 24 September 2020.

7 **2019-20 Management Accounts to July 2020-Version 1 (Paper 3) (P)**

J Thomson introduced Paper 3 and took the Committee through V1 as presented, reminding members that this represented the trading position as at the end of the 2019-20 academic year. The next meeting of the Committee in November 2020 would receive the draft Audited Accounts in the required statutory format for consideration and thereafter advise the Audit Committee and the Board.

The operating surplus in excess of budget was highlighted to the Committee and members' attention was drawn to Table 1 and Diagram 1 for graphical information. J Thomson then took members through the variances and position to date in detail, highlighting that the figures presented were broadly in line with year-end projections as previously reported to the Committee. Discussion

followed during which questions were asked and satisfactory responses received.

The Committee welcomed the content of Paper 3, noting the positive position and level of comfort offered by V1 of the 2019-20 Management Accounts to July 2020.

The Committee approved the 2019-20 Management Accounts for the period ended 31 July 2020 as presented.

8 HR and Staff Learning and Development Report (Paper 5) (P)

D Davidson took the Committee through the content of Paper 5 in detail, advising that the HR Team had been required to review and revise the College's recruitment and selection process in light of the COVID-19 restrictions. As a result, a new remote process had been developed and was considered to be working well.

The Committee noted the content of Paper 5 and welcomed the decrease in reported short-term sickness absence for the period, as compared to the previous year. It was also highlighted that there had been no confirmed cases of Covid-19 reported by staff during the period covered by the Report. It was noted that overall there had been a sharp decrease in sickness absence and that HR staff would continue to work with and support managers and staff.. D Davidson advised members that the staff survey had been issued to all staff and the overall feedback had been positive.

D Davidson then updated the Committee on the Investors in People (IiP) review and re-accreditation process, which began in November 2019, with the recommendations received in January 2020. D Davidson advised that work on the provision of an action plan resultant on the recommendations had unfortunately been halted by the Covid-19 lockdown. It was the intention to resume this work before the end of 2020. Once completed, further information on the background relationship to HR Strategy, challenges, benefits, and, where appropriate, a cost benefit analysis of Investors in People would be provided to the Committee.

The Committee noted and welcomed the content of Paper 5.

Action: Following completion of the Action Plan resultant on the IiP Review recommendations, the Committee be provided at its March 2021 meeting with information as detailed in the above minute and under Item 16 of the BRIC Action Tracker.

9 Equality and Inclusion & Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report (Paper 6) (P)

J McKie introduced Paper 6 and took the Committee through the report as presented. It was highlighted that the College overarching Covid-19 risk assessment was approved by the Return to Campus Operations Steering Group and took account of the guidance from Scottish Government, NHS and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). J McKie further highlighted the work undertaken by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team in developing and supporting the preparations of risk assessments, as outlined in paragraph 1.6, in its efforts to re-open campuses safely and in accordance with the UK and

Scottish Government guidelines. J McKie commended the hard work undertaken by the HSW Team, noting that it had been key to supporting the safe re-opening of campuses.

The Committee noted Paper 6 and commended J McKie and the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team on their response to the current situation, in particular, the work undertaken to support students and staff during the period of lockdown and their detailed preparations for the safe reopening of the campuses. W Mackie, in his capacity as Chair of the Board of Management, proposed that communication be issued to the HSW Team directly from the Board to acknowledge and thank the team for their hard work.

The Committee noted and welcomed the content of Paper 6

Action: Communication to acknowledge and thank the HSW team for their support and hard work during this period of uncertainty to be drafted on behalf of the Board and Board Chair.

10 Complaints Report (Fourth Quarter) (Paper 7) (P)

J McKie introduced Paper 7 and advised that the report covered the period from May 2020 to July 2020. The Committee noted that the number of complaints received was relatively on par with that of the same period in AY2019-20 and that a number of the categories were attributable to the impact of COVID-19.

Several questions were asked and satisfactory responses received.

The Committee noted Paper 7.

11 2019-20 Student Support Funds Final Position as at July 2020 (Paper 8) (P)

J Thomson introduced Paper 8, noting the final position of the College as a favourable variance of c£25,000 against the budgeted position. In response to a question it was explained that the allocation of Bursaries and HE Discretionary Funding had been prioritised to provide additional financial support to students adversely impacted by Covid-19. J Thomson also advised that there were no significant issues to report in relation to EMA and SAAS funds.

The Committee noted Paper 8 and its content and welcomed the College's prioritisation of students adversely impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions.

12 2020-21 SFC Capital Expenditure position at August 2020 (Paper 9) (P)

M Breen introduced Paper 9, advising the Committee of two circulars received from the Scottish Funding Council in respect of additional Capital funding available to the college sector to support economic recovery in FY 2020-21 and to support additional digital provision in AY 2020-21. It was noted that, in light of additional funding being made available, the Capital Projects and Budgets were revised to better reflect the ring funded additional allocations made, while maintaining the same strategic priorities already approved by both this Committee and the Board of Management.

M Breen then directed members' attention to the revised capital programme as set out in Table 2 of the Paper, noting the main changes highlighted for ease of reference. The Committee noted that the revisions were in-keeping with the agreed principals and strategic objectives previously agreed.

The Committee noted and welcomed Paper 9 and the revisions contained therein.

13 Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 17 November 2020

(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

Reserved Items on the next Page.