

**Minute of the Board of Management Meeting
Held on Thursday 17 June 2021
By virtual attendance via Zoom**



Present: Willie Mackie (Chair)
Elaine Anderson
Beth Clelland
Steven Fegan
Steve Graham
Lauren Howieson
Mary McClung
Fiona McQueen
Janette Moore
Hazel Murphy
Mike Stewart
Alison Sutherland
Carol Turnbull
Steven Wallace (from agenda item 9)
Matthew Wilson

In attendance: Pauline Donald (Board Governance Adviser)
Yvonne Melvin (Board Administrative Officer)
Michael Breen (Vice Principal – Finance)
Anne Campbell (Vice Principal – Curriculum)
Jane McKie (Vice Principal – People)
David Davidson (Director of HR & Organisational Development)
James Thomson (Director of Finance, Student Funding & Estates)
Ellie Jamieson (Observer)

1 Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular, new Student President elect Ellie Jamieson who was attending as an observer. The Chair also took the opportunity to congratulate the Vice Chair of the Board of Management, Fiona McQueen, on her recent CBE. The Board recognised this great achievement and offered its congratulations to Fiona.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Board members Scott Cooley and Steven Oliver.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 25 March 2021 (Paper 1) (P)

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2021 were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: E Anderson **Seconded:** A Sutherland

Board of Management Action Tracker (Paper 1A) (P)

There were no outstanding actions to discuss.

4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5 Student Association Report (Paper 2) (P)

L Howieson introduced Paper 2, advising that the first round of applications from students and curriculum areas had been considered for the recently awarded additional funding from the Scottish Funding Council and successful applicants were being contacted. The Student Association looks forward to supporting the projects.

It was highlighted that the Student Ambassadors had completed the second round of focus groups, which included questions in relation to the Organisational Effectiveness Review and questions which will also inform the Student Mental Health Agreement 2021/22 and Promoting Wellbeing Action Plan 2021-24.

L Howieson also noted that all events organised by the Student Association had been well attended and all feedback had been positive.

L Howieson advised that the Student President Elections for AY2021-22 had taken place and had successfully returned two officers to the positions of Student President and Student Vice President. The Board congratulated the new Student President, Ellie Jamieson, who will take up position on 1 July 2021 and returning officer Steven Oliver, who will serve a second year as Student Vice President.

The Chair recognised that this was the last Board meeting L Howieson would attend. The Chair commented that during her appointment as Student President, Lauren's growth in confidence and development had been inspiring and she would be greatly missed. The Board thanked Lauren for her contributions both as Student President and as a member of the Board of Management and wished her the very best in her future endeavours.

The Board noted and welcomed the above report.

6 Chair's Report

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

- A new Cabinet Secretary had been appointed as a result of the recent Scottish Elections, with Shirley Ann Somerville MSP taking over the Education and Skills portfolio. The Chair advised that he had issued a congratulatory email on behalf of the Board and noted that Ms Somerville previously had Ministerial responsibility for education and has always been very supportive and engaged with the college sector. Ms Somerville would be supported in her role by Jamie Hepburn MSP as the newly-appointed Minister for Skills and Education, who is also very passionate about skills and the college sector. The Chair commented that he welcomed both of these appointments and would extend an invitation to them to visit the College in due course.
- The Chair reported that he continued to meet with MSPs and MPs, together with the Board Vice-Chair Fiona McQueen and the Principal. The Chair

advised that meetings were going very well and that discussions to date had been very positive and supportive.

- The Chair advised that he continues to lead a sub-group of the College Chairs Group on economic recovery and the role of the college sector in the economic development across regional economies.
- The Chair also advised that he had hosted a webinar on behalf of the Chair of Scottish Enterprise to talk about its strategy for regional economies which also presented the opportunity to promote the great collaborative work that the College is regularly involved in. Further webinars are planned in due course.

7 Ayrshire College Statement of Ambition 2030 and Refresh and Renew Plan 2021-24 (Paper 3) (R)

C Turnbull introduced Paper 3, advising the Board of an accompanying presentation (contained in Admincontrol). C Turnbull took members through the presentation in detail. The Board noted the following:

- Positive feedback had been received following an extensive consultation process.
- The number of Ambitions have been reduced from 5 to 3, reflective of feedback received.
- The Strategic Objectives have been further updated and also reflect guidance from SFC and from the recent organisational effectiveness review.
- Both the Values and Priority Themes were considered to still be relevant and appropriate and therefore remain as previous.
- The Board would be updated on the key measures of success on a regular basis going forward.
- The Ayrshire College Statement of Ambition 2030 and Refresh and Renew Plan 2021-24 would aid the College Operating Plan and would assist Teams in achieving the strategic objectives.

C Turnbull further advised that stakeholder feedback had also been very positive and had generated a good discussion across the CPPs at a strategic level.

The Board thanked C Turnbull for the update.

Following review and discussion, the Board commented that the approach presented reflected the direction, the business and the culture of the College whilst being clear, concise and measurable. The Board commended the work undertaken to produce the strategic documents.

The Board approved the Ayrshire College Statement of Ambition 2030 and Refresh and Renew Plan 2021-24.

8 Colleges Scotland Draft Statement of Ambition (Paper 4) (R)

The Chair introduced Paper 4 as presented. The Chair advised that both he and C Turnbull had been involved at Colleges Scotland Board level as part of a wider review of Colleges Scotland, part of which was refocussing and revisiting the Statement of Ambition for the sector. The Chair advised that the Colleges Scotland Draft Statement of Ambition had been provided to members to highlight the strategic objectives of the sector at a national level.

The Board noted paper 4 and thanked the Chair for the update.

9 Board Member Recruitment Process 2021 (Paper 5) (P)

To note: Steven Wallace joined the meeting at this agenda item.

The Chair introduced Paper 5 and thanked the members of the Search and Nominations Committee for their work during the recruitment process. The Chair highlighted the following key points from the paper:

- A total of 8 candidates had taken part in the interview process, which was fully supported by Mr Paul Houlden as the independent member.
- Three candidates had progressed to the staff and student review stage and feedback had been provided by C Turnbull.
- Two candidates had been recommended as Non-Executive Board Members, subject to Ministerial approval.
- Due to the exceptional calibre of this year's applicants, two candidates had been recommended for co-option onto a Committee of the Board and two had been recommended to C Turnbull for a College Ambassador role.

The Chair also advised that he had received and, with much reluctance, had accepted the resignation of Dr Sathish Srinivasan, effective immediately (24 May 2021). The Board noted that this was due only to Dr Srinivasan's competing work commitments, which had significantly increased because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chair advised that Dr Srinivasan had expressed his good wishes and continued support to the College.

The Chair reported that H Murphy would stand down as a Board Member at the end of her current period of appointment on 31 July 2021 and, as such this was the last Board Meeting she would attend. The Chair advised that he had known Hazel for a number of years and her passion for Ayrshire College remained as strong as ever. Her positive and professional approach to her position as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee and as a Board member made her a pleasure to work with and would be greatly missed, as would her helpful and supportive manner. The Board thanked Hazel for her contributions during her tenure and wished her the very best for her retirement. C Turnbull echoed the Board's remarks on behalf of the Executive Leadership Team and commented that they had greatly benefitted from Hazel's leadership and engagement during her tenure. The ELT also wished Hazel all the best in her retirement.

In response to a query, the Chair advised that the decision to co-opt two of the candidates to a Committee had been made due to the overall exceptional quality of the candidates and the reluctance to lose such good capability.

The Board approved the submission of a proposal to the Scottish Ministers for the appointment of two new Board Members. The Board also approved the approach to appoint two co-opted members to Committees of the Board and two College Ambassadors.

10 Ayrshire College Corporate Risk Register as at June 2021 (Paper 9) (R)

M Breen introduced the Corporate Risk Register as approved by the respective Committees and finally the Audit and Risk Committee, and set out where individual risk levels were currently positioned. The Audit and Risk Committee, having fully considered the Risk Register, was content that it was an accurate representation of the current Risk position of the College and had commended it to the Board.

M Breen also highlighted that, following discussions at the Audit and Risk Committee, it was proposed that, moving forward to AY2021-22, the College would revert from the current Covid-19 focussed risk register back to the traditional corporate focussed risk register. This would enable the College to undertake a full review of the College risk profile and reassess risk scores reflecting the mitigating actions being taken by management.

The Board considered the Corporate Risk Register (V3) as at June 2021 and agreed that it presented an accurate reflection of the current risk position of the College. The Board also commended the approach and management of risk by the College during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Board approved the 2020-21 Ayrshire College Corporate Risk Register (V3) as at June 2021.

11 Covid-19 Update (Verbal) (P)

A Campbell provided a verbal update, advising that the main focus for staff was to support as many students as possible to successfully conclude their studies in the current academic year. It was noted that the move to operating in level 2 of the Scottish Government Framework had permitted more students to return to campus and had resulted in fewer students being deferred than originally thought. A Campbell outlined the main curriculum areas affected by deferrals, which were primarily due to the requirement for completion of practical elements and/or placements. The Board was also advised on the planned summer activities in place to help students complete their courses successfully in this AY and to also give students the experiences they missed out on throughout the year.

The Chair commended the work of staff and the commitment, focus and leadership of College in supporting students. C Turnbull also noted the work of the Campus Operations Steering Group in their leadership and management throughout the Covid-19 pandemic in making sure that the College was operating with appropriate and robust health and safety mitigations.

C Turnbull continued, advising that the focus for the College was now on AY 2021-22. The Board was reminded that Ayrshire remained in Level 2 of the Scottish Government's Framework and that this was not expected to change until 19 July 2021, following an announcement by the First Minister. It was noted that the College was currently working with the Scottish Government to understand better the assumptions they were able to make should Ayrshire be in a beyond Level 0 position at the start of the new academic year. C Turnbull advised that the ideal scenario for the College would be to maximise the number of staff and students on campus whilst operating within the appropriate health and safety guidelines.

C Turnbull reported that a Roadmap was currently being developed by D Davidson and the Directors to provide staff and students with clarity on what should happen if the Scottish Government were to announce changes to the level of the Ayrshire region as a whole or to specific campus regions. It was noted that a number of unknown variables remained but that planning was continuing. The Board was also advised that a Covid Recovery Group, chaired by Jamie Hepburn, Minister for Skills and Education, had been established to further examine the assumptions at a beyond level 0 position.

The Board thanked C Turnbull for the informative update and commended the leadership and engagement of staff during uncertain times and for their continued support to students.

12 National Bargaining Update (Verbal) (R)

C Turnbull provided a verbal update, advising that pay awards for Lecturing and Support Staff, for the period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021, had been agreed with both EIS-FELA and UNISON and had been fully implemented.

C Turnbull also noted that the national dispute regarding the role of a Lecturer had been resolved and a technical note on the outcomes of this was expected.

The Board was pleased to note that there were no current active disputes and an update on the 2021-22 pay awards would be provided at a future meeting.

The Board thanked C Turnbull for the update and looked forward to receiving further updates.

13 Committee Chairs' Reports (Verbal) (P)

The Committee Chairs provided verbal reports on the matters considered by the Committees since the last meeting of the Board, and not already dealt with under the agenda for this meeting. The agenda and papers would be published on the website and the confirmed minutes of these meetings would be received by the Board at its next meeting.

The Chairs reports were noted by the Board.

14 Confirmed Standing Committee Minutes.

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

- **Learning & Teaching Committee 4 March 2021 (Paper 10.1) (P)**
- **Business, Resources & Infrastructure Committee 9 March 2021 (Paper 10.2) (P)**
- **Audit & Risk Committee 16 March 2021 (Paper 10.3) (P)**

15 AOCB

The Chair reported that Jane McKie would be retiring from her position as Vice Principal – People effect from 1 July 2021. As such, this would be her last Ayrshire College Board meeting. The Chair advised that he had first met Jane

in 2013 when the Regional College was being established and her stewardship of HR since that time had been exceptional. Throughout the remarkable journey, Jane had met challenges and achievements with grace and professionalism at all times. Her support to the Chair, and to past and present Board members, and her contributions to HR leadership had been professional and engaging throughout her tenure and would be very much missed going forward. The Chair thanked Jane for her contributions to the College over the past 8 years and wished her the very best in her retirement.

The Board endorsed all of the Chair's remarks and wished Jane McKie all the best in her retirement.

Received for Information

- 16 Management Structure Change (Paper 11) (R)**
- 17 Empowering, Supporting and Inspiring Student Success (Ayrshire College Learning and Teaching Strategy) (Paper 12) (R)**
- 18 SFC Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability (Paper 13) (P)**
- 19 Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 23 September 2021**

P - Papers will be published on the College Website; R - Papers will not be published for reasons of commercial confidentiality or for reasons associated with data protection legislation; C/P - Confirmed minutes will be published on the College Website

Reserved Items on Next Page