BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Chairs Committee
Tuesday 17 March 2020

Draft confirmed by Chair

Minute of the Chairs Committee meeting held by conference call on Tuesday 17 March 2020 at 4.00pm.

PRESENT:	A McCusker	G Robertson	
	P Milne	S Mill	
	M Williamson		
IN ATTENDANCE:	S Taylor (Vice Principal)	G Ritchie (Principal)	
	J Carnegie (Vice Principal)	S Hewitt (Vice Principal)	

1. WELCOME

A McCusker welcomed members to the meeting, highlighting that the Chairs meeting had been arranged to replace the full Board meeting as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic and related government advice on social distancing.

2. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. BUSINESS CONTINUITY ITEMS - COLLEGE CYBER INCIDENT

The report on the 31 January 2020 cyber incident was discussed in detail and the key recommendations noted. S Hewitt stated that these recommendations had been collated and finalised in partnership with (and endorsed by) the Jisc CSIRT (Cyber Security Incident Research Team) and David Robertson, the College shared service HE/FE & Information Services (HEFESTIS) North Regional Chief information Security Officer.

The background to the initial attack, and network vulnerability that was able to be exploited to allow access into College systems, was noted and S Hewitt highlighted that the incident arose as a result of a combination of factors. It was noted that had this 'perfect storm' of factors not aligned then the attack was unlikely to have been successful.

S Hewitt noted that although it had been possible to identify the network vulnerability exploited on this occasion, Board members needed to be aware that no system was 100% secure and that ever more sophisticated attacks were taking place across all sectors and organisation types. This was noted.

S Hewitt highlighted the range of recommendations made and noted that a number of these had already been implemented or were in progress.

S Mill noted reference to the 'cloud hosting' strategy and the likely timescale of 18 months for this to be implemented fully, and asked if this was reasonable in the circumstances. S Hewitt stated that this timeframe had reduced from an initial 3 year period and stated that the timeframe required to achieve this was dependent upon external vendors. It was confirmed that there was no additional risks associated with this timescale.

The costs associated with the recommendations were discussed, and it was noted that some prioritisation of spend had already been undertaken to support implementation of the recommendations. This would be considered further within the 2020/21 budget.
J Carnegie noted that the significant costs required for the sector as a whole to maintain and enhance cyber security had been highlighted to the government.

G Robertson asked about the timescale required to re-establish Pay-to-Pay. S Hewitt noted that this was now underway and had been dependent upon availability of vendor consultancy. It was noted that this timescale had not impacted significantly on supplier payments.

Multi-factor authentication for staff access was discussed and it was noted that the risks relating to students were less due to the limited systems access that students had. It was noted that the complexity of two factor authentication made it more challenging to roll out to students.

The range of recommendations was discussed and it was agreed that monitoring of these, and consideration of further audit requirements, would be delegated to the Audit and Risk Committee. **S Taylor to progress.**

The paper was approved, and it was agreed that, given the technical and systems security detail this contained, that this would remain as a confidential and unpublished report.

A McCusker noted the positive feedback received in terms of the way in which the College had dealt with the incident, and noted the Board's thanks to all staff for their role in this.

5. **BUSINESS CONTINUITY ITEMS – CORONAVIRUS (COVID 19)**

J Carnegie provided an update on arrangements implemented and progressing in respect of the Coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic. It was noted that the College was following the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council (SFC) guidance to inform key decisions and actions.

J Carnegie advised that the College would close for face-to-face teaching from 17 March, but that buildings would remain open for the remainder of the week and staff would attend work to support the transition to remote learning and working.

S Taylor noted that a number of staff were self-isolating or working from home already. Arrangements around the continued payment of staff and support for remote working were noted and S Taylor stated that discussions with the trade unions on matters such as these had been positive.

P Milne outlined the approaches adopted by Dundee University and confirmed that similar steps around closure of buildings and 'skeleton' working were being planned.

G Robertson asked about the likely impact on students and student outcomes. S Hewitt stated that this not yet clear, but that there were national discussions taking place and expectations that students would not be disadvantaged.

S Mill asked if students would still be able to attend work placements. S Taylor noted that the advice was for students to follow the guidance from their placement provider as some (such as care homes) were keen that students were still attending to provide additional support where staff were absent or self-isolating.

The potential financial impact of the situation was discussed, and it was noted that there was an anticipated 'hit' around commercial income and activity such as the Flexible Workforce Development Fund. It was noted that SFC were aware of the issues, but that there were no solutions just yet.

Arrangements to continue payments to staff, students, and suppliers were discussed and it was noted that these were key business continuity priorities. The need to have a physical presence in College to process BACS payments was noted.

It was agreed that Board members would be updated on key decisions and developments as these arose. **S Taylor to progress.**

6. **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

    The budget monitoring report was noted, and J Carnegie highlighted the key areas of change from the revised 2019/20 budget. It was noted that forecasting was difficult given the cyber incident and COVID 19 issues. J Carnegie confirmed that there would be a key focus on cash going forward and that an up-to-date cash forecast and updated budget monitoring report would be shared as soon as practicable. **J Carnegie to progress.**

7. **REGIONAL OUTCOME AGREEMENT**

    The final draft Regional Outcome Agreement, Access and Inclusion Strategy and DYW Progress Report were approved, subject to e-mail confirmation by the full Board. **S Taylor to progress.**

8. **KINGSWAY CAMPUS REDEVELOPMENT**

    J Carnegie summarised the report and proposals presented in respect of the Kingsway tower development. It was noted that the COVID 19 issues were likely to impact on the progress of any works, but that the College were keen to progress with arrangements and an application to the D&A Foundation as far as practicable.

    S Mill stated that he had met with B Grace to go through arrangements/plans and, whilst recognising the current challenges, would support this approach.

    The anticipated costs of each phase of work were discussed and it was noted that this could be a challenge in terms of the funding that may be available from the Foundation. J Carnegie noted that it was anticipated that there would be further value engineering to be undertaken in respect of the planned works and that it was anticipated that the level of SFC funding for backlog maintenance would be higher for FY 2020/21. It was confirmed that the scheduling and progression of works would be prioritised and managed based on the known available levels of funding.

    The impact of utilising backlog maintenance funding to support work in one campus was discussed and it was confirmed that key priority requirements in Arbroath would still be met, with only minimal works needed in Gardyne. It was noted that this approach was often the

case, with the majority of funds targeted at one or other campus depending upon priority needs.

The approach was agreed in principle, subject to the paper being updated to incorporate the affordability of the options based on possible sources of funding from backlog maintenance and the Foundation, prior to circulation to the full Board for approval. **J Carnegie to progress.**

9. OTHER ITEMS

All other items of business from the Board agenda were noted.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 9 June 2020. Meeting arrangements to be confirmed.

Action Point Summary		
Action	**Responsibility**	**Date**
Progress on recommendations from Cyber Incident report to be monitored by Audit & Risk Committee	S Taylor	12 May 2020
Audit & Risk Committee to consider needs/timescales for cyber security audit arrangements	S Taylor	12 May 2020
Board to be kept up to date with key COVID 19 decisions/actions.	S Taylor	On-going
Cash forecast and updated budget monitoring report to be shared.	J Carnegie	30 April 2020
Approval of final draft Outcome Agreement documentation to be sought from Board by e-mail	S Taylor	3 April 2020
Kingsway development plans approved in principle, with papers to be updated to include affordability of the options. Approval to be progressed by full Board by e-mail thereafter.	J Carnegie	30 April 2020