

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
Board of Management Meeting
Tuesday 15 December 2019



Draft, confirmed by Chair

Minute of the meeting of the Board of Management of Dundee and Angus College held on Tuesday 15 December 2020 at 5.00pm via MS Teams

PRESENT:

A McCusker (Chair)	G Robertson
S Hewitt	B Carmichael
K Ditcham	D Fordyce
H Honeyman	K Key
N Lowden	D Mackenzie
C Meldrum	S Mill
P Milne	A Monks
T Pirie	S Stirling
M Thomson	M Williamson
A Wilson	

IN ATTENDANCE:

J Carnegie (Vice Principal)	J Grace (Vice Principal)
S Taylor (Vice Principal/Secretary to the Board)	
T D'All (Principal's/Board Chair PA)	
J Howie (observer undertaking Board Evaluation)	

1. WELCOME

A McCusker welcomed members to the meeting and introduced Angela Wilson and Kevin Ditcham to their first Board meeting. A McCusker welcomed J Grace to her first meeting as Vice Principal

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted for G Bisset.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest. G Robertson noted his role as Chair of the Board for Gardyne Theatre Limited

4. MINUTE OF LAST MEETING – 29 SEPTEMBER 2020

4.1 Adoption

The minute of the Board of Management meeting held on 29 September 2020 was signed and approved as an accurate record.

4.2 Matters Arising

All matters arising had been closed out.

A McCusker recorded her enormous thanks to S Hewitt, the Senior Leadership Team and all the staff for their work during the current situation maintaining and allowing students to attain their dreams at D&A College. A McCusker noted that this was an amazing effort.

In return S Hewitt noted his, the Senior Leadership Team and staffs thanks to the Board for their support during this very difficult and challenging year.

5. EXTERNALLY FACILITATED REVIEW OF BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

J Howie summarised here report echoing earlier comments around D&A College's continuity of service during both the cyber-attack at the start of the year and the ongoing COVID pandemic. J Howie noted that her findings confirmed that there were strong governance arrangements in place.

J Howie highlighted the only recommendation for the Board was to consider the appointment of members with an education background to assist with Learning & Teaching.

J Howie highlighted the area of good practice within her report:

- Board Leadership and full engagement
- Engagement with student body & enthusiasm working with the Students' Association
- Quality of Learning
- Board members challenging of the Principal and Senior Team
- Positive attitude to Risk
- Chairpersonship – strong, effective leadership with planned development sessions for members
- Great strength locally and nationally

A McCusker thanked J Howie for a comprehensive report.

M Williamson also welcomed the report and noted her support around the value in recruiting Board members with educational background particularly regarding the work of the Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee.

A McCusker suggested that the Board possibly consider co-opting a member to the Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee and would be delighted to receive any recommendations for this. **S Taylor to progress.**

S Mill also noted a really good report acknowledging J Howie's depth of knowledge of the sector and governance but queried how independent the process was if we appoint our own reviewer.

S Taylor confirmed the arrangements under the Code of Practice noting the Board ownership of the review rather than this being an external audit.

The Board approved the report.

5.1 Board Evaluation Action Plan

S Taylor highlighted the progress and key developments on actions since 2018. It was noted that the Action Plan had been updated to reflect the externally facilitated evaluation outcomes and S Taylor noted that the wording would be updated to include reference to co-option.

Discussion took place around the Board's desire further widen diversity.

The Action Plan was approved.

6. COVID UPDATE

S Hewitt noted that the College had been in crisis mode for nearly a full year. The College's Business Continuity Plan had been established and well tested with feedback and outcomes showing that things were working as well as they could in the situation.

S Hewitt noted the good communication and working relationship with unions and the student body, which was a major priority, with the positive impact of this seen in the recent staff and student surveys undertaken.

S Hewitt told the Board that the College continued to be involved in key priorities locally around student virus testing, support, contingency planning for potentially tougher levels/restrictions post-Christmas. Concentrating around three areas of Learning and Teaching; Operations; and support for staff and students.

Under the heading of Learning and Teaching, J Grace noted possible guidance changes in the New Year and the work undertaken to review Risk Assessments to ensure they were in line with current guidance and adaptable for any tightening of restrictions.

J Grace noted continuing challenges around work placements for some practical areas of study and highlighted that conversations were taking place with awarding bodies and placement providers.

H Honeyman noted her concerns around future planning for the College in terms of ways of working and asked how much thought was going into this. S Hewitt noted these concerns saying that students and staff had also voiced concerns around the future. S Hewitt stated that the Senior Leadership Team has scheduled a planning session around future working and approaches in January 2021 that will involve consideration of what had been learned during the pandemic and what the future might look like.

D Fordyce noted the length of time the College had been in its current situation and the demand this placed on the Senior Leadership Team and the need for the team to ensure that they were getting some down time and to consider their own welfare.

D Fordyce asked if there was anything that was required by the Team to help moving forward. S Hewitt noted that recruitment of the new Vice Principal, Economic Project Manager and COVID-19 Monitoring & Reporting Officer were all positive supports. S Hewitt stated that there was also a change to Kevin Murphy's role with an emphasis on Projects such as the Tay Cities Deal, MSIP and FWDF. This had allowed the Team to focus better on other priorities.

K Keay asked about the recruitment / credit targets and any expectations of a possible drop in students come session 2021/22, especially with schools. J Grace highlighted the great work of the Academic Partnership team and staff with schools in Dundee, Angus and Aberdeenshire, which was supporting recruitment.

J Grace stated that there had not been any a drop in January/February 2021 recruitment and credited this to the way the College was working with its partners.

Under the Operations heading J Carnegie shared information around the COVID statistics supplied to the Scottish Government, noting that the numbers had been relatively low. J Carnegie noted that there had been no evidence of onsite transmission of the virus, and no outbreaks (two or more linked cases) recorded. J Carnegie also noted a recent inspection visit by the Health & Safety Executive within the Hair & Beauty Therapy Team at Kingsway Campus, with positive feedback received.

A McCusker noted that this was a great testament to the work undertaken by the Estates and other teams.

S Taylor under the Student and Staff Support heading highlighted the impact of the COVID pandemic on the mental health and anxiety of students and staff, with greater and more pronounced support needs by students than would usually be expected. S Taylor stated that the College was awaiting an announcement from SFC around extra funding to help to support student mental health and wellbeing. There had also been an indication of extra support for Students' Associations but was unsure at what this would be. S Taylor summarised the work that would be undertaken over the holiday period to continue to support students. The College would also continue to monitor and report on any COVID cases and offer assist around shopping, support issues etc.

S Taylor stated that contingency planning was underway in respect of student support arrangements for any potential change to the Tiering for Dundee and Angus. It was noted that under level 4 there would still be plans to continue on-site support for student wellbeing, as this was recognised as an essential support.

A McCusker welcomed the update provided and noted the hard work that was going in to support students and staff across the College.

7. STRATEGIC ITEMS

7.1 Strategic Project Update

S Hewitt summarised the strategic Project Update paper highlighting key strategic projects across the region where the College was leading or heavily involved and noted that these were gathering pace:

- Flexible Workforce Development Fund
- Michelin Scotland Innovation Parc
- Tay City Deal

S Hewitt noted that Kevin Murphy had taken on the project management role with these. S Hewitt stated that this update was the first in a series of reports that would come to the Board of Management and Senior Leadership Team.

7.2 Economic & Social Recovery

S Hewitt stated that the Economic & Social Recovery paper linked directly with the Strategic Projects paper in terms of the College "lifting our heads" and looking at the range of opportunities that exist.

S Hewitt noted that the new Economic Project Manager would take up their post in January 2021 and would play an important role within many of the opportunities arising.

M Williamson noted that S Hewitt's paper was topical as the Tay Cities Deal (TCD) was expected to be signed that week. M Williamson asked about the potential investment required to be made by the College within any of the projects.

S Hewitt stated that under the Advanced Manufacturing Project there was no investment required at present – the project is delayed until 21/22. The Bio-Med project was linked to a bigger project (which we are not involved) and related to the skills development required for the larger project. The SMEs Project is at a very early stage, with significant work still required on this.

There was also a digital element underpinning all of the projects, which S Hewitt noted would involve the College.

S Hewitt said there was no real investment required at present except for Kevin and Grant Ritchie's current involvement.

M Williamson said she would be keen to keep TCD under review and to ensure that the College was at the appropriate tables to show what D&A College can do. M Williamson noted it would be important for the Team to keep coming back to the Board for support with this if needed.

S Hewitt stated that the College was taking a lead role where appropriate on forums / groups where Education, Skills and Training are needed. A recent Economic Recovery Seminar with Perth UHI and local stakeholders along with Ross Martin, Willie Mackie and Paul Smart had been very successful. The next stage would be to produce a formal Action Plan on Education, Skills and Training for the Region.

D Mackenzie asked about any funding available for Mental Health? S Hewitt confirmed that the College was receiving some funding, but this was no way near enough. S Taylor noted that demand for support was huge and the College was currently trying to repurpose budgets to help. An additional support package had been put in place around Group Tutor support, but this was an ongoing local and national challenge.

S Hewitt noted that Metal Health as well as Digital Poverty was a standing item for national discussion with the Scottish Government.

The Board welcomed the updates.

8. STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT

C Meldrum outlined the range of work that the Students' Association had progress since her report and took the opportunity to highlight some of the more recent developments including the increase in the numbers of Lead Representative (now at 49). C Meldrum attributed this increase to the work of the Students' Association speaking directly to new classes. C Meldrum said that the Lead Rep Training had gone very well with an enthusiastic group of people.

C Meldrum summarised other developments including:

- The opportunity to meet every 2 weeks with the new Vice Principal of Curriculum & Attainment and a chance for Lead Reps to meet on a monthly basis with the 4 Head of Sector - an initial "getting to know you" event was planned for January 2021
- A very successful Cosy Coat Appeal with over 400 items of winter clothing being donated over the College's 3 campuses.

- Live Q & A Session with the Executive Leadership Team
- Christmas Jumper Walk with fundraising going toward Maggie's Centre
- With the success of the Summer Event the Students' Association were hosting a virtual event on Saturday 19 December "the Big Night In" with cooking videos from staff; arts and craft projects for children then an evening of entrainment including bands and DJs. Money raised from this event would be used in the New Year as part of the Pay it Forward Project.
- Amy Monk and Sarah Rennie had completed their Services Design PDA qualification.

A Monks noted work she was progressing in respect various activities including:

- Make Up Artist Completion
- Active Advent Calendar
- Sweet Treats recipes and cooking demos – Hospitality
- Hair Show in the New Year with local employers invited to attend
- Animal Care demos, with videos that will link to the Essential Skills units within courses

A Monk also noted the creation of an ALL Students MS Teams site which allowed them to create channels for virtual clubs and groups chosen by students. A further number range of clubs will be created in January 2021.

A Monk highlighted the video produced for World Hello Day on 21 November 2020 where our students have shown off where they have come from in the world and said hello in the native language.

A McCusker congratulated the Students' Association on an amazing job over recent months.

H Honeyman noted the difference in the Students' Association over the last 2 years – highlighting that this was an energetic, enthusiastic, innovative group of people.

C Meldrum noted that she would share a video being produced for the Big Night In where a range of staff including the Senior Leadership Team were taking part by singing & dancing to 'Do They know Its Christmas'.

9. NATIONAL BARGAINING

S Taylor gave an update on current negotiations and the offer to support staff of £750 or 2% plus 1 day's additional non-consolidated annual leave.

S Taylor also noted the current National Dispute with EIS and the use of instructors / workplace assessors. An indicative ballot for potential industrial action had been held.

S Taylor noted that work was progressing around the National Job Evaluation project with Phase 1 scoring to be completed by April 2021.

10. PRINCIPALS REPORT

S Hewitt noted his report and highlighted:

- 20/21 Retention – We remained cautiously optimistic on both retention and engagement for the current academic year with current withdrawal rates looking

slightly lower than the week 11 equivalent from the previous year, despite concerns around engagement and remote delivery.

- Period Poverty – Tatiana Zorina started a new role as Period Poverty Project Officer and was taking forward a range of fantastic projects.
- Student Survey outcomes were very positive:
 - Average across all responses/all questions: **4.3 stars (out of 5)**
 - Feeling welcome and valued: **4.36 stars**
 - Learning experience so far: **4.12 stars**
 - Our staff: **4.57 stars**
 - Platforms and places for learning: **4.04 stars**
- Additional Support for Staff - SLT had worked on a package of support for staff to assist with ongoing workload challenges and, through a range of savings and budget adjustments, the following has been made possible for Semester 2 and through to the end of this academic session:
 - HN Guidance hour added to timetables
 - No reduction in hours for HN courses where graded units have been waived
 - Fund of around 2,000 additional hours to support L&T demand in semester 2
 - Use of the Government's Kickstart scheme for Support areas
 - The additional hours will add around £190,000 of additional staff input during semester 2 and will help to alleviate the pressure on staff throughout the College.
- CDN Awards - we won the Inclusive College award for the 'Find your Future' Child Poverty Project and received a commended award for the Essential Skills Award for the Escape Rooms, a Good to Great funded project.

A McCusker asked about the 2020/21 Retention asking if this was comparable to the previous year. J Grace noted that it was slightly improved and stated that a considerable amount of work had gone into retention and reassuring students that the College was here to help with frontline services contacting individual students.

11. FINANCE & ESTATES ITEMS

10.1 Kingsway Campus Options Update

J Carnegie reminded the Board of the currently situation around the Hair, Beauty and Complementary Therapies (HBCT) facility noting the discussion that took place at the and the Finance and Property Committee on 8 December 2020 where an options appraisal was discussed and the Option 2 proposal was approved. In choosing Option 2 (new build on the existing site) it was important to note that there was significant cost savings as services, including mechanical and electrical services, were already installed. J Carnegie noted that this option showed best value for money.

J Carnegie stated that SFC had been very supportive of the College and had committed funds for the demolition and design cost of the new HBCT facility.

J Carnegie noted that the College was seeking approval from the Board to progress with the work and to approach Dundee and Angus Foundation for up to an additional £500k to support the development.

S Mill noted for the Board's information that the Finance and Property Committee had fully discussed the different options presented by Billy Grace and were comfortable that Option 2 was the most financially effective option and represented an improvement on the original planned facility.

The Board approved the option presented and the approach to the Dundee and Angus Foundation. **J Carnegie to progress.**

10.2 Annual Report from Audit & Risk Committee

G Robertson summarised the report from the Audit Committee to the Board outlining positive internal and external audit activities and outcomes over the course of the year. G Robertson praised the Executive and Finance Teams for their hard work in achieving these. The report was approved.

10.3 Audit Scotland Annual Report

J Carnegie noted the "clean statement" from Audit Scotland highlighting the effective systems in place considering the cyber-attack and the COVID pandemic. The actions within the report were noted alongside the areas of positive practice.

The actions would be progressed, and J Carnegie noted plans in respect of refreshing the Financial and Estates Strategies.

The Board approved the report.

10.4 Financial Statements to 31 July 2019

J Carnegie summarised the financial statements and the cash backed outturn that was more positive than the original budget.

The financial statements were approved for signature and submission.
J Carnegie to progress.

12. HUMAN RESOURCE ITEMS

12.1 Workforce Planning

S Taylor summarised the work being undertaken around workforce planning, linking this to the question raised by H Honeyman at the start of the meeting. The approaches being developed, and points considered, were noted and the request to re-open Voluntary Severance with effect from early 2021 was discussed.

A McCusker welcomed the report with the opportunity to look and plan ahead.

P Milne agreed with the paper, noting that the shape of work for the future (working from home) or a blended approach was important to consider and asked if this might impact on the College's Estates Strategy.

S Taylor noted the planned development session in January and stated that this would look at the connections and impacts between curriculum, workforce, financial, and estates plans.

The Board approved the re-opening the Voluntary Severance Scheme. **S Taylor to progress.**

13. GOVERNANCE ITEMS

12.1 Board Membership

S Taylor summarised his paper and the arrangements to appoint, reappoint and recruit Board positions. The proposals outlined within the paper were approved.
S Taylor to progress

A McCusker noted that Board Recruitment would be picked up in the New Year.

12.2 Board Metrics

The range of Board metrics produced were noted.

14. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The minutes of the recent round of Committee meetings were summarised and key points noted.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

The list of recent communications was noted.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion took place around a new date for the Board's Strategic Planning Event. It was agreed that an evening event for approximately 1.5 hours in January 2021 be arranged and that an invitation once again would be extended to Karen Watt, Chef Executive, SFC.
S Hewitt to progress

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 16 March 2021 at 5.00pm, Via MS Team

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
Kingsway campus option 2 to be progressed with approach to D&A Foundation for funding as required	J Carnegie	31 January 2021
Financial Statements to be signed and submitted	J Carnegie	18 December 2020
Voluntary Severance Scheme arrangements to be progressed	S Taylor	31 January 2021
Board membership and recruitment to be progressed (inc potential co-option to LT&Q)	S Taylor	16 March 2021
BOM Strategic Development Session with SFC to be arranged	S Hewitt	31 January 2021