

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



**Tuesday 20 June 2023 at 5.00pm
in Enterprise Room 5, Gardyne Campus and Microsoft
Teams**

Draft

Minute of the meeting of the Board of Management of Dundee and Angus College held on Tuesday 20 June 2023.

PRESENT:

L O'Donnell (Chair)	S Middleton
D Smith	M Williamson
N Lowden	H Honeyman
S Stirling	A Monks
B Lawrie	L Strukanova
R McLellan	J Buchanan
D Mackenzie	C Cusick
D Rosie	

IN ATTENDANCE:

J Grace (Vice Principal)	
S Taylor (Vice Principal/Secretary to the Board)	
P Muir (Board Administrator)	P Connolly (Education Scotland)
C Ogilvie (incoming Student President)	

1. WELCOME

L O'Donnell welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting and welcomed Derek Smith, Carri Cusick and Daniel Rosie to their first Board of Management meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted from J Carnegie, K Ditcham and S Hewitt.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR CONNECTION

M Williamson and Neil Lowden noted a connection with Angus Council in respect of the Helping Hands Nursery.

4. MINUTE OF LAST MEETING – 14 MARCH 2023

The Minute of the Board of Management meeting held on 14 March 2023 was approved as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Matters arising had been closed out or covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Board members have requested a session to be held around Risk Management for a better understanding of this topic. This would be reviewed for the next Board strategy/development day. **S Taylor to progress.**

6. D&A Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit Feedback

J Grace introduced Peter Connolly and introduced the Annual engagement Visit report, noting that this had been a very positive engagement.

P Connolly shared the annual engagement feedback, highlighting the positive feedback around the outcomes and culture of the College. The report showed high levels of satisfaction with the support received from both curriculum and support staff, highlighting the strong and positive relationships between learners and staff at all levels.

The Annual Engagement feedback revealed the steps which the College was taking to address areas where outcomes were low and to engage and involve employers and communities in developing future curriculum and services. This included a tracking process around the potential of students, putting in place any interventions where necessary around the small number of areas for action identified.

The feedback also praised the Students' Association and the work it undertook to support learners and to work in partnership with the College. These links and activities were very strong and clearly amongst the best in Scotland.

The feedback showed that curriculum staff ensured that the curriculum was kept under constant review, engaging with employers to ensure that it remained fit for purpose.

P Connolly noted positive feedback around recent work to embed and signpost meta skills within the curriculum. He noted that meta skills were positively shared throughout the college and curriculum, showing the journey the learners were on, with these supported on a self-reflective way for learners throughout their journey through the College.

The report and positive feedback was welcomed by members of the Board for the great initiatives and good areas of practice.

M Williamson noted comment on performance indicators that appeared to be contradictory, and P Connolly noted that the comments referred to trends and national comparisons, hence the difference. This clarification was welcomed.

P Connolly noted the areas of positive practice identified and summarised arrangements for these to be published by the College Development Network (CDN).

L O'Donnell thanked P Connolly for his input and congratulated staff on this important external recognition of their excellent work.

7. NATIONAL UPDATE

L O'Donnell stated all colleges were going through difficult times financially; however, we are now in a stronger position at D&A as a result of the actions taken over the last year.

L O'Donnell noted that two new ministers have been appointed to cover Education, Jenny Gilruth and Graham Day (MSP representing Angus South). They both have attended in-person meetings to discuss and address a wide variety of matters. L O'Donnell stated these meetings have been very open and positive.

L O'Donnell summarised the main points made in the Scottish Government commissioned independent review of the skills delivery landscape, led by James Withers.

The report is generally positive with respect to the future role of colleges and the response to this from the government was awaited.

8. STRATEGIC ITEMS

8.1 Strategic Project Updates

J Grace summarised the paper for information only. In terms of the Michelin Scotland Innovation Parc (MSIP) development, Under the leadership of the Board, work is ongoing by the Admin, Curriculum, Estates, Health and Safety and Marketing teams on delivery readiness for August 2023. Curriculum planning for August to December 2023 will be finalised on 21st June with work ongoing to market this provision. B Lawrie noted that a presentation on plans and progress around these would be valuable for Board members. This was agreed. **J Grace to progress.**

A preliminary agreement, developed by the Business Partnerships Team, has been reached with Coast Renewable Services for the collaborative delivery of Global Wind Organisation Basic Safety and Basic Technical Training at the Skills Academy.

Work to progress Tay cities projects and forthcoming bids was continuing.

ESports continue to be embedded as a priority area. The Foundation Degree in ESports has fully recruited (23 students), with significant interest and potential to run additional cohorts in future academic sessions. Discussions are scheduled prior to summer.

ES Sports equipment has been successfully delivered and the opportunity for board members to see the Esports facility and new Engineering EPIC facility would be arranged alongside future meetings. **J Grace to progress.**

8.2 Board Strategy Day & Next Steps

L O'Donnell noted the overall positive Board Strategy event as a first step in considering the College strategy for 2025 onwards. M Williamson noted concerns about some of the input, highlighting that this was more of a management discussion instead of a formative talk around the strategy of the College.

D Fordyce welcomed the day as an opportunity to discuss the future, noting that the speakers were informative.

D Fordyce noted that it may be beneficial to work alongside other college boards in terms of alignment of future strategy.

L O'Donnell welcomed these inputs and noted that a further strategic planning session to be planned with the Board around November 2023 which will focus on further updates nationally and from within the region, as well as the outcomes of the strategic review/reform. He noted that he would also look at how engagement with other boards could be taken forward.

L O'Donnell to progress.

9. STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION PRESENTATION

L Strukanova introduced the report presentation to the Committee.

The 2023 Student elections closed at the end of the month with over 300 votes cast, which is the highest number in recent years. Colin Ogilive has been elected as the new Student President and Fatima Khan as the new Vice President for Gardyne Campus. Unfortunately, there were no candidates in Arbroath and Kingsway that made it to the voting stage. A re-election will be held in September and October.

A Monks summarised the other activities taking place since the previous meeting, noting that the team enjoyed WRAP Training delivered by Barry Carmichael, to help them look after themselves while supporting others. Feedback from the team shows this is something that would be beneficial to repeat nearer the start of the year.

The Student's Association team had supported the S3 Future Talent Taster days. This consisted of showing over 2,500 S3 pupils around the Campus for an insight into college life. This gave them experience in a variety of different subject areas over two days on campus. Positive feedback was received from the APT and schools.

Board members praised the work undertaken and the positive impact this had on students. L O'Donnell praised the report and thanked both Amy and Lena for their hard work and contribution to the Board, wishing them all the best for the future. He also thanked C Ogilvie for joining the meeting as an observer and looked forward to continuing the close working relationship between the Students' Association and the Board.

10. NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE

S Taylor summarised the update on the progress with National Bargaining, noting both Academic and Support staff pay discussions were in dispute and national ballots had resulted in votes in favour of industrial action. A final pay offer has been rejected by academic staff with additional conversations taking place with the Scottish Government. Significant areas of disagreement remain and work to be progressed if a settlement was to be reached.

Action short of strike action (ASOS) was underway by academic staff, consisting of a boycott on entering results. This would impact on students, particularly for those progressing and steps were in place to minimise this negative impact were possible.

D Smith stated there were conversations with the Scottish government taking place to seek to push forward for additional funding.

The update was noted.

11. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

J Grace summarised the report for information only, highlighting positive developments and increased links with our community.

M Williamson welcomed the report and noted the funding allocation given in respect of the Shared Prosperity Fund.

12. FINANCE ITEMS

12.1 Financial Sustainability

S Taylor noted that it continued to be a challenging time and highlighted planning and modelling that was progressing against a series of assumptions around flat cash settlements and increasing wage and other costs. He noted there had been over 200 responses received through the consultation inbox from the second paper publication. These consultation submissions were a mixture of responses from individual academic and support staff, from managers and from full teams.

The final 2023/24 funding allocations announced by the Scottish Funding Council on 25 May 2023 were identical to the indicative allocations highlighted in April. Despite ongoing lobbying by colleges, trade unions and representative bodies, this 'flat cash' financial settlement represents a significant cut in real term funding for the sector and for D&A.

Alongside this, work has also progressed to develop a breakeven budget for next year. With the level of savings planned, this will be achievable with the current draft budget forecasting a minimal (£15k) deficit for 2023/24.

The College is required to make savings of at least £2.5 million. Positive progress has been made in addressing this target, and it can be noted that the gap to the £2.5 million minimum savings target has been reduced to £225k in final implementation paper because of the actions identified and implemented.

Whilst the funding gap and savings required were still significant, it remained the strong desire of the College and our unions to avoid any compulsory redundancy situation if possible. This step would only be contemplated as a last resort where all other options and savings steps explored.

S Taylor noted that the final proposals for implementation had been shared with unions and staff and copied to the Board that day. These covered a smaller number of remaining steps, including changes to the senior and promoted post structure and changes affecting two curriculum teams and two support teams.

M Williamson expressed how assessable this paper was (despite the difficult subject matter), noting that this was clear and understandable. N Lowden welcomed the update provided that day and noted that he felt much clearer regarding both the progress made and remaining financial risk than he had in 2022.

D Fordyce welcomed the progress made and asked about the impact of this on staff. S Taylor noted that the mood across the College was understandably low, but that staff were getting on with what needed to be done and were focusing on their students. It was noted that the opportunity cost associated with the need to focus on savings plans was a concern and that there were worries that this would impede future developments and opportunities.

L O'Donnell thanked S Taylor for the paper and update.

12.2 2023/24 Budget

S Taylor presented the paper for approval noting that the Finance & Property Committee considered and approved the draft budget for submission to the Board on the 30th of May 2023.

S Taylor noted that sustainability work was ongoing (as per the previous item) and that this would support delivery of a cash-backed deficit budget of £15K. Although this was considered an acceptable outcome at this stage, it was subject to the many inherent risks and uncertainties and the senior team would continue to seek to achieve a more sustainable position.

The factors impacting on the draft budget were discussed and the budget approved.

12.3 Financial Forecast Return (FFR)

S Taylor summarised the paper for approval, noting that the required details were only received on 31 May 2023 and as such the Financial Forecast Return Paper was not ready to be shared with the Board. It was proposed that approval of the FFR be delegated to the Chair of the Board and Chair of Finance & Property Committee, with the paper approved on behalf of the board and circulated at the next Board of Management meeting. This was agreed. **S Taylor to progress.**

12.4 Procurement Approvals

S Taylor and J Grace presented this paper for approval. Members were asked to approve procurement for two items valued at over £500k.

The first was for the supply of Virtual Reality (VR)/Augmented Reality (AR) Welding Stimulators, and the second for LED lighting replacement of Gardyne Campus.

The Board approved these subject to confirmation that the appropriate compliant procurement routes were in place. **S Taylor to progress.**

Two non-competitive awards were proposed to support the purchase of specialist equipment for the Energy Skills Partnership. The need for these were discussed alongside the requirements for approval by SFC and APUC prior to progressing with the purchase. Following consideration approval was given.

12.5 GTL Audit Arrangements

S Taylor introduced the paper noting that the Audit & Risk Committee were comfortable with the underlying principle to amend audit arrangements as proposed but had asked that additional information and clarity be made available to the Board of Management to inform final decision making.

H Honeyman noted that the paper was now clearer but there remained concerns regarding the lack of final information on any conditions required from Audit Scotland.

Board members were still not comfortable approving this paper and asked that further information be sought from Audit Scotland and that arrangements for an independent review of GTL finances be built into the proposal. The final decision on the matter be delegated to the Chair of the Board and Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee. **S Taylor to progress.**

12.6 Climate Emergency Action Plan Update

S Taylor summarised the paper, noting the good progress made across the range of climate emergency actions. This progress, and the work underpinning it, was welcomed.

L O'Donnell noted that this was an excellent piece of work and merited further consideration at a Board meeting where the agenda was not as full.

12.7 Finance & Committee update- 2022/23

S Taylor highlighted these papers were for information only.

13. GOVERNANCE ITEMS

13.1 Membership Update

S Taylor summarised the update, noting the range of approvals to be confirmed.

Recruitment and selection arrangements had progressed under the delegated authority provided to the nominations committee, with two new appointments approved by the Scottish Government. Following this, the Board formally endorsed the appointments of Carri Cusick and Daniel Rosie.

Following the expiry of G Robertson's Board tenure one nomination was received for M Williamson to succeed George in the role of Vice Chair. The Board formally endorsed the appointment of M Williamson to this role and the appointment of N Lowden to the role of Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (replacing M Williamson).

It was noted that J Buchanan had been appointed to the vacant role as Vice Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (approved at the Audit & Risk meeting on 6 June 2023).

Following the expiry of their tenure as Students' Association President and Vice President, the Board membership of Amy Monks and Lenka Strukanova will expire on 31 July 2023. The new Students' Association President, Colin Ogilvie, will join the Board in August 2023 alongside a second DASA nominee (to be confirmed).

Arrangements and timescales for the appointment of union nominated board members were noted and it was agreed not to progress with observer arrangements given the short gap until full appointments were made. This was approved.

13.2 Board Development Plan

S Taylor summarised the paper and progress made on the actions identified. It was noted that a full evaluation would be undertaken during 2023/2024.

13.3 Board Metrics

The Board metrics were noted, and S Taylor highlighted the further improvement in student satisfaction arising through the recent SFC survey.

14. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Updates from the Committees were noted.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

The list of recent correspondence was noted.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 26 September 2023 **at 5.00pm** in the **Isla Building, Seminar Room 5, Arbroath Campus**. A hybrid option on MS Teams would also be available. A tour of the new engineering facilities would be scheduled just before the meeting.

L O'Donnell thanked members for their contributions. He also thanked S Taylor and J Grace for carrying much of the agenda, on behalf of the Executive, and P Muir for her support. He closed the meeting by wishing Board members and all college staff a well-deserved break over the summer.

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
Board development update on Risk management to be scheduled as part of next board day	S Taylor	November 2023
Update on MSIP curriculum plans and developments to be provided to the Board	J Grace	26 September 2023
Tour of Engineering and Esports facilities to be scheduled in advance of next two Board meetings	J Grace	26 September 2023
Board strategy day to be organised/confirmed	L O'Donnell	November 2023
FFR approval delegated to Chairs of the Board and F&P Committee	S Taylor	30 June 2023
Procurement Approvals to be progressed (subject to compliant procurement arrangements)	S Taylor	30 June 2023
GTL Audit and non-consolidation arrangements to be progressed subject to delegated approval by the Chairs of the Board and A&R Committee	S Taylor	31 July 2023