**BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

**Minute of the Meeting held on Tuesday 12 March 2024 at 5.00pm in Room A605, Kingsway Campus, and Microsoft Teams**

***Draft***

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| **PRESENT:** | L O’Donnell (Chair) | S Middleton |
|  | D Smith | S Hewitt |
|  | D Mackenzie | H Honeyman |
|  | D Rosie | C Cusick |
|  | B Lawrie | S Oakley |
|  | R McLellan | M Williamson |
|  | N Lowden | A Lawrence |
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| **IN ATTENDANCE:** | P Connelly (Education Scotland) | A Monks (DASA Team Leader) |
|  | S Taylor (Vice Principal Support Services and Operations) | |
|  | P Muir (Board Administrator) | N Anderson (Director of Finance) |

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|  | **WELCOME**  L O’Donnell welcomed everyone to the Board of Management Meeting and welcomed Adele Lawrence, Kingsway based science student, and Stephen Oakley, teaching staff trade union representative, to their first Board of Management meeting.  L O’Donnell welcomed HMI Peter Connolly from Education Scotland. |
|  | **APOLOGIES**  Apologies were received from C Ogilvie, J Buchanan, M Beattie, D Fordyce and J Grace. |
|  | **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR CONNECTION**  There were no declarations of interest. |
|  | **EDUCATION SCOTLAND ANNUAL ENGAGEMENT VISIT FEEDBACK**  P Connelly presented his Annual Engagement Visit (AEV) feedback to the Board of Management stating that the report and overall feedback demonstrated clear evidence of the dedication, commitment and high levels of innovation by the College staff. The report highlighted the commitment and high level of engagement to supporting learners, the college community and staff.  Within his report, P Connelly highlighted four key areas of work including.  Above sector average Learner Success: Notable improvements in the rates of successful completion for full-time FE and HE programs were emphasised, reflecting positive strides in learner outcomes.  Innovative Teaching Excellence: The college's positioning as a leading partner in the Tayside region was highlighted, showcasing effective utilisation of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund to address priority skills gaps.  Collaborative Support Teams: P Connelly emphasised the collaboration among various staff teams, including wellbeing student support staff, learner and e-learning support staff, aimed at assisting learners in staying on track and completing their programs.  Transition Support: It was noted that the College effectively supports community-based learners in transitioning to on-campus programs, ensuring a smooth integration process.  P Connolly summarised the overall report by highlighting that there was a strong College culture of support and success for its students and noting that this showed in the above average success rates and high levels of student satisfaction.  B Lawrie thanks P Connolly for the positive feedback and asked if the AEV from Education Scotland ever included the impact of the Board on educational outcomes. P Connelly noted that there used to be more engagement with college boards including a review of the input of boards, but that this had declined in recent quality models.  M Williamson praised the successful report and enquired about withdrawal numbers for part-time students, expressing concern and asking if there are additional actions the College could take. P Connelly acknowledged the challenge, stating that despite various efforts to improve, it remained a national issue. P Connolly stated that he knew that the College was looking at this and sharing practice with others to seek to find improvements.  S Taylor emphasised the significant effort and work put in by teams across the College to scrutinise retention rates and deliver improvements, emphasising the importance of sharing and tracking the entire learner journey.  L O'Donnell commended the outstanding report and asked S Hewitt to extend the thanks from the Board to staff. **S Hewitt to progress.** |
|  | **MINUTE OF LAST MEETING – 12 December 2023**  The minute of the Board of Management meeting held on 12 December 2023 was approved with minor amendment. |
|  | **MATTERS ARISING**  All matters arising were on the agenda or closed except the Risk Management session to be organised by September 2024. |
|  | **NATIONAL ACTIVITY UPDATE**  L O'Donnell summarised the various national discussions and collaboration with Colleges Scotland regarding funding and the Scottish budget. S Hewitt highlighted that meetings are ongoing with the Scottish Government, SFC, and the sector to address the challenging financial situation. Limited progress has been made, but efforts were continuing to better support flexibility.  L O'Donnell highlighted the recent budget indicating a 2p reduction in National Insurance and no increase in public expenditure stating that he could foresee a continuing challenge for public finances that would likely have a negative impact on the college sector. |
|  | **STRATEGIC ITEMS**   * 1. **Strategic Projects Update**   S Hewitt highlighted this paper for information only.  S Hewitt welcomed the feedback from P Connelly, noting that this verified the College's strategic approach to partnerships and the value that these brought. S Hewitt noted the request to reprofile the SME Skills fund to better support the gap left due to the loss of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund. It was confirmed that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) confirmed there would be no further funding for the Flexible Workforce Development for both 2023/24 and 2024/25.   * 1. **2030 Strategy Development Update**   L O’Donnell highlighted that two significant board strategy events took place on May 5, 2023, and January 22, 2024. During these sessions, the current progress and impact of the existing 2025 More Successful Students strategy were evaluated. Throughout both sessions, a consistent overarching theme emerged emphasising the College's integral role within the region.  Discussions highlighted that the College is more than just an institution; it is deeply woven into the lives of our staff, learners, partners, and stakeholders. In response to this, it is proposed that the next strategy to be focused around "Our College." S Hewitt highlighted that this title reflected the collective ownership and shared responsibility of shaping the institution's future. Under the banner of "Our College," three central themes were proposed Our People, Our Experiences, and Our Impact.  D Mackenzie welcomed the development and asked how the impact of this impact of the new strategy would be assessed. S Hewitt stated that this aspect would be covered within a set of metrics to accompany the final strategy.  S Hewitt asked if Board members were comfortable with the overarching concept and approach outlined. This was confirmed and S Hewitt stated that the Executive Team will prepare an initial draft, including potential metrics, for discussion at the June 2024 Board meeting. **S Hewitt to progress.** |
|  | **STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION REPORT**  A Monks outlined the report provided and introduced A Lawrence as the new Students’ Association nominated Board member.  A Monks highlighted the Department Representatives have established the Student Congress and have contributed to certain operational decisions for the Students' Association. The team structure includes one President and three campus specific Vice Presidents, each assigned a specific role focus, such as Wellbeing or Events. A session for the Student Partnership Agreement is scheduled for May 2024 and the first draft of the SMHA has been sent for comments to Think Positive.  A Monks highlighted that the 2024 Election season has commenced with the Students’ Association Team actively engaging with students about the elections and disseminating information to both staff and students through the dedicated Election Hub on SharePoint and election walls at each of the offices.  A Monks shared the ongoing commitment of the team attending and facilitating, Breakfast Clubs, Feedback Friday, Student Voice and many more activities.  H Honeyman and C Cusick praised the report and the immense amount of work that DASA was supporting. L O’Donnell echoed this and thanked A Monks and A Lawrence. |
|  | **PRINCIPAL’S REPORT**  S Hewitt summarised this report and highlighted in collaboration with Angus Council and The ESP Group, the institution has partnered to develop and implement an additional employability academy for Journeycall.  S Hewitt highlighted the Big College Open Week is scheduled for March. During this, Dundee & Angus College will welcome visitors to its campuses and immerse themselves into college life. Tours will be available in all three campuses and departments providing prospective students with an opportunity to experience college environment first hand.  B Lawrie asked if the range of projects outlined made a financial contribution to the College. S Hewitt provided assurance to the Board that this was the case, with this varying depending on the nature and funding of projects, whether financially or through equipment acquisition, with some form of tangible return to the College. The Board noted the breadth of the report and thanked S Hewitt. |
|  | **NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE**  S Taylor highlighted the summary of recent national bargaining developments, noting that despite on-going national discussions, no settlements have yet been reached.  Notification of planned action consisting of a ‘work to rule’ and action to withhold student results has been announced by EIS/FELA from 12 February 2024 and national strike action by academic staff took place on the 29th of February and targeted action on the 11th and 13th of March, with a turnover of 19% and 25% of staff participation for the March dates respectively.  Unison were also engaged in the national strike action which took place on 29 February 2024. The college remained open on the strike days and steps were taken to minimize disruption to learning.  S Taylor highlighted the National Job Evaluation project, with work continuing to progress slowly.  S Taylor noted that National Policy discussions were ongoing. These policies have proven to be challenging with only two policies having been agreed – A National Annual Leave Policy and a National Menopause Policy.  S Oakley noted that the information matched their awareness and noted that the overriding feeling from staff was that they wanted the matters resolved. S Hewitt stated that he was hearing similar feedback from staff.  S Oakley stated that the key issue nationally appeared to be around job security and avoiding compulsory redundancy, rather than specifically the financial value of the offers made.  The Board thanked S Taylor, noted the update and expressed their regret that there had been little national progress towards a settlement of the current pay dispute. |
|  | **FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE ITEMS**   * 1. **Financial Sustainability**   S Hewitt summarised updates since the previous meeting and noted that the overall Scottish budget showed an 8.4% reduction in sector funding compared with the previous year. This had, however, to be adjusted for the removal of the £26 million never received and resulted in a c4.7% overall reduction.  S Hewitt stated that allowing for changes in student support funds and the removal of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) it was anticipated that the funding available for main teaching grant would be flat cash for 2024/25.  S Hewitt emphasised the significant financial progress achieved during the two-year savings plan. He pointed out that the College was forecasting a surplus of just over £500k for 2023/24 which will cover the next installment of outstanding loan repayment for Gardyne Campus.  S Hewitt stated that the College was in a more stable financial position for the current year and confirmed that provision for the anticipated pay award was included within the current financial forecasts.  N Anderson outlined upcoming plans for the next two years, including a greater focus on zero based budgeting and a further focus on understanding the needs of budget holders and prioritising them accordingly. She explained that this approach will enable the Senior Leadership Team to gain a greater insight into costs, assisting to achieve greater fostering flexibility within the system and ultimately building a stronger platform for the College.  M Williamson asked about the potential impacts of pay changes or increased offers on the College budget. S Hewitt stated that there remained uncertainties regarding the year three deal but that it was felt that any likely change in the offer could be covered, but that this would need further changes in the budget and savings to be made elsewhere. He added that ongoing conversations and scenario planning were in progress to inform the 2024/25 budget.  D Rosie enquired about the opportunities and planning for commercial income across various departments. N Anderson stated the focus of the savings plan revolved around the curriculum' and noted that there were plans to focus more on the specific curriculum plans within future budgets, which would assist with establishing more detailed income and expenditure targets at team level. S Hewitt noted that all commercial provision included a financial contribution and reiterated the importance of the College concentrating on thematic approaches. He highlighted the Esports developments as an example, noting investments in staff to facilitate the growth of Esports and generate additional income through sponsorships and the introduction of additional courses.   * 1. **Future Infrastructure Vision**   S Hewitt highlighted his paper giving an outline of work currently progressing to inform and create a long-term infrastructure vision for the College and emphasised that the infrastructure plan aims to not only meet the aspirations of Dundee & Angus College students / staff but also to align with local, regional, and national priorities.  S Hewitt stated that in December 2023, the SFC introduced the College Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan and noted that the work progressing would also align with this national strategy.  S Hewitt highlighted the importance of a Future Infrastructure Vision and tackling the immediate challenges within our current infrastructure as well as creating a vision and plan to move forward with, should substantial capital funds become accessible. S Hewitt stated he will provide a more detailed plan around the infrastructure vision to the Board meeting in June 2024. **S Hewitt to progress.**     * 1. **Management Accounts (for information only)**   B Lawrie welcomed seeing the management accounts at Board level and noted that the forthcoming reduction in the Tayside Pension Scheme employers’ contribution rate would be a benefit for the coming year. |
|  | **GOVERNANCE ITEMS**   * 1. **Strategic Risk Register**   S Taylor summarised the Risk Register papers and Strategic Risk Register and provided an update regarding additional risks that have been added to The Strategic Risk Register as per the discussions at the Audit and Risk Committee and the recommendations of the risk management audit.  B Lawrie noted the significance of addressing the risks associated with Capital and Revenue Funding and S Taylor noted that this would be referenced as part of the Financial Sustainability risk.  The Board endorsed the Strategic Risk Register.   * 1. **Membership Update**   S Taylor provided an update on the recent changes within the Board. He emphasised that the introduction of Trade Union Members joining the board necessitated a reshuffling of Committee memberships, with these changes implemented on a ‘blind choice’ basis.  S Taylor noted that no appointment had yet been made to the current Board vacancy.  S Taylor noted the request for the Board to endorse the membership of A Lawrence and S Oakley as new members to the Board. This was agreed.  S Taylor noted that no trade union nominee had yet been identified by Unison/GMB for support staff, but that this would remain open for further consideration.   * 1. **Board Governance Manual Update**   S Taylor provided an overview of the Governance Manual, highlighting that it had been updated to incorporate changes resulting from the introduction of trade union-nominated board members.  Following S Taylor's update, L O’Donnell suggested that this document should be carefully read by all Board members to ensure they are familiar with its contents and the recent changes.  The updates to the Board Manual were approved.   * 1. **Board 2024/25 Meeting Dates**   The meeting dates were approved, S Taylor highlighted that if there were any significant clashes of scheduled Committee or Board dates to inform P Muir of these as soon as practicable.   * 1. **Board Metrics**   S Taylor noted the usual range of Board metrics. M Williamson asked if the Board should have a summary of any RIDDOR reportable accidents. S Taylor clarified that information on these was shared with the Human Resource and Development Committee and stated that any significant findings or potential legislative actions arising from the RIDDOR reportable accidents would be promptly reported to and discussed with the Board.  The paper was noted. |
|  | **MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**  Updates from the committees were noted. A small minor amendment to the LTQC minutes were made.  H Honeyman provided a verbal update on the Audit & Risk committee meeting. |
|  | **CORRESPONDENCE**  The list of recent correspondence was noted. |
|  | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**  Tuesday 18 June 2024 at 5.00pm in Kingsway Campus, Room A605 (NB this location would be reviewed given issues with online connectivity). |

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| **Action Point Summary** |  |  |
| **Action** | **Responsibility** | **Date** |
| Board thanks to be extended to staff in recognition of the excellent Annual Engagement Visit report achieved | S Hewitt | 15 April 2024 |
| Draft of the new ‘Our College’ strategy to be considered | S Hewitt | 18 June 2024 |
| Update on plans and future vision for infrastructure developments to be presented | S Hewitt | 18 June 2024 |