

Meeting: Planning & Resource Committee		Venue: Virtual via Zoom	Date: 13 September 2021	Time: 9.00am	
Minute Taken By: Jackie Kane		Sederunt: Duncan Robb (Chair), Marian Docherty, Joyce Clark, Brian Lister, Tommy Angus, Dorothy Welch, Gary Husband	Apologies:	Absences:	
FOR DECISION					
No.	Agenda Item	Action	When	By Whom	Status
1.	Apologies	There were no apologies.	13.9.21	JK	Complete
2.	Minute of Previous Meeting (Paper 1)	Minute of Meeting held on 10 May 2021 was approved as an accurate record.	13.9.21	PARC	Complete
3.	Matters Arising				
	Update from Principal	The Principal updated the committee and the following was noted:	13.9.21	MD	Information
	Arrangements for Start of Session	<p>Arrangements for the start of session are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with the health and safety arrangements agreed for last session, with amendments reflecting Scottish Government guidance issued on 10 August 2021. Request that staff and students adhere to 1 metre physical distancing in all areas of the college. Follow Scottish Government guidance re the use of face coverings throughout the building. Adjust class timetables to enable a maximum of 20 students to be taught in classes in the main building/externally - these groups will operate separately. Increase ventilation in all teaching areas, communal areas and office spaces. Maintain 2020-2021 arrangements for the dining room, including staggered student lunches. Arrange en suite facilities for all residential students. 	13.9.21	MD	Information

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update signage in the main building and residency. • Encourage students and staff to receive vaccinations and take regular lateral flow tests, as per Scottish Government guidance. • Continue to operate staff rotas to enable working from home, where feasible • Re-convene the Covid Working Group to review the implementation of revised health and safety arrangements 			
	SFC	<p>The college has received an increase of £200k in core funding.</p> <p>The Business & Resource Manager continues to produce a monthly financial forecast.</p> <p>The college awaits a response from SFC on the joint bid with the WEA that was submitted to them.</p> <p>The Principal continues to pursue the Outcome Agreement Manager, Keith Coyne for a meeting.</p>	13.9.21	MD	Information
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	Outcome Agreement	<p>SFC have now issued Outcome Agreement Guidance 2021/2022 to all colleges and universities.</p> <p>As with last year, this is a single document for both colleges and universities that recognises the ongoing pressures institutions face in dealing with Covid-19.</p> <p>The guidance recognises that colleges and universities are still at various stages of recovery and so maintains the approach SFC introduced in AY 2020-21 of consolidating, streamlining and simplifying the range of asks of both sectors to keep the focus on strategic outcomes.</p> <p>The guidance outlines SFC's expectation that colleges and universities continue with commitments to widen access, deliver high quality research and ensure a high-quality learning experience for all students that will in most cases be different in shape, structure and mode to previous years. SFC have also taken the opportunity to focus on</p>	13.9.21	MD	Information

		<p>economic recovery - including their expectation that provision continues to respond to changing need - and the critical contribution colleges and universities will make to this.</p> <p>The Depute Principal will be attending a seminar on 14 September 2021. This will provide an opportunity to outline the key changes to the guidance.</p> <p>Self-evaluation for AY 2020-2021 should be submitted to SFC by 30 November 2021 outlining the impact of Covid-19 on delivery and targets along with the Outcome Agreement for AY 2021-2022 having been signed off by the Board.</p> <p>Outcome Agreements for AY 2021-2022 will then be published by 31 January 2021.</p> <p>Committee member, Gary Husband offered his services in the preparation of the Outcome Agreement for AY 2021-2022.</p>			
	Trustees	<p>At the Trustees' meeting on 21 August 2021, the Principal updated the Trustees on the college's financial situation and the Wisconsin University partnership. The Trustees were pleased with progress and congratulated the college on the work involved to achieve this.</p> <p>The Trustees gave an update on the development of the Business Park and their commitment to refurbishing the roads, electric overhead cables and the development of Unit 9. They also agreed that the college would retain the current income from the Business Park and would contribute to the use of the Estates & Facilities Manager and Financial Assistant.</p> <p>The Trustees agreed to produce a draft Letter of Agreement in October outlining the above.</p> <p>An update will be presented to the Board after the Chairs' Committee Meeting on 16 September 2021 which the Chair of Trustees attends.</p>	13.9.21	MD	Information
	Capital Project	Despite delays the project is broadly on target.	13.9.21	MD	Information

FOR DISCUSSION					
4.	Business Manager's Report:				
	College Management Accounts (Paper 2)	<p>The college cash flow position is still positive. Given the timing of the capital spend for 2020-2021, this will become an issue November/December 2021.</p> <p>The annual audit has commenced.</p>	13.9.21	JC	Information
	HR (Paper 3)	<p>As from 1 September, all staff have now returned to work. Administrative staff are working a rota system, as are the Senior Management Team. Other teams are in college as required.</p> <p>Staff are being encouraged to make use of the online counselling service if they need to and have been offered 1-1 counselling if they feel it necessary. There will be challenges in staff returning to work and this will be closely monitored. Other mental health support is being explored including health & wellbeing workshops and mindfulness courses.</p> <p>The college continues to offer staff and students the opportunity to participate in Lateral Flow Testing whereby they receive home tests which they carry out 2-3 times per week and upload results to Scottish Government website. This is being offered to across the college sector to staff and students.</p> <p>With the start of the new academic year, the college Covid-19 Working Group will reform to ensure compliance with Scottish Government guidelines for colleges and universities.</p> <p>Vacancies There were no applications for the Hospitality Assistant role. However, as the number of students in the residency is low, this vacancy can be put 'on hold' until we assess how our commercial bookings are progressing. The role of Support for Learning Assistant has now been filled. However, due to the pending retirement of the Support for</p>			

		<p>Learning Tutor, a review of this role will be carried out. The applications for the Principal role are now with the interview panel. Other HR practitioners in the sector have commented on the difficulties surrounding recruitment.</p> <p>The Woodland Ranger started in August and is settling in well.</p> <p>After the part-time bookkeeper left in March, an external contractor was taken on to support Finance. They are continuing till the end of September. A review of the Administrative function will be carried out and the outcome will enable recruitment.</p> <p>Job Evaluation This is ongoing. There is no indication when this will be completed.</p> <p>Salaries Both EIS and Unison are in negotiation with the Employers' Association regarding salary increases for 2021-2022. There are concerns around the affordability and sustainability of both.</p>			
	Commercial Update	<p>The contract has now been signed with Wisconsin River Falls for January - April 2022. We are almost at the stage of sending a draft contract to Wisconsin Stout for July 2022. The college is also considering partnerships with Wisconsin White River and a university in Texas.</p> <p>Communication is still ongoing with International House, UKLC and St Andrew's. It is hoped that they may have bookings to fill the 'gaps' in May/June and August.</p> <p>The college is now open for commercial business and is following Scottish Government health and safety guidelines. However, future bookings will depend on public confidence in meetings and events whether business or private. Due to staffing implications, it has been agreed not to commit to any future wedding bookings. A long-term strategy is required at this point in time to allow the college to work effectively due to the implications from Covid-19.</p>	13.9.21	JC	Information

		Team Building packages have been developed for corporate clients.			
	Risk Register (Paper 4)	<p>Highlights from Risk Register</p> <p>A1 This Risk has not been increased. The mitigating actions taken last semester were effective. Student attainment was positive. New session has started, and blended learning is in place. This will be continually monitored.</p> <p>A2 This risk has decreased. Recruitment for all courses has been positive for the start of the year. Mitigating actions have been positive. Recruitment is comparable with previous years. The committee noted that the probability was the wrong way round and the Business & Resource Manager agreed to rectify this.</p> <p>A3 Feedback from last year was generally positive, given the circumstances. Measures in place to support student for the new academic year.</p> <p>A4 This Risk has stayed at 20 at present. This will be monitored. The induction programmes have been revised.</p> <p>A5 All colleges have been asked to produce self-evaluation reports by end of November 2021.</p> <p>B1 This Risk remains at 20, although it has reduced slightly as we move forward with the Digital Transformation Project. The Project is in three parts - Infrastructure, VLE and MIS. The infrastructure work is expected to be complete by December 2021. The other two parts will move into 2022. The consultants, Agenor, have provided the college with good support.</p> <p>B4 This Risk was 25 and has reduced to 20. Language schools are</p>	13.9.21	MD	Information

		<p>optimistic for 2022, although it will take to 2023 for full recovery. We have continued communication with International House and UK Language Courses, as well as developing a new relationship with St Andrews, a Scottish language school. They are confident they can give us students. This remains a high risk, as all is dependent on travel restrictions.</p> <p>B5 This Risk remains at 20 - we are continuing to promote college facilities for weddings, meetings etc within Scottish Govt guidelines for hospitality. We have a good level of enquiries and staff are working hard to convert these to sales. August was a good month, and we have a residential booking for September and an enquiry for October. The enquiries are coming from our new corporate website, which is encouraging.</p> <p>C1 This Risk has decreased. The Scottish Funding Council have increased funding to the College.</p> <p>C2 This Risk moves down to 20 - Wisconsin River Falls contract has now been signed and a draft contract is with Wisconsin Stout. River Falls will arrive in January 2022 for 12 weeks and Stout in July for four. It is expected River Falls will return in September for a further 12 weeks. The risk remains relatively high due to Covid and travel restrictions. Development of Forest School and AAA opportunities continue.</p> <p>C3 This Risk has reduced with the signing of Wisconsin contract, optimism around language school business and increasing events business. However, it remains a high Risk.</p> <p>C4 Of the four moderate recommendations made in the Internal</p>			
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	Update on Agenor	<p>The Business & Resource Manager spoke to the Project Status Report from Agenor and the following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dependency for IT services delivered from Edinburgh College to Newbattle remains high priority, and some good progress has already been made in this regard through the implementation of a new Microsoft User Management Platform. • A single point of failure remains around the existing skills and capability of the college's ICT Technician, and Agenor's focus remains to urgently address the provision of IT support through Third Party Managed Services. The committee discussed this point and advised if it would be possible to fill the gap with a Learning Technologist or identify a member of staff with these skills. The 	13.9.21	JC	Ongoing

		<p>committee were made aware that there is no money to support the post.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee asked that the “ill-health” risk be removed from Agenor’s Risk Register. The committee discussed previously about setting up a Project Group to overview the digital development. This would draw on the expertise of the Board. • Agenor had given a presentation to the Learning & Teaching Team on Canvas. The presentation had been received positively by the team. • Due to a high cost on MIS. It was agreed to contact Borders College in a view to sharing their MIS. • The committee felt that the financial risk was not explicit enough and asked if future capital project funding would be able to support this going forward. It was agreed to include this cost in the budget. 			
	Update on Policies	A significant amount of work is needed on updating policies. This has proved challenging over the last year. However, as the college starts to return to normality and staff are back at work, policies need to become a focus.	13.9.21	JC	Ongoing
FOR INFORMATION					
5.	AOCB	The Chair of Board requested that the November Board Meeting take place in the college Board Room, if possible and in line with the Scottish Government Guidelines.	13.9.21	BL	Ongoing
6.	Date of Next Meeting	Monday, 1 November 2022, 9am - 11am.	1.11.21	PARC	Information