

**NORTH EAST
SCOTLAND
COLLEGE**



FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Meeting of 28 November 2019

FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

NOTICE

There will be a meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee on Thursday 28 November 2019 at 1100 hours in the Boardroom, G10, at Aberdeen City Campus.

AGENDA

Agenda Item		Paper
	Reserved Item of Business (To be considered in conjunction with the Audit & Risk Committee)	
	Matter for Decision	
29-19	Financial Statements for the Year to 31 July 2019	
30-19	Apologies for Absence	
31-19	Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items	
32-19	Minute of Previous Meeting – 15 May 2019	X
33-19	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting	
	Matter for Decision	
34-19	Course Fees AY2020-21	X
	Matters for Discussion	
35-19	Estates Strategy Annual Report 2019	X
36-19	IT Strategy Annual Report 2019	X
37-19	Summation of Business and Date of Next Meeting	
	Matter for Discussion – Performance Reporting	
38-19	Management Accounts	
39-19	Any Other Business	
40-19	Summation of Reserved Item of Business	



FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee held on Wednesday 15 May 2019 at 1400 hours in G10, Aberdeen City Campus.

Agenda Item	
	<p>Present: David Anderson Martin Dear Abdul Elghedafi John Henderson – Chair Liz McIntyre Neil McLennan Ken Milroy Adrian Smith – Vice Chair</p> <p>In attendance: Peter Smith, Vice Principal Finance & Resources Pauline May, Secretary to the Board Zoe Burn, Minute Secretary</p>
15-19	<p>Apologies: Apologies were presented for A Miah.</p>
16-19	<p>Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items A Smith declared potential conflicts of interest by virtue of his role as a Director of ASET. N McLennan declared potential conflicts of interest in relation to his role at the University of Aberdeen.</p>
17-19	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 30 January 2019 The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.</p>
18-19	<p>Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting Members noted the matters arising report and no further matters were raised,</p>
	<p>Matters for Decision</p>
19-19	<p>Course Fee Policy Members considered a paper providing information on a review of the College's Course Fee Policy. P Smith highlighted the main contributors to the review of the Policy and advised that the review had sought to improve alignment to other key College policies and to clarify its implementation. It was noted that the Policy had been reassigned from a curriculum policy to a finance policy.</p> <p>Members considered the Policy, noting the proposed amendments.</p> <p>A discussion was held in relation to additional clarity added to the Policy regarding payment of course fees by instalments. P Smith advised that the College would not agree to a payment plan by a student unless in exceptional circumstances and confirmed that the College's Credit Controller manages this</p>

	<p>process, with an option to refer to the Vice Principal Finance & Resources of Financial Controller if required.</p> <p>The Committee approved the College's updated Course Fee Policy, subject to 3.6.1 being amended to read "within 10 <u>working</u> days".</p>
20-19	<p>Commercial Letting Charges The Committee considered a paper providing information on the outcome of a recent review into letting charges.</p> <p>Members considered the proposed Commercial Letting Charges to be implemented from AY2019-20, with P Smith advising of the approach adopted for the review of commercial lets. A short discussion was held regarding the setting of the baseline for charges with P Smith confirming that rates will operate with terms and conditions to ensure that any additional costs such as multimedia, security etc will also be covered and that the approach would not operate at a loss. It was noted, that as currently operates, flexibility should remain to enable discretion in terms of charges to charities and local community groups.</p> <p>New marketing materials for seeking to increase lets of College facilities were tabled, with Members noting the clear branding and the quality of the publications. P Smith advised that a soft launch of the new approach to lets would take place in June 2019.</p> <p>A short discussion was held on how the markets for commercial lets may potentially differ in Aberdeen in comparison to Fraserburgh. P Smith advised that the 'new' rates for Fraserburgh were in line with current rates. Members noted that it would take some time to see the impact of the new marketing and more competitive rates. K Milroy commented that a positive outcome would be to increase footfall at all campuses.</p> <p>In response to a query from D Anderson. P Smith confirmed that the proposed approach to commercial lets would not have any implications in relation to public liability insurance.</p> <p>Members agreed that the commercial letting charges for AY2019-20 should be set as proposed. The Committee also agreed that that future changes should now be agreed by management rather than the Committee.</p> <p>Members requested that a report on the implementation of the new approach to commercial lets be prepared and shared with the Committee at an appropriate time in the future, to be determined by management.</p>
21-19	<p>Summation of Business and Date of Next Meeting The Secretary gave a summation of the business conducted. The next meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee is scheduled for September 2019 and will be confirmed at the June Board Meeting when the Programme of Meetings for AY2019-20 is approved.</p>
	<p>Reserved Items of Business Matters for Decision</p>
22-19	<p>Draft Revenue Budget 2019-20</p>

23-19	Write-off Bad Debt

	Matters for Discussion – Performance Reporting
24-19	Financial Performance
25-19	Student Support Funds
26-19	Credit Activity AY2018-19
27-19	Any Other Business No other business was raised.
	Summation of Reserved Items of Business The Secretary gave a summation of the reserved business conducted.
	Meeting ended 1455 hours

Agenda Item	Actions from Finance & Resources Committee 15/05/19	Responsibility	Deadline
19-19	Course Fee Policy to be finalised.	P. Smith	As soon as possible
20-19	Report on the implementation of the new approach to commercial lets to be prepared.	P. Smith	Appropriate time in the future, as determined by management
22-19			
23-19			

Signed:.....

Date:



FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE Meeting of 28 November 2019	
Title: Course Fees AY2020-21	
Author: Peter D Smith, Vice Principal – Finance & Resources	Contributor(s):
Type of Agenda Item: For Decision <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved Item of Business <input type="checkbox"/>	
Purpose: To enable the Committee to set Course Fees for Academic Year 2020-21.	
Linked to Strategic Goal: 5. Optimise the use of our available resources to deliver financial and environmental sustainability.	
Linked to Annual Priority: 18. Deliver a financial plan that reduces reliance on SFC funding and ASET gift-aid and increases capacity for in-year resourcing flexibility.	
Executive Summary: In accordance with the College's Course Fee Policy, the Committee is responsible annually for setting certain of the College's course fees. Full-time fees for students from Scotland and the European Union, other than England, Wales and Northern Ireland, are published by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) in accordance with rates set by the Scottish Government. SFC has yet to announce these rates; when it does, the College will be required to adopt them. The College is free to set its own fees for part-time programmes of study. The College has targeted an increase in non-SFC income of 2.5% for Academic Year 2020-21; however, in order to address a decline in part-time fees in recent years, I propose that the College hold fees at the 2019-20 level for 2020-21. Tuition provided to students from the rest of the UK (RUK) is not funded by SFC. Colleges are free to set course fee rates for these groups of students, and I propose that the College continue with the practice of setting the fee at a level	

that is equal to the total income receivable from a Scottish student on the same course i.e. fee income plus SFC grant.

In 2019-20, in response to evidence that showed the College was priced significantly above other colleges, the Committee agreed a reduction in international (non-EU) fee rates. This would appear to have been a successful tactic as international enrolments and income have increased significantly in 2020-21. I therefore propose that the College hold fee levels at the 2019-20 level for 2020-21 to attempt to increase this further.

Proposed fee levels are summarised at Appendix 1.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee set course fees for AY2020-21 in accordance with Appendix 1.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable):

None

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence:

North East Scotland College Proposed Course Fee Rates, AY2020-21

1. Students from Scotland and the European Union, other than England, Wales and Northern Ireland)

Fee rates for full-time programmes

Set by the Scottish Government/Scottish Funding Council

Fee rates for non full-time programmes

Unit of study – Advanced level £120

Unit of study – Non-advanced level £95

2. Students from England, Wales and Northern Ireland (RUK)

These fees for this group of students are set at a rate that is equal to the total income that the College receives from a Scottish student on the same course. In other words, fee income from an RUK student equals the fee received for a 'Scottish' student plus SFC grant-in-aid for that course.

3. Students from outwith the European Union

Advanced courses £7,500

Non-advanced courses £6,000

These are fees charged to this group of students for full-time programmes. Fees for part-time programmes are derived by reference to the 'full-time' fee.



FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 28 November 2019	
Title: Estates Strategy Annual Report 2019	
Author: Peter D Smith, Vice Principal – Finance & Resources	Contributor(s): David Simpson, Head of Facilities and Estates (Mitie), Mike Wilde, Facilities Client Services Manager
Type of Agenda Item:	
For Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
For Discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reserved Item of Business	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purpose: To enable the Committee to consider progress in implementing the College's Estates Strategy 2019-2029.	
Linked to Strategic Goal:	
5. Optimise the use of our available resources to deliver financial and environmental sustainability.	
Linked to Annual Priority:	
20. Within a wider estates strategy, devise an estates plan which re-furbishes and re-purposes under-utilised space at the Aberdeen City Campus.	
Executive Summary:	
In June 2019, the Regional Board approved a new Estates Strategy for the College, covering the period 2019 to 2029. The paper attached as Appendix 1 updates the Committee on progress in delivering the aims and objectives of that Strategy.	
Recommendation:	
It is recommended that the Committee discuss the Report.	
Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable):	
None	
Equality Impact Assessment:	
Positive Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Evidence:	

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND COLLEGE

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Estates Strategy Annual Report 2019

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In June 2019, the Regional Board approved an Estates Strategy for the College, covering the period 2019 to 2029.
- 1.2 This Report updates the Committee on actions taken to deliver the aims and objectives of the Strategy to date and also the outline plans going forward. The Report is for discussion.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In its Estates Strategy 2019-2029, the College defined the following Aims and Objectives: -

*“Aim one: **Sustainable Estates Developments***

*Aim two: **Efficient Resource Deployment***

*Aim three: **Maximising Value***

*Aim four: **Flexibility***

*Aim five: **Minimising Environmental Impact***

*In delivering **Sustainable Estates Developments**, the College will employ robust planning, monitoring and risk management techniques to ensure the sustainability of its estates. A programme of planned and preventative maintenance will ensure that the estate remains fully fit for purpose throughout its useful lifespan.*

*To ensure **Efficient Resource Deployment**, The College will ensure its resources are deployed economically, effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of curriculum and support services. Space utilisation surveys will be used to ensure existing estates are used as efficiently as possible. The College will also balance the needs of physical resources against the increasing use of technology in delivering the curriculum and business support services. Where surplus assets are identified, the College will seek to dispose of these, maximising value.*

*In **Maximising Value**, the College will seek to maximise value derived from its estates, through alternative uses and commercial income, and through the disposal of surplus assets.*

To ensure **Flexibility**, the College will seek to utilise innovative, flexible solutions to estates requirements, including partnership working and managing its assets in such a manner so as to allow changes to use wherever possible.

In **Minimising Environmental Impact**, the College will develop a new Carbon Management Plan 2020-2025, setting challenging targets which build on the achievements of the previous Carbon Management Plan 2015-2020. The College will assess the environmental impact of all major developments and will prioritise measures which have a positive impact.”

2.2 The key deliverables identified to support the Aims and Objectives are: -

“To Meet the Aim of SUSTAINABLE ESTATES DEVELOPMENTS, the College will: -

- Continue to address backlog maintenance for all campuses in line with the priorities set out in the Condition Survey and supported by SFC funding.
- Create short- and medium-term accommodation plans for Aberdeen City Campus, designed to deliver curriculum coherence and harmonisation, in line with longer term curriculum planning.
- Develop a programme of refurbishment and environmental improvements at Aberdeen Altens Campus.
- Fully bring the South Block at Aberdeen City Campus back into use, creating a hub for enterprise and business engagement.

To Meet the Aim of EFFICIENT RESOURCE DEPLOYMENT, the College will: -

- Prioritise SFC funding, together with commercial income and sales from surplus sites, to areas of greatest need and impact.
- Use Space Utilisation statistics to inform accommodation planning.

To Meet the Aim of MAXIMISING VALUE, the College will: -

- Market its surplus sites at Balgownie and the Gordon Centre on a phased basis, taking into account prevailing market conditions, to ensure the best return.
- Seek to derive a cash return from property held for resale, by letting to commercial tenants.
- Set annual stretch targets for commercial income from hire of College facilities.

To Meet the Aim of FLEXIBILITY, the College Will: -

- Annually review accommodation requirements, including alternative approaches to curriculum and service delivery.
- Ensure a Regional Presence, utilising learning centres and other facilities to meet the needs of stakeholders as appropriate.

To Meet the Aim of MINIMISING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT, the College will: -

- Develop and deliver a new Carbon Management Plan covering the period 2020 to 2025.

- *Deliver all estates projects in such a way so as to consider environmental impact."*

2.3 Progress toward achieving these is discussed in Section 3 below.

3.0 PROGRESS REPORT

3.1 Sustainable Estates Developments

3.1.1 We have continued to prioritise resources to backlog maintenance identified in the 2017 Condition Survey. The major work in this regard has been the replacement of the duplex lifts in the Tower Block at Aberdeen City Campus. Current spend for this, inclusive of VAT, is £392k against budget of £420k. There have also already been over 60 smaller projects, with costs ranging from £1,000 to £20,000.

3.1.2 The Hazardous Areas Training Workshop at Aberdeen Altens Campus was completely refitted to current standards with spend of £286k against a budget of £282k.

3.1.3 In response to feedback from the City Futures workstream, there has been significant work in the South Block at Aberdeen City Campus, bringing the first floor back into use, and creating 7 new, double-sized teaching spaces for graphic design, and digital animation and media. It has also created new staff workrooms, meeting rooms, offices and student social and informal learning space. Spend was £487k against a budget of £498k.

3.1.4 A total of £240k was allocated to Aberdeen Altens Campus for improvement works, with the to be agreed with the staff and students onsite. This has included external paintwork, reconfiguration of rooms FG13 and 14, replacement of welding curtains, and reconfiguration of workshop space in D Block. External works to the car park are pending.

3.2 Efficient Resource Deployment

3.2.1 In 2019-20, SFC allocated the College £2,308k of Estates Capital funding, with £1,617k to be targeted to "very high priority" maintenance. The College supplemented this with £550k from the Cash Budget for Priorities, giving a total available fund of £2,858k.

3.2.2 No sales of surplus sites have yet been achieved. The default position for sales proceeds is that they return to the Scottish Government. We are in early discussion with SFC to make the case to retain any proceeds for use by the College in addressing backlog maintenance.

3.3 Maximising Value

3.3.1 Advice from the College's selling agents was to delay marketing the Balgownie site until autumn 2019, and then to market by direct approach to potential developers. This tactic has now been initiated with 11 development

companies; at the time of writing, eight have expressed interest, one has declined and two have yet to respond. Advice currently is that, while any offers may not achieve a significant increase on those most recently considered, they may be “cleaner”, with less restrictive conditions.

3.3.2 Recent negotiations have seen the sports hall at Gordon Centre let out to Scottish Hockey, via Granite City Wanderers Hockey Club, for an initial 5 month period to 31 March 2020. If this proves successful, we will consider a longer-term arrangement.

3.3.3 We are also in negotiations with Bridge of Don Men's Shed to lease the former Guardhouse, also at Gordon Centre.

3.3.4 In terms of commercial lets, the new and revised marketing materials have generated good levels of interest and the re-opening and relaunch of the Planetarium has been successful, with a number of groups attending sessions. To respond to the increased level of interest and to provide support for events, management are currently considering the creation of a new post within marketing and communications. Annual targets for commercial let income will be set from 2020-21 onwards.

3.4 Flexibility

3.4.1 The developments noted in paragraphs 3.1.3 and 3.1.4 were undertaken in response to changes in the way the curriculum is delivered. At Aberdeen City Campus, this “Phase 1” frees up space to plan subsequent moves to be finalised for 2020. Initial plans include re-configuration of hair and beauty salon space to allow for a more commercial offer, relocation of photography workshop and gym. These will be further considered over the coming months.

3.4.2 The College maintains its presence and delivery on all seven of its sites across the Region.

3.5 Minimising Environmental Impact

3.5.1 The College's Carbon Management Plan 2020-25 will be prepared for approval in June 2020.

3.5.2 A number of projects are currently underway, designed to reduce the College's impact on the environment, including: -

- Replacement of the pool car fleet with a combination of electric, hydrogen and hybrid vehicles;
- Removal of all office and classroom bins, with increased numbers of recycling points; and
- Negotiations with Aberdeen Heat and Power to connect to the District Heat Network.

The annual Environment and Sustainability Report will be considered separately by the Committee in February 2020.

4.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 4.1 While resources available to support the Strategy are limited, the College has made good progress towards its Aims. We continue to address very high priority maintenance, and have been able to support greater coherence in the curriculum by creating new and improved learning spaces. This theme will be continued in 2019-20 and 2020-21.

PETER D SMITH
Vice Principal – Finance and Resources

20 November 2019



FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 28 November 2019	
Title: IT Strategy Annual Report 2019	
Author: Peter D Smith, Vice Principal – Finance & Resources	Contributor(s): Paul Smith, Director of IT & Technical Services
Type of Agenda Item:	
For Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
For Discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reserved Item of Business	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purpose: To enable the Committee to consider progress in implementing the College's IT Strategy 2018-2021.	
Linked to Strategic Goal:	
5. Optimise the use of our available resources to deliver financial and environmental sustainability.	
Linked to Annual Priority:	
Executive Summary: In support of the Strategic Plan 2018-2020, the College has an approved Information Technology Strategy. The report attached as Appendix 1 updates the Committee on progress in delivering the aims and objectives of that Strategy.	
Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee discuss the report.	
Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable): None	
Equality Impact Assessment:	
Positive Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Evidence:	

ITTS Report: 18/19 Review and 19/20 Plans

Document Overview

This document aims to inform the group about the services provided by IT and Technical Services including our helpdesk service, operational support, infrastructure projects, development projects, rolling replacement of equipment, support contracts and information security. It will cover a review of the 18-19 session and our plans for the 19-20 session.

Version	Author	Recipients	Change Date	Reason For Change
1.0	Paul Smith	Pete Smith	18/11/2019	First Draft

Session 18-19 Review

Overall service review

The 18-19 session was our first year of a new service model after transitioning from an outsourced service to primarily in house. This has allowed us to become a more visible and accessible service and allowed the operations, development and technical services teams to integrate and collaborate more. This integration now makes it much easier to assign tasks to the appropriate group or individual in good time and deploy resources where we need them quickly.

As part of the transition we now have an on-site helpdesk and our own IT service management tool allowing easy access for our customers to log and track requests. Ownership of the ITSM has allowed us to create our own categories and closure codes meaning better reporting and trend analysis.

Having the helpdesk service in house has helped us improve our relationship with the Student Helpdesk who provide a valuable service in supporting our student body.

Customer satisfaction scores are up at 95% for the session and we have returned a strong audit report with many areas of good practice identified.

Overall this has been a positive transition but there are always areas for improvement. We have identified these in our team self-evaluation report and have fed them into our enhancement plan for 19-20.

New roles

- **Business Analyst:** This role was introduced as part of the development function to ensure that business requirements and processes can be fully understood and documented prior to any development project work being carried out. It is a key customer engagement role in the team providing a vital link between the customer and the developers.
- **Project Team Manager:** This role has been introduced within the development function to ensure we have appropriate levels of rigour applied to management of IT

projects. Working with other IT managers and our customers to plan and manage delivery of successful projects with measurable benefits.

- **Information Security Lead:** Recognising the increased need for specific expertise in the area of information security this role was introduced at the start of the 18-19 session. The role sits outside the operations team to allow objective analysis of the security of our systems. The role is also responsible for managing and delivering training, production of training materials and running a security awareness campaign. The role is key to our relationship with the HEFESTIS CISOShare service and the Scottish Government Cyber Resilience Unit.

Infrastructure Projects (250k. 150k Systems Platform)

- **New Systems Platform (Storage Spaces Direct/Hyper-V):** Replacement of end of life VMWare platform (6 x servers and SAN storage) with a new Microsoft Storage Spaces Direct and Hyper-V platform. Systems resilience and performance have been improved with a 15k saving on VMware licensing as the Hyper-V licensing is covered under our current Microsoft Agreement.
- **SQL Server Consolidation:** Consolidation of multiple instances of SQL database servers into 3 resilient clusters. System resilience and performance improved with 15k savings on Microsoft licensing costs.
- **Network Wi-Fi refresh Design:** High level design of the new network and Wifi solution. Options appraisal of solutions completed in collaboration with our partners Esteem and ROC. Discussion around system resilience, access to services and user profiles completed. This feeds into detailed system design and equipment list for procurement in 19/20 session. The focus on this design was ease of access for our users balanced against security requirements.

Development Projects (80k. Consultancy costs and licensing)

- **Student Information Portal:** Requirements gathering and phase one deployment of the Student Information Portal. The aim of the project is to bring all relevant information about our students into one place to help our staff provide support. Phase one focus was on bursary information and information for curriculum staff. The majority of our development resource was assigned to work on this project to meet start of session deadline.
- **MyNESCOl:** Migration to version 3 of the Collabco MyDay solution. Making new functionality available for investigation and implementation in 19-20 session.
- **D/EPM and P2P:** In collaboration with the finance and procurement teams requirements gathering and initial build of new DEPM budget management system and P2P procurement system. ITTS are providing infrastructure and project management support to this project.

Replacement and deployment of equipment (340k. 86k classroom replacements. 120k MAC lab replacements. 60k CAD lab replacements. 43k BCD laptop replacements)

- Aberdeen City Campus and Altens Campus classroom desktop replacements x 11
- Inverurie and Clinterty classroom desktop replacements.

- Aberdeen City MAC lab replacements x 6
- Science laptops x 20
- FG13/14 CAD lab replacements x 66
- BCD laptops x 150
- AVID Video Editing Studio x 30

Licensing and maintenance contracts (670k. 100k Blackboard. 55k Microsoft. 50k Capita - Unit-E)

Increased cost due to current economic climate. This was the final year on the Microsoft licensing model based on staff FTE so an increase was expected in 19-20. Our new Blackboard solution which is now a 'Software As a Service' model was deployed. Approximately the same cost as the old version but with additional functionality (Collaborate module and Blackboard Ally). Also the final year on the current Capita – Unit-E contract. We have negotiated a new 3 year contract to continue our relationship with Capita.

Information Security (20k – CISOShare service and security tools)

Much of the work in this area during the 18/19 session was focused on the Scottish Government Public Sector Action Plan for cyber security. The initial steps of the plan were completed and the key task of gaining Cyber Essentials + accreditation was achieved in April 2019. We continue to use the HEFESTIS CISOShare service to help us with governance in this area and there have been some positive changes in the structure of this service that have proved to be beneficial for NESCol. We now carry out our own internal and external vulnerability scanning as well as our scheduled annual CE+ audit. Our 'Keep It Safe' campaign on COLIN and MyNESCol is an excellent mechanism for getting the information security message out to staff and students.

Session 19-20 Plans

Infrastructure Projects (350k. 200k on network and wifi refresh)

- **Network and Wifi refresh:** The main infrastructure project we have this session is phase one of our network and Wifi refresh. This will give us a bet of breed software defined network based on HP Aruba technology. This upgrade will allow devices of all types to connect and access services with ease while being secured based on defined policies so the experience for our users should be the same whether connected to wired or wireless network. This project also includes deployment of Eduroam for staff and students, an upgrade of our JANET links from 1GB to 10GB and new guest Wifi solution.
- **Platform Resilience:** With the successful deployment of our new 'Storage Spaces Direct' system platform the next stage in improving system resilience is to provide site resilience to protect against a major disaster at our primary data centre. Options

of 'on premise' and cloud solutions will be investigated that will provide a failover mechanism for core systems in the event of a disaster at our primary Data Centre. Cloud services provide the possibility of having a service available at low cost ready to be used with additional cost only when we activate systems on the platform. This is a preferred option as we do not need to purchase and maintain our own failover infrastructure.

- **Print Solution:** Our current lease agreement for multi-function devices is at an end in 2020 so the opportunity will be taken to review the overall print solution to ensure it is providing value for money and provides us with a flexible yet secure solution. A solution with strong reporting facilities will help considerably in our efforts to reduce our print volumes contributing to financial and environmental sustainability targets.

Development Projects (150k. Consultancy costs, additional development resource and licenses)

- **Student Information Portal:** Phase two development of the Student Information Portal will be our main priority this session. Lessons learned sessions from phase one have been completed and we have our priority areas agreed for phase two including additional support requirements and absence. This is a large and complex internal development project that has consumed much of our development resource so we need to plan carefully to make sure we can resource our other projects and tasks.
- **Digital Accessibility:** Project to ensure NESCol meets the WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility standard. This applies to all websites, other customer facing online systems and mobile apps. All websites also need to provide an accessibility statement detailing how the standard is met or if not what accessible alternatives are available.
- **D/EPM and P2P:** In collaboration with the finance and procurement teams we'll go live with new budget management and procurement tools this session. ITTS are providing infrastructure and project management support to this project.
- **Identity Management:** Our current Microsoft Identity Management tool gives us the ability to automate account provisioning and de-provisioning for staff and students. Beyond this the tool has the capability to provide more benefits such as role based access to systems and services, self-service user access to update information, and workflow approvals for managers. This aligns with our drive for improved security and use of digital removing manual processes that can be prone to error.
- **Employer Bookings:** A review of how we engage with employers who enrol their staff on courses at NESCol to improve their experience and ensure we have all relevant information recorded and accessible to our staff. This project is at the requirements gathering stage and we are working in collaboration with BCD to fully understand what is needed.
- **MyNESCol Improvements:** With MyNESCol now well established as our student portal we move into phase three of the project identifying further improvements that can be made to the system and assessing additional functionality that has been made available.
- **Online Programme of Study:** A review of the programme of study processes to understand how we can improve this for our staff. Aligned with our year of digital

we'll look to create an online system for this task working in collaboration with all relevant departments.

Replacement and deployment of equipment (400k. 80k on staff laptops, 60k on Starboards)

- Maritime Academy Simulator Upgrade. Hardware and software upgrade provide by vendor Wartsila bringing the simulator suite up to the latest version with fully supported hardware.
- Laptop trolleys for schools groups and care. Allowing more flexible access to IT resource for these groups. Particularly to allow timetabling in GP rooms when classes are split between practical and online research.
- Front of class interactive board replacement. Roll out of new Starboard devices to classrooms. Phase one this session.
- High specification classroom PCs in Fraserburgh. For use with CAD and other design applications.
- Staff laptop replacement. 150 staff laptops are end of life this session and will be replaced in a phased roll out.
- Staff workroom PCs. 50 workroom PCs are end of life this session. Requirements will be reviewed to make sure the right device type is deployed.
- Monitoring system servers. Additional 3 servers to provide resilience to our IT system monitoring solution.
- Render farm hardware. Replacement of hardware or deployment of cloud based solution to act as our render farm for 3D animation classes.

Our device estate has increased in the last year so we'll analyse our utilisation statistics to make sure we have the right type of device in the right place to get the most out of the equipment we have. We always aim for our estate to be lean and heavily used. Demand appears to be for more laptops and flexible access rather than fixed IT in classrooms so we'll need to position ourselves to accommodate this.

Licensing and maintenance contracts (690k. 104k Blackboard, 70k Microsoft, 52k Capita - Unit-E)

Covering software licensing, maintenance agreements, subscription fees and connectivity contracts this costs has increased over the last 2 years for a number of reasons. Suppliers are citing current economic conditions including Brexit as a reason for higher than expected annual price increases on existing licenses. There is also a shift away from traditional educational site licence costs to subscription based models. As an organisation we tend to add to the list of available services each year but rarely remove access to any.

Microsoft has recently changed their educational licensing model resulting in increased costs. Previously a license was based on staff FTE and with all students' allocated free licenses. Now we have a 'knowledge worker' count (any user who access a Microsoft service) and allocation of student licenses on a 40:1 ratio of students to knowledge workers. While the costs still represents excellent value against commercial costs we'll need to keep a close eye on this as it could be a significant future cost.

We continue to review each contract at renewal working with relevant departments and individual to ensure we are only buying licenses that are required.

Information Security (75k – CISOShare service, security tools, MFA and device encryption)

Having completed the initial PSAP items and achieved CE+ accreditation in 18/19 the 19/20 session will see plans to improve the organisations security posture in a number of areas. We will continue to use the CISO Share service with a new CISO, David Roberston now appointed for our region. David and our internal security lead have formed an information security working group and a risk governance group to manage all critical information security risks and tasks. The CISOShare service will provide a framework for measuring our progress in this area and will provide a collaborative working platform for all member organisations. A framework document detailing the next stage of the Public Sector Action Plan was expected from the Scottish Government in October 2019 but is still being finalised. In the absence of this we plan to move forward using the ISO27001 standard as a guideline as this aligns with most of the points that were in the draft version of the action plan. Key security projects to be undertaken this session include:

- Mobile device management
- Multifactor Authentication
- Advanced threat protection in Office 365
- Device Encryption
- Security Information and Event Management tool (SIEM)

Esteem Contract (142k. Infrastructure/Systems support)

As part of our service transition we engaged with an infrastructure support partner, Esteem/ROC, who manage and maintain our back end systems such as Active directory, backup systems, network infrastructure, windows servers and systems platform. Our aim was to ensure our on-site staff were fully engaged with our customers rather than carrying out scheduled maintenance tasks, patching systems and monitoring. We also wanted to ensure we had the capacity within the team to run proof of concept work and create technology roadmaps to keep NESCol moving forward.

A service review will take place in January 2020 to assess the success of the service and agree on any changes required. Our aim would be to identify areas to upskill our in house staff and reduce the cost of this contract over the next 18 months.