



REGIONAL BOARD

Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Regional Board held on Wednesday 24 March 2021 through the use of Microsoft Teams.

Agenda Item	
	<p>Present: David Anderson Ann Bell – Vice Chair Sasha Brydon Neil Cowie Martin Dear Abdul Elghedafi Susan Elston John Henderson – Vice Chair Abha Maheshwari Julia McGinley Neil McLennan Ken Milroy - Regional Chair Sheena Ross Andrew Russell Gwen Watt</p> <p>In attendance: Robin McGregor, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality Peter Smith, Vice Principal Finance & Resources Pauline May, Secretary to the Board Susan Lawrance, Minute Secretary David Archibald, MHA Henderson Loggie (for Agenda Items 01-21 to 06-21 only) Atholl Menzies, ASET Chief Executive And Executive Director (for Agenda Item 20-21 only) Duncan Abernethy, Director of Business Development (for Agenda Item 20-21 only) Susan Grant, Director of Learning (for Agenda Item 12-21 only) Kimra Donnelly, Director of People Services (for Agenda Item 24-21 only)</p> <p>Trade Union Observers: Elle Watson, UNISON Sue Porter, EIS/FELA</p>
01-21	<p>Apologies No apologies were presented but Anne Simpson's absence was recorded.</p>
02-21	<p>Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items N McLennan declared potential conflicts of interest by virtue of his role at the University of Aberdeen.</p>
03-21	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 16 December 2020 The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.</p>

04-21	<p>Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting Members noted the Matters Arising Report with no further matters raised.</p>
	<p>Matters for Decision</p>
05-21	<p>External Effectiveness Review The Board considered a paper providing Members with an opportunity to consider the Report prepared by MHA Henderson Loggie on its Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review.</p> <p>D Archibald thanked Members, the Executive Team and the Secretary to the Board for their input into the process.</p> <p>Members were advised that the Report evidenced a high level of compliance with all aspects of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges. It was highlighted that there are no areas of non-compliance and no recommendations. D Archibald highlighted that no previous Reviews undertaken by MHA Henderson Loggie for other colleges had also identified no areas of non-compliance and no recommendations.</p> <p>D Archibald commented that the Review findings should provide Members with assurance that the NESCol Regional Board is strong and committed. N Cowie commented that the Executive Team was greatly appreciative of working with such a committed Board and that the Team would support actions to strengthen future governance activities.</p> <p>D Archibald explained four 'others areas to consider' in support of improvements that were identified through the Board Focus Group discussions, noting that the Board may wish to reflect on these for possible introduction.</p> <p>D Archibald confirmed that positive views shared in Member questionnaires had been supported by evidence reviewed as part of the Review's desktop exercise.</p> <p>Members approved the Report prior to its submission to the SFC and publication on the College's website.</p> <p>In relation to the preparation of the Board's Development Plan for the next 12 months, it was agreed that the Board's Governance Steering Group would give this initial consideration before consulting with Committee Chairs and the full Board.</p>
	<p><i>D Archibald left the meeting at this time.</i></p>
	<p><i>It was agreed Agenda Item 20-21 would be taken at this time.</i></p>
	<p>Reserved Item – Matter for Discussion</p>
20-21	<p>Commercial Activity <i>A Menzies joined the meeting at this time.</i></p> <p>Aberdeen Skills and Enterprise Training Limited</p> <p><i>A Menzies left the meeting. S Ross and D Abernethy joined the meeting at this time.</i></p>

	<p>Business and Community Development</p> <p><i>D Abernethy left the meeting at this time.</i></p>
	<p>Reports to the Board</p>
06-21	<p>Report by the Regional Chair Members noted the Report.</p> <p>K Milroy advised that the recent Board recruitment process for Non-executive Members had been very successful, with applicant interviews scheduled to take place in early April 2021.</p> <p>The Regional Chair's attendance at a number of key national meetings was highlighted.</p>
07-21	<p>Report by the Principal Members noted the Report by the Principal.</p> <p>N Cowie and S Porter provided updates in relation to National Collective Bargaining Developments, including planned EIS-FELA industrial action.</p> <p>P Smith shared initial observations on additional funding for AY2021-21 and interim allocation for AY2021-22 published by the SFC earlier that day. It was agreed a detailed analysis of the announcements would be circulated to the Board in due course, and would also be considered as required by the Finance & Resources Committee as well as at the upcoming Strategy Event.</p>
08-21	<p>Report by the Committee Chairs Members noted the Report by the Committee Chairs.</p> <p>J Henderson, in his role as Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee, noted the information considered by the Committee regarding the Budget Review, and highlighted positive discussions around the College's Annual Environmental Sustainability Annual Report.</p> <p>A Bell, in her role as Chair of the Human Resources Committee, highlighted that the revised Equal Pay Statement & Policy had now been reviewed and reapproved by the Hums Resources Committee.</p>

	<p>Governance Matters</p>
09-21	<p>Governance Manual Members considered a paper detailing a number of proposed additions to the Board's Governance Manual.</p> <p>The Board approved the additional two role descriptions – Committee Chair and Principal & Chief Executive - as presented.</p> <p>Additional text relating to the co-option of former Non-executive Members and the remit of the Selection & Appointments Committee was also approved as presented.</p>
10-21	<p>Succession Planning The Board considered a paper highlighting a number of considerations relating to its succession planning.</p> <p>Members approved the proposed appointments to the offices of Chair and Vice Chair of Curriculum & Quality Committee and Human Resource Committee. It was noted these have been considered by the Selection & Appointments Committee and the Governance Steering Group in advance of being presented to the Board for approval.</p> <p><i>A Bell left the meeting at this time.</i></p> <p>The co-option of two current Non-executive Members at the end of their terms of office to two Board Committees was approved to ensure that critical Member knowledge and experience is retained during the ongoing challenging circumstances.</p> <p>A Bell rejoined the meeting at this time.</p> <p>Members acknowledged that the current Teaching Staff Member would leave the Board in early May 2022 and that an election process to appoint their successor would be initiated shortly. Members also noted the forthcoming changes relating to one of the Board's Vice Chairs and NESFEF Trustees.</p> <p>K Milroy advised that Committee Membership would be reviewed for AY2021-22 as part of the Annual Development Meeting process and to reflect the impending appointment of a number of new Non-executive Board Members.</p>
11-21	<p>Appointment of Chair of ASET Board of Directors Members considered a paper providing the Board with an opportunity to consider the appointment of the Chair of the Board of Directors of ASET.</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding the proposals presented in the paper.</p> <p>Some Members raised concerns regarding a four year appointment at this time, and the decision not to appoint through an open recruitment process given that other public appointments and open recruitment processes have continued despite the pandemic. Some concern was also noted given that the proposals did not reflect approaches previously agreed by the Board in April 2020 in relation to succession planning for the ASET Board of Directors.</p> <p>A discussion was also held in relation to considerations around continuity and retaining knowledge given the current and future challenging economic, industry and market circumstances, with Members noting that this would still be</p>

	<p>tested at the interview stage of an open recruitment process, one which the current Interim Chair would be eligible to participate in.</p> <p>It was suggested that the term of appointment and related timeline should be considered in line with the development of ASET's new strategy, and in support of future proofing the ASET Board in line with emerging industries and opportunities.</p> <p>In not supporting the proposal to appoint the current Interim Chair, the Board noted that consideration should be given to any related potential risks that could arise with this direction of travel.</p> <p>In noted the succession planning arrangements for current Directors to step down from the ASET Board, Member agreed that it was important for actions to be considered to improve diversity of membership of the ASET Board of Directors.</p> <p>Members agreed that the interim arrangements should be extended further for the Chair of the ASET Board rather than approve a longer term appointment at this time.</p> <p>Given the complexity of this matter, K Milroy agreed to discuss the Board's view and the alternative proposal further with the Interim Chair and to bring the matter back to the Board.</p>
	<p>Matters for Decision</p>
	<p><i>S Grant joined the meeting at this time.</i></p>
<p>12-21</p>	<p>Equality Mainstreaming Report</p> <p>Members considered a paper providing information on the preparation of the College's next Equality Mainstreaming Report and the identification of new Equality Outcomes for the period 2021-25.</p> <p>S Grant summarised the work undertaken by her and a number of key contributors. The role of the College's Equalities Committee was also noted. Members were advised that the extensive appendices relating to staff data had been considered by the Human Resources Committee at its most recent meeting. S Grant added that the Report would be enhanced by the inclusion of a number of case studies to provided additional context, and would be designed by the College's Marketing & Communications Team prior to its publication on the College's website by the end of April 2021.</p> <p>In response to a Member's query, it was agreed that the response rate to the Student Survey referred to in Section 5.3.1 would be added into the Report.</p> <p>The Board noted a number of positive outcomes and developments highlighted in the Report related to the mainstreaming of equality across the College. Members commented that it was important for the Board to be aware of the College's agreed key actions in relation to equality.</p> <p>All staff involved in the preparation of the comprehensive Report were thanked. It was agreed that it was important for the positive messages contained in the report are communicated to stakeholders.</p> <p>The Board approved the Equality Mainstreaming Report and the College's Equality Outcomes for 2021-25 as presented.</p>

	<i>S Grant and R McGregor left the meeting at this time.</i>
13-21	<p>Scottish Colleges “Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency” Members considered a paper providing the Board with an opportunity to consider adopting the Scottish Colleges’ Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency.</p> <p>The Board agreed that NESCol should demonstrate its commitment to contributing to addressing the global climate emergency and Scotland’s Net Zero ambitions by adopting the Statement.</p> <p>It was noted that the Statement would be officially launched by CDN on Earth Day, 22 April 2021.</p>
	Matters for Information
14-21	<p>Annual Priorities AY2019-20 – Final Update Members noted a paper providing a final update against the College’s twenty Annual Priorities for AY2019-20.</p> <p>It was highlighted that two Priorities flagged as red would continue to be addressed as they relate to learner outcomes and financial sustainability. It was also noted that the six amber Priorities would continue to be addressed as part of the ongoing Business Priority Planning project or as ‘business as usual’ work.</p>
15-21	<p>Staff Wellbeing Update The Board noted a paper detailing the College’s approach to staff wellbeing.</p> <p>Endorsement of the College’s strengthened approach recorded in the Report of a recent Investors in People Review was highlighted.</p>
16-21	<p>Prevent Duty Annual Report Members noted a paper providing information on the College’s compliance with the Prevent Duty.</p>
17-21	<p>New Strategic Plan – Approach & Timeline Members noted a paper providing information on the development of the College’s next Strategic Plan.</p> <p>N Cowie explained the rationale for a “lighter touch” document due to current levels of fluidity and uncertainty in relation to the College’s operating environment.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the draft Strategic Plan would be presented for the Board’s consideration at the Strategy Event scheduled for 27 April 2021.</p> <p>In response to comments from S Brydon regarding the potential for student input into the College’s new Strategic Plan, it was agreed that appropriate opportunities for the Students’ Association to be consulted on new College Plans would be considered by the Executive Team.</p> <p>A Member’s request made for the upcoming Strategy Event to provide the Board with information on longer term horizon scanning was acknowledged and would be considered prior to the Event’s Agenda being finalised.</p>

18-21	<p>Any Other Business No other business was raised.</p>
19-21	<p>Summation of Business and Date of Next Meeting The Secretary gave a summation of the business conducted. The next meeting of the Regional Board is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 23rd June 2021 at 1000 hours.</p>
	<p><i>D Russell left the meeting at this time.</i></p>
	<p>Reserved Items of Business – Matter for Discussion</p>
20-21	<p>Commercial Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen Skills and Enterprise Training Limited • Business & Community Development
	<p><i>K Milroy and P Smith left the meeting at this time.</i></p>
21-21	<p>Annual Appraisal of Regional Chair</p>
	<p><i>K Milroy and P Smith rejoined and N McLennan left the meeting at this time.</i></p>
	<p>Matters for Decision</p>
22-21	<p>Extension of Contract for Janitorial & Security Services</p>
23-21	<p>Contract Award – Associate Trainers</p>
	<p><i>P May and S Lawrance left and K Donnelly joined the meeting at this time.</i></p>
24-21	<p>Appointment of Secretary to the Board</p>
	<p><i>K Donnelly left and P May and S Lawrance rejoined the meeting at this time.</i></p>
	<p>Standing Item</p>
25-21	<p>Regional Board Programme of Business AY2020-21 This Agenda Item was not considered.</p>
26-21	<p>Summation of Reserved Items of Business The Regional Chair advised that a summation of the Reserved Items of Business was not required.</p>
	<p>K Mirloy acknowledged that this was M Dear's last attendance at a Board Meeting due to his term of office ending shortly. M Dear was thanked on behalf of the Board for his support and contributions. M Dear was also wished well for his planned retirement in Summer 2021.</p> <p>K Milroy also highlighted that this would have been A Simpson's last attendance at a Board Meeting with her term of office ceasing at the end of April. A Simpson's significant contribution to the Board's of the former Banff & Buchan College and NESCol over many years was highlighted, with the Board passing on their best wishes and noting that A Simpson would remain a Co-opted Member of the Curriculum & Quality Committee.</p>

	K Milroy, on behalf of the Board, also acknowledged that P May would shortly be leaving the College and acknowledged the high regard Board Members had for her. P May was wished well for her future plans.
	Meeting ended 1250 hours

Agenda Item	Actions from Regional Board Meeting 24/03/21	Responsibility	Deadline
05-21	Prepare Board Development Plan for next 12 months	Governance Steering Group	30 April 2021
20-21			
20-21			
07-21	Circulate analysis of recent SFC funding announcement	P Smith	As soon as possible
09-21	Finalise Governance Manual	P May	As soon as possible
11-21	Further discussions to be held regarding appointment of ASET Chair, with Board updated in due course	K Milroy	As soon as possible
12-21	Add survey response rate into section 5.3.1 of Equality Mainstreaming Report	S Grant	30 April 2021
17-21	Consider approach for consulting with SA on new College plans	N Cowie	Ongoing
17-21	Include longer-term horizon scanning on April Strategy Event Agenda	K Milroy, N Cowie with P May	15 April 2021

Signed:.....K Milroy..... Date:23.06.21.....