

REGIONAL BOARD

MINUTE OF MEETING

Minute of the meeting of the Regional Board of North East Scotland College held on Wednesday 21 June 2023 at 1000 hours in the Boardroom of Aberdeen City Campus.

Agenda Item	<p>Present: Neil Cowie Susan Elston (Regional Chair) Jim Gifford Bryan Hutcheson Nicole Matthews Carrie Beaton Leona McDermid Andy Rodden David Blackhall Sheena Ross Duncan Cockburn Iain Watt Mark Fotheringham Cindy Dempster</p> <p>In attendance via Teams: Neil McLennan</p> <p>In attendance: Stuart Thompson, Vice Principal, Finance & Resources Susan Lawrance, Secretary to the Board Karen Fraser, Minute Secretary</p> <p>Trade Union Observer: Sue Porter, EIS/FELA (until Agenda items relating to Private Reserved Matters for Decision)</p> <p>Guest Attendees: Joe Mulholland, College HMI, Education Scotland (for Agenda item 66-22) Kirsty Pettitt, Student Engagement & Wellbeing Manager (for Agenda item 78-22) Paul Smith, Director of M&C (for Agenda item 80-22) Susan Grant, Associate Vice Principal, Learning & Quality (for Agenda item 83-22)</p>
66-22	<p>Education Scotland Progress Visit: Update from J Mulholland Guest attendee J Mulholland directed members to the outcome report following the 21-23/03/23 Progress Visit, with emphasis placed on the data used being that published by SFC for AY2020/21.</p> <p>J Mulholland highlighted the many positives and limited negatives from the Visit including the valued relationships between staff and learners; the support and staff collaboration; the high positive destinations and the slight drop in f/t FE recruitment. Discussions followed on the 21/22 data (now published by SFC) with J Mulholland providing an overview of NESCol's position within the sector.</p> <p>The Principal highlighted the clear improvement recruitment trajectory, and the positive retention statistics for this year; whilst acknowledging the comments</p>

	<p>regarding a lack of continuity across all curriculum areas in contextualising the APSD unit.</p> <p>Suggestions were offered in terms of going forward: to convert partial successes into full successes, student recruitment and the learning and teaching processes. A discussion on a move towards p/t rather than f/t delivery to aid retention by offering flexibility and agility across the College sector took place; along with possible changes in approach to progress visits took place.</p> <p>Members noted a shortened version of the report is available on the Education Scotland website.</p>
	Guest attendee J Mulholland left the meeting at 10:25am
67-22	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies were received in advance from G Watt, R McGregor and D Anderson.</p>
68-22	<p>Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items</p> <p>A Rodden declared a potential conflict of interest by virtue of his position with ETZ Ltd and Agenda item 83-22.</p> <p>N McLennan declared a potential conflict of interest by virtue of his position with University of Aberdeen.</p> <p>L McDermid declared a potential conflict of interest by virtue of her position with Aberdeen Foyer.</p>
69-22	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 22 March 2023</p> <p>The Minute was approved as a true and accurate record.</p>
70-22	<p>Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting</p> <p>Members noted that all matters arising had been addressed with no additional comments made.</p>
	Reports to the Board
71-22	<p>Report by the Regional Chair (Susan E)</p> <p>Members noted the summary of meetings attended by the Regional Chair and additional verbal information provided. S Elston drew attention to the Joint Board Event taking place on the evening of 21/06/23. S Elston, in response to a query, confirmed the College's engagement with both Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Community Planning, but highlighted the differing approaches of both entities.</p>
72-22	<p>Report by the Principal (N Cowie)</p> <p>Members noted the verbal summary of the Report provided by the Principal.</p> <p>N Cowie highlighted the Withers Review which has been welcomed by the Sector, and the developed relationship with Fraserburgh campus' benefactor and NESCol's Director of Business Development D Abernethy, and underlined also the future role industry funding could play in the College's growth ambitions.</p>
73-22	<p>Report by Committee Chairs (Committee Chairs/Vice Chair)</p> <p>Members noted the Report by the Committee Chairs.</p>

	<p>As Chair of the Curriculum and Quality Committee, A Rodden summarised key business and noted the valuable oversight provided by credit forecast scenario planning and the increased student engagement generated by the SA.</p> <p>L McDermid provided an overview of key activities in her capacity as Chair of the Human Resources Committee. The Equalities Report was recognised as being an exceptional piece of work and the far-reaching implications of AI usage discussed. AI awareness training for all Board members is currently being explored.</p> <p>As Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, J Gifford itemised some of the business undertaken.</p> <p>On behalf of the Finance and Resources Committee, Chair S Ross detailed the main items of recent business. An increase in the number of meetings per AY and robust discussions regarding SSJ were highlighted.</p> <p>On behalf of the Governance and Nominations Committee, the Board Secretary provided a summation of key matters addressed.</p>
	Governance Matters for Decision
74-22	<p>Board Policies (Susan L)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession Planning Policy <p>S Lawrance directed members to the revised Succession Planning Policy, highlighting the proposed amendments. Members approved the Policy changes as presented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment & Selection Policy <p>S Lawrance requested members consider the proposed revisions to the Recruitment and Selection Policy. Members approved the amendments as presented.</p>
	Governance Matters for Information
75-22	<p>Board and Committee Membership (Susan L)</p> <p>S Lawrance highlighted the proposed changes following the end of tenure for D Russell and the appointment of M Fotheringham. Revisions to Committee Chairs, Vice-Chairs and memberships were summarised. Members noted the information provided.</p>
76-22	<p>Board Recruitment – verbal update (Susan L)</p> <p>S Lawrance updated members on Board recruitment, confirming a closing date of 14/07/23 with shortlisting and subsequent interviews planned for July and August 2023. The recruitment drive has been referenced in the AGCC's Morning Bulletin and informal discussions have already been scheduled with 3 interested parties. Members were again encouraged to promote the vacancies across their networks. Members noted the information provided.</p>
77-22	<p>Trade Union Representation on Regional Board (Susan L)</p> <p>S Lawrance updated members with regards to Trade Union representation. Members noted the paper's content.</p>
	For Decision
78-22	SA Strategy 2023/2026(K Pettitt)

	<p>Guest attendee K Pettitt referred to the shared Strategic Plan and its' anticipated impacts on the work of the SA for 2023-26. Following her summation of the PowerPoint presentation, members were invited to provide feedback. Comments relating to the absence of references to the SA in the Progress Report, the positive engagement of Class Reps and the evidenced healthy and vibrant SA were noted. The SA's understanding of the wider ambitions of the College and its' implementation of this within its' work undertaken was acknowledged, as was its' assistance with improving the student experience and its' building of relationships with internal and external parties.</p> <p>In recognition of the meeting being the last to be attended by Regional SA President, members joined N Cowie in thanking N Matthews and wishing her well and also wishing Depute SA President C Beaton well in her new role for AY2023/24.</p>
	Guest attendee K Pettitt left the meeting at 11:22am
79-22	<p>Programme of Meetings for AY2023/24 (Susan L) S Lawrance directed members to the shared draft meeting schedule for AY2023/24, drawing attention to the additional F&R and HR Committee meetings in September 2023 and January 2024. Members noted the dates outlined. Action: S Lawrance to schedule an additional meeting of the A&R Committee for Sept 2023.</p>
	Matters for Discussion
80-22	<p>Graduation Ceremonies – Fellow Nominations (Paul) Guest attendee P Smith updated members on Graduation planning to date and requested nominations of NESCol fellows be forwarded to S Lawrance for consideration by mid-July 2023. It was noted that BBC Radio Scotland's Fiona Stalker will once again host the ceremonies. Action: S Lawrance to share list of current NESCol fellows.</p>
	Guest attendee P Smith left the meeting at 11:31am
	Matters for Information
81-22	<p>Strategy Event – next steps (N Cowie/S Elston) Following the Strategy Event on 27/04/23, a circulated paper outlining "next steps" in addition to plans to hold another Strategy Event in November 2023 was noted by members, with feedback invited.</p> <p>It was suggested that a further consolidation and distillation of the points raised on the day is completed. Whilst appreciation of 1 day of focused activity was expressed, consideration of utilising an off-site venue was advocated.</p>
82-22	<p>KPI Data (N Cowie) N Cowie drew attention to the shared paper, written to provide members with the internal version of the SFC's AY2021/22 KPI report, and highlighted the positive retention figures, the ongoing spotlight reviews, and the quarterly KPI meetings to ensure aspirations are progressing.</p> <p>Comments were invited. Linking with the student satisfaction survey results was mooted. Action: S Lawrance to discuss with NESCol's Director of Quality G Griffin including the student satisfaction results in the KPI data report.</p>
	Reserved Item of Business
	Matters for Decision

83-22	ETZ Progress report (late paper to allow for last minute developments to be included) (S Grant)
	Guest attendee S Grant left the meeting at 12:01pm
84-22	2023-24 Financial Budget (S Thompson)

	<p>N Mathews left the meeting at 12:28pm L McDermid and A Rodden left the meeting at 12:33pm</p>
85-22	2023-24 Capital Budget (S Thompson)
86-22	SFC FFR (S Thompson)
	Matter for Information
87-22	Strategic Risk Register (S Thompson)
88-22	Credit Activity Overview AY2022/23
89-22	<p>Any Other Business In recognition of the meeting being the last to be attended by the Trade Union Observer, members joined N Cowie in thanking S Porter for her contributions.</p>
	<p>Trade Union Observer S Porter left the meeting at 12:52pm S Thompson, D Blackhall and C Dempster left the meeting at 12:53pm</p>
	Private Reserved Matters for Decision
90-22	Regional Board Nominee
	S Thompson rejoined the meeting at 1:04pm
	Private Reserved Matters for Information
91-22	National bargaining update
92-22	Think the Unthinkable Convention 5 (N Cowie)

	N Cowie, S Thompson and K Fraser left the meeting at 1:05pm
93-22	Principal's Performance Objectives Update
94-22	Summation of Actions and Date of next Meeting The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 11 October 2023.

Actions from the Regional Board Meeting held on 21 June 2023.			
Agenda Item	Action	Deadline	Responsibility
79-22	Schedule of Meetings: Schedule to be circulated to members plus additional meeting of A&R Committee (Sept 2023)	By AY2023/24	Board Secretary
80-22	Fellows: List of current Fellows to be circulated to Board Members with nominations submitted to Board Secretary.	August 2023	All & Board Secretary
82-22	Student Satisfaction Data: Explore opportunity to include in KPI Data report.	Update for next Meeting.	Board Secretary
83-22	Chairs Committee:		
93-22	Performance Objectives:		

Signed by S Elston..... Regional Chair

Date: 05.10.23