



## MINUTES OF MEETING OF ARGYLL COLLEGE BOARD

Held on Friday 13 September 2019 at 1 pm

at CERC, Lochgilphead and by VC

**Present:** Andrew Campbell (AMC) Chair, John Colston (JC) Vice Chair, Martin Jones (MJ), Ken Jones (KJ), Scott Matheson (SM), Amber Crowley (AC), Jim Findlay (JF), Tony Dalgaty (TD), Jennifer Swanson (JS)

**Apologies:** Lesley McInnes (LMcI), Gillian McCready (GMC)

**In attendance:** Elaine Munro (EM), Ailsa Close (AEC), Helen McGuigan (HM) HISA Student Association Assistant, Jamie Davidson (JD) MHA Henderson Loggie by VC for item 19.3.7 only, Steve McNaught (SM) MHA Henderson Loggie by VC for item 19.3.7 only, Vicky Daveney (VD) Board Secretary

No	Minute	Who	Action	Date
	<b>Welcome and apologies for absence.</b> The Chair welcomed all governors to the meeting and Helen McGuigan, Student Association Assistant. Apologies from Lesley McInnes and Gillian McCready.			
19.3.1	<b>Declarations of interest &amp; to determine any items as confidential.</b> JF declared his position as a local authority councillor.			
19.3.2	<b>Minutes of the last meeting.</b> These were approved by the board and signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting.			
19.3.3	<b>Matters arising.</b>			
	(i) Helensburgh Centre - Argyll & Bute Council have confirmed that Argyll College can continue in the building on the existing lease arrangement for another two years. Negotiations over terms following 2 years to begin in 20/21.	MJ/AEC	Liaise council	
	(ii) Riverside premises – on 3 <sup>rd</sup> September the lawyer sent a formal discharge of security to the Big Lottery Fund to sign and send back. AEC confirmed that she hopes to hear back in the next week.			
	(iii) Nursery – MJ confirmed that the seconded manager is to stay on until end October on a part-time basis. JC stated that a plan B should be put in place to minimise the impact on senior college management’s responsibility for the nursery if the college still owns the business by the end of October. MJ said that discussions are ongoing with two interested parties. Christie & Co have carried out a valuation of the business as a going concern and the rental value. The nursery employees	MJ/AEC	Ongoing negotiations	

	<p>and parents have been informed that the college is in negotiations to transfer the business. MJ to speak to a solicitor about the lease.</p> <p>(iv) Oban – MJ stated that costs are higher than originally thought for the hire of a temporary office building so is looking at ways to re-utilise rooms within the existing building.</p>	MJ	Liaise solicitor	
19.3.4	<p><b>Chair’s report.</b> The chair provided a report on his recent activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written to Stella Leitch since her resignation, she sends her good wishes.</li> <li>• Keeping in regular contact with the Principal and SMT as required.</li> <li>• Has had informal chats with various parties regarding a new Board Chair.</li> <li>• Attended the regional FE Board Meeting.</li> <li>• GAWG (Governance and Accountability Working Group) has met 5 times since previous Board Meeting.</li> <li>• A note had been received inviting the Chair and a Board member to meet with the Chair of Court to consider changing the FERB into a committee dealing with both HE and FE matters. The Board responded that in view of the ongoing Programme Board activity that this invitation was premature and a meeting should not be held until the outcomes from the overall Assembly activity was completed.</li> </ul>			
<b>RESOURCES</b>				
19.3.5	<p><b>Draft Finance and General Purposes Committee Minute of 30 August 2019</b> Minute noted</p>			
19.3.6	<p><b>Management accounts for year to 31 July 2019</b> JC noted that there is a modest surplus and asked whether this is before the assumed receipt of funds for Helensburgh. AEC confirmed that to be correct. Noted</p>			
19.3.7	<p><b>Draft External Audit Plan for 2018/19</b> JD introduced himself as the new audit team manager and stated that a new letter of engagement has been sent to the college to sign and return. This is due to a change in the auditors company name and because the scope of assignment has changed to the higher education SORP, due to the college’s assigned status. JD also stated that the key areas of focus are on page 4, this is a summary of their understanding of the major events within the college further to meetings between Steve McNaught and AEC. JD welcomes any comments as to whether this is complete or if anything is missing. JC asked if changes to the SORP are mainly presentational or material. JD confirmed that capital grants will be treated differently under the SORP, and confirmed that a re-statement of last year’s figures will be required to some extent. AMC queried the additional cost of the service, SM confirmed that this was for an additional day for re-statement. JD asked whether the timetable on page 8 ties in with scheduled Board Meeting dates. AEC confirmed that it does.</p>			

19.3.8	<p><b>Draft SFC Financial Forecast Review</b></p> <p>AEC stated that the annual return must demonstrate a reduction in costs over next 5 years. National Pay Bargaining has significantly increased teaching costs therefore colleges are looking at ways to increase teaching efficiencies. MJ said that SFC will be introducing a new model of funding over that same 5 year period, the parameters of which are, as yet, unknown. MJ said the focus is on putting in place better management systems which show how efficiently staff are being utilised. SM requested that the final version of the FFR be circulated to the board before it is sent to the SFC.</p>	AEC	Circulate to Board	
19.3.9	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety: H&amp;S issues</b></p> <p>MJ reported that a risk assessment for classroom activities is ongoing. A system for 'near misses' is also being investigated. MJ will report back on this.</p>	MJ		
<b>STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE</b>				
19.3.10	<p><b>Principal's Report for Period Ending 31 August 2019</b></p> <p>MJ updated the board on recent activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Marine Industry Training Centre, Oban – Argyll College has been successful in a bid to Argyll &amp; Bute Council which will enable a member of staff to be seconded to work solely on this project.</li> <li>Rural Growth Deal – The council is willing to invest in the Marine Training Centre as part of the Rural Growth Deal. MJ attended a workshop organised by the Scottish and UK Governments. Funding for the projects will be phased but MJ is hopeful this will be one of the earlier ones, potentially being signed off in early 2020. MJ said that The Rural Growth Deal isn't confined to the Marine Training Centre, it may also be used to improve the built environment which he is keen to improve. The council have been supportive.</li> <li>Property Update – MJ confirmed that an application is to be made to the SFC for loan to improve the built environment in Dunoon. HIE are in support of this. Progress is good to date.</li> <li>Engagement with SFC – AEC and MJ met with the SFC recently to discuss National Pay Bargaining.</li> <li>Engagement with HIE – attending regular meetings regarding support with property and strategic developments.</li> <li>Potential Archaeology Provision – Orkney are currently the centre of archaeology for UHI but are keen to share this with other colleges, as a regional offering is better for the partnership. Conversations are ongoing.</li> <li>SCDI/CDN Awards - Argyll College were guests of SEPA at the recent awards ceremony and received the award for Environmental Sustainability for the fleet of electric cars and charge points.</li> </ul> <p>The Board were pleased to see positive working partnerships between Argyll College and Argyll &amp; Bute Council</p>			
19.3.11	<p><b>Draft Minutes of Learning, Teaching and Engagement Committee held on 30 August 2019</b></p> <p>Minute noted.</p>			
19.3.12	<p><b>FE KPIs 2018/19</b></p> <p>EM confirmed that the KPIs are still being finalised, although indications were that partial success for full time FE courses has increased by 10%. A full investigation is being carried out. EM to report back to the board after the investigation is complete.</p>	EM	Investigation ongoing	

	TD asked if there are interim KPIs, EM confirmed that withdrawal data is reviewed on a regular basis and interim progression boards held at the start of semester two are used to highlight particular issues. AC suggested that the increased use of VC to FE students may be part of the problem and that learning support can take a long time to put in place. Noted			
19.3.13	<b>2018/19 Final HE FTEs and FE Credit Count</b> EM confirmed that Argyll College had exceeded its target by over 800 credits. MJ stated that there is a trend of overachieving on credits but we receive zero additional funding. Noted			
19.3.14	<b>Update on Student Recruitment</b> EM confirmed that the predicted target for HE is 200, currently sitting at 176. There are currently 530 pupils enrolled on Schools Link programmes which should increase to 800. 5 HNC/HND courses did not go ahead due to low student numbers, increased teaching costs meant they weren't viable. MJ suggested that marketing can become even more targeted in future and there needs to be consistency of courses running so students can progress from one level to the next. AC stressed the reputational damage to the college of courses not running. MJ said there may be a case for running fewer courses that will run consistently. Noted			
19.3.15	<b>Update on learning, teaching and enhancement items in last quarter:</b> a) HMle visit b) Pilot of regional essential skills policy c) HISA Awards – 2 winners from Argyll College The Board pleased to hear this and AMC will be writing to the winners. HM said that Argyll College was selected to pilot local awards last year and the feedback from nominated staff was good. Noted	AMC	Letters	
19.3.16	<b>Policies approved:</b> UHI Promoting a Positive Learning Environment Policy Noted and approved.			
<b>PEOPLE</b>				
19.3.17	<b>Draft HR &amp; R Committee Minute 30 August 2019</b> Noted			
19.3.18	<b>Summary of recruitment and HR in last quarter</b> Noted			
19.3.19	<b>Amendment to Policy:</b> Revised recruitment policy and associated procedures EM confirmed that the removal of '4.1 Definitions' been made by HR and it has been uploaded to the website.			

	Noted			
<b>BOARD GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT</b>				
19.3.20	<b>Board Recruitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The board recruitment sub-group met prior to the board meeting to discuss how to go about recruiting new board members and a new chair.</li> <li>MJ confirmed that there was a requirement for new board members with finance and accountancy experience, FE and HE knowledge and potential relevant industry links.</li> <li>Scott Matheson has accepted the post of interim Chair of the Audit Committee.</li> <li>Board members are requested to speak to contacts who may be interested in joining the board, but to ensure that they are aware there is an interview procedure to be followed.</li> </ul>	All		
19.3.21	<b>Programme Board Paper</b> AMC to write back to Gary Coutts in response to his paper.	AMC		
19.3.22	<b>Any other business</b> MJ briefly discussed the lease on the land CERC is on, he is going to investigate it further.	MJ		
19.3.23	<b>Date of next meeting.</b> 13 December 2019 at 1pm venue TBC			
	..... <b>Signed by Chair of meeting</b>	<b>Date</b> .....		