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REGIONAL BOARD REPORT

Subject: Borders College Student Associations Strategic Plan 2018-2020	**Purpose:** **For Approval** ☐ **For Discussion** ☐ **For Information** ☒
Prepared by: Douglas Jardine	**Date:** 12 October 2018

Purpose: To present BCSA's Strategic Plan 2018-2020

Linked to Strategic Goal 3: Provide a high quality College experience.

Executive Summary:

This paper presents BCSA's Strategy, '*Our Strategy 2018-2020'*, which has been developed through a process of consultation with elected and voluntary student officers of BCSA, and Class Representatives of Borders College.

The decision to develop a 2-year strategy was made in order to align with college strategy dates going forward.

Our vision is to develop an empowered and engaged student community; learning and growing together at Borders College.

The strategic plan is shaped by the following aims;

Build a Community
Have Fun
Empower Our Students
Work to be Aware
Prepare to Support

Recommendation:

Previous Committee Approvals:

For publication ☒	**For publication with redactions** ☐	**Not for publication** ☐

Our Strategy 2018-2020

BORDERS COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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1.0 Welcome

Welcome to Borders College Students' Association's strategic plan that looks ahead to 2020, and the vision, mission, and aims that will guide us during this time.

This is the second strategic plan BCSA has developed and it builds on the success and learning over the last three years. In 2014, the college received funding to develop a strong and sustainable Students' Association. From this point, elected Student Officers, staff and dedicated student volunteers have worked hard to build a Students' Association that is well understood, and has the ability to effectively represent the needs, wants and desires of students studying at Borders College.

We have decided to implement a shorter strategic plan this year to align ourselves with Borders College's strategy. Without the college and the students studying there we would not exist so it is appropriate to work alongside them when we assess our progress and plan for the future.

None of this would have been possible without the strong relationships and partnerships that the staff and previous student officers have developed over the last three years so I would like to sincerely thank them for their work representing the students of Borders College, both within the college, and to everyone beyond the campus community.

Douglas L Jardine	Amy Hamilton
Student President	BCSA Support Officer
Autumn 2018	Autumn 2018

2.0 BCSA 2015-2018

BCSA's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan outlined our commitments to improving the student experience across 6 key themes. Below is a summary of our main achievements over the last 3 years.

Representing the Student Voice
Delivered training to over 300 student representatives
Developed a Class Rep training programme for supported students
Introduced a Student Partnership Agreement, ensuring that each year the college and BCSA is committed to working together on projects to improve the student experience
Created a range of Student Officer training opportunities to equip all members of the BCSA team with the skills and knowledge required to effectively represent students.

Offering independent support and advice
Developed positive relationships with local organisations to augment the support services available at college
Committed to ensuring all BCSA Officers and staff receive mental health first aid training.
Set up and promoted of a range of student drop-in sessions, including careers services, sexual health advice, money skills, mental health peer support and LGBT.
Achieved Silver LGBT Charter Mark

Providing opportunities to enhance and develop transferable skills
Regular promotion of job and volunteering opportunities to students.
Worked with college staff and local partners to run training sessions to help student develop their skills and knowledge.
Supported 3 students to complete work placements with BSCA.

Communicating openly and effectively
Developed a new website in order to communicate more effectively with the student body.
Created a variety of ways to communicate with students e.g. BCSA Radio, BCSA YouTube channel, social media
Arranged regular meetings with the College Principal to discuss the student experience
Created a range of methods for students to tell the college about their student experience

Developing a sustainable and autonomous Students' Association
Developed policies and procedures allowing BCSA to operate sustainably and autonomously from year to year.
Employment of a full time Student President and staff member
Commitment to an annual budget to support our activities.

Promoting an atmosphere of belonging
Hosted a range of student events throughout the year
Supported students to develop a range of student clubs
Continued to advertise BCSA's open door policy to all students

3.0 Vision

“An empowered and engaged student community; learning and growing together at Borders College.”

This is our ideal vision of Borders College and it is what we will always be working towards. The rest of this strategic plan describes how we will work to achieve our vision. Although this may not be possible in the timeframe of one strategic plan this is normal for a big dream and we will work to get as close to this vision as we can over the next 2 years.

4.0 Mission

“To support and celebrate every student’s studies, wellbeing, and activities.

Our mission is the broadest description of what we do; BCSA exists to support students to succeed in many areas of their life while they are learning at Borders College.

5.0 Aims

Build a Community
We will encourage the development of a strong student community where we provide regular opportunities for students to get involved in a range of our activities, including sports, societies and volunteering.

Have Fun
We want to create a happy environment for students where they are able to relax with friends, meet new people and enjoy spending time at Borders College.

Empower our Students
Through our work we will inspire and empower students to influence change at Borders College.

Work to be Aware
We believe BCSA can best serve our members when we listen to them and students elsewhere to learn about the challenges they face.

Prepare to support
We have a proactive attitude and a positive desire to support students to overcome their challenges.

5.1 Actions to Support our Aims

Build a Community

Our vision is to create a community of students at Borders College. We will work towards that goal by:

- Using a broad range of platforms to communicate with students including, social media, email, and on campus notices.
- Hosting a range of events and activities each year that bring students together from across the courses and campuses of the college
- Supporting the development of student clubs and societies
- Creating opportunities for students to get involved in sport and physical activity
- Providing social and training opportunities for all student representatives.
- Work with Heriot-Watt Students Union to build a unified community at Scottish Borders Campus
- Increase awareness of BCSA through the development of a cohesive and recognisable identity both within the college and across our online platforms.

Have Fun

BCSA is passionate about working in a professional manner for students, while maintaining a fun, friendly and relaxed atmosphere. We do this by:

- Creating a relaxed atmosphere where students feel able to approach Student Officers and BCSA staff.
- Providing an alternative route for students to pass information back to the college
- Delivering a range of community-building events to the student body
- Promoting social opportunities in the local community

Empower our students

Empowered students are able to influence their own learning and teaching at the College. We empower students by;

- Electing a team of student officers to support students on a range of themes relevant to the student experience
- Developing an effective student representative system that works well for students
- Developing a range of ways in which students are able to tell the college about their student experience
- Create opportunities for students to engage in local and national politics
- Deliver effective training to all student representatives and officers
- Agreeing formal partnerships with the college in order to work on shared priorities including:
    - Student Partnership Agreement
    - Student Mental Health Agreement

Work to be Aware

We recognise students face a range of challenges when studying at college, and we must be aware of these in order to offer the best possible support. We make ourselves aware by:

- Making time to regularly speak with students about their college experience so we can represent these to the college
- Regularly feed back to students any outcomes from our work on issues they have identified.
- Working closely with the college wellbeing team and Achievement Coaches to identify key challenges faced by students
- Communicating regularly with other Student Associations, and national bodies (e.g. NUS) so we are aware of key issues affecting students across the country.
- Effectively represent the views of students in the Scottish Borders to national bodies.

Prepare to Support

BCSA recognise that we must equip all BCSA staff and Student Officers with the skills and resources required to effectively support students. We are prepared by:

- Delivering an effective Student Officer induction and training programme
- Committing to training all BCSA staff and Student Officers on Scottish Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA) and giving the option to complete Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)
- Ensuring all Student Officers have access to relevant CPD to support their activity and training needs
- Engaging in different awards and frameworks to challenge ourselves to be better
- Working with local organisations to enhance the service currently available to students

Key Performance Indicators

Build a Community
Numbers involved at BCSA events
Numbers attending clubs and societies
Numbers getting involved in sport and physical activity
Satisfaction rates for the Students' Association
Students know what the Students' Association is doing
Student awareness of BCSA (measured through the Annual Learner Feedback Survey, and Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey results)

Have Fun
Number of students seeking help from the Students' Association
Number of partner organisations attending BCSA events
Satisfaction rates for the Students' Association

Empower our Students
Election turnout
Students' feel the student representative system works well
Students feel informed about the work of student representatives
Number of students using the various feedback services in place
Feedback from student representative training

Work to be Aware
Students know what the Students' Association is doing
Minutes from committee meetings
BCSA tracking documents
Attendance at national student events

Prepare to Support
Feedback from Student Officer training
Training records for Student Officers
Awards achieved by BCSA
Numbers of local partners