FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT

Subject: ISLT Strategy Implementation Update	**Purpose:** **For Approval** ☐ **For Discussion** ☒ **For Information** ☐
Prepared by: Hazel Robertson, Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Services	**Date:** 10 March 2020

Purpose: To provide the Committee with an updated action plan for ISLT.

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

Executive Summary

The attached paper provides the programme and further detail on specific projects in regards to implementation of the College's ISLT Strategy.

Recommendation:

Members to note the progress on these projects and discuss.

Previous Committee Approvals: n/a

For publication ☒	**For publication with redactions** ☐	**Not for publication** ☐

BORDERS COLLEGE

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

ISLT Strategy Implementation

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This paper updates the Committee on progress in implementing the College's ISLT Strategy.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Borders College ISLT Strategy 2016 – 2020 identifies four overarching themes to support the College's Strategic Plan "*Towards 2020"*:

2.2 The strategic priorities from an ISLT point of view are to provide a sustainable and secure infrastructure, support efficient resource deployment, and crucially to enable transformative change in digitalisation of curriculum delivery. Significant enabling funds have been received from South of Scotland Enterprise Partnership to establish the South of Scotland Skills & Learning Network across Borders and Dumfries & Galloway.

2.3 We have undertaken a programme of engagement to develop a new three year Digital Delivery and Development Programme. This programme aligns ISLT strategy work closely with curriculum delivery. A tool called logic modelling (sometimes known as outcome based planning) was used to ensure that the Delivery and Development programme is firmly linked to the delivery of short and long terms outcomes of the college. As a result the action plan is presented in the following workstreams.

Workstream	Components
Operational solutions	Software systems and processes Support for staff to maximise use of technology – advice on design Supporting communications processes (eg Microsoft teams)
Platform	Organisation of materials to assist operational delivery Virtual Leaning Environment (Moodle and other tools) Storage and communications (shared drive, intranet)
Infrastructure	networks, servers, desktop, mobile, AV and communications technological capacity Wireless network, UPS, back up, disaster recovery, campus connectivity.

2.4 In addition, this will be aligned with a digital learning strategy.

3 STRATEGIC PLANNING

3.1 Priorities for this year and the following two years are summarised in the programme plan attached as Appendix 1.

3.2 The significant priorities for this year are to:

- Continued roll out of digital spokes with phase 2 targeting business and community provision;
- Review of attendance management requirements so that we can establish digital priorities to enable effective support to be in place for students;
- Continue to develop management information in relation to students tracking and monitoring, again enabling effective support to be in place for students;
- Review of the implementation of online admissions, bringing the project to an official close;
- implementation of a new e-portfolio solution (Smart Assessor) for the business development unit and potentially curriculum areas;
- continue to provide student and staff devices to meet demand in as efficient a manner as possible;
- Upgrade our identity management system to enable full roll out of Office 365;
- Implement web filtering to increase our safeguarding arrangements for students;
- Upgrade the finance system to ensure it is a fully supported system and that we maximise the use of technology and thus improve efficiency and effectiveness of financial processing and financial management.

3.3 Following further consideration of our priorities, we have recently agreed to implement on line enrolment for all students, for academic year 2020/21.

3.4 In addition to the above developmental projects the team will have to undertake procurement exercises to replace items which are coming to the end of contract. The most significant of these is the Multi Function Device contract, and we envisage the change over of devices to take place over the summer of 2020. In line with our Sustainability Plan we will implement a paperlite culture, which will be enabled by making dramatic changes in the availability and use of MFDs.

3.5 We have received the report on the strategic review of our IT applications and are considering our approach to the wider review of our infrastructure which will help to further shape future years plans. This service is provided by JISC at no additional cost. It involve analytical review of how we have set up our applications and highlight inefficiencies and opportunities. The review process included service users and the ISLT team.

3.6 The report will be considered by our Digital Delivery and Development Group in March. It highlights issues with the majority of our systems, with reports of concerns about system speed and functionality, and complexity of set up of our student systems. Significantly, support systems have identified concerns which are not currently in our sights to address over the 3 year programme.

3.7 Following a visit to Heriot Watt University by Head of ISLT and Learning & Teaching Digital Facilitator and myself we were very impressed with the way that they describe their strategic context for digital transformation and delivery activity. They have a

simple one page diagram that sets out their digital ecosystem and all its elements. They have a regular meeting across all three campuses where teaching and support staff and students are represented. It is widely regarded as a very effective mechanism to enable change. Following this meeting I shared this with the VP Curriculum and Student Support and she has developed a one page mind map of the Digital Learning Strategy which will form the basis for action planning.

3.8 As part of the engagement process for development of a national Digital Ambition Strategy, Borders College hosted an event on 30th October. The workshop was very well attended by a wide mix of staff and students. I have received feedback that people have found the workshop helpful and thought provoking. This workshop along with five others will feed into the development of the strategy. I am member of the working group for the strategy (as the finance rep for the College sector). The first draft of the report is now being considered by the group prior to being made more widely available.

4 IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

4.1 I have previously advised the Committee that we have established more formal project management arrangements including a project complexity assessment tool, formal scoping of projects and an expansion of the Digital Delivery and Development Group to include a broader base of curriculum and business development staff.

4.2 Project management arrangements have been strengthened by setting out the expectations of project managers, project sponsors and project executives. A standard set of documentation templates has been agreed and the PMO Manager is providing support to project managers and sponsors on the best use of this documentation.

OPERATIONAL SOLUTIONS

4.3 The review of attendance is not yet at a project stage. That said, amendments to systems have been identified and implemented as required, by our in house developer. This has allowed the implementation of two week reports on attendance, which greatly assists curricular staff to identify students who require additional support. One week reports are also been developed. The next phase of the review will involve consideration of what constitutes engagement. This will be a more complex consideration and likely will involve the development of options and consideration of risks, benefits, and costs.

4.4 Our developer and MIS Manager have been on training for Power BI, one of the Office 365 tools. Effective implementation of this will greatly enhance our data analytics and reporting. Commencement of roll out of this tool is planned once Smart Assessor has been implemented in April.

4.5 The review of mainstream admissions has been completed and some further system amendments have been made to improve functionality.

4.6 The Head of MIS, following a visit to West Lothian College proposed bringing the on line enrolment project forward a year, this to be achieved at no additional cost to the College, due to the help of West Lothian College, the use of in house developer and MIS manager, and the use of pre-purchased support/development days from the supplier. This development is on track for go live in 20/21 academic year.

4.7 We developed a proposal for the introduction of Smart Assessor, a new e-portfolio solution; this proposal was submitted to BFET for funding. We already use an e-portfolio system within the BDU however it is at end of life and does not provide all the functionality we require. A substantial amount of manual effort is still required. Smart Assessor will provide significant advantages in providing a seamless system for students and staff, reducing time to complete, reducing travel time and reducing generation of paper. It will offer significant advantages for staff and students to manage progression. Having received funding approval from BFET the implementation is progressing at pace and we are on track for go live in April 2020.

4.8 The upgrade of the Identity Management is complete, and is a significant enabler for the move to implement Office 365 and the wide range of collaborative tools that are part of this package. Office 365 and Exchange email accounts will be merged on 12 March. This is the important first step in our formal launch of Office 365.

4.9 The finance system upgrade is part way through and is supporting operational procedure changes and elimination of manual processing including duplication of effort. This work should complete by mid April.

4.10 The web filtering application has been implemented and configuration of the rules is complete.

PLATFORMS

4.11 The first element of curriculum delivery through the digital hub and spoke model commenced in October with Higher Psychology to two of the phase 1 spoke sites. Feedback has been received that the digital delivery is excellent. We have worked with employers and community groups to develop plans for round 2 spokes. We have progressed to implementation phase with Farne Salmon, Heart for Duns and Innerleithen Church of Scotland.

4.12 Our iLearn room is open, staffed by the Independent Learning Facilitator who brings substantial experience to this role. The purpose of the room includes student individual and group work on mobile devices. There will be a combination of student walk in and group work. This could be student led study or by the direction of teaching staff for independent online learning. It will be facilitated by the Independent Learning Facilitator who provides an enabling environment for students. Usage of the facility is steadily increasing, and feedback is very positive. We will work closely with the library to make sure that the two services are complimentary. Following feedback from students we have changed the seating arrangement and installed digital screens for the booths and for the room as a whole.

4.13 The Office 365 programme gives us a great opportunity to redesign business processes and provide guidance to staff about how we expect them to use the available functionality. This work is being led by the Director of Business Improvement and Performance along with the Head of ISLT. They are engaging with relevant staff including our digital development staff and HR. A significant number of staff have already been using various parts of the package and their learning will be an important aspect of informing the implementation plan. An exercise has been undertaken to scope out the elements of Office 365 which will give the greatest impact to the College. The full programme will be a key focus of discussion at the next Digital Delivery and Development Group in mid March.

4.14 The Data Protection Officer and the Head of ISLT are working towards creation of a data retention schedule. This will build on the information on data retention already

captured in our Article 30 registers.

INFRASTRUCTURE

4.15 The Head of ISLT developed a substantial paper which brings together all aspects of "A digital device in every students hands". This paper was presented to SLT where it was felt to be a comprehensive report, however would benefit from a stronger orientation on students own devices, and mechanisms available to support students to source their own devices. The SLT have now approved guidance to be available to students on using their own devices. This guidance will be available to students as part of the applications process and support will be available to students who have difficulty in sourcing a device. One of the remaining constraints is that our systems are not always conducive to use on android or apple devices.

4.16 We implemented a laptop locker safe system in the foyer of the Galashiels campus. Since its introduction we have had very positive feedback from students. It also reduces the amount of ISLT and teaching staff time to operate a manual system. BFET approved a bid for more lockers at Galashiels and a locker system at Newtown St Boswells. We will be implementing this in April 2020.

4.17 Planned activity to upgrade windows 7 and roll out staff laptops is progressing to plan.

4.18 We have been able to accelerate the replacement of apple computers in the Graphic Design area. These have been ordered and will be in place this academic year. This takes some pressure off our financial plan for 20/21.

STAFFING

4.19 The Head of ISLT and one of the Assistant Principals worked together to develop a proposition for the support required to support digital delivery of the curriculum. This has allowed us to move forward with recruitment of two e-learning specialists. Until these are in post we are using external developers to support development of digital curriculum.

4.20 The AV support analyst left our employment for a promoted role. We reviewed our staffing structure in the light of the time limited SOSEP funding and have advertised two elearning specialists. We have agreed the need to replace the AV analyst and have agreed the scope of this role. As a post which is shared by HWU this will go to the Campus Management Committee in mid March for final sign off. We intend to bring forward a proposal for a graduate apprentice to replace the part time Instructional Designer who has recently left for a promoted post.

5 LOOKING FORWARD

5.1 This year so far has seen a substantial body of work undertaken to upgrade our infrastructure, address the issue of student devices, and implement improvements to our operational solutions.

5.2 We have received the applications report from JISC however agreement to strategic solutions requires a wider view. We need to agree our strategic approach to systems alignment as part of the wider curriculum alignment programme.

5.3 Undertaking a strategic review is critical to help us determine our approach for next year and future years. This will involve considering whether we continually incrementally improve our operational solutions or whether it is possible to take a

longer term approach. Inevitably funding, staff training and resourcing will be major factors.

5.4 I have been in discussion with a local specialist company in relation to our strategic approach. We will look to engage their services to undertake a baselining and discovery exercise which will help us to think bigger about our strategic priorities. This will in turn feed into ongoing discussions about the priorities for the bid for Phase 2 funding for the Digital Learning and Skills Network with Dumfries and Galloway. A major priority has to be for us to have integrated one stop systems for students, and a modern, flexible learning platform for digital learning. These systems and platforms to be available on all possible technological bases. For example our current elearning platform is not compatible with android or apple technology.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Funding for ISLT remains challenging however we are aware that a request for specific IT funding was made as part of the Colleges Scotland spending review submission. We are also aware of the work ongoing across the sector to develop an ICT Strategy, and a Digital Strategy both of which will be informed by the Digital Ambition Short Life Working Group of which I am a member. The plan is affordable on the following basis:

- SFC infrastructure funding is heavily targeted to Digital investment
- we are able to reduce the number of Apple computers which are much higher cost than laptops (this has been addressed in 2019/20)
- replacement of laptops is phased over 4 years
- two bids for funding to BFET have been supported.

7 RISK COMMENTARY

7.1 The achievement of Cybersecurity standards represents a substantial improvement in the security of our infrastructure and systems. A requirement of achieving this level of accreditation is to have documented procedures in place to continue to operate at this level of protection. The Head of ISLT has been to a recent event which will help us to develop our next phase of Cybersecurity work.

7.2 We had an action outstanding from a previous IT audit in relation to disaster recovery arrangements. This has been addressed by Cybersecurity accreditation.

7.3 The recent IT system audit report identified two high risk matters, relating to data leakage and lack of web filtering. Web filtering has been addressed. Data leakage will be addressed following the merger of Exchange and Office 365 accounts.

8 DATA PROTECTION

8.1 The Data Protection Officer will be promoting Data Protection By Design and to the use of Data Protection Impact Assessments. She is also working with the Head of ISLT to develop data retention schedules.

8.2 Potential for data leakage will be addressed following the merger of Exchange and Office 365 accounts.

8.3 We are in the midst of a Data Protection and Information Governance Audit and will incorporate any recommendations from that audit into our programme.

9 HEALTH AND SAFETY

9.1 There are no Health and Safety considerations as part of this paper.

10 SUSTAINABILITY

10.1 Implementing a paperlite culture will be a significant project within our Sustainability Plan going forward. This can be enabled through effective use of technology, applications such as Smart Assessor, and infrastructure such as reduced use of multi-function devices. This will be a key project within the Carbon Management Plan 3 which the Estates Manager is currently developing for approval by the Sustainability Committee.

11 EQUALITIES

11.1 We have recognised the requirement to include equalities assessments as part of scoping any new projects.

12 CONCLUSION

12.1 Borders College continues to implement an ambitious programme of improvements in the use of technology to support and enable digital delivery to students, to improve operational solutions and to provide more robust platforms and infrastructure.

12.2 The Digital Delivery and Development 3 year programme and supporting approach to programme managment is proving to be an effective way to manage priorities and deploy money and resources.

12.3 Funding remains challenging and consideration of collaborative approaches to IT infrastructure and platform are essential going forward. A strategic review of our current applications and infrastructure will further inform the discussions which are ongoing.

Hazel Robertson
Vice Principal – Finance and Corporate Services

10 March 2020

APPENDIX 1 – DIGITAL DELIVERY AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

	Status	Budget			2019/20													2020/21													2021/22										
		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	`	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul
DIGITAL DELIVERY - OPERATIONS																																									
Review of attendance		**0**	**0**	**0**																																					
Management information relating to students progression – monitoring and tracking		**0**	**0**	**0**																																					
Review of mainstream admissions		**0**	**0**	**0**																																					
Online applications/payments from employers		**0**	**0**	**0**																																					
online enrollments		**0**	**0**	**0**																																					
Eportfolio (year 1 funded by BFET)		**0**	**0**	**0**																		funded by BFET																		
Identify management system upgrade		**65**	**0**	**0**							65																														
Finance system upgrade		**23**	**0**	**0**								23																													
PLATFORMS																																									
Digital Hub & Spoke room installations		**0**	**0**	**0**																																					
Staff intranet / wesite refresh / people finder / Office 365 communications/ student portal		**0**	**0**	**0**																																					
Helpdesk across all College services		**0**	**9**	**0**																	9																				
Create a data retention schedule		**0**	**0**	**0**																																					
INFRASTRUCTURE																																									
Personal device in every students hands		**22**	**19.2**	**19.2**			22											19											19												
Staff laptops roll out		**64**	**64**	**35**			16				16				16			16			16			16			16		8												
Windows 7 upgrades		**42**	**50**	**52.5**			42											50																							
Apple MAC Replacement		**27.6**	**14.4**	**0**								28						14																							
Infrastructure/Server/Storage replacement		**0**	**0**	**0**																									X												
		243.6	156.6	106.7	0	0	80	0	0	0	81	51	0	0	16	0	0	100	0	0	16	9	0	16	0	0	16	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0