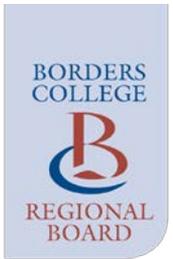


BORDERS COLLEGE REGIONAL BOARD



Actions from the
Meeting of the Virtual Regional Board held at 5.30pm on
Thursday 23 April 2020

Item	Action	Responsibility and Date	Action Status
08/20	Carry forward Committee Terms of Reference to next meeting	I Earp	Carried forward to June meeting
10/20	Bring piece of work around stakeholder engagement, partnership working and profile to the next Board	A Cox	To be presented at June meeting
12/20 (conf)	Maintain joint working group of the two Boards – Principal to take forward with Board Secretary	A Cox	Ongoing
27/20	Update N Broderick's Register of Interest	S McColm	Complete
28/20	Bring updates to Outcome Agreement after lockdown	A Cox	
30/30	Make employers aware that furloughed staff could undertake training while receiving 80% salary	H Robertson	Complete
39/30	Board papers for publication to be agreed	E Acaster/ I Earp	Complete

	<p>The Interim Chair and Executive Team will keep Board members updated on governance.</p> <p>The South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) is now operational. The Interim Chair and the Principal are meeting with the Principal and Interim Chair of Dumfries and Galloway College on 13 May to discuss joint working and the tertiary model. A meeting of the joint working party will then be arranged.</p> <p>Board members thanked staff for the herculean effort made on behalf of the College.</p>
25/20	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>
26/20	<p>MINUTES OF REGIONAL BOARD MEETING HELD ON 18 FEBRUARY 2020 (Paper A)</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2020, including the confidential section were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>
08/20 10/20 16/20 21/20	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>Committee Terms of Reference is deferred to the meeting on 18 June.</p> <p>A draft strategic ambition is being produced and should be complete for the next meeting. The focus work would take place after that.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: AC</p> <p>Feedback from students, staff and managers has been compared and consolidated and is being used to inform minor amendments to the Values and Behaviours currently being drafted to inform the Strategic Themes.</p> <p>Some Board members are attending virtual CDN Leadership and Governance sessions the following week.</p> <p>The Interim Chair advised that the Cumberford Little report discussed at the previous meeting is available on the SFC website, and would be relevant to discussions with Dumfries & Galloway College around joint working and tertiary model.</p>
27/20	<p>DECLARATION OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST/REGISTER OF INTERESTS UPDATE</p> <p>N Broderick reported an update to her Register of Interest, which will be amended accordingly.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: SMc</p>
28/20	<p>REGIONAL OUTCOME AGREEMENT (Paper B)</p> <p>The Principal presented the Regional Outcome Agreement and apologised for its late distribution due to the current COVID19 situation. She reminded Board members that the document is a snapshot in time given this constantly changing landscape.</p>

	<p>She advised that the data normally presented to the Board was not available and that, in discussions with SFC and the FE Minister it was accepted that no college would deliver on its current Outcome Agreement. The content would remain but the shape of the next academic year would be very different.</p> <p>A number of students would not achieve qualifications this year and there would be a staggered and incremental start to next academic year. The steer from the FE Minister was that employability and digital upskilling should be prioritised.</p> <p>Board members requested, due to the dramatic change to the context, an indication in the summary of how the College considered the current situation would impact on the Outcome Agreement. The Principal advised that the Outcome Agreement had been prepared to secure SFC funding and amended in line with feedback from SFC. Further guidance is expected from the Scottish Government. The Board would be provided with further detail after the lockdown position was over.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: AC</p> <p>The considerable amount of work involved in preparing the Outcome Agreement was noted. The document showed the diverse range of work taking place in the College.</p> <p>The Board recognised that the Regional Outcome Agreement was a moving target and as such, the document was approved at this point in time.</p>
29/20	<p>PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Paper C)</p> <p>The Principal presented her report and advised of several updates since it was prepared. The following points were highlighted, many arising from the ongoing meetings of the Covid-19 Incident Management Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student engagement for the week before the Easter holiday was 93%. • Feedback from the Great Places to Work staff survey was very positive. A number of actions have been agreed to address the key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The difficulty in balancing home and work with many staff having childcare and caring responsibilities. <i>An explicit message would be relayed that staff were not expected to respond in the normal way.</i> - Concerns around technology, accessibility to information and practicalities of home working. <i>A short-term solution of supplying dongles would increase wi-fi speeds. A medium to long-term project is planned to ensure all staff have sufficient technology to work from home for a sustained period of time.</i> - Concerns around the practicalities of students achieving their qualifications. <i>The Principal has written to all students to encourage them to continue with their studies and the Vice Principal has produced a video to be posted the following week. BCSA is also playing a big part. It will be necessary to accept that a percentage of students would be unable to achieve. Mental health support will be put in place if necessary.</i> • A national dispute has been raised by Unison in relation to members carrying over annual leave for up to two years in line with ACAS guidance for key workers. Little progress has been made. The College is confident it had acted properly in its decision for all staff to take two weeks holiday over Easter. • The EIS-FELA student survey had been distributed by NUS on 17 April. The student member advised that questions appeared suitable.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After reviewing applications it had been agreed to defer recruitment and re-advertise the two CLM vacancies. • Colleges have been involved with Colleges Scotland, SFC, the Deputy First Minister and the FE Minister. • Discussions are underway with SDS around different apprenticeship models and pre-apprentices. 85 - 90% of apprentices are currently furloughed. Some EU funding is available although flexibility is uncertain. • The joint Phase 2 bid with Dumfries and Galloway College was considered by the SOSE Board on 16 April. • The Principal is attending weekly calls with SCDI in terms of economic priorities. • The College is engaging regularly with Scottish Borders Council to offer support. Items of PPE have already been donated, staff members are now producing protective visors and hospital beds from the BTECH have been loaned to Louisa Jordan Hospital in Glasgow. • The College has been involved in a great deal of publicity recently. • In anticipation of gradual easing of lockdown SLT is working through exit-plan scenarios and will discuss further on 5 May. A phased approach is likely and priority groups are being identified. The Scottish Government is keen for colleges and universities to have a collaborative and over-arching approach to this. <p>The Board noted the Principal's detailed report and supported actions being taken.</p>
<p>30/20</p>	<p>STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER (Paper D)</p> <p>The Vice Principal Finance & Corporate Services presented a compressed version of the Strategic Risk Register to make it easier to comprehend.</p> <p>The impact of COVID 19 to each risk has been identified and those above target highlighted:</p> <p>2c. Meeting regional need and the impact of COVID 19 on employers - delivery to employers continued where possible but some were furloughed.</p> <p>2e. Skills tests – students will be unable to undertake skills tests as part of the application process, impacting mostly on carpentry and joinery.</p> <p>2h. Assessments and qualifications – the potential impact on outcomes is a concern.</p> <p>4b. The financial impact of commercial courses not running.</p> <p>Mitigation strategies had progressed the following risks:</p> <p>4f. Additional funding may be available for Phase 2 of the hub and spoke model.</p> <p>5a. Digital delivery and development – it has been possible to accelerate several programmes over the last year.</p> <p>2f Bursary laptop scheme – plans have been implemented to cope with risk.</p> <p>The following two risks above target were complex would be explored further with the Audit Committee:</p> <p>5h GDPR 5i Cyber Security</p> <p>Risk 5k relating to the bursary laptop scheme was recommended for closure.</p>

	<p>It was noted that employers may be unaware that furloughed staff could undertake training while receiving 80% salary. This would be followed up. ACTION: HR</p> <p>The VP Finance and Corporate Services reported that the Finance Directors Network had taken a common approach to risks. The sector was trying to work together wherever possible.</p> <p>The Board noted the current approach to risk.</p> <p>It was agreed to move to item 32/20 at this point on the agenda.</p>
<p>32/20</p>	<p>STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (Paper F)</p> <p>The VP Curriculum and Student Services presented the Student Experience report and appendix providing definitions of measures used to track student performance at this time of lockdown.</p> <p>The first measure was the number of units completed at Easter (74%) against target (100%). CLMs are currently following up on work that should have been submitted. A major concern is the ability for students to complete highly practical SVQs and construction apprentices to complete their apprenticeships. 85-90% of apprentices are currently furloughed.</p> <p>The next measure was activity on Moodle which has risen substantially when face to face delivery ceased, but it is not possible to differentiate between staff or students use.</p> <p>The third measure was the number of contacts made by Achievement Coaches to students not engaging, in particular those on SCQF Level 4 courses.</p> <p>The fourth measure was the number of contacts made by the Student Support team for mental health reasons or with “at risk” students. Welfare issues have exacerbated and a rota service from Student Support had continued over the holiday. Learning Support had also continued.</p> <p>SFC has reallocated costs for colleges to use for hardship funding.</p> <p>The College has allocated additional funding to enable students to purchase additional data if required. 150 laptops had been loaned out to students before closing, with another 15 being delivered this week.</p> <p>Lecturing staff continued to develop the curriculum for delivery next academic year.</p> <p>As part of the digital strategy the College joined a Blended Learning Consortium, providing access to a huge amount of learning resources.</p> <p>Admissions for next academic year are progressing well and are on target. Board members noted the efforts being made to motivate students and support their learning.</p>

MID-YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST AND CASHFLOW (Paper E)

The VP Finance and Corporate Services presented the finance update and highlighted the following areas.

- The cashflow position remains positive with a closing balance of £1.7m at the end of March.
- The mid-year progress report has been submitted to SFC. The overall position is a forecast deficit of £290k, taking account of the impact of COVID 19. This could change again when information is received from SDS and other sources. Some reduction in expenditure is anticipated although a large proportion is fixed, e.g. estates, staffing, corporate supplies and teaching supplies. There will be a cost reduction in terms of building based supplies and a reduction to some maintenance costs. Temporary staff contracts are being honoured and there was a small impact in guaranteeing Baxter Storey's 20% loss to the end of March.
- The Debtors total is higher than expected due to a timing issue with payments due from HWU.
- Payment performance to suppliers is improving with 70% of invoices paid within 40 days.
- The deficit is no different in principle to that of other colleges.

The Board queried the cash situation given the sizeable forecast deficit. The VP Finance and Corporate Services advised this is not currently an issue but it would become a problem if the situation continued into the next academic year.

The preparation of a very high level budget for the next academic year is underway, although the content will undoubtedly change given the current situation.

The Board considered the presentation of the finance update to be very helpful.

In response to a question, the support staff member advised that the Student Support team is coping well with the additional work. Contacting students could be challenging. The team is using a risk register to monitor the students that are struggling. The Manager is aware of the challenges and the team is meeting daily.

The Principal advised that there has been a real staff effort and everything possible is being done to engage with students. The Board gave credit to the entire College team and BCSA for this.

Board members expressed concern around the inability to progress the upgrade of the Newtown campus, as access is required for a site inspection in order to receive an accurate quote. The VP Finance and Corporate Services will explore the option of providing access with the Facilities Manager in order to try to bring this to a conclusion. The work needs to be carried out in the summer months or postponed for a further year, which would require agreement from SFC to split the funding over two years.

It was agreed to hold a Chair's Committee or an additional Board meeting to make a decision regarding funding when the estimate is available, although the Board noted that it may not be possible to have the work carried out in the short term due to current construction restrictions.

<p>33/20</p>	<p>BCSA UPDATE (Paper G)</p> <p>The student member presented the update on Student Association activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving feedback from class reps could be a challenge and the Student Experience Committee may be divided into smaller groups to achieve this. • BCSA has been working closely with Student Services with a focus on health and wellbeing. A lot of students are struggling with the lockdown. • The student community is developing, with more cross curriculum activity on Teams. Teams is also being used for a daily breakfast catch up with students, and also for a weekly BCSA Exec meeting. • The weeks before Easter were very busy, with food shortages a much greater issue than anticipated. Students were encouraged to take what supplies they required from the foodbank before lockdown. • A good number of students are volunteering. • NUS have been reporting back on their meetings with senior civil servants. • A lot of social events are planned going forward. • Students are struggling with confusing messages regarding exams and attainment. <p>The Chair congratulated the Student President on being re-elected for a further year and thanked the BCSA team for their hard work on behalf of the Board.</p>
<p>34/20</p>	<p>EVALUATION REPORT OF SOSEP PROJECT (Paper H)</p> <p>B McGrath declared a possible conflict of interest in relation to this item due to his new position with SOSE.</p> <p>The VP Finance and Corporate Services presented the draft progress report for the joint SOSEP funded project for the creation of the Learning and Skills Network and articulation across the South of Scotland.</p> <p>The report explained how the investment has been used and that more had been done than set out in the original bid, particularly in relation to the digital hub and spokes. A greater number of spokes have been implemented in schools, businesses and in the community, and the digital reach was greater than expected. The College is now in a very good position to support the economy of the region.</p> <p>The report mentioned inclusive and sustainable growth, supporting the regeneration of the economy and touched on rurality and transport issues. Articulation has been very complex, but a significant range of opportunities have been identified for progression.</p> <p>An impressive range of teaching materials have been developed and delivery has begun through the digital network in the BTECH centre in Galashiels and through the schools. A single digital learning and skills network and a single website has been implemented across the South of Scotland.</p> <p>The report was very positive and highlighted the strengths of collaboration. Sustainable outcomes could be built upon in Phase 2 of the project.</p>

35/20	<p>SOSE LEARNING AND SKILLS NETWORK PHASE 2 BID (Paper I)</p> <p>The Board received a copy of the joint proposal which was submitted to SOSE the previous week for a total of £1,345,310 to move the project forward and deliver to a wider range of learners and employers across the South of Scotland. The intention is for this to be split evenly between the two colleges, with some shared goals.</p> <p>The Principal explained that in order for the colleges to embrace opportunities around digital learning a future proof digital platform is required. This will enable delivery through tablets and mobile phones, removing the need for additional hardware. Students would just download an app.</p> <p>The two colleges had differing approaches to the employer spokes. The College did not intend to create additional fixed spokes, instead focusing on the agility of devices to access learning on demand.</p>
36/20	<p>REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS</p> <p><u>Finance & General Purposes Committee</u></p> <p>The Committee had met the day before the lockdown therefore all discussion had been superseded by COVID 19 events.</p>
37/20	<p>STANDING ITEMS</p> <p><u>Health and Safety</u></p> <p>No items were raised.</p> <p><u>Equality and Diversity</u></p> <p>No items were raised.</p> <p><u>Environmental and Sustainability</u></p> <p>No items were raised.</p>
38/20	<p>AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Board members were reminded to forward any proposed agenda items for the next meeting.</p>
39/20	<p>BOARD PAPERS FOR PUBLICATION (Standing Item)</p> <p>The papers to be published would be agreed out-with the meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: EA/IE</p>
40/20	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>An additional Board or Chair's Committee meeting was agreed as required.</p> <p>Any ideas for more interaction at subsequent meetings should be forwarded to the Chair.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their support of the College in particularly challenging circumstances.</p>

41/20	DATE OF NEXT MEETING The next meeting of the Board of Management will take place on Thursday 18 June 2020 at 5.30pm.
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Signed:.....
Chair

Signed:.....
Board Secretary