



For the future you want

## **CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

### **APPROVED MINUTES OF MEETING OF 17 NOVEMBER 2020**

#### **15:00, Remote Meeting via Microsoft Teams**

**Present:** Rose Dodgson; Lesley Drummond (Chair); Ann Landels; Gwen Raez; Azra Sharif-Qayyum;

**In attendance:** Nick Croft; Jane Grant; Michael Jeffrey; Marcus Walker (Clerk)

#### **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

1.1 Apologies were received from Bruce Cassidy.

1.2 The Chair welcomed Alex Killick and Toni McAlindin to the Corporate Development Committee as observers, following confirmation of their appointment to the Board as non-executive members on 22 September 2020.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2.1 None.

#### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

3.1 The Committee APPROVED the minutes from 25 August 2020 as an accurate record of the meeting.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING REPORT**

4.1 The Committee NOTED that actions from the previous meeting were complete, overtaken or on the agenda.

4.2 The Committee NOTED that the 2020/21 Commercial Development Budget had been based on a scenario whereby lockdown and social distancing measures continued until January 2021. The Vice Principal Corporate Development advised the Committee that scenario planning would be updated in light of ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, which were expected to continue into early 2021.

- 4.3 The Committee NOTED an update on the COLLAB partnership, following an updated provided to the meeting on 25 August 2020. The Vice Principal advised the Committee that the College was considering its options and a further update would be provided to the Committee on 02 March 2021.

## **5. RELATIONSHIP REPORT**

- 5.1 The Committee NOTED a Relationships Report which outlined key developments in relation to stakeholder engagement, Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), community and third sector outreach, major partnership projects and Board engagement.
- 5.2 The Committee NOTED that the College continued to participate in a range of CPP strategic partnerships to address growing concerns about unemployment, poverty and skills. The Head of Communications, Policy and Research advised the Committee that recent work had focussed on improving coordination between various new government funded resources and programmes in CPP areas, such as the Youth Guarantee, Kickstart, transition fund, employability fund and DYW school advisors.
- 5.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the plethora of government funded programmes and the role of the College in their promotion. Head of Communications, Policy & Research advised the Committee of the work currently being undertaken by the Marketing Team to produce updated progression maps to support the learner journey.
- 5.4 The Committee NOTED that construction work at the Granton Waterfront Development continued, along with an Outline Business Case to the SFC for a new Construction Centre of Excellence. The Head of Communications, Policy & Research informed the Committee that recent work between National Museums Scotland (NMS) and the College Nursery had led to proposals for a community garden and woodland as meanwhile use on the NMS site.
- 5.5 The Committee NOTED a proposal to delay the development of a new Board Engagement Pack (including key messages) until the College had reviewed the Edinburgh College Strategic Plan in 2021. The Committee DISCUSSED the need for the College to more effectively utilise Board members networks, and AGREED that a key messages document should be developed for consideration at its next meeting - while the Strategic Plan remained under development.

## **6. BRAND AND REPUTATION REPORT**

### **6.1 BRAND AND REPUTATION UPDATE**

- 6.1.1 The Committee NOTED a Brand and Reputation Update which outlined progress on activities relating to communications, marketing, business intelligence, corporate development, policy research and public relations.
- 6.1.2 The Committee NOTED that all staff emails confirming Covid-19 cases and providing reminders on updated guidance, health and safety protocol and expected behaviours on campus were circulated regularly by the College. The Head of Communication, Policy and Research

advised the Committee that, as of 17 November 2020, the College had confirmed 20 cases of Covid-19 across its campuses.

- 6.1.3 The Committee NOTED that the new Edinburgh College website remained under development, and was expected to launch in Spring 2021. The Head of Communications, Policy and Research advised the Committee that the scoping phase of development was now complete, and a site map had been agreed with Innovation Digital.
- 6.1.4 The Committee NOTED analytics data on the EC Welcome webpages, which included a number of pre-recorded videos for students.
- 6.1.5 The Committee DISCUSSED the ECSA Virtual Campus and messages posted on the site relating to the delayed payment of bursaries. The Vice Principal Corporate Development outlined the key challenges relating to bursary payments at the start of the academic year, and advised members that the Executive Team expected outstanding bursary applications to be processed within the coming week.
- 6.1.6 The Committee NOTED that the issue of outstanding bursary payments had been considered by the Academic Council on 13 November 2020, and would be reviewed further by the Committee at its next meeting.

***Azra Sharif-Qayyum joined the meeting***

***The Head of Commercial joined the meeting***

**6.2 DEEP DIVE: EDINBURGH COLLEGE BRAND**

- 6.2.1 The Committee NOTED a presentation from the Head of Communications, Policy and Research on the Edinburgh College Brand.
- 6.2.2. The Committee NOTED that a review of the Edinburgh College Brand had taken place in 2014, which led to the launch of a corporate brand framework and guidelines in 2016. The Head of Communication, Policy and Research advised the Committee that good progress had been made since the brand launch, however, there remained the following challenges:
  - (i) A lack of appreciation of the power and value of a strong Edinburgh College brand;
  - (ii) The corporate brand had not been fully embedded across the organisation;
  - (iii) The brand identity had weakened due to lack of brand alignment;
  - (iv) There remained no consequences to brand misuse and/or the lack of use of branding.
- 6.2.3 The Committee NOTED areas of opportunity to strengthen the College brand through key touch points, such as the new strategic plan, recent national strategic reports, and the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Further to this, the Head of Communications, Policy and Research outlined to the Committee a future vision for the Edinburgh College

Brand, and the key actions to address the challenges highlighted under Minute 8.2.2.

6.2.4 The Committee welcomed the opportunity to consider the Edinburgh College Brand, and DISCUSSED the following points:

- (i) The resistance in large organisations to the idea of a brand, and the potential to engage individuals through key values;
- (ii) The ease to which staff can access brand information and guidance;
- (iii) The limited operating budget of the Marketing Team;
- (iv) The clear messaging from the Principal of the direction of the College, and the need to promote its achievements;
- (v) The need to engage with staff to develop the College brand and its core values.

6.2.5 The Committee thanked the Head of Communications, Policy and Research for the presentation provided, and NOTED that further updates on the College Brand would be presented through future Brand and Reputation Reports.

## **7. COMMERCIAL, INTERNATIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE FUNDING REPORT**

7.1 The Committee NOTED an overview of the commercial income in the academic year 2019/20, and the proposed approaches of the Commercial UK and International Teams for 2020/21.

7.2 The Committee NOTED that the Commercial UK Team continued to rearrange a large volume of training courses which were postponed during UK-wide lockdown in March and April 2020. The Head of Commercial advised the Committee that in September 2020 alone the College had run approximately 100 virtual Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) and/or Bespoke training courses.

7.3 The Committee NOTED that the college sector would receive an addition £3 million FWDF funding from Scottish Government. The Head of Commercial advised the Committee that although the finalised guidance for the use of additional FWDF funding had not been confirmed, the Commercial UK Team were ready to commence the promotion of courses to eligible employers.

7.4 The Committee DISCUSSED the workforce implications of delivering additional FWDF activity, and the confidence of the Commercial UK Team to deliver such training.

7.5 The Committee NOTED that campus closures due to the Covid-19 Pandemic had affected Scheduled activity, and the College would gain a clearer view of its overall impact in the coming weeks - once all faculties had reported back on activity. The Chair advised the Committee that, given the challenges in meeting the Scheduled activity target, decision would need to be taken by the College on where it focussed its resources.

7.6 The Committee NOTED that an update on Commercial International activity, and the postponement of programmes in China to 2021/22 due to travel restrictions. The Head of Commercial advised the Committee that the College was in the

process of finalising its 2021 Summer School offer, whilst recognising that activity in this area would be dependent on the Covid-19 restrictions in place during 2021.

## **8. CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES REVIEW UPDATE**

- 8.1 The Committee NOTED that the Board had held its Strategy Day on 27 October 2020, and a timescale for the development a new Edinburgh College Strategic Plan would be presented to the Board on 08 December 2020. The Vice Principal Corporate Development advised the Committee that, once a new Strategic Plan had been developed, both the Communications, Marketing and Engagement Strategy & the Commercial & International Strategy would be reviewed and presented to the Committee for its consideration.

***Gwen Raez and Toni McAlindin left the meeting.***

***The Vice Principal Corporate Development left the meeting.***

## **9. EU WITHDRAWAL UPDATE**

- 9.1 The Committee NOTED a verbal update on the potential impacts of EU withdrawal bases on potential 'Deal' or 'No Deal' scenarios. The Head of Communications, Policy and Research advised the Committee that the *Impacts of EU Withdrawal on the College* remained high on the Top-Level Risk Register, and continued to be monitored closely by the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee.
- 9.2 The Committee NOTED that the EU withdrawal transition period, agreed between the EU and the UK, would end on 31 December 2020. The Head of Communication, Policy and Research advised members that a detailed report on the impacts of EU withdrawal would be provided to the Committee at its next meeting.

***Azra Sharif-Qayyum left the meeting.***

## **10. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

- 10.1 None.

## **11. FOR INFORMATION**

### **11.1 HORIZON SCANNING REPORT**

- 11.1.1 The Committee NOTED a Horizon Scanning Report which outlined major political, economic, social, technological, legal and/or environmental developments that could impact on the five strategic plan aims of the College.

### **11.2 COMMITTEE PROGRAMME OF WORK 2020/21**

- 11.2.1 The Committee NOTED its proposed programme of work for the upcoming academic year.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

12.1 The next meeting of the Corporate Development Committee will take place on 02 March 2020.

***Meeting closed at 17:10***