



For the future you want

## **CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING OF 2 DECEMBER 2022**

#### **14:00, Remote Meeting via Microsoft Teams**

**Present:** Fiona Doring; Ann Landels; Skye Marriner; Gwen Raez (Chair)

**In attendance:** Nick Croft; Audrey Cumberland; Michael Jeffrey; Shona Pettigrew; Nora Senior; Paolo Vestri (East Lothian Council); Marcus Walker (Clerk)

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

- 1.1 The Committee NOTED apologies from Bruce Cassidy.
- 1.2 The Committee NOTED that the Board of Management on 27 September 2022 had agreed that Gwen Raez, a Non-Executive Board Member, would become Chair of the Corporate Development Committee from 1 October 2022 onwards. The Chair thanked Lesley Drummond, the former Committee Chair, for her significant contribution to Corporate Development Committee over the past 6-years.
- 1.3 The Chair welcomed Skye Marriner, a Student Board Member, to her first meeting of the Corporate Development Committee as a member.
- 1.4 The Committee NOTED that Paolo Vestri, Corporate Policy Manager at East Lothian Council, would join the meeting Committee for *Item 5.2, East Lothian Community Planning Partnership Update*.

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

- 2.1 None.

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

- 3.1 The Committee APPROVED the minutes from 31 August 2022 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 a 'deep dive' into the Granton Waterfront Nursery would be considered at the next meeting of the Corporate Development Committee on 28 February 2023.

## **5 RELATIONSHIP REPORT**

### **5.1 RELATIONSHIP UPDATE**

- 5.1.1 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.
- 5.1.2 The Committee NOTED that in November 2022 Edinburgh College had hosted one of six UK WorldSkills Finals at its Granton Campus. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research informed the Committee that hundreds of people had attended the event including competitors from across 18 skills competitions.
- 5.1.3 The Chair praised the success of the UK WorldSkills Finals, which laid a foundation for future events to be held in Scotland, and the Committee DISCUSSED the direct and indirect benefits of the College holding such a prestigious event. Director of Communications, Policy & Research advised the Committee that, in addition to the enhancement of links between the College and CITB, the UK WorldSkills Finals had engaged a number of schools (through the Schools College Partnership) and raised the profile of the Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment.
- 5.1.4 The Committee NOTED that the College had been approached by the Scottish Government to assist in meeting the learning needs of around 600 Ukrainian refugees on the MS Victoria, which was docked in Leith. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research advised the Committee that the College continued to work closely with the Scottish Government, the Dnipro Kids Charity, City of Edinburgh Council, and NHS Lothian to provide appropriate support.
- 5.1.5 The Committee NOTED that the College had worked in partnership with ECSA to set-up a free breakfast club, which ran every Tuesday to Thursday morning across the four campuses. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research highlighted to the Committee that, to date, around 200 students per day were accessing free breakfast produce and feedback from students had been very positive.
- 5.1.6 The Committee DISCUSSED the breadth and scale of both outreach and partnership projects that the College was directly involved in. The Principal advised the Committee that the contribution of the College to the region, and its social cohesion, was clearly demonstrated through its integral role in a wider range of activities.

***The Corporate Policy Manager (East Lothian Council) joined the meeting***

**5.2 EAST LOTHIAN COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

- 5.2.1 The Committee NOTED a presentation on the East Lothian Community Planning Partnership (CCP). The Corporate Policy Manager outlined the three key themes of the East Lothian Plan 2017-27, which focused on development of a region which was increasingly 'Prosperous, Community-minded and Fair'.
- 5.2.2 The Committee NOTED that the East Lothian CPP had in-place a Recovery and Renewal Plan, to support communities adversely affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Corporate Policy Manager advised the Committee that the Plan also aimed to respond to the significant impact of the cost-of-Living crisis and the Climate Emergency on East Lothian residents.
- 5.2.3 The Committee NOTED the support available to East Lothian residents, including Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grant and Cost of Living Assistance. The Corporate Policy Manager highlighted to the Committee a new [Community Windpower Energy Fund](#), a partnership between Community Windpower and Advice Direct Scotland, which aimed to deliver £1,000,000 to people in East Lothian affected by the cost-of-living crisis.
- 5.2.4 The Committee DISCUSSED the Community Windpower Energy Fund and AGREED that the College should consider how to promote the Fund, and other available financial support, to eligible Edinburgh College students. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research advised the Committee that he would liaise with Advice Direct Scotland, and ECSA, regarding access to the Fund and the potential for the College to become referral partner.
- 5.2.5 The Committee NOTED the key role of the College in the delivery of the East Lothian Plan 2017-27 in terms of workforce planning, training opportunity (specifically related to the City Region Deal) and the improvement of digital skills. The Corporate Policy Manager advised the Committee that the College also had a role in the implementation of both action plans relating to community justice and poverty.
- 5.2.6 The Committee NOTED that the Principal & Chief Executive of Edinburgh College was Chair of the East Lothian CPP Governance Group. Further to this, the Corporate Policy Manager advised the Committee that the Director of Communications, Policy & Research, a member of the Senior Management Team, was actively involved in the coordination of workstreams between the CPP and the College.
- 5.2.7 The Chair thanked the Corporate Policy Manager for engaging with members in discussion and welcomed the level of engagement outlined between both the College and the CPP at a senior level.

***The Corporate Policy Manager (East Lothian Council) left the meeting***

**6. COMMERCIAL, INTERNATIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE FUNDING REPORT**

**6.1 COMMERCIAL, INTERNATIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE FUNDING UPDATE**

- 6.1.1 The Committee NOTED that Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) 'Year 5' forecast had been exceeded. The Director of Enterprise & Knowledge Exchange advised the Committee that the FWDF 'Year 6' allocation had yet to be confirmed, following the recent Scottish Government Emergency Budget Review, whilst dialogue continued between the SFC and sector representatives.
- 6.1.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the delayed allocation of the FWDF for Year 6 and its impact on the college sector. The Vice Principal Corporate Development highlighted several case studies of the College working with businesses through the FWDF and the positive impacts for both parties. The Committee AGREED that the College should publish a press release, highlighting such case studies, to promote the economic value of the Fund at both a regional and national level.
- 6.1.3 The Committee NOTED that 74 Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) students were currently studying at the College. The Director of Enterprise & Knowledge Exchange advised the Committee that income related to FAs could be higher than originally anticipated, due to the potential for retrospective claims for work carried out during the Covid-19 Pandemic, however, the College continued to explore all avenues to ensure that FA courses were promoted effectively, and income maximised.
- 6.1.4 The Committee DISCUSSED the responsibilities of both the Commercial and International Teams, and the variance between the planned financial performance compared against the final financial income. The Committee AGREED that, to reconcile the lag between commercial income and the monthly management accounts, future reports to the Committee would include comparative information to clearly outline any variance.

## 6.2 DRAFT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022-25

- 6.2.1 The Committee NOTED a Draft Business Development Strategy 2022-25. The Vice Principal Corporate Development advised the Committee that the Strategy was presented to members for review with two significant caveats: (i) the unknown outcome of a decision on Year 6 FWDF; and (ii) the implementation of Phase 2 of a voluntary severance scheme in January 2023.
- 6.2.2 The Committee NOTED that the Draft Business Development Strategy 2022-25 aligned to national priorities and regional growth, with a focus on Health & Social Care, Renewables & Green Skills, Construction, Digital Technologies, Creative Industries, Administrative & Support Services, and Financial Services. The Vice Principal Corporate Development informed the Committee that the Draft Strategy also aligned with the Draft Edinburgh College Strategic Plan, which would be presented to the Board of Management for approval on 13 December 2022.
- 6.2.3 The Committee NOTED that the Draft Business Development Strategy focussed on four priority strands of business:

- (i) Commercial and Employer Engagement Activities.
- (ii) Apprenticeship Activities.
- (iii) International Activities.
- (iv) Alternative Income and Innovation.

6.2.4 The Committee welcomed the opportunity to review the Draft Strategy but were cognisant of the caveats outlined by the Vice Principal (Minute 6.2.1 refers). The Committee DISCUSSED the inclusion of further reference to the Edinburgh College Development Trust, and its role in generating alternative income, within the Strategy.

6.2.5 The Committee NOTED that the Draft Business Development Strategy 2022-25 would be reviewed again by members once clarification around the outcomes of the FWDF and Phase 2 of the voluntary severance scheme were known.

## **7. BRAND AND REPUTATION REPORT**

### **7.1 BRAND AND REPUTATION UPDATE**

7.1.1 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.

7.1.2 The Committee NOTED that the College had initiated delivery of communications and staff engagement activities to celebrate Edinburgh College's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary during 2022/23. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research advised the Committee that, in collaboration with the Edinburgh College Development Trust, an archivist had created a formal record of the history of Edinburgh College, and its legacy colleges, which would be showcased to stakeholders in early 2023.

7.1.3 The Committee NOTED that a brand refresh project, designed to modernise and strengthen the College brand, was now underway - following the approval of the Senior Management Team. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research informed the Committee that refreshed branding was utilised at the 2022 Graduation Ceremony and was currently being installed at signage points across all campuses.

7.1.4 The Committee NOTED data illustrating that social media activity across all platforms had continued to increase, with approximately 3% growth recorded on a month-by-month basis. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research announced that the Communications Team had also recruited a new Communications Assistant to support and enhance social media activity.

### **7.2 EDINBURGH COLLEGE RESEARCH PLAN 2023**

- 7.2.1 The Committee NOTED an update on the Edinburgh College Research Plan 2023 and its proposed aims, which linked to the Draft Edinburgh College Strategic Plan. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research outlined the current governance arrangements relating to Edinburgh College Research Unit (ECRU), as chaired by the Vice Principal Corporate Development.
- 7.2.2 The Committee NOTED that the Research Plan included the following strands:
- (i) Staff Research and Innovation Forum.
  - (ii) Staff and Student Research Scholarship Programmes
  - (iii) Student and Staff Research Placements
  - (iv) Improving Research Resources and Methodology.
  - (v) Industry and Business Research Innovation.
  - (vi) Joint Research Projects.
- 7.2.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the Research Plan, how it tallied with staff capacity, and the opportunities it raised for staff, students, and partner organisations. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research advised the Committee that the ECRU did not aim to compete directly with established university research models, but instead allowed the College to operate in a space with SMEs and business start-ups.
- 7.2.4 The Committee welcomed the update provide by the Director of Communications, Policy & Research and NOTED that a further update on progress against the aims outlined in the Plan would be provided to the Corporate Development Committee in due course.

## **8. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

### **8.1 DEPARTURE OF A NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBER**

- 8.1.1 The Committee NOTED that the tenure of Non-Executive Board Member, Ann Landels, would end on 9 February 2023. The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Ms Landels for her significant contribution to the Corporate Development Committee over recent years.
- 8.1.2 The Committee NOTED that the Board of Management currently sought to fill four non-executive vacancies by 1 March 2023. The Chair advised the Committee that it was expected that the membership of all the Board's committees would be reviewed once these appointments had been made.

## **9. FOR INFORMATION**

9.1 COMMITTEE PROGRAMME OF WORK 2022/23

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

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

10.1 The next meeting of the Corporate Development Committee will take place on 28 February 2023

***Meeting closed at 16:00***