



For the future you want

## **CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING OF 31 AUGUST 2022**

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

**Present:** Bruce Cassidy; Fiona Doring; Lesley Drummond (Chair); Ann Landels; Gwen Raez

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

**Observers:** Ian McLaughlan

## **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

- 1.1 The Committee NOTED apologies from Skye Marriner.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed Fiona Doring, a newly appointed Non-Executive Board Member, to her first meeting of the Corporate Development Committee as a member.
- 1.3 The Chair welcomed Nora Senior, the Chair of the Edinburgh College Board of Management, to her first meeting of the Corporate Development Committee as an attendee.
- 1.4 The Chair welcomed Ian McLaughlan, a Non-Executive Board Member, to the Corporate Development Committee as an observer, following his appointment to the Board of Management on 30 June 2022.
- 1.5 The Committee NOTED that a representative from East Lothian Community Planning Partnership (CPP) was unable to attend the meeting to provide an update on CPP activity. The Chair advised the Committee that Paolo Vestri (Service Manager, Corporate Policy & Improvement) of East Lothian Council would attend the next meeting of the Committee on 23 November 2022 to update members on recent developments.

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 2.1 None.

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

- 3.1 The Committee APPROVED the minutes from 24 May 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 a brief update on the future of Knowledge Exchange funding for the sector and ongoing national discussion around the allocative model. The Director of Enterprise & Knowledge Exchange advised the Committee that a more detailed update would be provided to members once clarification around sectoral funding arrangements had been confirmed.

### **5. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 5.1 The Committee NOTED that the Code of Good Governance dictated that committees of the Board should regularly review their terms of reference to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
- 5.2 The Committee DISCUSSED its terms of reference and AGREED that its purpose, remit, and membership remained appropriate.

### **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) activity had been delivered throughout the summer period, with the Commercial Team aiming to ensure that as much activity as possible was achieved in-year - in support of the financial challenges faced by the College. The Director of Enterprise & Knowledge Exchange advised the Committee that the final year-end position aligned to the revised forecast agreed by the Executive in April 2022, with all remaining FWDF Year 5 activity expected to be delivered within the first quarter of the new academic year.

6.1.2 The Committee NOTED that the Commercial Team had continued to participate with the Interface Innovation Voucher pilot project, with encouraging levels of success. The Director of Enterprise & Knowledge Exchange informed the Committee that the Commercial Team were motivated by both the long-term strategic partnership benefits and engagement opportunities with employers that were expected to emerge through continued work with Interface.

6.1.3 The Committee NOTED that the International Team had achieved positive progress towards the delivery of its diverse portfolio of 15 separate programmes, worth a total value of £1.36m. The Principal highlighted that, despite the International Team's excellent performance, there remained a disparity between Scottish colleges and universities in relation to the conditions placed on postgraduate international students. The Committee NOTED that the Principal would continue to lobby the Scottish Government to ensure that the College could continue to maintain, and develop, its international presence.

6.1.4 The Committee DISCUSSED the following points in relation to the Commercial, International & Alternative Funding Update:

- (i) The postponement of activities caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic and the efforts of the Commercial Team to ensure the completion of all backdated activity.
- (ii) The College's receipt of the highest allocation of FWDF across the college sector, and the ongoing ability to claim available funding which remained open to colleges.
- (iii) Recent staffing changes within the Commercial and International Teams, and its potential impact on 2022/23 activity targets.
- (iv) The use of thematic commercial working groups to regularly assess opportunities, capacity, and priority/growth areas - both within and across faculties.
- (v) The knowledge gathering conducting with external stakeholders, including Skills Development Scotland, through regular engagement events and meetings.

6.1.5 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 a summary overview of the variance between the budget and actuals, which also tied into the Monthly Management Accounts, should be considered by members at the next scheduled meeting.

## 6.2 COMMERCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE

6.2.1 The Committee NOTED an update from the Principal on the development of the new Edinburgh College Strategic Plan. The Vice Principal Corporate Development advised the Committee that, in preparation for the draft Strategic Plan being approved by the Board in December 2022, the priorities with the Commercial Strategy 2022-25 were being considered by the Senior Management Team.

6.2.2 The Committee NOTED a presentation on the development of the Commercial Strategy 2022-25, which outlined the background and context of the Strategy and its links to the '*People, Place, Performance*' strand of the draft Strategic Plan. The Vice Principal Corporate Development outlined the following four priorities of the Commercial Strategy:

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

6.2.3 The Committee welcomed the opportunity to consider the draft priorities and DISCUSSED the following:

- (i) The need for ambition within the Commercial Strategy and the inclusion of stretch goals.
- (ii) The priorities within the Strategy and how the Corporate Development Committee could monitor progress through future 'Deep Dives'.
- (iii) The legislative changes required to remove the financial limitation placed on colleges, as highlighted through both the Cumberford-Little Report and the Independent Commission on the College of the Future.
- (iv) The current international links of the College and the potential to reach out to new markets.
- (v) Extending the College networks to include CPP and Third Sector partners, to access new pots of funding.

6.2.4 The Committee welcomed the presentation provided and NOTED that an initial draft of the Commercial Strategy 2022-25 would be presented to its next meeting on 23 November 2022.

***Nora Senior left the meeting***

## **7 RELATIONSHIP REPORT**

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 The Committee NOTED that the College had submitted several project proposals to its three local authority partners, for funding from the UK Government's Shared Property and Multiply Funds. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research advised the Committee that the Fund, along with other proposals, would form part of a Local Investment Plan which had allocated £20m to Edinburgh, Midlothian, and East Lothian over the 2022-25 period.
- 7.3 The Committee NOTED that the College had agreed to host the national finals of World Skills UK, at the Granton Campus and Forthside facility, during the w/c 14 November 2022. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research informed the Committee that the top students and apprentices from around the UK would compete in 11 construction and built environment competitions, with industry representatives and local schools also set to be in attendance.
- 7.4 The Committee NOTED that the College continued to provide accommodation, catering, and English language learning support to 62 members of the Dnipro Group. The Committee DISCUSSED adjustments made by the College to support Ukrainian refugees and the wellbeing support currently provided by the City of Edinburgh Council.
- 7.5 The Committee NOTED that a new Cost of Living Project had been established in Edinburgh to help those people and communities most affected by price increases across a range of household goods and services. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research advised the Committee that initial work had

focussed on raising awareness of support services, with the College engaging directly with ECSA on awareness training.

- 7.6 The Committee NOTED that the College continued to play a key role in the delivery of the Climate Compact 2030 Strategy, which aspired to make Edinburgh carbon neutral by 2030. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research highlighted the work undertaken by the College in this area, including its recent collaboration with Edinburgh University on a sustainability skills pipeline research study.

## **8. BRAND AND REPUTATION REPORT**

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 The Committee NOTED that College had established a project team to lead on the development and delivery of activities to celebrate Edinburgh College's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary during 2022/23. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research informed the Committee that the College and the Development Trust had funded a project to research and archive important historical events and documents associated with the College and its legacy colleges.
- 8.3 The Committee NOTED that, in line with both the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Project and the expected launch of a new Strategic Plan, the College had initiated a brand refresh project - which aimed to modernise and strengthen the brand, whilst maintaining its core identity, values and purpose. The Director of Communications, Policy & Research advised the Committee that a presentation on the project would be provided to its next meeting on 23 November 2022.
- 8.4 The Committee DISCUSSED the brand refresh and the current levels of investment in Marketing. The Principal highlighted that the brand refresh project was not a 're-launch' and emphasised the importance of appropriately funding marketing activities to ensure new students were attracted to the College and engaged with its messaging. The Committee NOTED the potential to engage Creative Industries students in the brand refresh project, to further harness existing talent within the College.

## **9. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

### **9.1 CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2**

9.1.1 The Committee NOTED that it had been asked by the Board to present an annual report to the Board on 27 September 2022. The Chair advised the Committee that the report would highlight key matters of business considered by the Committee and future areas of development.

9.1.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the following in relation to the annual report:

- (i) The inclusion of the four pillars of the Commercial Strategy.
- (ii) The level of partnership engagement the College is currently involved in.
- (iii) The important work undertaken by the College, and regional partners, in relation to the Cost-of-Living Crisis.

- (iv) The potential to provide a more visual interesting annual report to the Board.

9.1.3 The Committee AGREED that a finalised version of the report, taking into consideration the points raised by members, would be presented to the Board of Management at its next meeting by the Committee Chair.

## **10. FOR INFORMATION**

### **10.1 COMMITTEE PROGRAMME OF WORK 2022/23**

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

## **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 11.1 The next meeting of the Corporate Development Committee will take place on 23 November 2022.

***Meeting closed at 17:00***