

Shetland College Board**Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick****Thursday 5 October 2017 at 10.00am****Present:**

P Campbell G Smith
T Smith L Spence
B Wishart

Apologies:

E Macdonald A Priest
G Smith (lateness)

In attendance (Officers):

N Grant, Director – Development Services
D Bell, Executive Manager – Human Resources
W Shannon, Interim Joint Principal
K Adam, Solicitor
S Berry, Acting Deputy Principal
K Briggs, Joint Manager – Train Shetland (Vocational)
B Kerr, Communications Officer
A Pottinger, Joint Manager – Train Shetland (Short Courses)
L Geddes, Committee Officer

Chair

Mr Campbell, Chair of the Board, presided.

Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

The Chair welcomed Mr Spence to his first meeting as an official member of the Board.

Declarations of Interest

None

Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 30 August 2017 on the motion of Ms Wishart, seconded by Mr T Smith.

25/17 Principal's Update

The Board considered a report by the Interim Joint Principal (SCB135-F) which provided an update on a range of issues of interest and importance to Shetland College and the tertiary sector in Shetland.

The Interim Joint Principal summarised the main terms of the report, advising that it was a busy time for the College at the moment.

Some discussion took place regarding the Strategic Dialogue Meeting that had taken place with UHI and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on 26 September. Members

commented that they felt it had been a positive meeting, and that there had been a willingness to listen to the tertiary sector in Shetland.

The Interim Joint Principal advised that the SFC had indicated that the involvement of the local MSP had been useful, and had also made a comment that they were sympathetic regarding resources if application numbers and places were maintained. He went on to say he had had a video-conference with the UHI Vice-Principal for FE, and would be having a follow up discussion regarding the development of a specification for the business plan. With regard to the operational plan, the first draft was currently being discussed with senior managers across the tertiary sector. It was an ambitious plan, but they had made it clear that it was what the UHI and SFC had been hoping to see. The plan had been circulated to staff, and he thanked staff across the sector for the dialogue on this matter.

He went on to speak about the Financial Forecast Return, which was a difficult exercise given that the financial period involved was the next six years. Nationally, the prognosis was not positive and all colleges, with the exception of one, were forecasting a deficit. National pay bargaining funding was not included in the return as it would be paid for by the SFC, but it would continue to be a factor. It was also likely that there would be a drop in funding from the local authority, meaning a further reduction in income for the tertiary sector. The Board was required to approve the Financial Forecast Return.

He concluded by referring to the College's participation in the "Taste of Shetland Festival" and the recent graduation and awards ceremonies, both of which had been very successful.

The Joint Manager – Train Shetland (Vocational) gave an update on the latest vocational training numbers, highlighting in particular that there had been an increase in the number of Modern Apprentices from 16 to 37. These were based across a wide spread of industries, but the largest block were Council placements in the health and social care sector. There would be further additions later in the year, and there would be a clearer picture in relation to the contract by January.

(Mr G Smith attended the meeting during the following discussion)

In response to a query as to whether Modern Apprentice places were transferrable between industry sectors should targets not be reached in a particular sector, he advised that there had been some flexibility in the past. However there was now a more complex process in place which would require Train Shetland to bid for any additional places it required. The Director of Development Services added that this inflexibility was likely to create some problems in future, and it would be appropriate for Skills Development Scotland to be challenged should this become the case.

The Chair advised that he would be supportive of any efforts to lobby Skills Development Scotland on this matter, as it was important that the total number of Modern Apprentices was maintained.

The Board approved the recommendation in the report on the motion of Ms Wishart, seconded by Mr T Smith.

Decision:

The Board NOTED the contents of the report and APPROVED the Scottish Funding Council Financial Return.

26/17 **College Board Self-Evaluation and Effectiveness Review**

The Board considered a report by the Interim Joint Principal (SCB133-F) regarding the requirement for the College to undertake annual self-evaluations and periodic externally validated reviews.

The Interim Joint Principal summarised the main terms of the report, advising of the requirement for college boards to keep their effectiveness under annual review, and to have a robust self-evaluation process in place. As the Code of Good Governance had been written with incorporated colleges in mind, Shetland College Board did not quite fit as it had more limited decision-making powers than fully autonomous boards. Therefore the Code eventually produced for the College would have due regard to the principles of the Code of Corporate Governance for Shetland Islands Council. It was hoped to proceed with a workshop session as soon as possible, subject to the self-evaluation approach being agreed, and the next step would be to engage a suitable external facilitator.

It was suggested that the SFC should be advised that the Shetland College Board would never be a perfect match for their scheme given that it was an unincorporated body, so amendments to the structure would have to be made locally.

It was commented that the self-evaluation matrix would challenge the Board to think about how it operated, although some aspects would be difficult, and it was questioned what use others would make of it in terms of areas for development. It was also noted that incorporated colleges had responsibility to Scottish Ministers, who had extensive powers over their boards, but it was not the same situation in Shetland. Therefore it would be useful to clarify where the powers of Scottish ministers sat in relation to the College Board locally.

The Interim Joint Principal advised that all colleges were currently undertaking this for the first time, so it was not yet known how other bodies would use it in terms of development. With regard to the powers of Scottish ministers, in terms of legislation Shetland College was an assigned college. This may give Scottish Ministers some powers over the Board, but this was something which could be explored further and clarified.

Decision:

The Board AGREED that the self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the College Board be undertaken through participation in a workshop session structured as proposed, and following the processes set out in the report.

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In order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, Mr Campbell moved, Mr T Smith seconded, and the Board agreed to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of the following items of business.

28/17 EIS FELA Dispute

The Board considered a report by the Executive Manager - Human Resources.

The Executive Manager – Human Resources summarised the main terms of the report and outlined the background to the dispute. She went on to say that the meeting of the College Lecturers' JNC the day previously had requested that some points be clarified, and the Policy and Resources Committee would be advised of this when the report was presented to it. However the JNC did not otherwise have an issue with the recommendations.

The Board approved the recommendations in the report, and thanked officers for the time they had spent dealing with this complex piece of work.

Decision:

The Board approved the recommendation in the report.

The meeting concluded at 10.50am.

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Chair