



**Board of Management Meeting
Held on 25th March 2015**

Present J Gallacher, S McKillop, C Ferguson, P Devenny, S Dillett,
B Johnstone, R Ralston, I Todd, L McTavish, D Burnett, K McInnes

Apologies J McCartney, K Anderson, C McDowall, J Evans, M Bingham,
M Cord, A Allan

In Attendance A Martin, K McAllister

1. Declaration of Members' Interests

Mrs McTavish declared her position as Chair of The Lanarkshire Board.
Mr Dillett and Mr Todd declared their membership of the arms-length Trust.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2015 were approved.

3. Principal's Update – March 2015

Student Support

The Principal informed members that Mr Kemp, SFC, had now responded to the College's initial letter. Both the Chair and Vice Chair had been consulted in the compiling of a response and this was a fairly strong letter.

Mr Gallacher informed members that he had attended the joint meeting with NCL and the Scottish Funding Council to discuss student support. He stressed the level of dissatisfaction that events had been allowed to progress to the time of the meeting without a solution which had left both colleges in a compromised position.

Discussion took place on the position and the fact that the Board of Management had, in line with good governance, sought and received assurances from the Funding Council to enter into the same level of student support funding and that this would be met in full by the Funding Council. Members stressed that this decision had not been taken lightly and had been based on these written assurances.

Members were then informed that a payment had been received from NCL for the period to 31st March 2015 and as yet there was no clear indication as to what would be happening in the future. Discussion arose as to the effects the

transferring of this level of monies would have between the colleges and as to whether the same line of action would indeed be possible in the coming year.

Mrs McTavish detailed the scenario leading up to this outcome. She stated that The Lanarkshire Board had indeed lettered the Funding Council asking for clarification and assurances as outlined at the joint meeting. At this point, these assurances had not been given however the detailed minute of the meeting outlined the verbal responses received.

She added that when this letter was received it would be copied to members of both The Lanarkshire Board and South Lanarkshire College.

Discussion has taken place with NUS as this is a sector-wide issue and should be addressed on a national basis. Mr Gallacher re-iterated that it was the clear responsibility of the Board of South Lanarkshire College to continue to protect the college, students and staff by ensuring financial wellbeing. However, F.E. student support remained the responsibility of the Funding Council. He added that it would be helpful if a copy of the minute of the joint meeting and of all subsequent correspondence regarding it was made available. Mrs McTavish agreed that this would be processed through the Clerk of South Lanarkshire College.

Members were informed that the College was likely to face the same dilemma next year. It was agreed that members would be given regular communication on progress.

College Website

It is anticipated that the new College website will be ready by 2nd April 2015 and will be launched on 7th April 2015. The design will be in line with the image being used throughout the College marketing.

Annual Report

This is now with the design team. Input has been given from across the College. This document will be distributed to Board members in due course.

Activity Levels 2015/16

A meeting has been arranged with NCL, SLC and the Funding Council to discuss the allocation of activity for 2015/16. This will be the first formal meeting of its kind for the Region. The Principal added that the Senior Management Team Planning Day had already taken place with notional activity being agreed for each Faculty.

New Build

It is hoped that work will commence on the site during the Easter period. Some disruption to parking may arise but the College was at present negotiating the use of temporary parking within the Technology Park.

4. Updates from the Committees

Human Resources Committee

In the absence of Mr McDowall, the Principal took members through the minute of the Human Resources Committee which took place on 4th March 2015.

The following was highlighted –

Staff Development – two staff development days had taken place since the last meeting. Both had been successful with varied content and ranges of training. Attendance at both of these days was offered to both NCL and the local secondary school.

Absence – information detailing the levels of absence over the fourth quarter showed the level of absence at 2.94%. This is the lowest percentage for this period since 2003. The College continues to monitor absence and significant efforts were made to support staff to attend work. Members agreed that the College had excellent absence monitoring systems in place.

Health and Wellbeing – a programme of activities and promotion regarding mental health issues and sources of support is currently underway throughout the College. This initiative is being run in conjunction with the Student Association. Members were impressed by the level of support in place for students and staff.

National Investors in Diversity – the Principal and Kirsten Oswald have been invited to form part of the Diversity Patrons Network. This body aims to encourage the development and sharing of good equality practice.

Destination Success – now planned for 21st May 2015. This event will follow much the same format as last year. The day aims to mix both fun and informative events to advise and assist students into the next stage of their education or career path. Mr Devenny stated that the day had been an excellent event in 2014 and only positive feedback had been received.

The Lanarkshire Board Recruitment – timescales now in place.

NJNC - members were made aware of the content of the paper of January 2015 outlining the way forward on national pay bargaining and the Government's preference to this type of negotiation.

Discussion took place on the implications for the College and the Sector as a whole when this system was introduced particularly in terms of funding any increase in costs. Concerns were also raised on the impact on the lower paid members of staff and the obvious focus on the teaching staff. Members agreed that further discussion would be required in this area and the consideration of Ms Burnett requested that equalities impact assessments being carried out for SLC. The Principal stated that such concerns had been raised at The Lanarkshire Board.

Audit Committee

In the absence of Ms Evans, Mr Todd took members through the minute of the Audit Committee which took place on 16th March 2015.

The following was highlighted –

Auditors – first meeting with the new internal audit providers from Scott-Moncrieff.

Risk Management – the College Risk Management Group has revised the Risk Register and now contains further detail on Risk Appetite. It had been agreed that the College should have an almost universal ‘low’ appetite for risk however some areas such as business development may carry a higher risk appetite.

A separate Risk Register is being maintained for the new build by the Project Managers which is shared both with the Estates and Audit Committees.

Skills Development Scotland Audit on Modern Apprenticeships – a number of recommendations had arisen from this audit. The Committee had noted that the College had already put an Action Plan in place to take these forward and it had been requested that this plan be forwarded to SDS to highlight the College’s commitment to addressing the concerns.

Finance Committee

Mr Gallacher took members through the minute of the Finance Committee which took place on 10th March 2015.

The following was highlighted –

Student Support Funds – this was a point of detailed discussion for the Committee and the meeting of the 3rd of March had been discussed at length. Mr Gallacher re-iterated the Committee’s frustration at the College finding itself in this present situation – a situation not caused by the College.

All members supported this view.

Members stated that it must remain focussed that this was affecting a particular group of the student population, those following FE courses, and that they were often among the most vulnerable groups of students.

Management Forecast – 16th months to July 2015 - a deficit is now being predicted. This however would be seen across most colleges in the sector due to the payment having to be made by them to cover the student funding shortfall.

Ms Burnett stated that it would be useful for the Board to see some option appraisals to allow comfort that the College was not being put at risk.

Commercial Income – discussion took place regarding the College’s ability to retain its commercial income and the plan for this going forward.

VAT Lennartz Proposal – Mr McAllister explained the detail. Discussion took place regarding the process and claim. Members asked that further consideration be given and fed back to the Board of Management through the Finance Committee.

Match Funding Approval – ERDF

Members of the Board noted and approved the increase in College match funding to £1,745,000 for the Low Carbon Building which had been reported to, and approved by, the Finance Committee.

Development Committee

As Mr Ferguson had chaired the meeting, he took members through the minute of the Development Committee which took place on 17th March 2015.

The following was highlighted –

Quality Report

Quality Enhancement Group - continues to meet monthly with areas such as the Action Learning Project, quality processes and self evaluation being discussed.

Academic Board – the February meetings have taken place. Gill Ritchie, Sheilia Page, HMI and Sharon Drysdale, Regional Outcome Manager attended the meeting on the 19th February 2015.

Learner Engagement – forty eight class representatives have attended three lunchtime focus events facilitated by the Quality Unit and Student Association. These groups are extremely successful.

Marketing Report

Website – new website will be launched on 2nd April 2015. It will be fully responsive to smart phones and tablets.

Publications – full-time course leaflets have been updated to reflect the new curriculum delivery across the three faculties. A short course guide has also been produced.

Media Plan – continuing with the ‘Now is your time’ strapline.

Internet – Facebook likes have increased from 1300 to 2350 over the term. The College Facebook posts now reach some 6000 people.

Members agreed that it was important that the marketing was focussed on the key medias most used by our student base.

Property and Estates Committee

Mr Johnstone took members through the minute of the Property and Estates Committee which took place on 16th March 2015.

The following was highlighted –

First Aiders – the numbers of First Aiders has increased and they are being trained in groups of four. All first aiders now carry mobile phones and first aid pouches.

New Building – Work will commence during the Easter break. The College is trying to arrange additional car parking within the business park.

International Women's Day – attracted 70 exhibitors and 850 visitors. The College has hosted for a number of years and have agreed for one more year.

There being no further competent business Mr Gallacher closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their contributions and attendance.