

## **Chairs Report from the Board Meeting 26<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

1. This is the ninth of my Chair's Reports and it follows the spring meeting of the Board on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at South Lanarkshire College. The main items for this meeting were the minutes of the Board's committees, the minute of the Board meeting in December 2017, the minute of the SLC Board on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018, the Student Association Reports, my Chair's Report, the approval in principle of the submission of the Regional Outcome Agreement to the Scottish Funding Council, the approval of NCL strategies key to the (ROA), an update on the NCL Voluntary Severance Scheme and a report on the arrangements in place for safeguarding in NCL following the recent issues identified in OXFAM and other aid charities.
2. The committee Chairs reported by exception from the draft minutes of the meetings in this Board cycle. Following this round of committees, the Board was informed as follows:
  - **Audit Committee 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018:** Ann Stark drew the Board's attention to the fact that following discussions with Audit Scotland, the Auditor General has asked for a Section 22 report to be prepared for New College Lanarkshire. It is expected that the report will take 5-6 weeks to be drafted by Audit Scotland, with the input of the College, the SFC and Mazars. NCL will be given one week to respond to the formal draft report. The Board noted its concern about the projected timetable to respond to the section 22 report from Audit Scotland and the need to consider the process by which a section 22 was being prepared. A further report on this will be brought to the Audit Committee and to the next meeting of the Board.
  - **RGP Committee 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018:** Keith Fulton informed the Board that there was an offer from Burness Paul on behalf of Galliford Try in final settlement of retention monies for the Motherwell Campus. There has been movement from the initial request and the RGP committee agreed to accept the offer subject to an additional no prejudice clause in the agreement for the college. I congratulated Keith Fulton and the college staff involved in the discussions. Keith Fulton also drew the Boards attention to the figures from the Gardiner and Theobald survey of FE estate in Scotland which puts the net total backlog maintenance and renewals costs at £163,308,518 with a gross figure of £363,321,028. He also drew the Boards attention to the fact that that the SFC has allocated £6,180,000 for estate in the Lanarkshire Region and that a programme of activity to maximise the funding would be brought to the next meeting of the committee.
  - **Finance Committee Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018:** The Chair of the Finance Committee, Kenneth Anderson, informed the Board that the Finance Committee continues to recommend that the budget is noted not approved because the college is still in negotiation with the SFC on the draft scenario plan and the outcome of these discussions impacts on the funding for the college. The Board endorsed the approach from the Finance Committee and its recommendation to continue to note and not approve the budget. It also noted that the Finance Team are maintaining robust monitoring of the budget process and this is being reported to the Finance Committee.
3. The draft minutes of the last meeting of the Board on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017 were approved and the minute of SLC Board meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018, which is published on the SLC website, was presented for information.

4. The Board heard from both presidents of the Student Associations (SA) about the broad range of activities and events that they are undertaking. The NCL SA is undertaking including the promotion of the student elections, volunteer week, the NUS National Conference, the NCL LGBT week in April 2018, work experience offered by the NCL SA, the Worldskills Scottish Ceremony and the update on the take up on the SA social media sites. The SLC SA activities include an increased focus on student engagement with further class inductions and secondary visits, raising the profile through Yammer, developing the operational plan so that its themes align with the NUS Framework for Effective Students Association, the process to agree a partnership agreement with UWS is underway, making the strategic plan visual by putting into a diagrammatic form, a graduation ceremony for the Advanced Craft C& G course, the three day volunteering event at the end of January 2018, embedding social responsibility and sustainability into the learner experience and the annual NUS and UK conferences. I thanked both presidents for their reports and commended them on the range of activity being undertaken in both colleges.

5. Stewart McKillop reported from the SLC meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018 to the Board as follows:

- The report on KPIs had been well received.
- The allocation to SLC of £300K for estates was also welcomed
- There had been an update to the meeting on the recruitment of the new SLC Chair
- SLC was still looking to having a balanced budget at the year end
- The decision to continue with the derogation allowing self- insurance for colleges was welcomed.
- There had been an update on national bargaining
- The annual report would be presented to the next meeting.

6. I updated the Board as follows in my Chairs report:

- **Events and Awards:** I congratulated the NCL marketing team on two gold awards and a bronze at the CDN marketing awards.
- **Update on the Evaluation of the Lanarkshire Board:** There had been a presentation from Professor Pyper at the strategic event and a good discussion on the findings from his analysis of the evaluation returns from Board Members. His analysis would be included in the self- evaluation report to the SFC as would the follow up discussion with Jan Polley at the event. The analysis will also inform the Board's Development Plan.
- **Lanarkshire Board Recruitment:** I informed the Board that there would be a fresh round of recruitment to bring the Board up to its full number of 22. The nominations committee would meet to undertake the recruitment process. I also informed the Board that I have been re-appointed to the Lanarkshire Board for a further 2 years from October 2018.
- **Lanarkshire Board Strategy Day:** I reported that she thought the strategy event held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March had gone well and I thanked all Board Members for their contribution to the day. Copies of presentations and summaries of the sessions on the day will be sent to Board Members.
- **National Committees:** I reported that Colleges Scotland would have its AGM and a meeting attended by ministers at the end of March 2018.
- **SFC Funding Update:** I informed the Board that there was ongoing discussion with the SFC about the business scenario plan and funding for NCL. This has been noted in the minutes from the Audit and Finance Committee.

- **Audit Scotland Interviews:** I informed the Board that Audit Scotland were undertaking a review of the effectiveness of the Regional Strategic Bodies and that I had been interviewed along with Martin McGuire, Stewart McKillop, Ann Stark and John Gallacher from the SLC Board.

**7. Regional Outcome Agreement:** The Board noted the Regional Strategy overview document which shows diagrammatically what strategies are in place and how they relate to each other. Angus Allan presented the second draft of the new slimmed down version of the ROA which now focusses on tabulated information with links to key documents and took the Board through the document. The Board approved the submission in principle with authority for the Chair and Principle to sign the finalised document. The Board also approved the Draft NCL Estates Strategy, the Draft NCL Access and Inclusion Strategy and the Draft NCL STEM strategy.

**8. NCL Voluntary Severance Scheme:** The Board noted that the current position is that 34 staff (29.59 FTE) have been accepted for voluntary severance. This includes 19 teaching staff (15.97 FTE) and 15 management and support staff (13.61). There is one application still to be resolved.

**9. Safeguarding:** This report was on the agenda at the request of OSCR. The college's procedures were last updated in April 2017 and there is a team of 17 safeguarding officers across NCL to provide support and a point of contact. All posts in the college are subject to a vetting check through Disclosures Scotland. The paper sets out the list of notifiable events. The College conducts risk assessments for prospective/existing students who have been convicted of an offence or who are subject to any restrictions that may create a safeguarding issue. However, the most common types of safeguarding concerns addressed by the College are the disclosure of information by a student from their life outside College that indicates that they may be at risk, or where a student discloses information relating to their mental health that indicates that they may be a risk to themselves. Safeguarding concerns relating to the conduct of a member of staff towards a student are rare and there have been no such incidents at New College Lanarkshire since merger. The Board noted the arrangements that are in place and noted the report.

**10.** The Board approved the publication of the minutes of the last meeting a link to the minute of the SLC Board of the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018 and the papers from the students' associations and the paper on Voluntary Severance and Safeguarding. These can be found on the NCL web-site.

**11.** I hope, as ever, that you have found this report on the work of the Board and its committees useful. The next meeting of the Board will be on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and I will report again after this meeting.

Linda McTavish CBE - Chair of the Lanarkshire Board