

confirmed for website

Minutes of the 37th SCQF Partnership Board held on Friday 03 March 2017 at 11.00 hours in the SCQF Partnership Conference Room, 201 West George Street, Glasgow, G2 2LW

Present:

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| Rob Wallen (RW) | Chair SCQF Partnership |
| Gill Stewart (Representing Janet Brown) | SQA |
| Alastair Sim (AS) for Items 1, 2, 7 & 8 | Universities Scotland |
| Rowena Pelik (RP) | QAA Scotland |
| Jim Metcalfe (JM) | College Development Network |
| Liz Cameron (LC) | Scottish Chamber of Commerce |
| Ray Harris (RH) | Chair of Quality Committee |

In Attendance:

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| Paul Smart (PS) | Scottish Government |
| Alex McTeir (AMcT) for Item 6 | University of Glasgow |
| Aileen Ponton (AP) Items 1 to 14 except for Item 11 | SCQF Partnership |
| Sheila Dunn (SD) for Items 4 to 14 except for items 5 & 11 | SCQF Partnership |
| Lorna Meiklejohn (LM) Items 1 to 14 except for Item 11 | SCQF Partnership (Minutes) |

Apologies

Janet Brown from SQA with Gill Stewart attending as her deputy.

AS gave apologies to those present as he was not be able to stay for the full meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

RW opened the meeting and welcomed the new Directors, Jim Metcalfe and Liz Cameron to their first meeting of the Partnership Board.

RW also welcomed Paul Smart from Scottish Government for engaging with the work of SCQF Partnership. RW stated that the order of the Agenda would change slightly to ensure that AS was present for the items that required approval. He would take Items 1, 2, 7 -10, then back to 3 -6 and finally Item 11 (which he had discussed with AS before the meeting).

Register of Interests

RW reminded the Directors of the Registers of Interests form which was included with the papers should they require to complete and submit.

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2016

RW invited all to consider the draft minute of the previous Board Meeting which had already been sent out for comment to those that had attended the meeting. It was agreed that this was an

accurate record of the meeting. Both the formal minute and the web version were approved by the Directors and the formal minute was signed by RW.

2. Matters Arising

RW referred to Item 2 on the appointment of a new Chair of the Quality Committee. He confirmed that two people had been interviewed for the role.. The Board agreed that they were happy to take the judgement of the panel which had consisted of RW, RH and SD. RH added that the Chair had explored potential conflicts of interest and there were none.

AP then referred to Item 10 membership of the Audit and Risk Committee. RP had now served for two years and given other work commitments would need to stand down. AP had circulated all other Directors to ask for any interest in taking up membership of ARC but for a range of reasons this had not proved possible. RW had therefore indicated that he was happy to act as a channel of communication by attending the meetings and reporting back to the Board. His preference though was that by the end of the year one of the other Directors should take this on to avoid any potential conflict of interest, It was considered by Directors and agreed that it would be best if one of the other six Directors would consider taking this over. The Directors noted all other matters arising.

As the Management Accounts required Approval the Board moved to take Item 7 on the agenda.

3. CEO Report

AP then gave an update on the Schools Ambassadors programme with 6 schools enrolled this year and others awaiting training days. West Lothian Council plan to host a group meeting for all 11 of their secondary schools. RW offered to suggest this approach to Aberdeen Council.

AP referred to the Leaner Journey Videos that were premiered at the recent Parliamentary Reception, all of which would be promoted via the SCQFP website as well as social media channels. PS suggested that SCQFP could also promote the videos as part of the celebration of 'International Woman's Week' given the fact that four of the videos provided strong role models for young women. The Directors noted the report.

4. Reflections on 2016-17

SD joined the meeting to present Item 4. She gave a brief overview highlighting the work involved in supporting Credit Rating Bodies and setting out some of the key achievements and challenges for 2016-17. AP represented JC as she was not able to attend the meeting. She highlighted the work that JC had been involved in around Partnerships and communication citing a number of new products and services.

RW invited comments after the presentation. The Board of Directors expressed their appreciation for the scope and scale of the work covered and agreed that considerable progress had been made by what was a very small team.

5. Final Impact Research Report (TERU Attending)

RW introduced AMcT to the group. AMcT commenced by saying that at the December Board meeting he had presented a draft report on the Impact Assessment research and he was now presenting the final report to the Board. The Directors noted the recommendations from the report and at the end of the presentation RW invited Directors' questions and comments. Directors supported the recommendations and it was agreed that it would be useful to have a further discussion at the June Board specifically on the metrics being proposed for the future. RW asked AP what the intention would be on publicising the report and she confirmed that it would be put on the website and shared with key partners including the media. PS suggested that it could also go to the Management Group for the Learner Journey Review. The report was formally approved by the Directors and AMcT was thanked for the work which TERU had undertaken and the clear and concise report.

6. Board self-evaluation

RW stated that he had received replies by email from Directors setting out their views on the running of the Board and their contribution to it. There was nothing causing concern to Directors but a couple of suggestions were made around the timing of Board meetings which led to an agreement to move these to morning meetings. In addition there was a comment which would be addressed around ensuring that the content of the agenda was focused on those key areas for discussion and approval.

7. Management Accounts 2016-17 Quarter 3

AP introduced this paper and explained the three main sources of income, for the benefit of the new Directors attending. As the SG grant in aid did not cover all of staff salaries or overheads, opportunities for some income generation were explored each year to ensure the organisation remained a going concern. Where this income resulted from international activity this would be in line with the agreed strategy for international activity agreed by the Board. Another area which also potentially generated some income was the application of new credit rating bodies. This always remained unbudgeted however as it was difficult to predict when applications might be made.

AP went on to explain that over the past few years the Board had agreed to look to build up 3-4 month's running costs in reserves to provide proof of going concern for the purposes of both the Board and OSCR. The accounts for 2016-17 showed a predicted underspend of £20K this year in savings and a further £30K underspent in the salary line, along with additional unbudgeted income of around £25k. AP was seeking approval from the Board to utilise these surplus reserves in two ways. The first was to organise a conference in the first quarter of 2018, to highlight the key messages from the TERU report and to share some of the real achievements of the last three years. The second was to take on a Modern Apprentice to support the administrative function of the organisation and also as a commitment to the Government agenda for apprenticeships. The Board approved the quarter 3 accounts and confirmed agreement to the proposals for use of the additional reserves.

8. Key Priorities and Budget 2017-2018

RW invited AP to speak to this paper. AP reported that these key priorities for 2017-18 had been taken to the Quality Committee, the Forum, Scottish Funding Council and Scottish Government. It had been agreed with SG that it could be reviewed further once the detail of the Learner Journey Review was public to ensure that it fully supported that agenda. AP confirmed that a very detailed set of activities sat below the Key Priorities which would be managed by the Executive Team and reported through the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Board discussed the Key Priorities in detail and recommended that they could be sharper and that there could be fewer than the fourteen as shown in the paper. It was suggested that some of these reflected specific priorities for 2017-18 but others were areas of work which would be ongoing and it may be helpful to distinguish between the two. It was agreed that AP would make some amendments to these priorities and circulate to the Board for approval.

AP then took the Directors through the Budget for 2017-18. She reported that the budget did not include anything that was not firmly in place; for example it did not include either of the bids for international activity nor any potential applications for credit rating body status. RW invited further comments on the Budget and it was suggested that whilst the Budget showed how much was being spent on actual running costs and activities it would be useful to see percentages of allocation against each of the key priorities once these were finalised. The Directors approved the Budget and asked that information on the allocation of percentages against priorities be brought back to the Board.

RW invited PS to comment on the Learner Journey Review and the Development of Young Workforce (DYW). He confirmed that the Learner Journey Review would cover ages 15 -24 and

information had now been circulated with the SCQFP being asked to contribute to a number of work-streams. It was very important that this work also linked to DYW and the Enterprise Review. Ministers were keen to ensure that all these initiatives linked well and that there was no unhelpful overlap. He felt that the SCQF would be central to the work of the Learner Journey group as it looked at progression and transitions. RW confirmed that this was helpful to the Partnership and that the Executive Team were keen to be involved in taking the work forward.

9. Report from the Audit & Risk Committee

RW introduced this paper having attended the last Audit & Risk Committee meeting. He confirmed that the new Auditors, Henderson Loggie would bring the year-end accounts to the Board meeting in June. He invited AP to comment on the detail that had been discussed at the meeting around the Risk Register. AP updated on the current situation with a number of these and explained that the risk in relation to apprenticeships had been added as the different approach being taken in England could potentially impact on Scotland particularly with UK- wide employers. The SCQFP had submitted a position paper to Scottish Government earlier that week setting out how the SCQF could be used in relation to the Workforce Development fund due to be launched later this year. In addition the SCQFP was providing advice to SDS on the development of graduate Apprenticeships and their levels in the Framework.

The Board noted the plan for the audited accounts and approved the updated Risk Register.

10. Report from the Quality Committee

RH spoke to this paper and reported that four HMIs had been asked to review all Colleges in relation to their credit rating work. An interim report would come to the May meeting of QC with a final report in the autumn. This would then provide Education Scotland and the SCQFP with a clear understanding of what was being done in the name of the SCQF as well as what the plans would be for future credit rating. At this point there would then need to be a discussion about what the future model of review would be.

AP then highlighted the HK – SCQF Referencing Report to the Directors. She confirmed that Hong Kong had a framework in place since 2008. As a country they had considerable mobility sending students to the UK, Mainland China, Australia and New Zealand. For the benefit of new Directors she explained that the Education Bureau in Hong Kong and the SCQFP had a joint Memorandum of Understanding and had worked on a number of projects together. The Board discussed the report and sought clarification in some areas. RP indicated that she thought the report was very robust and would be useful as a benchmark for any further referencing but would also be useful to HEIs particularly those which had joint arrangements with universities in Hong Kong. It was agreed that the report should be published on the website

JM suggested adding a short Question and Answer section to explain the background to the report. Directors approved the report.

The Directors noted the range of other business conducted by the Quality Committee.

11. Performance appraisal and remuneration

LM and SD left the room as a private session took place with the Board Directors and AP for this item. Directors discussed and agreed the proposed pay settlement for 2017. RW had received approval for the proposal from AS prior to him leaving the meeting.

12. Report from the Forum

AP confirmed that the Forum meeting had taken place with only 6 attendees rather than the usual 16-18. This may have been due to some very bad weather that had affected people travelling that day. The report was oral as the deadline for the Board papers did not allow time to prepare a paper but the meeting went well with Scottish Government presenting on plans for the Learner Journey Review and TERU presenting their final findings and recommendations in the impact assessment.

13. Any other business

No other business was reported.

14. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting of Friday 2 June was discussed with Directors and it was agreed that all of the remaining meetings would run from 9.00 to 11.00 am to allow for a more productive day for everyone attending, rather than from 11.00 am to 1.00 pm.