
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The 132nd meeting of the Scottish Funding Council was held on 24 June 2022 at West Lothian College.

PRESENT:

- Mike Cantlay (Chair)
- Karen Watt (Chief Executive)
- Lorna Jack (Deputy Chair)
- David Alexander
- Mhairi Harrington
- Professor Ewart Keep
- Dr Paul Little
- Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam
- Professor Peter Mathieson
- Dr Veena O'Halloran
- Caroline Stuart
- Professor John Wallace
- Professor Lesley Yellowlees

OFFICERS:

- Lynne Raeside (Secretary)
- James Dunphy
- Martin Boyle
- Richard Maconachie
- Cat Ball
- Gary Bannon
- Angela Seymour (Clerk)

OBSERVERS:

- Dr Georgina Weatherdon
- Morven Pritchard (Staff Representative)

APOLOGIES:

- Andy Kerr

Sheila Duncan David Sweeney (UKRI)

David Blaney
(HEFCW)

22/66 Welcome

The Chair welcomed all present.

22/67 Chair's business: Papers for discussion and declarations of interest

The Chair invited members to indicate if they wished to discuss any of the starred items on the agenda. The recommendations contained within papers SFC/22/55 to SFC/22/57 were agreed without discussion.

The Chair reminded Board members of their responsibility to indicate if they have, or may be perceived to have, a conflict of interest under any item.

22/68 Minutes of the 6 May 2022 meeting (SFC/22/Min03)

The minute of the 6 May 2022 meeting was confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

22/69 Action Tracker (SFC/22/48)

The Board received an update on the actions from previous meetings of the Board.

22/70 Chief Executive's report: items for report (SFC/22/49)

The Board received an update from the Chief Executive on current operational issues.

In discussion, the Board:

- Noted the upgrades to the ICT infrastructure.
- Noted plans to conduct a lessons learned exercise in relation to college governance issues.
- Reflected on the Spending Review and noted the need to secure further detail on the sector split from the Scottish Government.
- Acknowledged the challenges associated with research funding and Scotland's competitive position.

The Board noted the update.

22/71 Strategic Framework: achievements and priorities (SFC/22/50)

The Board received a paper providing an update on our approach to refreshing SFC's Strategic Framework, including a summary of stakeholder engagement undertaken to date. It also provided a report on achievements against the 2019 – 22 Framework.

The Board:

- Welcomed the report on achievements against the 2019-22 Framework.
- Discussed SFC's strategic direction and priorities for the final Framework to be presented at the September Board.

22/72 Knowledge Exchange & Innovation consultation (SFC/22/51)

The Board received a paper outlining the responses to the Knowledge Exchange & Innovation consultation and the planned next steps in co-designing our support for KE & I, recognising the wider context of the Spending Review, SFC Review implementation, the Scottish Government's Innovation Strategy and National Strategy for Economic Transformation.

In discussion the Board:

- Acknowledged that the Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC) supported the proposals.
- Noted that the planned evaluation of the Innovation Centres will provide an invaluable input to the Board's decision-making next year about this infrastructure investment.
- Noted the importance of supporting college innovation.

The Board:

- Noted the responses to our KE&I consultation and next steps and offered advice on developing plans, particularly relating to the Entrepreneurial Campus Strategy, Infrastructure investment process and university and college Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Fund.
- Agreed the guiding principles for the evaluation of our innovation infrastructure investment, outlined in paragraph 22 of this report.
- Agreed the alignment of Innovation Centre phase 2 timelines, as set out in paragraphs 26-28 of this report, in order to consider the future plans of all the Innovation Centres together in 2023.

22/73 Outcome agreement Approach AY2022 – 23 (SFC/22/52)

The Board received a paper proposing arrangements for the AY 2022-23 Outcome Agreements (OAs) with institutions and regional strategic bodies (RSBs). The agreed way forward will inform guidance to be issued in summer 2022 ahead of subsequent engagement with institutions and RSBs over the late summer/autumn.

In discussion the Board:

- Noted this approach had been scrutinised by the Skills Enhancement and Learning Committee (SEAL).
- Noted the importance of emphasis on growth and enhancement not just monitoring.

The Board:

- Agreed the proposed arrangements and development of the OA guidance, as set out in the paper.
- Agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to finalise and issue the 2022-23 OA guidance to the sectors, consistent with the proposals in this paper.

22/74 Museums, Galleries and Collections Grant (SFC/22/53)

The Board received a paper providing an update on the purpose, value and development of the Museums, Galleries and Collections (MGC) grant, including the ongoing review, ahead of consideration of funding commitments at the September meeting.

Although no funding decisions were being taken, the following members of the Board expressed a conflict of interests:

- Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam in relation to Glasgow School of Art and as an Advisory Board Member of University of Edinburgh.
- Professor Peter Mathieson in relation to University of Edinburgh.

In discussion the Board:

- Discussed the value of the Grant and its status within SFC's non-core funds.
- Explored the likelihood of funds being secured from other sources.

The Board:

- Noted the summary of the purpose and value brought by the MGC grant.

- Noted the summary of progress of the review to date.
- Approved the guiding principles and suggested indicators in the proposed future funding model for the grant.

22/75 Board and Committee Governance Review (SFC/22/54)

The Board received a paper seeking approval for the scope and timeline for a planned review of governance arrangements within the Scottish Funding Council.

The Board agreed this review of governance.

22/76 Committee minutes: Finance Committee (SFC/22/55*)

The Board received the confirmed minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 26 April 2022.

22/77 Committee minutes: Remuneration Committee (SFC/22/56*)

The Board received the confirmed minutes of the Remunerations Committee meeting of 1 March 2022.

22/78 Committee minutes: research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (SFC/22/57*)

The Board received the confirmed minutes of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee meeting of 24 February 2022.

22/79 Long Term Agenda (SFC/22/58*)

The Board received a paper informing members of substantive agenda items proposed for future meetings.

22/80 Any other business (oral)

There was no other business.

22/81 Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place at 10am on 2 September at 99 Haymarket Terrace.