Steeple Suite, Falkirk Campus 4.30pm (refreshments available from 4pm)

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AGENDA

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		Type	Lead
1	Apologies and Declarations of interest	Discussion	Trudi Craggs
2	Minutes & Matters Arising of Meeting of 8 December 2022 and 19 January 2023	Approval	Trudi Craggs

(Elements of paper 2 are withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 33 Commercial Interests and the Economy of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

		Type	Lead
3	Minutes of Committee Meeting 3.1 Learning & Student Experience 9 February 2023	Noting	Lorna Dougall
4	Principal's Report	Discussion	Ken Thomson

(Elements of paper 4 are withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 33 Commercial Interests and the Economy of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

		Type	Lead
5	Chair's Report (Verbal)	Discussion	Trudi Craggs

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

		Type	Lead
6	Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit Report	Discussion	Rob McDermott

GOVERNANCE

		Type	Lead
7	Public Sector Equality Duty Interim Report	Approval	Anna Vogt
8	Fuel Change	Approval	Alison Stewart
9	Support for the relocation of the University of Stirling's Clinical Skills Faculty and a Health and Social Care Centre of Excellence for Alloa Campus	Approval	Kenny MacInnes

(Paper 9 is withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 33 Commercial Interests and the Economy of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

		Type	Lead
10	Voluntary Severance Scheme 2023-2026	Approval	Alison Stewart
11	Review of Audit Committee Remit	Approval	Alison Stewart

12   Review of Risk

13   Any other competent Business

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Stirling Campus, Kildean Suite, 9.30am

Present: Trudi Craggs (Chair)
             Professor Ken Thomson
             Lorna Dougall
             Katherine Graham
             Claire Green, Forth Valley Student Association Vice President (FVSAVP)
             Jennifer Hogarth
             Liam McCabe
             Emma Meredith (via Teams)
             Ken Richardson

Apologies: Andy Caldwell
             Hazel Burt
             Paul Devoy
             Lindsey Hastie
             Amber Little, Forth Valley Student Association President (FVSAP)
             Alistair McKean

In Attendance: Alison Stewart, Vice Principal Finance & Corporate Affairs (VPFACA)
             David Allison, Vice Principal, Infrastructure and Communications (VPIC)
             Kenny MacInnes, Vice Principal Learning and Student Experience (VPLSE)
             Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer and Deputy Board Secretary (CGPO)
             Pauline Jackson, Development and Fundraising Manager (DFM) for B/22/021
             Laura Fraser, Business Transformation Manager (BTM) for B/22/021
             Sarah Higgins, Director of Curriculum (DOC) for B/22/023

B/22/015   Apologies and Declarations of interest

The VPLSE declared an interest in relation to B/22/022

The Principal declared an interest in relation to B/22/024

B/22/016   Minutes and Matters Arising of Meeting of 22 September 2022

Members approved the minute of the meeting of 22 September 2022.

Matters Arising

The Chair requested any update on the FFR submission to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC)

The VPFACA noted that the letter and the acknowledgement from SFC had been shared with members and that there had been no further progress.

The Principal commented that there was a lack of commentary or action from SFC which left the College having to be the proactive party in this matter.

B/22/017   **Minutes of Committee Meetings**

3.1 HR – 10 November 2022

The Committee Chair outlined the business of the committee and discussed the new People strategy document which had been presented and noted how the content mirrors that of the overall College strategic plan.

She highlighted that recent surveys had been discussed which noted concerns from staff over workload levels.

She informed members that a new health and safety dashboard had been presented to the Committee and that the Committee had recommended that the full Board receive health and safety training and consider whether health and safety should become a standing agenda item for all Board business.

Committee members commented on the complaints overview report and the fact that the College continued to deal with a serial complainer. It was recommended that the College look at other educational bodies to see their approach to vexatious activity.

a) Members noted the content of the update

3.2 Nomination – 11 November 2022

The Chair reported that the remit of the Committee had been considered and updated to align it with other College processes. She noted that the Committee had approved the approach to the process for recruitment of a new Principal.

a) Members noted the content of the update

3.3 Draft Finance – 15 November 2022

The Chair reported that the financial statements had been considered by the Committee but that, as a substantive issue on the meeting agenda, further comment would be made at that point.

He discussed the Procurement annual report which had been considered by the Committee, noting that there were elements in the report that are required but that the Committee felt could affect negotiations on future contract values.

He also highlighted to members that there had been substantial discussion at Committee in relation to two areas of non-procurement compliant activity, with a particular focus on the

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The Board Chair noted that there were a numbers of lessons to be learned and confirmed to members that this matter would also be referred to SFC as a breach of the Financial Memorandum.

a) Members noted the content of the update

3.4 Audit – 15 November 2022

The Chair informed members that the meeting had the annual joint section with the Finance Committee to consider the accounts and external auditors report. She confirmed that the College had received an unqualified opinion on the accounts.

She highlighted that, owing to the meeting not being quorate and the external auditors not being at the meeting in person, it had been decided not to hold the annual private discussion between the Committee and the internal and external auditors. She confirmed that this would be rescheduled for the next Committee meeting.

a) Members noted the content of the update

3.5 Learning & Student Experience – 17 November 2022

The Chair informed members that there was a significant amount of work happening to either improve the quality of the learner experience or to allow for forward planning and early intervention with individual students where warranted.

She discussed the work ongoing to continue the development of digital skills and the challenges of some staff, now they are back on campus, reverting to previous practices.

She reported on the positive news that, following the closure of the Raploch campus, positive feedback had been received from the students from Raploch who had moved to other campuses and who now felt that they were part of the wider College.

Members queried, in relation to reverting to previous practices, were there measures in place to address this. The VPLSE confirmed that this was the case and that there were mentors in departments to help colleagues develop and challenge practices being used.

a)   Members noted the content of the update

B/22/018   **Principal's Report**

(Elements of this section are withheld from publication under Section 33 Commercial Interests and the Economy of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

The Principal presented members with his report on activity since the last meeting of the Board.

The Principal thanked members for their kind messages following his announcement of his intention to retire.

He informed members that, in response to the anticipated poor funding announcements from Scottish Government, the VPFACA and her team had begun to pull together a range of scenarios which would be presented to members at the appropriate time.

Members queried whether any other Colleges were planning to do the same. The Principal informed members that, while he could not confirm if other College's would do so at this time, he was confident our withdrawal will prompt consideration and further changes.

Members queried the impact of coming out of College's Scotland. The Principal noted that the College would not be able to contribute to policy discussions but that our ability to influence policy or the College's Scotland responses to Scottish Government had been minor at best for a number of years.

The Chair noted that ongoing work of the Finance team to support both the accounts and the scenario planning outlined above and asked that the Board's thanks be recorded for the team.

a) Members noted the content of the report

B/22/019   **Chair's Report**

The Chair presented her first report to the Board.

She discussed a call she had with Jamie Hepburn, Minister for Higher Education and Further Education, Youth Employment and Training on the impact of the College sector and individual colleges. During the call she had also highlighted the risks to Board of Management given the financial challenges facing the sector and the responsibilities of members.

She discussed the College opening event that had occurred earlier that week and discussions she had with Mike Cantlay, Chair of SFC. She informed members she intended to meet with the Chair and CEO of SFC in the New Year.

a) Members noted the content of the report

B/22/020   **Student Association Report**

The FVSAVP presented a report on the activity of the FVSA since the last meeting of the Board. She discussed class representative training and confirmed over 100 class representatives had been trained so far.

She discussed the FVSA food pantry which is available to all students in each campus.

She noted the demand for breakfast foods had dropped following the College starting to offer free breakfasts on all campuses.

She confirmed that the mental health partnership agreement with the College is back up and running and that the Student Partnership agreement was currently under review.

She informed members that students had been approached for ideas for the theme for the upcoming refreshers fayre and the chosen them was film and comic books.

Members queried, re the free breakfasts, whether there was a wider community benefit to accessing this. The Principal confirmed he would raise this with the third sector representatives at the Community Planning Partnership.

It was noted that some students were cautious regarding a perceived stigma of accessing the free breakfasts. Following discussion, it was agree that the branding for the area would be reviewed to help address this.

The VPFACA noted that, if following the pilot, it was expanded to some lunch provision, the Arm's Length Foundation would be approached for financial support to enable this to happen.

Following on from discussion on cost of living challenges, members also raised a query regarding whether there has been an analysis of the costs for running the new Falkirk campus.

The VPIC commented that an analysis has happened and that, even with a reduction in campus utilisation, current energy prices have led to an increase in costs. The Principal committed to bringing a further analysis to the February 2023 meeting of the Board.

a) Members noted the content of the update

Advisory Group Member request

The FVSAVP highlighted the FVSA advisory group was seeking a Board member to join it. She outlined the purpose of the group and the schedule of meetings.

The Chair noted that, as a previous member of the Advisory group, she had found participation enjoyable and encouraged members to volunteer via the email address in the paper. She also confirmed she would email members who were not in attendance at the meeting to bring this opportunity to their attention.

a) Members noted the request

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

B/22/021   Skills Transition Centre

The DFM presented a report outlining the College's bid for funding for a £4m Skills Transition Centre project as part of the wider Falkirk Growth Deal which is funded by UK and Scottish Governments.

She noted the funding was primarily capital and described the objectives of the project. She also provided an overview of the timescales involved and the external help which had been sourced to help the team write the required Outline Business Case to the required UK Treasury 'green book' standard. This was following on from a successful Strategic Business case which had been approved by the Falkirk Growth Deal.

The Principal commented that this would be one of the first projects in the Falkirk Growth Deal as there needs to be the required skills in place for other projects coming on line later.

Members welcomed the overview and the decision taken to allocate additional resource to complete a technically demanding process. Members queried whether the resource allocated would be sufficient.

The DFM confirmed that there was more funding that could be accessed and this would be reviewed as the project developed.

She did note that, while the College had a range of resources, there were concerns that Falkirk Council, who are leading the overall process, need additional resource as there is only one member of staff in the programme office at this time. It was confirmed that these concerns have been raised with the Council.

Members queried whether the College would be seeking input from other organisations who have already gone through the growth deal process and it was confirmed a number of visits had been arranged.

Members queried what the other proposed projects in the Falkirk Growth Deal were and also whether the funding for the College element was secure.

The Principal gave an overview of the other projects and organisations involved and confirmed that the College had been informed that, following the strategic business case being approved, the funding for the Skills Transition Centre had been ring-fenced.

a) Members noted the content of the report and requested to see a copy of the Strategic Business Case

B/22/022 **Principal Recruitment (Verbal)**

The Chair provided members with an overview of the Principal's recruitment. She noted that the process had been started quickly as the successful candidate could potentially have a 6 month notice period and there were also other Colleges out for recruitment for a Principal.

She confirmed that Aspen People had been appointed to support the process and the advert went live with a closing date of 12 December 2022. The next steps would a sifting meeting on 20 December 2022, long list interviews on 10 January 2023 and 17 January 2023 would be the date for the short list interviews which would include a presentation to a panel of staff and students.

She also outlined who the panellists would be for each of the stages.

The VPFACA informed members that an additional meeting of the Board via teams would be held on 19 January 2023 to approve the appointment of the Principal and also the outcome of the Board of Management non-executive member recruitment.

It was agreed the CGPO would send a link to members for this meeting.

a) Members noted the content of the update

B/22/023 **Forth Valley University College NHS Partnership**

Sarah Higgins, DOC, presented a paper providing an update on the Forth Valley University College NHS Partnership (the Partnership).

She informed members that the partnership was formally launched on 3 October 2022 and was already beginning to see some benefits.

She noted that there had been queries at the last presentation to the Board on how the partnership governance would work and she provided members with an overview on this.

She also provided an overview of upcoming project launches within the Partnership covering areas such learning pathways for senior phase students and simulation and immersive learning sessions.

She commented to members that, in relation to College resources, the plan was to embed partnership activity throughout the College.

She also covered the current risk relating to potential industrial action across the range of partner bodies.

Members queried the branding, noting that this should be considered at an appropriate time in the project.

Members queried whether there was a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in place for this project to ensure College Intellectual Property was protected?

The DOC informed members that there was not an MOU in place at this time. The Principal confirmed that this would be actioned.

Members queried what financial and other targets were in place. The DOC informed members that owing to the unique nature of this project the first year was being used to establish a baseline off of which future targets will be built.

a) Members noted the content of the report

B/22/024   **University of Stirling - Collaboration**

a) Members noted the content of the report

GOVERNANCE

B/22/025   **Annual Report and Financial Statements 2021/2022**

The VPFACA presented the 2021/22 annual accounts for members consideration and approval. She highlighted the significant amount of work that is required to prepare

these and the impact on the overall picture of the College as a result of the various accounting standards the document has to meet.

She confirmed to members that overall, the accounts show a good outturn for the year.

She raised the challenges experienced again this year meeting the range of the external auditor requirements, including in relation to a donation made to the ALF.

The external auditors were also unwilling to accept the position of going concern from the College without a letter of assurance from SFC, despite SFC agreeing with the College that this was not necessary.

a) Members approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2021/22

B/22/026   **External Auditor Annual Report and Letter of Representation**

The VPFACA presented the draft report to members, noting that the College had not received the final version yet.

She informed members that the issues highlighted in the previous report had been resolved and there was an unqualified audit opinion but that the College was currently challenging some of the fees being levied, particularly those in relation to the donation. ██

She also noted that financial sustainability had been classified as a 'red' risk but that this applied to the whole sector and was not specifically related to the College.

Members noted their thanks to the full finance team who are to be commended for producing the accounts in the face of these external challenges.

Members noted the issues with the external auditors and queried whether it was worth communicating this with Audit Scotland who appoint them.

The VPFACA confirmed that commentary on the external auditors had been provided to Audit Scotland for the last two years but that no action had arisen. She confirmed that she would do so again and noted this was the final year of the external auditor's appointment.

Members noted their disappointment in the additional fees for work that they regarded as unnecessary for the College to have to undertake.

The VFPACA informed members that, when the final version of the report was received, this would be circulated to members.

The Chair also highlighted that there were some minor errors in the document and that the commentary on the donation to the ALF needed to be revised to more accurately reflect the reasons for doing this. She confirmed she will pick this up separately with the VPFACA

a) Members noted the content of the draft report

B/22/027 **Audit Committee Chair's Report to the Board of Management**

The Audit Committee Chair presented her annual report to the Board on the activities of the committee.

She highlighted some of the business covered during the year and noted that the College had received a very positive internal audit report in relation to Business Continuity.

a) Members approved the content of the report

B/22/028 **Appointment of Vice Chair (Verbal)**

The Chair highlighted that there was currently a vacancy for the Vice Chair role on the Board and encouraged members to consider applying for this position.

She asked for any expressions of interest to be emailed to her and the VPFACA.

a) Members noted the content of the report

B/22/029 **Board Evaluation 2021/22**

The VPFACA presented the paper on Board evaluation which had been deferred from the previous meeting.

She noted that the main feedback in the meetings members had with her and the previous Chair had been the desire of members to return to in person meetings. She noted that, despite this preference, the College had experience some issues with attendance at meetings.

The Chair stated that, for the Board, in person was preferred and, rather than a hybrid approach to the meeting, members who cannot attend should submit apologies.

She noted committees could be more flexible if they choose to be.

The VPFACA confirmed that this could be discussed further at the April meeting once the new members were in place and the committee structures could be refreshed.

She noted that there were also comments on the length of Board papers and that the Board engagement calendar should also be reintroduced.

a) Members noted the content of the report

B/22/030   **Code of Good Governance - Update September 2022**

The VPFACA presented the updated Code of Good Governance for member's consideration and approval. She highlighted the changes since the previous version and also informed members that Scottish Government were currently consulting on the introduction of Trade Union members to College Boards, with a view to them joining in August 2023.

a) Members approved the adoption of the revised Code of Good Governance

B/22/031   **Review of Risk**

Risks were identified in their covering papers.

B/22/032   **AOCB**

None

Teams, 4.30pm

Present:	Trudi Craggs (Chair)
	Professor Ken Thomson
	Hazel Burt
	Andy Caldwell
	Lorna Dougall (left after B/22/034)
	Katherine Graham
	Claire Green, Forth Valley Student Association Vice President (FVSAVP)
	Lindsey Hastie
	Jennifer Hogarth
	Alistair McKean
Apologies:	Amber Little, Forth Valley Student Association President (FVSAP)
	Paul Devoy
	Liam McCabe
	Ken Richardson
	Emma Meredith

In Attendance: Alison Stewart, Vice Principal Finance & Corporate Affairs (VPFACA)

B/22/033   **Apologies and Declarations of interest**

Lorna Dougal noted an interest in item B/22/035.

B/22/034   **Principal Recruitment**

The Chair talked through the process which had been undertaken in relation to the recruitment of a new Principal following Professor Ken Thomson's announcement of his retirement at the end of Academic Year 2022/23. She highlighted that the Nominations Committee had been supported by Aspen People Ltd and Audrey Cumberford, Principal of Edinburgh College.

The Chair informed members that following a through process the unanimous decision of the interview panel was that Kenny MacInnes the current Vice Principal of Learning & Student Experience be appointed as Principal of Forth Valley College.

The Chair added that Kenny's ambition, enthusiasm and passion for Forth Valley College made him the standout candidate. Lorna Dougall who was also part of the Nominations Committee echoed the Chairs comments.

a) Members welcomed the recommendation and approved the appointment of Kenny MacInnes as Principal of Forth Valley College.

B/22/035   **Board Member Appointments**

The Chair presented an overview of the process undertaken for appointing new members to the Board of Management. As required by the code of Good Governance she highlighted that staff and students were involved in the process which was also overseen by John Blackie as an independent advisor. The Principal and Baord Secretary were also involved in an advisory capacity.

16 applications were received, of which five were invited to interview with three of these applicants being proposed for appointment. Two existing Board members had reapplied and were not interviewed given their current performance and were also recommended for re-appointment.

The Chair highlighted a concern over the lack of quality applications and noted consideration would be given to how we take this forward in future.

The Board Secretary highlighted the gender split of the Board post appointment of the proposed candidates was weighted towards female and out with the range suggested by the Ministerial guidance. The Chair highlighted that the Nominations committee did not know the applicants gender when siting the applications in line with Equality guidance.

a) Members approved proposing the three external applicants identified, along with the 2 current members of the Board of Management who applied to Scottish Ministers for approval.

B/22/036   **Review of Risk**

Risks were identified in their covering papers.

B/22/032   **AOCB**

None

Steeple Suite, Falkirk Campus (commencing at 4.30pm)

Present: Lorna Dougall (Chair)
                  Kat Graham
                  Claire Green, Forth Valley Student Association Vice President (FVSAVP)
                  Emma Meredith

Apologies: Anna Fenge

In Attendance: Professor Ken Thomson, Principal
                  David Allison, Vice Principal Infrastructure and Communications (VPIC)
                  Kenny MacInnes, Vice Principal Learning and Student Experience (VPLSE)
                  Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer (CGPO)
                  Rob McDermott, Quality Manager (QM) for L/22/004
                  Lyndsay Condie, Director of Operations (DOO) for L/22/005
                  James Aston, Head of Business Transformation (HoBT) for L/22/005
                  Anna Vogt, Head of Inclusion and Student Services (HISS) for L/22/006
                  Laurence Ferguson, Learning and Digital Skills Manager (LDSM) for L/22/007

L/22/001   Declarations of Interest

                  None.

L/22/002   Minute of Meeting of 17 November 2022

                  The minute was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

L/22/003   Matters Arising

                  4.1 L/21/043 Student Journey Dashboard

                  Members had requested access to the Campus-M app and guest access is now in place
                  for members. Members agreed to review the app and discuss this as a matters arising
                  at the May meeting of the Committee.

                  4.2 L/21/044 Outcome Agreement Self Evaluation

                  Members had requested more data on the College sector and this has been included
                  in the paper for agenda item 11 of the meeting.

                  4.3 L/21/045 2022/23 Year End – PI Dashboard

                  Members had requested a demonstration of College systems and this has been
                  included as item 6 on the agenda.

4.4 L/21/047 Student Activity Report

Members had requested an update on the SFC review which will be presented during the meeting.

The Chair also noted that, at the end of the last meeting of the Committee, there was some discussion on information regarding enrichment activity. Members noted it would be good to hear about activity the College is doing to enrich the learning experience as well as hearing about some student success stories.

The Chair confirmed she would take this forward in discussion with the FVSAVP and CGPO.

L/22/004   **Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit Report**

The QM presented the report from the Education Scotland (ES) engagement visit in February 2023.

He informed members that the focus of the visit was on retention, achievement and progression and that the College had secured a satisfactory rating, which is the most positive rating ES provided.

He highlighted the report itself contained 43 examples of positive feedback and noted that the FVSA had received particular praise and thanked the FVSAVP for her and the FVSA teams work.

He discussed the more negative aspects of the report, noting that a lot of the challenges identified were sectoral such as attainment and confirmed that the College was in line with the sector.

Members welcomed the positive report from ES.

Members queried what could be done to increase the levels of attainment identified in the report.

The VPLSE noted that the work of Continuous Curriculum Improvement (CCI) and the PIPT process was continuing to have a positive effect, arresting the slight slide below sector averages in recent years and driving forward incremental increases. He also noted that the expansion of Learning Development Worker (LDW) support into HE courses to provide pastoral support, the introduction of the Learning Improvement Facilitator (LIF) role to provide specialist academic support and the restructure of the Inclusion and Student Services team to direct resources where there was demand had all contributed to the arrest of the downturn.

a)   Members noted the content of the report

L/22/005   **Student Journey Systems Demonstration**

The DOO and HoBT gave a presentation to members outlining the array of systems in place within the College, both back office and student facing, that work together to support and improve the student journey during their time at College.

The HoBT outlined each system, the purpose for each and how they collaborate and support specific parts of the journey.

The DOO also noted that each of these systems remains under review so that changes, based on user feedback, can be identified and implemented as appropriate.

Members welcomed the presentation and the chance to see how all the various systems they had heard about link together.

The Principal noted that these systems would also support future learner analytics to enable the College to demonstrate the impact, value and efficiencies gained by the College.

a)   Members noted the content of the report

L/22/006   **Inclusion and Student Services Dashboard**

The HISS presented members with the first dashboard covering the activity of the service and the range of students who engage with the services.

She noted that this dashboard had quite a lot of raw data in it to set the baseline and that further development of the dashboard would follow to look closer at the impact of the service on areas such as retention and achievement.

She discussed the range of services offered and the number of students engaging with each, highlighting that some students would access multiple services during their time at college.

She outlined the importance of early intervention whenever possible, particularly for safeguarding issues.

Members queried how the information generated by the support was utilised to support students and understand demand.

The HISS confirmed that engagements were recorded and that the Student Support Service (SSS) portal was being developed to become a 'one stop shop' for appropriate staff to be able to view the level of support in place and actions needed.

Members noted the high level of students engaging with the service and the comments on the dashboard around the various sources of funding and how these were not guaranteed to continue, presenting a high risk for the service.

The HISS confirmed this was a challenge, with some of the funding such as the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) funding for counsellors being time limited and quite proscriptive in terms of how the College could utilise the funding. She noted that the funding was for 4 years, with this being the last year and that SFC were developing a mental health plan but that details on what this would include or fund was not known at this time.

She noted that alternative sources of funding such as the Arms' Length Foundation (ALF) were being looked at but that these were no longer term solutions at this point.

Members noted the difficulty of the core focus needing to be on education but also ensuring appropriate support is in place at a time of funding cuts.

The VPLSE informed members that, as noted earlier, the College was going to conduct a piece of work looking at the cross over between interventions and success and also look at how many students who don't succeed that do not engage with the support interventions available.

He agreed that funding was a challenge, especially if it were to be removed given a third of full time students currently access some form of support.

Members queried how the College compared to the sector. The HISS reported that Outcome Agreement (OA) data was used to see how the College compares and that it had been identified that the College had fewer students disclosing a disability and the reasons for this were being investigated.

Overall, she reported that the College, in terms of support mechanisms did appear to be sector leading.

a) Members noted the content of the report

L/22/007   **Learning and Digital Skills Academy Ambition Dashboard**

The LDSM presented the regular dashboard on the activities of the Learning and Digital Skills Academy (LDSA).

He discussed the content of the dashboard, noting increased levels of engagement and support for LDSA activity from Curriculum Managers.

He highlighted a number of activities that had occurred since the last Committee meeting, including ongoing collaborative work with SERC in Northern Ireland.

He also discussed the risks being encountered and mitigations for these.

a) Members noted the content of the report

L/22/008   **Draft Outcome Agreement**

The Chair highlighted that this item was for consideration and approval rather than for discussion as noted on the agenda.

The VPIC presented members with the draft OA for 2022-23, noting that this was coming later to the Committee due to the Covid impact on SFC timescales.

He reported to members that the draft had been shared with SFC in December 2022 and that the College had received positive verbal feedback on the contents and targets.

He noted that, in relation to student success rates, a modest 1% increase had been put into the targets.

Members noted that the target seemed reasonable but queried the impact of the College funding position on the achievability of these.

The VPIC confirmed that the financial impact was taken into account and that the modest increase was due to anticipated benefits from developments discussed earlier.

Members noted the use of Labour Market Intelligence in curriculum review and requested further information at a future meeting on this topic. One member also indicated a number of firms work with the College sector in England and that she would forward on these details to the VPIC to consider.

a) Members approved the draft Outcome Agreement 2022-23

L/22/009   **PI Prediction Dashboard**

The VPLSE presented the dashboard covering the first of four review periods for the academic year.

He outlined the attainment target thresholds for each of the four periods and noted that, for both FE and HE, there were improvements compared to the previous year's figures.

He discussed with members the actions taken where activity does not meet the threshold targets and the use of the systems to support decision making and identify support for learners.

He highlighted that all ratings are challenged as appropriate by himself and the VPIC. He also referenced the number of ambers and reds in the dashboard which indicated areas of additional attention. He noted that some of these may be as a result of staff being cautious in predictions and will be monitored going forward.

He also informed members that a review of withdrawals was also conducted, noting that most of these seemed to be for personal circumstances but acknowledging this data could be developed more to reflect what the circumstances were, for example someone moving into employment during their course.

He confirmed the March review would allow the College to start to identify any trends and allow further proactive targeting of support.

Members noted that prediction can be quite difficult to get right and queried whether the data was compared to actual outcomes to see how accurate it was.

The VPLSE confirmed that the comparison of predicted vs actual was part of the ongoing process and differences in these were used to challenge the teams and identify more appropriate actions for supporting students.

The Principal noted that it may be useful to develop an overarching dashboard to pull together the range of data for members.

Members noted a College performance dashboard could be interesting and remove the need for some papers but that this should only be developed if it provided wider benefit to the College and not solely for Committee use.

a) Members noted the content of the report

L/22/010 **Student Activity Report**

The VPIC presented the regular report noting that, following the request from members at the previous meeting, additional information had been added on student demographic data.

He confirmed that overall enrolments were similar to last quarter although the level of Full Time (FT) enrolments was lower in some areas.

He confirmed a 1% increase in credits compared to last session and noted that the latest credits guidance had been released and that this still allowed use of credits for pastoral activity.

He noted, in relation to OA progress, there was a red against FE credits. He highlighted that this was as a result of the target being increased by SFC and that the College was actually above last year's levels.

He discussed the demographic information in the report and brought the level of students declaring a disability to the attention of the Committee as the level was lower than the sector average. He outlined a number of reasons why this may be.

Members noted it may be useful to compare this against the demographics for the Forth Valley area to see how the level compares to the local population. Members

also queried whether this type of information would influence College marketing activity.

The VPIC noted that it was not always easy to tie college data into the local area but this could be looked at. He also confirmed that trends which were identified were shared with both marketing and College management and that marketing do tailor campaigns as a result of this data.

a) Members noted the content of the report

L/22/011   **Future Agenda Items**

The VPIC presented the paper on intended future agenda items. Members noted the items and also asked that a report regarding Labour Market Information be added.

a) Members noted the content of the report

L/22/012   **Review of Risk**

Members highlighted the risk of funding for mental health and other support services.

L/22/013   **Any Other Competent Business**

None

1.   **Purpose**

To present to the Board of Management the thirty ninth Principal's report on key and strategic activity undertaken since the Board meeting in December 2022.

2.   **Recommendation**

The Board should note and comment on the activity undertaken by the Principal since the December 2022 Board meeting.

3.   **Key Highlights**

3.1   On the 6th December 2022 Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Higher Education and Further Education, Youth Employment and Training formally opened our Falkirk Campus, nearly three years after the first students entered the building in January 2022. Can I thank all Board members who attended for their support and to our Marketing and Communications team for a slick organised event which saw Mr Hepburn tour the facility with Mike Cantley, Chair SFC and Trudi Craggs, FVC Chair, Hector McCauley, MD Balfour Beattie Scotland, Neil Gillespie, Partner Reiach and Hall and Dr Mhairi Hay, Director of Curriculum for STEM & Construction as excellent guide. The event saw excellent coverage in all social media channels as well as centre stage in the Falkirk Herald.

3.2   I was absolutely delighted with the appointment of Kenny MacInnes as the next Principal of Forth Valley College. I am very aware of the work Kenny has put in since being appointed Vice Principal of Learning and Student Experience and how he has taken the opportunity to promote the College on a national stage. He has a great reputation with our partners and I look forward to the College going from strength to strength under his leadership. As a consequence of an internal appointment and in discussion with Trudi I have agreed to move my retirement forward to 30th April 2023 to allow Kenny to hit the ground running from the 1st May 2023. We have informed all staff, students and partners of the new date.

3.3   Of course the day job continues and we continue to work with LMT on scenario planning what we know to be a flat cash settlement from the SFC. This together with pay increases of 5%+ in the public sector and inflation running at 10% effectively is a severe cut to College budgets. We still await detail and impact of Foundation Apprenticeship funding all of which will be approved at the SFC Board meeting on the 10th March 2023. In the meantime we are scenario planning 10%, 15% and 20% cuts to budget and volume. More details will follow at the April Strategic Planning days.

At a recent College Principals Group meeting (CPG) we met with Karen Watt CEO SFC and other senior officials of SFC. Headlines from that meeting was the removal of Scottish Governments target of 116,000 FTE student number. This allows for the potential for decoupling 20% funding from the credit target enabling development and planning and a high level of flexibility which effectively could be a 20% cut to the volume of College delivery but at the discretion of individual Colleges. We also discussed the £26 million transition fund which was clearly stated is not for voluntary severance. The transition fund will be used for

non-core funding projects to allow pump priming a more sustainable and secure sector for the future.

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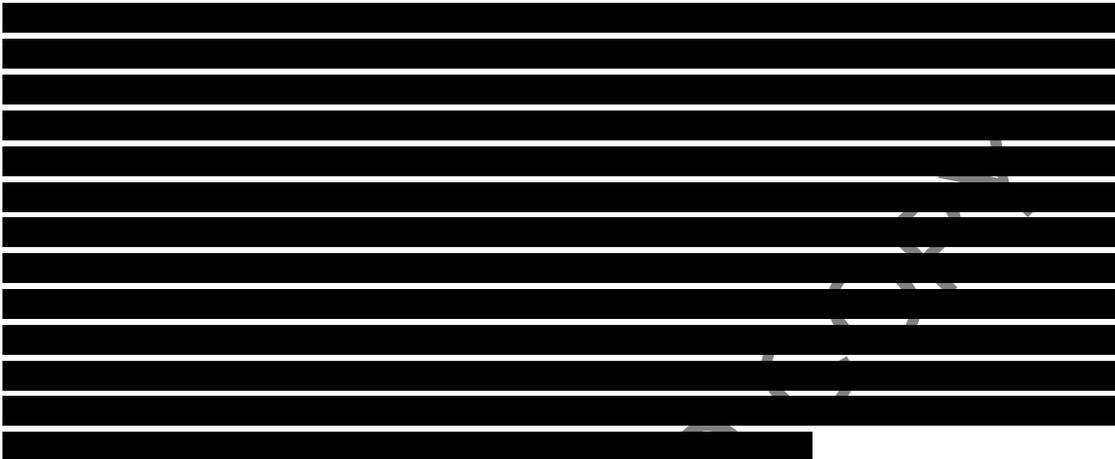
3.5 I am a Board member on delivering the £90m Falkirk Growth Deal which includes our own £4m project for a Transition Skills Centre in the Falkirk Campus. Pauline Jackson, Development and Fundraising Manager is leading on the project with Laura Fraser, both of whom are undertaking training on the Green Book for delivery of UK projects. It is hoped the funds will be released in May of next year and spread over 5 years.

This funding will hopefully pump prime further opportunities through the Forth Green Freeport Initiative through the Green Freeport Skills Fund and Just Transition funding for Grangemouth which has been allocated to support jobs, skills and employment in the area. There is no shortage of opportunity for the College going forward.

4 Networking and Presentations

4.1 I was appointed the IoD Scotland's National Ambassador for Education, Learning and Skills following a national selection process. It's a grand title for chairing a round table of regional ambassadors. Having been a member of IoD for twenty years I am keen that the business voice has a bigger impact on the education and skills system in Scotland and we will see how active the IoD Scotland can become. Currently CBI Scotland are the only business membership body I have observed with an input into learning policy.

4.2 The College's LMT have now had five sessions of the Ceannas Leadership Education programme with one more to go in late February. This has been an excellent programme for LMT with a focus on self as a leader and involved a whole college culture survey (which Kenny referred to in his Principal presentation) and individual "sonar" and "radar" feedback from line managers and reports. Thought provoking for all the team and supporting our strategic objective for investing in our leadership today and into the future.

5. Key Meetings

5.1 Since the start of 2023 I have been involved in three Independent Review Group meetings of the Hayward Review on Qualifications and Assessment. Three Board meetings of the SQA

Board, two of which have been extraordinary meetings called as a consequence of the ongoing strike action. I've been involved in three meetings of the New Delivery Board to replace SQA and have contributed to the Withers review on Skills Delivery. I have also been involved in discussion with Scottish Government's new Reform Directorate on the Purpose and Principles for Post 16 Education in Scotland. In discussion with Trudi, we think it would be helpful for me to present a paper to the Board at the strategic away day in April to try and pull together all the threads of development currently happening in a very cluttered educational reform landscape.

5.2   I continue to meet weekly with Trudi to share intelligence, direction and support. I've also met twice with the Student Association and the Student Council.

5.3   Over the last three weeks Kenny MacInnes and I have had meetings with Michael Matheson MSP, Michelle Thomson MSP and Stephen Kerr MSP. In addition Anna Vogt, Head of Inclusion and Student Services met with Evelyn Tweed MSP for Stirling and I had a very good meeting with Keith Brown MSP and Ellen Forson, Council Leader for Clackmannanshire. The latter meetings focussing on the ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮

5.4   In early February we hosted Liam Middleton, the Scottish Government's Head of Critical Energy, Infrastructure and Commercial Projects and his team with a discussion and tour of our facilities. Liam is lead for Scottish Government's policy on Net Zero and heads up the current review for a Net Zero Grangemouth.

6.   Colleges Scotland (CS)

6.1   There has been one meeting of the CPG since the last Board meeting. I am leading on a project to identify professional support from an appropriate national membership organisation to provide advice and support for individual Principals and Vice Principals across the sector. This falls on the back of the difficult situation at South Lanarkshire College. I hope to conclude negotiations with School Leaders Scotland (SLS) in March which is the Scottish arm of the Association of School and College leaders (ASCL).

7.   Community Planning Partnership

7.1   There has been one meetings of the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership (CPP) and one from the Stirling CPP. Kenny MacInnes, currently VP for Learning and Student Experience continues to lead on the Stirling CPP in Stirling given his responsibility for the Stirling Campus. We play a lead role in community planning and continue to lead on key projects relating to the college's purpose and important we retain that leadership position going forward.

8.   Financial Implications

None

9.   **Equalities**

   Assessment in Place? – Yes ☐ No ☒

   If No, please explain why – This paper is an overview report only, there are no changes to College policy or practice involved.

10.   **Risk**

   Please indicate on the matrix below the risk score. Risk is scored against Impact and Likelihood as Very Low through to Very High.

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium		
Low		
Very Low	X	X

   Please describe any risks associated with this paper and associated mitigating actions – None

   Risk Owner – Ken Thomson   **Action Owner –** Ken Thomson

12.   **Other Implications –**

   Communications – Yes ☐   No ☒   **Health and Safety – Yes ☐   No ☒**

   Paper Author – Ken Thomson   **SMT Owner –** Ken Thomson

24 January 2023

Dr Ken Thomson
Principal and Chief Executive
Forth Valley College

Dear Dr Thomson

A team of HM Inspectors from Education Scotland visited Forth Valley College in October 2022 to undertake an Annual Engagement Visit. During our visit, we talked to learners, staff and stakeholders, and worked closely with the senior managers.

The team found the following major strengths in the college's work.

Recruitment

College staff work well with its local authority partners to provide learning opportunities for school pupils who have become disengaged from learning. This offers an effective experience at entry level for young people who may not have previously considered continuing with their education. Support services staff have reflected on the learner journey to streamline and simplify recruitment processes and support applicants to ensure that they were better informed, and had improved personal support in completing documentation.

Retention

Based on the most recently available data, rates of learner retention for academic year 2020/21 did not vary significantly from pre-pandemic levels. Staff value and make good use of college online systems to access learner information in real time. Teaching staff make effective use of information technology resources to track and monitor learner progress, identify where further support is needed, and share information quickly regarding the impact of interventions. Forth Valley Students' Association actively supports a sense of community across all college campuses. An extensive range of social activities, campaigns, and targeted support for specific groups of learners has been effective in developing a culture of belonging which contributes to learner retention.

Attainment

Overall attainment rates for learners on further education and part-time higher education programmes are above the sector norm. Attainment rates for learners on full-time higher education programmes are around the sector norm. Staff make good use of college data and systems to identify learners 'at risk' of withdrawal or underachievement. This systematic and proactive approach ensures that support is put in place quickly for learners who are at risk of not achieving.

Progression

Rates of learner progression to a positive destination are high, with almost all learners finding a positive destination on completing their programme. College staff have established effective links with local universities and learners benefit from a wide range of articulation routes to degree-level study. Good links between college staff and employers are ensuring that learners on the majority of programmes engage in useful work placements. Learners are benefitting from these contacts and experiences to gain employment.

The following areas for improvement were identified by the team and discussed with the senior managers:

- Full-time higher education attainment rates have not improved over the last three years and do not yet meet college or outcome agreement targets.

The following main point for action was identified:

- The college should ensure that all staff receive appropriate updating training in safeguarding

What happens next?

We are confident that the college has the capacity to continue to improve and will continue to monitor progress through regular engagement with the link HM Inspector.

Dr John Laird
HM Inspector

cc Chair of College Board, SFC Outcome Agreement Manager

Annual Engagement Visit Report

Forth Valley College

17 January 2023

for Scotland's learners with Scotland's educators
do luchd-ionnsachaidh na h-Alba le luchd-foghlaim Alba

College Principal	**Dr Ken Thomson**
Annual Engagement Visit Date	**27 October 2022**
College Nominee	**Rob McDermott**
Lead Inspector	**Dr John Laird**

1.   Background

Annual Engagement Visits (AEV) are planned collaboratively between the college, HM Inspectors and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

During the AEV, a team of HM Inspectors evaluated progress made by the college towards its improvement priorities and outcomes of previous engagement with HM Inspectors. During the visit, the team met with staff, learners and other stakeholders and explored the following overarching themes linked to the college's enhancement plan and priorities around COVID-19 recovery: learner recruitment; retention; attainment; and progression.

This report summarises the findings from the visit and highlights areas of positive progress, areas for development, and any associated main points for action. The report will be shared with the college Principal, Board of Management and SFC. An accompanying short report will be published on Education Scotland's website.

2.   The college and its context

Forth Valley College is a large, multi-site college serving local communities from campuses in Falkirk, Stirling, and Alloa. The college works collaboratively with the local authorities of Falkirk, Clackmannanshire and Stirling and with a number of national engineering, oil, gas and chemical sectors operating in Forth Valley. As part of its outcome agreement with SFC, the college provides around 90,000 credits of activity each year through a range of further education (FE) and higher education (HE) programmes at levels 1-10 on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). It has recently relocated its provision from Raploch Community Campus to the nearby Stirling Campus. Annually, the college offers places to 600 young people from 18 secondary schools across the 3 local authorities through school-college partnership provision. The College also offers four partnership Degrees and the BA in Art and Design with the University of Stirling and two associate student programmes with Heriot Watt and Strathclyde universities. The college's operating context includes communities with mixed levels of deprivation. Around 9% of learners reside in the most deprived postcode areas

The college reduced its range of provision in some curriculum areas due to staffing reductions and a recent voluntary severance scheme.

3.   Summary of findings

3.1   Recruitment

Areas of positive progress

Learner progress and outcomes

- During the summer period when application and recruitment numbers appeared lower than in previous years, the college launched a highly successful recruitment campaign. The campaign focused on raising the college profile on social media and engaging directly with Skills Development Scotland (SDS), schools, job centres, and employers to promote the range of programmes available to potential learners. Alongside this, actions taken by staff increased recruitment numbers from a deficit position to within a few percentage points of target.

Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment

- College staff work well with its local authority partners to provide learning opportunities for school pupils in S4 who have become disengaged from learning. This offers an effective experience at entry level for young people who may not have previously considered continuing with their education.

Services to support learning

- Support services staff have reflected on the learner journey to streamline and simplify recruitment processes and support applicants to ensure that they were better informed, and had improved personal support in completing documentation.

Leaner engagement

- All learners are highly satisfied with the college's recruitment and selection arrangements. They value the level and quality of information they receive in advance of making an application or interview to ensure they are supported to enter a programme appropriate to their needs.

- College staff ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to support learners who commence their studies after the start date of their programmes. Staff ensure learners receive appropriate information both about their course and student finance, and all full-time learners receive a full induction programme. Learning Development Workers (LDWs) provide useful support to ensure new learners are settled quickly and prepared well for engaging in learning activities.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- Staff carried out an analysis of the applicant experience and drew on the findings to simplify and speed up arrangements for progressing applications to enrolment.

Areas for development

- None identified

3.2   Retention

Areas of positive progress

Learner progress and outcomes

- Based on the most recently available data, rates of learner retention for academic year (AY) 2020/21 did not vary significantly from pre-pandemic levels.

- In all modes of learning, learner retention rates compare well to national averages. Based on the most recently available data, rates of learner retention are around 4% better than sector average.

Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment

- Staff use induction arrangements well to ensure that learners are prepared for both on-line and campus-based learning. Staff identify and respond early to meet the needs of learners who have an additional or specific learning need.

- Progression pathways to further learning and employment are promoted comprehensively to learners at the start of programmes to stimulate pathway planning and motivation, and support retention. As a result of this approach, all learners indicated that they intend to apply for either a higher level programmes or enter employment on completion of their course.

- Staff value and make good use of college online systems to access learner information in real time. Teaching staff make effective use of information technology (IT) resources to track and monitor learner progress, identify where further support is needed, and share information quickly regarding the impact of interventions.

- Senior staff encourage Curriculum Managers (CMs) to be creative when designing programme content, coordinating delivery methods, devising timetables and integrating work placements. CMs take care to establish the most appropriate balance of face-to-face and online delivery to best meet the needs of learners.

- Within classes teaching staff take good account of learner feedback. For example, they regularly introduce aspects of work-based practice or topics that learners wish to know more about. This is motivating for learners.

Services to support learning

- The role of the LDWs has been extended to include learners on higher education (HE) level programmes. LDWs are identifying many similarities in the issues experienced by both further education (FE) and HE learners, and their monitoring and support is beginning to improve retention rates for HE learners.

- Throughout their programme, learners benefit from timetabled meetings with their LDW to access support and raise any issues impacting negatively on their studies. LDWs draw productively on these regular discussions with learners and staff to monitor engagement and performance and take prompt action to arrange intervention when non-attendance, progress or wellbeing is causing concern.

Leaner engagement

- Forth Valley Students' Association (FVSA) actively supports a sense of community across all college campuses. An extensive range of social activities, campaigns, and targeted support for specific groups of learners has been effective in developing a culture of belonging which contributes to learner retention.

- FVSA representatives contribute productively to induction sessions. They promote FVSA to learners and encourage class groups to elect class representatives. This has helped to promote a wider understanding of FVSA roles and initiated a prompt start to class representative recruitment.

- All class representatives are undergoing training to equip them to carry out their new role. Sessions are delivered through a mix of online and face-to-face activities and are supporting course representatives well to gain the confidence and knowledge to undertake their role.

- Regular meetings between FVSA and the college senior team provides managers with useful feedback on the learner experience. Senior managers engage regularly with FVSA, attending Student Council meetings and class representative training.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- CMs make effective use of Continuous Curriculum Improvement (CCI) meetings to discuss and share approaches to support and improve retention.

- FVSA's significant engagement in quality processes has been useful in helping to create a positive and collaborative learning environment that has supported learner retention.

- FVSA works well with staff in the college Learning and Quality Team. This collaborative approach has supported regular capture of the learner views through 'Listening to Learner' surveys.

Areas for development

- None identified

3.3   Attainment

Areas of positive progress

Learner progress and outcomes

The following is based on the latest available data (AY 2020/21).

- The overall attainment rate for full-time FE learners 8% above the sector norm. Internal college data predicts a similar level of attainment for AY 2021/22.

- The overall attainment rate for part time FE learners is 2% above the sector norm. Internal college data suggests that this will improve for AY 2021/22.

- The overall attainment rate for full-time HE learners was around the latest sector norm. Internal college data suggests a similar rate of attainment for AY 2021/22. The overall HE attainment rate has remained at this level over time.

- The overall attainment rate for part-time HE learners was 4% above latest the sector norm. Internal college data indicates that this will increase slightly for AY 2021/22.

Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment

- The college curriculum incorporates a strong focus on technology, business, digital/creative arts and leisure industries. Staff are working collaboratively with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and industry partners to ensure the range and levels of provision match current and projected regional skills needs.

- Learning and Inclusion Facilitators (LIF) are providing learners with useful academic support for specific subjects. For example additional tuition for mathematics.

- Approaches used by teaching staff to ensure assessment is relevant and integrated are helping to improve attainment across the college. Over the recent period of remote learning, staff worked well to integrate assessments and minimise the burden of assessment on learners.

- Staff draw on their industry and subject expertise to provide learners with a clear understanding of the world of work. This motivates learners to link theory to real-life work practice and is supporting productive engagement in assessment activities and contributing positively to learner attainment.

Services to support learning

- Staff make good use of the Performance Indicator (PI) Predictor Tool to identify learners at risk of withdrawal or underachievement. Teaching staff draw well on this resource to access information from LDWs about issues that are impacting negatively on learner engagement and performance. This systematic and proactive approach is supporting learners to access the help they need quickly.

- There has been significant professional learning support provided by the college to ensure staff are aware of the risks to learner mental health. A few teaching staff are delivering Mental Health Awards within their programmes. This is supporting learners well to understand issues around their mental health and develop useful coping mechanisms.

Learner engagement

- All learners report that programmes are well organised and provide learning experiences that help them to become better learners. They describe how staff take care to construct and design programmes that meet their specific needs and enhance their employability options.

- All learners value the vocational and professional experience of teaching staff and this motivates them to stay on course and attain qualifications.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- CMs make good use of CII meetings to discuss and share approaches to improve attainment.

Areas for development

- Full-time HE attainment rates have not improved over the last three years and do not yet meet college or outcome agreement targets.

- A number of staff have not yet received appropriate updating training on safeguarding.

3.4   Progression

Areas of positive progress

Learner progress and outcomes

- Rates of learner progression to a positive destination are high. 94% of FE learners and 95% of HE learners entered a positive destination within 3 to 6 months of completing their programme in AY 2020/21. Positive destination rates have been at similar levels over the last three years.

Curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment

- The college plays a significant role in the delivery the education and skills provision across the Forth Valley region and this supports future planning of progression opportunities across the region.

- College staff have established effective links with local universities and learners benefit from a wide range of articulation routes to degree-level study.

- Good links between college staff and employers are ensuring that learners on the majority of programmes engage in useful work placements. Learners are benefitting from these contacts and experiences to gain employment.

- The college has established very strong partnerships with local businesses and agencies. These partnerships provide good routes to employment which learners can access as they progress through their programme.

Services to support learning

- Curriculum teams work well with external partners and employers to provide additional training for learners to ensure they are being prepared well for future employment opportunities. The training includes support with interview techniques, building self-confidence, and preparing a relevant curriculum vitae.

Leaner engagement

- In AY 2020/21, 90% of learners responding to the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) indicated that they were satisfied or highly satisfied with their college

experience despite the disruption caused by the pandemic. Learners are highly satisfied with their college experience, and would recommend the college to their friends and family.

Evaluation to facilitate improvement

- College staff work collaboratively with local schools to evaluate the quality of provision for school-based learners and to plan for improvement. This work supports a coordinated approach to learner progression from school to college programmes.

Areas for development

- None identified.

4. Main Point(s) for Action

- The college should ensure that all staff receive appropriate updating training in safeguarding

5. What happens next?

HM Inspectors are confident that the college has made satisfactory progress and has the capacity to continue to improve. Progress will continue to be monitored through ongoing engagement with the link HM Inspector.

Dr John Laird
HM Inspector

1. **Purpose**

    To share with members the interim report on Forth Valley College's progress towards achieving the Equality Outcomes published in April 2021.

2. **Recommendation**

    The Board of Management approve the attached Public Sector Equality Duty Interim Report (Appendix 1).

3. **Background**

    As an organisation, we have specific duties under the Equality Act (2010). These duties include reporting on mainstreaming the equality duty, publishing equality outcomes and reporting on our progress. The Public Sector Equality Duty asks that, when working towards mainstreaming equality, we have due regard for;

    - Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
    - Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
    - Fostering good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

    In 2021, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) highlighted that, across the public sector, equality outcomes have been too broad and generic. For this reporting cycle, the EHRC were looking for more specific, measurable outcomes. The College's outcomes for this cycle are specific, align to our priorities as an organisation and also align to the priorities of the sector.

    With the Public Sector Equality Duty aims and the feedback from the EHRC in mind, our equality outcomes for 2021 – 2025, as published in April 2021, are;

    - **Equality Outcome 1** - We will improve our use of data and analytics to enhance our understanding of the student and staff experience at Forth Valley College with a view to improving that experience and enhancing our engagement with those who share protected characteristics.
    - **Equality Outcome 2** - We will work towards building and fostering an antiracist culture by addressing: curriculum and pedagogy, policy and processes, recruitment, and reporting structures.
    - **Equality Outcome 3** - We will make progress on improving outcomes and the student experience by addressing gender based violence and gender balance in specific subject areas.
    - **Equality Outcome 4** - We will take significant steps to improve wellbeing and mental health support to those groups who experience consistently poorer outcomes.

- **Equality Outcome 5** - We will take significant steps to systemise continuous professional development for staff specifically targeting understanding around anti-racism, gender based violence, disability and well-being.

In addition to the work undertaken to meet the specific duties, the context that we are working within has evolved over the last two years. Equality work has become a focus and discussion point across a wider section of society. Social justice movements continue to highlight the persistent inequalities that those with protected characteristics experience. The COVID-19 pandemic and the recovery from this has further exacerbated these inequalities and public sector organisations have been challenged to actively demonstrate how they are challenging these inequalities and working towards eliminating them.

4. **Key Considerations**

The attached report outlines the work we have undertaken over the last two years. Our staff and student data tells us that we are heading in the right direction and that our interventions are making a difference however, there is much work still to be done.

The key conclusions from interim report are;

- The strategic direction is clear and the College needs to work to further weave equality mainstreaming into strategic priorities so that it continues to be embedded and aligned with the needs of the business
- The outputs of Project NxGen continue to be a key catalyst for embedding equality work by developing a whole system, inclusive approach to development work; developing inclusive support for all students and embedding reviews of the outcomes of those who share protected characteristics into the Continuous Curriculum Improvement process.
- A great deal of high quality work is taking place across the organisation, at all levels, to mainstream equality and achieve out Equality Outcomes.
- Work is still required to align and streamline equality work to ensure that it is tangible, measureable and achievable. Duplication of effort also needs to be avoided to maximise resource and impact.
- It is anticipated that the next two years will be extremely challenging for the College sector. This means that both students and colleagues will continue to be affected by persistent inequalities, the cost of living crisis and the after effects of the pandemic. This means a high level, high quality focus on mainstreaming work is required to have maximum impact. Data analysis and informed decision making will be key to progressing our mainstreaming work over the next two years.

5. **Resource Implications (Financial, People, Estates and Communications)**

   There are no Financial, People, Estates or Communications implications with this paper.

6. **Equalities**

   Assessment in Place? – Yes – See Appendix 2

7. **Communities and Partners - Yes –** the overarching aim of the equality mainstreaming work is to have a meaningful impact on access to education and attainment rates for the communities that the College serves.

8. **Risk and Impact**

   Please complete the risk table below. Risk is scored against Likelihood x Impact, with each category scored from Very Low through to Very High. Risks should be robustly scored and, if the combined score (Likelihood x Impact) is higher than the Board Risk appetite for the risk category identified, additional justification must be provided on why this risk is necessary.

   If the paper is an approval, please reflect on whether the approval will have any direct or indirect impact for any other areas of operational activity internally or externally within the College – **No**

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High (5)		
High (4)		
Medium (3)		X
Low (2)	X	
Very Low (1)		

Total Risk Score – 6

The College has a Strategic Risk appetite for categories of risk as defined by the Board of Management. Decisions being taken at LMT/SMT/Board level must have cognisance of this. Please indicate the single most relevant risk category in the table below.

BoM Risk Categories & Risk Appetite (Select one area only)					
Cautious <15		**Open 15> <20**		**Eager >20**	
Governance		Strategy		People	
Legal		Financial		Project/Programme	
Property		Reputational	X		
		Technology			

If we do not publish our interim report on time, the EHRC has the power to issue Forth Valley College with a compliance notice to publish and, ultimately, we can be challenged in court. This outcome is unlikely and reputational damage is a far greater risk. We are aware that the EHRC regularly check organisations' websites for publications of reports and provide feedback on our reporting.

Is the score above the Board Risk Appetite level? No

Risk Owner – Kenny MacInnes

Action Owner – Anna Vogt

Paper Author – Anna Vogt

SMT Owner – Kenny MacInnes

1. #Introduction

This report reviews the progress made by Forth Valley College from 2021 - 2025 to mainstream[1] equality at the mid-point of the reporting cycle. Forth Valley College considers equality and inclusion an integral part of College life. In reviewing the College's overall progress in relation to mainstreaming equality, the assessment continues to be that the work the College is undertaking is *very positive*.

Since 2021, the College has made significant progress in embedding equality considerations into key college strategies and plans and raising awareness of equality and inclusion through student and staff inductions, campaigns and events, curriculum subject learning and continuous professional development. There are now requirements from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), through the Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) process, to mainstream equality including targets to monitor and track progress of students by age, gender, disability, ethnicity, SIMD area, care experienced status and other characteristics. The SFC and the Equality and Human Rights Council (EHRC) have also recently published joint Equality Outcomes for the sector.

Equality and the impact of inequality has been part of the national conversation since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and this discourse continues as society navigates the post-COVID landscape. Evidence from across the education sector, as a whole, has demonstrated that those who were already marginalised and excluded have seen further disadvantage thrust upon them because of the pandemic and subsequent challenges, including the cost of living crisis. There is much work to be done to ensure that those groups are truly included as the College develops over the years to come.

The rather 'cluttered' landscape of the Public Sector Equality Duty and other pieces of legislation, such as the British Sign Language Scotland Act, SFC requirements as well as those of Education Scotland, continue to challenge us to assess efforts to include all, in a streamlined and efficient manner. Fortunately, there are areas of crossover – for example, the groups of students listed in outcome agreements generally correspond to the protected characteristic groups in the Equality Act. Whilst it is important to plan and have clear actions, the requirement to produce so many different strategies and plans for different groups, continues to run the risk of diluting work across all of the protected characteristics. Forth Valley College continues to streamline approaches; gather evidence of progress; measure impact and consider whether targets are met for a range of plans and strategies for different groups of staff and students at the same time. While these requirements put the College on the right track to mainstream equality, work still needs to be done on linking them; sharing the responsibilities across the organisation; having a clear view of needs and to better demonstrate where progress has been made.

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[1] Mainstreaming – integrating equality into the day to day working of Forth Valley College

2. **Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2025**

Below are Forth Valley College's Equality Outcomes for 2021 to 2025. These Equality Outcomes were developed in collaboration with staff, students and external stakeholders and consideration was given to sectoral priorities and the findings from our reporting on and evidence gathering for the last set of equality outcomes.

EO1	**We will improve our use of data and analytics to enhance our understanding of the student and staff experience at Forth Valley College with a view to improving that experience and enhancing our engagement with those who share protected characteristics.**
EO2	**We will work towards building and fostering an antiracist culture by addressing: curriculum and pedagogy, policy and processes, recruitment, and reporting structures.**
EO3	**We will make progress on improving outcomes and the student experience by addressing gender based violence and gender balance in specific subject areas.**
EO4	**We will take significant steps to improve wellbeing and mental health support to those groups who experience consistently poorer outcomes.**
EO5	**We will take significant steps to systemise continuous professional development for staff specifically targeting understanding around anti-racism, gender based violence, disability and wellbeing.**

3. Progress Update

EO1	We will improve our use of data and analytics to enhance our understanding of the student and staff experience at Forth Valley College with a view to improving that experience and enhancing our engagement with those who share protected characteristics.

Action	Mainstreaming Duty	Protected Characteristic	Progress	Department
Staff Health, Wellbeing and Cultural Surveys	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity; Fostering Good Relations	All	Use of the Workplace Resilience and Wellbeing and Ceannas Cultural Index surveys, undertaken in academic year 22/23, to create a baseline of culture and workforce wellbeing to identify areas of work and enhancement required across the organisation. These surveys have generated data and information around the staff experience that will be used to inform strategic and operation direction around staff wellbeing and College culture.	Human Resources
Student Experience Surveys	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity	All	From academic session 22/23, there is now the enhanced ability to be able to delve further into College student experience surveys to understand experience by protected characteristic and priority access group. This is the first year the College has been able to do this and this analysis will help inform the understanding of the student experience further; to understand how different group's experience varies and inform work around closing any identified gaps in experience.	Learning and Quality
Introduction of PowerBI	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity; Fostering Good Relations	All	Power BI is a Microsoft package that allows organisations to generate high quality analytics. Business Transformation are currently exploring the implementation of PowerBI to allow senior managers to have the ability to interrogate data to inform robust decision making. In terms of equality reporting, this product will allow us to understand more of the detail of the student experience; identify areas of intersectionality and determine impact of interventions and activities.	Business Transformation
Equality Impact Assessment Training	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality	All	Refresh and roll out of Equality Impact Assessment training to decision makers and Union colleagues. This training includes the exploration of the use of data, both from within and	Inclusion and Student Services

	of Opportunity; Fostering Good Relations		outwith the College, in order to make informed decisions about planned change. This approach helps to support strong evidence based decision making.	
Continuous Curriculum Improvement Process		Disability	The College has implemented an in-year performance prediction tracking process that splits the academic year into curriculum performance Indicator reviews and delivery periods in order to understand, track and turnaround the downturn in performance across the College. This monitoring includes identifying students with additional support needs and those living in SIMD 10 and 20 to track their progress explicitly and allow for analysis of groups by characteristic.	All Curriculum Areas Inclusion and Student Services Learning and Quality

EO2	We will work towards building and fostering an antiracist culture by addressing: curriculum and pedagogy, policy and processes, recruitment, and reporting structures.

Employee Data

NATIONALITY	% of Staff
British Citizen	93.80%
Germany	0.31%
Iran	0.31%
Lithuania	0.16%
Poland	0.78%
Republic Of Ireland	0.62%
USA	0.47%
Zimbabwe	0.16%
Australia	0.16%
Romania	0.16%
Ghana	0.16%
Greece	0.16%
Libya	0.16%
Hungary	0.16%
Azerbaijan	0.16%
Other	2.02%
Prefer not to say	0.31%
Total	100.00%

ETHNIC ORIGIN	% of Staff
Scottish	77.98%
English	3.26%
Welsh	0.16%
Irish	0.78%
Any other white background	2.02%
Any mixed background	0.93%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	0.47%
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	0.16%
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	0.16%
Any other Asian background	0.16%
African, African Scottish or African British	0.47%
Other African background	0.16%
Any other background	0.62%
Northern Irish	1.09%
British	7.13%
Polish	0.93%
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	0.47%
Prefer not to say	3.10%
Total	100.00%

Student Data

ETHNIC ORIGIN	2019/20 %	2020/21 %	2021/22 %	Achieved 19/20	Achieved 20/21	Achieved 21/22
BME	4%	4%	4%	81%	75%	79%
White	95%	96%	95%	83%	75%	75%
Overall	100%	100%	100%	83%	75%	75%

ETHNIC ORIGIN	2019/20 %	2020/21 %	2021/22 %	Achieved 19/20	Achieved 20/21	Achieved 21/22
African, African Scottish or African British	13%	16%	17%	74%	67%	88%
Any mixed background	8%	6%	7%	63%	68%	90%
Any other Asian background	10%	9%	5%	82%	65%	77%
Any other background	37%	38%	41%	90%	85%	81%
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	3%	4%	5%	93%	63%	76%
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	1%	1%	1%	67%	50%	100%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	0%	0%	0%			
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	2%	2%	1%	43%	67%	60%
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	3%	2%	3%	100%	78%	57%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	6%	4%	4%	79%	67%	88%
Other African background	1%	1%	1%	0%	100%	100%
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	18%	16%	15%	84%	74%	63%
Overall - Summary	100%	100%	100%	81%	75%	79%

Action	Mainstreaming Duty	Protected Characteristic	Progress	Department
Anti-Racist Training for Managers	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Race	Bespoke training delivered to around 15 managers across the organisation. This training was delivered by two members of the Advance HE Anti-Racism project [Advance HE Anti-Racism project](#) and took place over 9 hours. This is the beginning of the journey towards anti-racism work and collaboration and learning from awarding bodies and education sector partners will be required.	Inclusion and Student Services
Anti-Racist Training Module	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Race	Anti-racist module currently in development that will be available to all staff. This will sit on Moodle and form part of the equality and diversity training suite for staff.	Inclusion and Student Services Learning and Quality
Support for BME Students	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Race, Religion Sex, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation	Hosting of a [Shakti Women's Aid](#) Support Worker on Falkirk campus one day per week. Shakti view the college as a safe space, where they can promote their services and work with their client group away from their families and communities. If successful, this service will be expanded to Stirling campus.	Inclusion and Student Services
Black History Month and Cultural Celebrations	Fostering Good Relations	Race, Religion	[Celebration of Black history](#) throughout Black History Month. 2021 had an emphasis [on stories and storytelling](#) while 2022 focussed on Black history in the Forth Valley region. Longer form posts around religious celebrations, including [Diwali](#) and [Hanukkah](#). The emphasis for all of these events is around celebration of culture and history and to reframe discussions of race and religion to ensure discussions are well rounded and informed.	Inclusion and Student Services Communications and Marketing Student Association
Update to Hate Incident Process	Eliminating Discrimination	Race, Religion, Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Sex, Sexual Orientation	Working on improving hate incident reporting using an electronic form and improved information to support reporting so that everyone feels more comfortable identifying, addressing, and reporting hate incidents to the College. This process will also be expanded to include Gender Based Violence incident reporting.	Inclusion and Student Services

Increased international work and ESOL provision	Advancing Equality of Opportunity; Fostering Good Relations	Race, Religion	Through projects like the BP West Africa Project and an enhanced ESOL offering in response to an increased number of refugees, there has been more visibility of students of colour on campus. A more diverse student population enhances the education experience for all. Events like a St. Andrew's Day celebration to welcome international students were also hosted in 2022 to bring together our international students to enhance their community experience.	STEM and Construction Care, Sport, Business and Communities Student Association
Show Racism the Red Card Event	Elimination of Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity; Fostering Good Relations	Race, Religion	The Student Association holds an annual Show Racism the Red Card event to demonstrate their commitment to anti-racism work.	Student Association

EO3	**We will make progress on improving outcomes and the student experience by addressing gender based violence and gender balance in specific subject areas.**

Employee Data

GENDER	% of Staff
Female	57.05%
Male	40.47%
Prefer not to say	2.48%
Grand Total	100.00%

TRANS	% of Staff
No	92.25%
Yes	0.47%
Prefer not to say	7.13%
Grand Total	100.00%

Student

GENDER	2019/20 %	2020/21 %	2021/22 %	Achieved 19/20	Achieved 20/21	Achieved 21/22
Female	50%	47%	45%	79%	75%	71%
Male	49%	52%	54%	86%	75%	78%
Prefer not to say	1%	1%	1%	64%	65%	73%
Overall - Summary	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**83%**	**75%**	**75%**

TRANS	2019/20 %	2020/21 %	2021/22 %	Achieved 19/20	Achieved 20/21	Achieved 21/22
N	99%	99%	99%	82%	75%	75%
Y	0.27%	0.28%	0.23%	92%	89%	73%
Overall - Summary	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**83%**	**75%**	**75%**

STEMC GENDER	2019/20 %	2020/21 %	2021/22 %
Female	34%	17%	32%
Male	66%	82%	67%
Prefer not to say	0.37%	0.35%	0.43%

CSBC GENDER	2019/20 %	2020/21 %	2021/22 %
Female	57%	56%	57%
Male	42%	41%	40%
Prefer not to say	1%	3%	3%

CDLI GENDER	2019/20 %	2020/21 %	2021/22 %
Female	60%	63%	60%
Male	38%	35%	38%
Prefer not to say	1%	1%	2%

Action	Mainstreaming Duty	Protected Characteristic	Detail	Department
16 Days of Action Events	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity; Fostering Good Relations	Sex	Falkirk campus hosted the Forth Valley wide opening event for 16 Days of Action in 2022 in collaboration with Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils. Early years students took part in this event by designing a dress and parasol with anti-domestic abuse slogans that was displayed at the event. In 2021, staff and students took part in a walk to highlight gender based violence and its impact as part of 16 Days of Action.	Inclusion and Student Services Care, Sport, Business and Communities STEM and Construction Student Association
Gender Based Violence Training Module for Students	Eliminating Discrimination	Sex	Training module developed by Rape Crisis Scotland and made available to all students. Embedded in i-Learn for 22/23 and undertaken during the first week of 16 Days of Action.	Inclusion and Student Services Learning and Quality
Gender Based Violence Training Module for Staff	Eliminating Discrimination	Sex	Gender Based Violence module, designed by UHI and made available to the sector, available to all staff. This will sit on Moodle and form part of the equality and diversity training suite for staff.	Inclusion and Student Services Learning and Quality
#ErasetheGrey Campaign	Eliminating Discrimination	Sex	Introduction of the #ErasetheGrey campaign, designed by Glasgow Caledonian University and made available to the sector. The campaign can been seen on all of the display screens across all three campuses.	Inclusion and Student Services Communications and Marketing
Update to Hate Incident Process	Eliminating Discrimination	Race, Religion, Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment,	Working on improving hate incident reporting using an electronic form and improved information to support reporting so that everyone feels more comfortable identifying, addressing, and reporting hate incidents to the College. This process will also be expanded to include Gender Based Violence incident reporting.	Inclusion and Student Services

		Sex, Sexual Orientation		
Continued Partnership with Forth Valley Rape Crisis	Eliminating Discrimination	Sex, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation	Dedicated support work assigned to work with Forth Valley College students affected by sexual violence. Students can get up to 20 support sessions and access to other Rape Crisis services, including advocacy support.	Inclusion and Student Services
Partnership formed with Shakti Women's Aid	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Race, Religion Sex, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation	Hosting of a Shakti Women's Aid Support Worker on Falkirk campus one day per week. Shakti view the college as a safe space, where they can promote their services and work with their client group away from their families and communities. If successful, this service will be expanded to Stirling campus.	Inclusion and Student Services
Membership of Gender Based Violence Strategy Groups in Stirling and Falkirk	Eliminating Discrimination	Sex	Forth Valley College representation on the Gender Based Violence Partnership group that forms part of Falkirk Council's strategic work – The Falkirk Plan. Forth Valley College representation on Stirling Council's Gender Based Violence Partnership as a partner in delivering their Gender Based Violence Strategy.	Inclusion and Student Services
Primary School STEM Activity	Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Sex	Ongoing outreach work to continue to bring STEM into the primary school environment. This provides the opportunity for children to explore STEM subjects and engage those who might not view STEM as a career path, like young women, from an early age. Specific work undertaken in partnership with Equate Scotland, West College Scotland and employers on International Women's Day to encourage women to consider a career in STEM.	STEM and Construction
Exploration of Women in Construction or Parents in Construction Course	Advancing Equality of Opportunity; Fostering Good Relations	Sex, Age	Through acknowledgement of the gender gap in Construction areas and the benefits of having diverse class groups, exploration is currently underway around supporting women into the Construction environment. This includes the potential for an all women class or a parent/adult returner class.	STEM and Construction
Free Access to Period Products	Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Sex, Gender Reassignment	The College continues to offer free period products to everyone accessing the campuses. These products are available in the women's and accessible toilets. Period products packs are also made available for students to take home and are on display throughout the year. More stock is made available before College closure days.	Estates and Health and Safety

	EO4	We will take significant steps to improve wellbeing and mental health support to those groups who experience consistently poorer outcomes.

GROUP	2019/20 %	2020/21 %	2021/22 %	Achieved 19/20	Achieved 20/21	Achieved 21/22
Female	50%	47%	45%	79%	75%	71%
Prefer not to say (Sex)	1%	1%	1%	64%	65%	74%
<16	9%	4%	7%	77%	52%	67%
16-19	38%	35%	33%	79%	66%	69%
Disabled	12%	11%	10%	75%	71%	67%
BME	4%	4%	4%	81%	75%	79%
Bisexual	3%	3%	3%	74%	72%	65%
Gay Man	1%	1%	1%	77%	61%	69%
Gay Woman/Lesbian	1%	1%	1%	58%	67%	75%
Other (Sexuality)	0.46%	0.38%	1%	78%	54%	81%
Any other religion or belief	1%	0.44%	0.44%	78%	71%	69%
Buddhist	0.15%	0.12%	0.13%	75%	100%	70%
Hindu	0.08%	0.05%	0.08%	67%	60%	90%
Muslim	1%	1%	1%	79%	70%	67%
Sikh	0.07%	0.04%	0.05%	78%	50%	67%
Care Experienced	4%	3%	3%	72%	58%	59%
Carer	3%	3%	2%	81%	64%	68%
SIMD 10	9%	8%	7%	76%	70%	65%
SIMD 20	21%	20%	19%	77%	69%	70%
COLLEGE AVERAGE				81%	75%	79%

Action	Mainstreaming Duty	Protected Characteristic	Detail	Department
Widening Participation Project	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity;; Fostering Good Relations	Age, Disability	The College introduced the Widening Participation Project (WPP) in 2021. Widening Participation (WP) activities and interventions are aimed at creating an education system that includes all who can benefit from it. These activities and interventions are particularly focused on those facing social, cultural, economic or institutional barriers and typically under-represented groups. These include, but are not limited to, Care Experienced, Carers, those experiencing financial disadvantage, disability, ASN, and those impacted by the criminal just system. The WPP is a 2 year project which focuses on enhancing the transition process for students from WP backgrounds who are coming to FVC for the first time.	Inclusion and Student Services
Continuous Curriculum Improvement Process	Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Disability	I The College has implemented an in-year performance prediction tracking process that splits the academic year into curriculum performance Indicator reviews and delivery periods in order to understand, track and turnaround the downturn in performance across the College. This monitoring includes identifying students with additional support needs and those living in SIMD 10 and 20 to track their progress explicitly and allow for analysis of groups by characteristic.	All Curriculum Areas Inclusion and Student Services Learning and Quality
Free Breakfast and Lunch for Students	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity	All	From academic year 22/23, all students, across all three campuses, have access to free breakfasts and lunch to combat the cost of living crisis and to ensure that those living in or experiencing poverty are able to have access to nutritious food that allows them to concentrate and learn.	Creative, Leisure and Digital Industries
Community Food Pantry	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity	All	From March 2022, all students are able to access the Community Food Pantry on all three campuses. The pantry consists of donated food that is ready to eat or easy to prepare.	Student Association
Enhanced Student Funding Support	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing	All	Introduction of a new support payment for students in 21/22 and continued into 22/23. This payment is available to Further Education and Higher Education students who are responsible	Finance

	Equality of Opportunity		for housing costs to reduce the impact of the cost of living. This support is finite but has been used to maximise and systemise the use of the College's discretionary funding.	
Partnership with Department of Work and Pensions	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Age, Disability	During the pandemic, the Department of Work and Pensions has tasked Job Centres to create meaningful partnerships with organisations in their regions to develop Youth Hubs to attract more young people aged 18 to 24 to access their services. There was no set format to these Youth Hubs and regions were being encouraged to develop a service that works for their area. Falkirk and Alloa campuses are now hosts to Youth Hubs which were finally able to be launched in 2021.The Youth Hubs are places where Work Coaches can meet with young people face to face to provide them with the support they need to find a positive destination. While the JCP's aim is to get young people into work, they are happy to work in collaboration with the college and Skills Development Scotland to support young people to get on the path that works best for them. JCP views the college's 'hub' approach as the perfect location for their Work Coaches to be based so that they can provide 'warm handovers' for the young people interested in college and careers advice and for all stakeholders to learn about what the others have to offer.	Inclusion and Student Services
Supported Programmes	Advancing Equality of Opportunity;	Age, Disability	Continuing commitment to delivering access to education and supported programmes to ensure continued engagement and improved life chances for those in the community furthest away from education and work. These programmes include Project Search; SCOTS; Click for Clacks; Click with Confidence at Bellsdyke; Foundation Apprenticeships and Centre Forward.	All Curriculum Areas Inclusion and Student Services
Increased collaboration work with NHS Forth Valley	Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Age, Disability, Sex	Enhanced engagement and partnership with NHS Forth Valley to improve health and wellbeing, including offering vaccine facilities for young people and funded projects through the NHS Together Charity. Creation of the University College Hospital Partnership to address health care skills gaps in the Forth Valley region and to offer career pipeline opportunities to those across the community into a career in health.	Care, Sport, Business and Communities

Wellbeing and Engagement Activities	Advancing Equality of Opportunity; Fostering Good Relations	Age, Disability	Book Week Scotland and Scottish Library and Information Council funding used to host events and create book clubs to increase engagement through the Learning Resource Centres and enhance the community environment on campus.	Inclusion and Student Services
Mental Health Support	Advancing Equality of Opportunity	All	Forth Valley College now has a Mental Health and Wellbeing service that is funded until July 2023. This service offers both counselling and Mental Health Mentor support. The College has offered person centred counselling for a number of years and the continuations of funding from the Scottish Funding Council has allowed the College to expand this service to the point where there has been no waiting list for the last two academic sessions. The Mental Health Mentors are a new role and the emphasis of this service is around supporting students to sustain and achieve at college while developing their personal resilience skills and capacity building to navigate life after college, in a mentally health context. This type of support is different from support in a therapeutic environment or support in a capacity that focuses solely on the educational needs of the student. There has also been significant work undertaken around Safeguarding processes. This work has ensured a more robust response to Safeguarding across the organisation and the College's Safeguarding approaches were praised by Education Scotland during their visit in June 2022.	Inclusion and Student Services
Learning Inclusion Facilitators	Advancing Equality of Opportunity	All	Introduction of the Learning Develop Facilitator role across all curriculum areas. This role opens up support, in an academic context, to all students who made need additional intervention at any point throughout the year. Inclusion and Student Services and curriculum areas co-designed the shape of this new role as well as the training for teaching staff undertaking the role. This training was delivered before term commenced in August 2022. Nominated lecturers now have weekly timetabled time to provide additional support to students in a way that works for their particular cohort of students and curriculum areas. Ongoing CPD has been identified for these staff and reflection points have been built in to the implementation plan to monitor impact and ensure maximisation of resource.	All Curriculum Areas Inclusion and Student Services
Winter Wellbeing Information	Advancing Equality of Opportunity	All	Many students rely heavily on the support available from the College for a variety of reasons and many of students have limited support networks in the community. In response to College closures over the winter period, a Winter Wellbeing was created to ensure students were no	Inclusion and Student Services

			without community support while the College was closed. This will be updated and utilised for other periods of College closure.	
Student Mental Health Agreement	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity, Fostering Good Relations	Disability	The College and Student Association continue to work in partnership on the Student Mental Health Agreement. This agreement brings together Student Association and College staff to collaborate on shared objectives and share work that is ongoing around supporting mental health and wellbeing.	Forth Valley College Student Association
Free Access to Period Products	Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Sex, Gender Reassignment	The College continues to offer free period products to everyone accessing the campuses. These products are available in the women's and accessible toilets. Period products packs are also made available for students to take home and are on display throughout the year. More stock is made available before College closure days.	Estates and Health and Safety
Freshers and Refreshers Events	Advancing Equality of Opportunity	All	The Students Association host a Freshers Fair in September and Re-freshers Fair in February to showcase the College as a community. Various departments have stalls to demonstrate the support available at College and the Students Association also invites in external partners that may be of interest to our student population. There are also fun events that allow students to get to know each other and the Student Association staff to encourage engagement and volunteering.	Student Association

EO5	**We will take significant steps to systemise continuous professional development for staff specifically targeting understanding around anti-racism, gender based violence, disability and wellbeing.**

Action	Mainstreaming Duty	Protected Characteristic	Progress	Department
The Wellbeing Project	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity; Fostering Good Relations	Disability	In 2022, the College initiated The Wellbeing Project following the feedback that came through the Workplace Resilience and Wellbeing survey. This project will focus on supporting leaders to develop their skills around leading for resilience and wellbeing with a view to support their teams and create a resilient workforce that has the capacity to support students well. The project also intends to undertake analysis around areas of pressure over the next year; run targets workshops for all staff and then survey staff again to assess and measure impact. A dedicated Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator will co-ordinate all of this activity.	Human Resources
Bespoke Training Development	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity	Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Disability	Gender Based Violence module, designed by UHI and made available to the sector, available to all staff. This will sit on Moodle and form part of the equality and diversity training suite for staff. Anti-racist module currently in development that will be available to all staff. This will sit on Moodle and form part of the equality and diversity training suite for staff. Trans Awareness module currently in development that will be available to all staff. This will sit on Moodle and form part of the equality and diversity training suite for staff. Accessible Content training module currently in development that will be available to all staff. This will sit on Moodle and form part of the equality and diversity training suite for staff.	Inclusion and Student Services Learning and Quality
Support for Staff	Eliminating Discrimination;	All	The College's Human Resource team have developed, sourced and delivered a suite of workshops, on a continuous basis, addressing some of the most common challenges staff are	Human Resources

	Advancing Equality of Opportunity		facing. These workshops are themed around nutrition and exercise; coping with change; retirement; menopause awareness and stress and resilience In addition, line managers have also been offered a range of workshops to support them to support their staff. These workshops are themed around cancer, menopause and long-term health conditions; supporting carers and supporting wellbeing in the workplace. In addition, the College has enhanced its support to staff around mental health, including a partnership with Able Futures, the introduction of Mental Health Ambassadors and the expansion of the Mental Health First Aiders service.	
Enhanced Digital CPD Offering to Staff	Eliminating Discrimination; Advancing Equality of Opportunity; Fostering Good Relations	All	In 2021, Forth Valley College invested in giving all staff access to LinkedIn Learning. Relevant Health & Wellbeing and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion modules have been highlighted to staff and courses are curated covering particular subject areas.	Human Resources

4. <u>Conclusion</u>

Forth Valley College is proud of the work that it is doing to mainstream equality and there are robust plans in place to continue enhancing the work that is being undertaken. Like wider society, there is much work to be done around eliminating inequality and this has been acknowledged at both a strategic and operational level. Through strategic planning and Project NxGen, the College continues to embed inclusion work further so that the College's business needs and equality duty responsibilities are truly aligned. A diverse and supported workforce and student population only serve to enhance the experience and outcomes of all who interact with Forth Valley College.

The overall reflection of progress has helped to identify the following main points for action for the next part of the cycle:

- The strategic direction is clear and the College needs to work to further weave equality mainstreaming into strategic priorities so that it continues to be embedded and aligned with the needs of the business
- The outputs of Project NxGen continue to be a key catalyst for embedding equality work by developing a whole system, inclusive approach to development work; developing inclusive support for all students and embedding reviews of the outcomes of those who share protected characteristics into the Continuous Curriculum Improvement process.
- A great deal of high quality work is taking place is taking place across the organisation, at all levels, to mainstream equality and achieve out Equality Outcomes.
- Work is still required to align and streamline equality work to ensure that it is tangible, measureable and achievable. Duplication of effort also needs to be avoided to maximise resource and impact.

Moving into the second half of this reporting cycle, it is anticipated that the next two years will be extremely challenging for the College sector. This means that both students and colleagues will continue to be affected by persistent inequalities, the cost of living crisis and the after effects of the pandemic. This means a high level, high quality focus on mainstreaming work is required to have maximum impact. Data analysis and informed decision making will be key to progress over the next two years and will be a key priority.

Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)

revised 10/17

The purpose of this template is to ensure that decision makers consider impacts on equality when making decisions which may impact on people in some way, or develop new - or revise existing - policies, practices or operating guidelines. This EQIA template should be completed in conjunction with the Guidance Notes.

Title of the Policy/Decision considered:	Equality Outcomes 2021 - 2025
Impact Assessed by:	Anna Vogt
Signature(s) of assessor(s):	▉▉▉▉▉▉
Date of Impact Assessment:	12th April 2021

Step 1: (a) Identify the aims of the policy/decision

(i)   What is the purpose of the policy/decision? Why has this policy/decision been developed/reached?
(ii) How does the policy/decision seek to achieve its purpose?
(iii) How do the aims of the policy/the decision relate to equality?

(i)   The purpose of the equality outcomes is to focus on key equality work over the next four years.
(ii) The equality outcomes seek to set measurable aims to enhance our equality work and are in addition to our mainstreaming responsibilities.
(iii) The equality outcomes are directly linked to supporting those who share protected characteristics.

Step 1: (b) Identify who is affected by the policy/decision

(i)   Who benefits from this policy/decision?
(ii) How does the group of people benefit from the policy/decision?
(iii) Who does not benefit from the policy/decision? Is anyone disadvantaged?
(iv) If so, how is the group of people disadvantaged by this policy/decision?

(i)   Those who share protected characteristics.
(ii) The equality outcomes are specifically designed to improve the outcomes/experience of those who share protected characteristics.
(iii) While no-one is directly disadvantaged by the equality outcomes, some groups, such as those with a disability, women and those from a BME background benefit more than other groups.

Step 2: (a) Consider the evidence and impact assess

(i)   What data or evidence have you used to consider the impact of the policy/decision on each Protected Characteristic group? E.g. student/staff demographic data, consultation responses, national data.

(ii)   If you lack data/evidence, please outline your plan for obtaining up-to-date data/evidence e.g. consultation, survey, focus group responses, national research.

(iii)   Referring to the evidence you have available, would this policy positively or negatively impact on the following Protected Characteristics groups? If so, then how? Detail how it would be possible to minimise negative impact (an action plan may be required to ensure minimal negative impact in practice/change an aspect of the policy). Refer to the following Duties where possible: **elimination of discrimination; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.**

Protected Characteristic	Evidence	Impact (and how to minimise negative impact).
Disability	FVC Data and feedback, Scot Gov and UK Gov data.	Direct Positive Impact
Sex (man or woman)	FVC Data and feedback, Scot Gov and UK Gov data.	Direct Positive Impact
Race (refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins)	EHRC & Scot Gov Reports	Direct Positive Impact
Age		Positive impact to a lesser extent. This group will benefit from EO4 and 5 but there is no specific EO to cover this group. Some members of this group may also benefit from the other EOs because of intersection.
Gender reassignment (the process of transitioning from one gender to another)		Positive impact to a lesser extent. This group will benefit from EO4 and 5 but there is no specific EO to cover this group. Some members of this group may also benefit from the other EOs because of intersection.
Sexual orientation (whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes)		Positive impact to a lesser extent. This group will benefit from EO4 and 5 but there is no specific EO to cover this group. Some members of this group may also benefit from the other EOs because of intersection.

Religion and belief (inc. no belief)		Positive impact to a lesser extent. This group will benefit from EO4 and 5 but there is no specific EO to cover this group. Some members of this group may also benefit from the other EOs because of intersection.
Pregnancy and maternity		No direct impact as we do not report on this group. Some members of this group may benefit from the EOs because of intersection.
Marriage and civil partnership		No Impact as we do not report on this group.
Other identified groups (e.g. carers)

Care Experience

Carers | |

Positive impact to a lesser extent. This group will benefit from EO4 and 5 but there is no specific EO to cover this group. Some members of this group may also benefit from the other EOs because of intersection. |

(ii) Action Plan to obtain data and evidence for impact assessment:
A range of stakeholders were consulted while developing the Equality Outcomes. Stakeholders include FVC students and staff.

Step 3: Consultation

Is a consultation required? Are the views of other people required to be sought, in case they may highlight issues arising from the implementation of this policy?	
o Yes	X No

| **Please provide reasons why you did/did not offer a consultation:**

A range of stakeholders were consulted during the development of the Equality Outcomes and the Equality Outcomes are designed to focus on those who share protected characteristics, in a positive way. |
|---|

If 'yes', please complete the following sections.
Analysis of the views/evidence gathered from the consultation:

<table>
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Recommendation(s):

Step 4: Decision Making

Select an option to summarise how the IA has informed your decision-making:

4.1 No amendment to the policy/decision is required (policy/decision is robust, with no negative impact);

4.2 Adjust the policy/decision (take steps to meet the general duty and reduce negative impact);

4.3 Implement the policy/decision without adjustment (continue despite the potential for adverse impact);

4.4 Stop and remove the policy/do not proceed with decision (where adverse effects are not justified and cannot be mitigated or where the policy leads to unlawful discrimination).

No amendment to the policy.

Step 5: Publication:

Equality Impact Assessments must be published.

	Does this group need to be aware of this EQIA? (tick if applicable)	How to inform this group:
Students (service users)	X	
Employees	X	
Partner organisations & stakeholders	X	
Other - please state:		
Are there any barriers to communication?	o **Yes**	X **No**

If 'yes', how will barriers to communication be overcome?

Step 6: Monitoring and Review

How will this policy/decision be monitored to assess its impact on protected characteristics groups? E.g. will qualitative/quantitative date be collected? Survey, Student Council, Listening to Learners sessions? The impact of the Equality Outcomes will be reviewed in 2025.	
Staff member/designation responsible for writing the monitoring report:	Anna Vogt
Monitoring report publication date:	April 2023
Review date: (no later than 3 years after the policy/decision has been impact assessed)	April 2025

Please send the completed EQIA to equality@forthvalley.ac.uk

If you require any assistance in completing an EQIA, please contact equality@forthvalley.ac.uk

1. Purpose

To present a proposed change to the remit of the Audit Committee.

2. Recommendation

That members delegate authority to the Audit Committee for the recruitment and appointment of the College Internal Auditors and agree the updated remit for the Committee attached to this paper.

3. Background

Henderson Loggie were appointed as the College's Internal Auditors from 1 August 2019 following a competitive mini tender through the APUC Audit Services Framework. The initial contract was for a period of three years with the option to extend for a further year, which was approved in May 2022. As such, the College now needs to tender for a new provider.

4. Key Considerations

Following discussions with the Audit Committee on 15 November 2022, the College has commenced the preparation for procurement of new internal auditors using the relevant Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC) framework.

The appointment of Internal Auditors is not a reserved function of the full Board however the current Audit remit requires the Committee to advise the Board on the selection and appointment of Internal Auditors. It is proposed that the approval should now be delegated to the Committee level in keeping with recent decisions by the Board to delegate more authority to the Committees.

In order to ensure good governance, and in keeping with section 2.3 of the Board's Standing Orders, the Board is required to approve any amendments before they are implemented.

5. Resource Implications (Financial, People, Estates and Communications)

None

6. Equalities – N/A

7. Communities and Partners N/A

8. Risk and Impact

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High (5)		
High (4)		
Medium (3)		
Low (2)		X
Very Low (1)	X	

Total Risk Score – **2**

The College has a Strategic Risk appetite for categories of risk as defined by the Board of Management. Decisions being taken at LMT/SMT/Board level must have cognisance of this. Please indicate the <u>single most relevant</u> risk category in the table below.

BoM Risk Categories & Risk Appetite (Select one area only)					
Cautious <15		**Open 15> <20**		**Eager >20**	
Governance	x	Strategy		People	
Legal		Financial		Project/Programme	
Property		Reputational			
		Technology			

The risk of delegation of this approval to the Audit Committee is very low given the use of the APUC framework in the tender process. Bringing the preferred company from the tender exercise for consideration and approval at both Audit and Board meetings does not deliver any added value to the process.

Is the score above the Board Risk Appetite level? No

Risk Owner – Ken Thomson   **Action Owner –** Alison Stewart

Paper Author – Stephen Jarvie   **SMT Owner –** Alison Stewart

Audit Committee

1   Committee Rationale

To contribute to good governance by providing assistance to the Board of Management on issues of compliance, risk, financial probity and the overall effectiveness of internal College control systems

2   Purpose

- To advise the Board of Management on the effectiveness of the financial and other internal governance systems

- To advise the Board of Management on compliance with the Code of Audit Practice for Further Education Colleges

- To undertake reviews of topics referred from the main Board of Management and make such recommendations as may be appropriate

3   Membership

- The Audit Committee is appointed by the Board of Management and must comprise at least 5 members

- The Chair of the Board of Management, Principal, and other senior members of staff are not eligible for membership

- The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Management and should not be the Principal. In the event that the Chair is unavailable to attend a meeting of the committee, a substitute will be nominated by the Committee members in attendance

- Committee members should possess an appropriate level of experience in finance, accounting or auditing

- Finance committee members are eligible to become members of the Audit Committee however, to maintain the independence of these committees, no more than 2 current members of the Finance Committee may serve on the Audit Committee. The Chair of the Finance Committee is not eligible to serve as Chair of the Audit Committee

4   Meetings

- The Audit Committee should normally meet at least three times per year. Additional meetings may be convened at the request of the Chair of the Committee or at the request of the Internal or External Auditor

- The meeting shall be quorate if 3 or more members eligible to vote are in attendance

- The External Auditor will be invited to attend meetings where an external audit report is being considered but may attend any meeting of the Committee

- The Chair of the Finance Committee will be invited to attend the joint meeting of the Finance and Audit Committees where the annual external auditors report is considered

- Minutes will be kept of the proceedings and circulated after approval by the Chair. The minutes will be presented to the following meeting of the Committee for approval and to the next Board of Management meeting

- Meetings will be held in accordance with the Board of Management Standing Orders and Operating Guidelines

- Other members of College staff may be invited to attend meetings of the Committee

5   Specific Duties of the Committee

Internal Governance Systems

- Review and advise the Board of Management of the Internal and External Auditors' assessment of the effectiveness of the College's financial and other internal control systems, including controls specifically to prevent or detect fraud or other irregularities as well as those for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness

- Review and advise the Board of Management on its compliance with The Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges

- Monitor on behalf of the Board of Management the content of the College Strategic Risk Register and the relevance of actions implemented by Senior Management to mitigate identified risks

- Review and approve the College Business Continuity plan

- Monitor on behalf of the Board of Management compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations

Internal Audit

- ~~Advise the Board of Management on the terms of reference, selection, appointment (or removal), resourcing and remuneration of the Internal Audit providers~~

- Selection and appointment of Internal Audit providers in accordance with College procurement processes

- Review the scope, efficiency and effectiveness of internal audit reports and the responses of Senior Management, advising the Board of Management of any significant issues raised

- Review the Internal Auditor's monitoring of management action on the implementation of agreed recommendations reported in internal audit review reports and internal audit annual reports

- Consider and endorse the annual audit plan for the College as developed by Senior Management in consultation with the current internal auditor providers

- Ensure establishment of appropriate performance measures and indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the internal audit service

External Audit

- Consider the College's annual financial statements and the External Auditor's report prior to submission to the Board of Management as part of the annual joint meeting with the Finance Committee

- Review the External Auditor's annual Management Letter and monitor management progress on the implementation of the agreed recommendations. Advise the Board of Management of any issues arising from this activity.

- Establish appropriate performance measures and indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the external audit service

Other Duties

- Produce an annual report to the Board of Management

- Review compliance with the Code of Audit Practice and advise thereon

- Consider relevant reports from SFC and Audit Scotland, and successor bodies, and where appropriate, advise the Board of Management of action required

- Review reported cases of impropriety and consider whether they have been appropriately handled

- To receive advice, and act on recommendations, from the Finance Committee

6   **Authority**

- The Committee is authorised by the Board of Management to investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It is authorised to seek any information it requires from any employee

- The Committee is authorised by the Board of Management to obtain legal or other independent professional advice and to commit reasonable financial resources to fulfil its responsibilities

- The Committee is authorised by the Board of Management to approve all policies relevant to the Committee, or where appropriate refer to the Board of Management for final approval

- The Committee is authorised by the Board of Management to appoint Internal Audit providers in accordance with College procurement processes