

Minutes of the sixty-second meeting of the Board of Management held at 10.00am on Wednesday 14 April 2010 in the Boardroom, Ironmills Road, Dalkeith.

Members

- * Mr G Houston (Chairman)
- * Dr J Brown (Chief Executive)
- * Mr A Cassidy
- Mr J Edgar
- * Mr W Gallagher
- * Prof A MacLennan
- Mr K McKay
- * Mrs M Nicol
- * Mr G Rodgers
- * Prof J Simmons
- * Mrs S Walsh

* indicates present

Officers

- * Ms M Cahill
- * Mr R Gibson
- * Ms K McCallum
- Mr J McDonald
- * Mr G Moodie
- * Ms J Ross
- Dr G Stewart
- Mr N MacGowan (item 62/7 only)
- Mr J McMorris (Item 62/9 only)

Observers

Mr M McVicar, Scottish Government

62/1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Mr Edgar, Mr McKay, Mr McDonald and Dr Stewart.

62/2 DECLARATION OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

62/3 PREVIOUS MEETING

i Minutes of meeting held on 24 February 2010

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

ii Action Grid

The contents of the action grid were noted.

The Chairman advised that the Cabinet Secretary could not make any immediate Board meetings, but that would join a meeting before the end of the year.

62/4 MATTERS ARISING

It had been hoped to hold a private session of the Board that day, but due to apologies from a number of members, it had been decided to postpone the session until a meeting with full attendance.

62/5 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The Chairman advised that interviews for three new Board members had taken place on 16 and 17 March, and that recommendations for appointment had been submitted to Ministers.

Recent SQA engagements had included attendance at the Scotland's Colleges' Business to College Awards and the Show Racism the Red Card Award Ceremony.

62/6 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Dr Brown referred to the contents of her report and highlighted specific areas of interest and progress. Further to her report, the Chief Executive also provided the Board with an update on her recent meeting with the Cabinet Secretary, which had been convened specifically to discuss the potential change in the approach to Literacy and Numeracy qualifications. At that meeting, there had also been the opportunity to discuss the delivery timescales for National 4 and 5, and to highlight SQA's detailed programme plan and its dependency on other partners to deliver.

Following useful discussion around entry points into universities, it was agreed that the pattern of qualifications uptake was an important issue for SQA and worthy of further investigation.

62/7 DALKEITH RELOCATION – PROJECT GOVERNANCE

Mr Neil MacGowan, Head of Corporate Affairs, was welcomed to the meeting.

Ms McCallum provided an update on the governance arrangements in place to manage and deliver the relocation to Shawfair Park. At this point, she paid formal recognition to Jacqui Faulds and Helen Probart for their involvement and commitment to the project thus far. Project management now rested with Neil MacGowan, who would manage the delivery of the project through to completion.

Mr MacGowan went on to outline the groups that had been established to deal with the strategic and operational inputs into the project, highlighting the commitment and arrangements in place to ensure ongoing engagement with staff. This work would be managed through a detailed programme plan with associated milestones and dependencies, which was monitored and reviewed routinely by the Project Board and Core Relocation Group. It was noted that the move to Shawfair would be phased over a number of months, and that contingencies had been factored in to manage any delays.

The Board was assured that the specifications for the new build would take cognisance of future changes in ways of working and capitalise on opportunities for technological advancements.

It was agreed that for future meetings, the Board would be provided with a written update on progress.

The Board was invited to view the architect drawings on display.

Mr MacGowan left the meeting.

62/8 CFE

Dr Brown provided the Board with a general update on progress with CfE, programme planning, and the budget. In the course of her presentation, the following key aspects were highlighted and discussed.

- Work was underway to review the impact of the proposal to incorporate literacy and numeracy units into English and Maths qualifications. This was not without its challenges, and SQA would explore the implications around the English integration associated with Disability and Discrimination Act, timetabling and articulation. Further guidance on the direction of this work would come from the CfE Management Board, which was scheduled to meet on 22 April.
- Workshops on inter-Partner dependencies within the overall CfE programme plan had been constructive to date. Positive dialogue had also taken place with Local Authorities through the Directors of Education. It was confirmed that the delivery expectations from partners featured as a component of the SQA programme plan. The Board was reassured by the collective partnership working.
- The CfE budget for 2010/11 had been approved, and a proposed budget through to 2017 would be submitted mid-April.
- The development of the Enterprise Content Management system had been successfully completed. This system would enable SQA to develop, catalogue and maintain high quality version control for the volume of documents that would be generated as the National Qualifications were developed. Configuration would take place over the following three months, and would provide an accelerated and enhanced functionality to the CfE Teams in the development of qualifications.

The Board sought clarity on its governance role in ensuring programme delivery. It was confirmed that responsibility for the delivery of the SQA programme plan rested with the Executive Management Team, with reporting by exception to the SQA Board. Progress against CfE milestones would be monitored through Quarterly Performance Reporting. It was also emphasised that the Qualifications Committee had delegated authority to consider and challenge significant changes to qualifications policy, and that the outputs of these discussions were reported to the Board as a matter of course.

Whilst reassured by these arrangements, it was agreed that:

- The Chief Executive would develop a reporting mechanism that would offer the Board assurance on progress status against both the SQA and the overarching CfE programmes. This proposal should be brought to the next meeting of the Board, and then feature as a regular agenda item thereafter.
- The Board would receive a further copy of the key milestones, as circulated at the December meeting of the Board.
- The Board would receive a further copy of the overarching programme plan, and then only again by exception.

62/9 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The Chairman welcomed Mr John McMorris, Head of Marketing, to the meeting.

The report was opened with an overview of progress against plan for business development objectives, which could be reported on target with the exception of the

trading subsidiary. It was noted that the business case was currently with Scottish Government officials, for submission to Ministers in the following week. Mr McMorris went on to provide an overview of project activity in the international market.

Further to the contents of the report, it was noted that the final report from the Ofqual audit had been confirmed, and that the action plan with associated timelines had been agreed.

The Board noted the report for the period to 28 February 2010.

Mr McMorris left the meeting.

62/10 **FINANCE & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

i **Draft Corporate Plan 2010-13**

As agreed at the last Board meeting, the Executive Management Team had given full consideration to the feedback and points raised by the Scottish Government on SQA's corporate plan 2010-13. Members had before them, the revised version for their comment and approval.

Mr Moodie presented the proposed revision, highlighting in detail, the seven areas for consideration. On discussion of all points and once clarification was provided on the principle behind corporate action 5.1 (Accreditation), the Board approved the corporate plan for submission to the Scottish Government.

As an aside, it was noted that SQA continued to be involved in the broader activity around recognition of wider achievement.

ii **Financial Report 11 months YTD**

Mr Moodie presented the Financial Report to 28 February 2010 and was pleased to report a cash zero balance at year end.

He stressed the urgency in gaining approval from the Scottish Government on the 2010-11 budget. This was supported by the Board.

62/11 **REPORT FROM CERTIFICATION PLANNING GROUP**

The Board noted the update on certification planning, and that activity was progressing on schedule. An update was provided on a number of the key critical success factors reported at amber, and it was noted that these areas could now be reported as on track.

Ms McCallum advised that the performance measures for 2010 had been submitted to the Scottish Government and would form part of the Quarterly Performance Reporting.

62/12 COMMITTEE REPORTS

i **Audit Committee – 9 February 2010**

The Board noted the contents of the draft minutes, which would be approved at the next meeting of the Audit Committee on 11 May 2010.

ii **Joint Advisory Council and Qualifications Committee – 1 March 2010**

The Board was advised of the business covered at the joint meeting of the Advisory Council and Qualifications Committee that had taken place in Stirling at the beginning of March. It had proved to be a very productive and successful event, and the notes from the meeting would be enclosed in the next set of Board papers.

iii **International and Commercial Committee – 30 March 2010**

The International and Commercial Committee had met two weeks ahead of the Board. Mr Cassidy provided an outline of the business covered, which had included a useful presentation on the operations of the Business Intelligence Services, and an update on the work of Specialist Awards and Services. The minutes of the meeting would be enclosed in the next set of Board papers.

iv **Accreditation Committee – Co-opted Members**

Prof Simmons presented an update on the letter sent to members inviting them to remain on the Accreditation Committee. It was noted that there was one addition to the list, Mr Keith Quinn.

The Board approved the co-option of the members for a three-year period.

62/13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no matters raised for consideration.

62/14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board of Management would be held on Wednesday 9 June 2010, in Esk/Forth, The Optima Building, Glasgow.