

The 120th meeting of the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council was held on Tuesday 21 July 2020 at 1.30pm, by video-conferencing.

**Present:** Mike Cantlay (Chair)  
Karen Watt (Chief Executive)  
Douglas Mundie (Deputy Chair)  
David Alexander  
Sheila Duncan  
Mhairi Harrington  
Lorna Jack  
Professor Ewart Keep  
Andy Kerr  
Professor Peter Mathieson  
Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam  
Dr Veena O'Halloran  
Caroline Stuart  
Professor John Wallace  
Professor Lesley Yellowlees

**Officers:** Martin Fairbairn (Secretary)  
Dr Donna MacKinnon  
Martin Boyle  
Angela Seymour (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Dr Paul Little

**20/45 Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all Board members to the meeting.

**20/46 Chair's business: declarations of interest**

The Chair commented on the extraordinary circumstances the meeting was being held under and outlined how the meeting would proceed. The Chair explained that this was a special additional meeting.

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

The following members noted a potential conflict of interest:

- David Alexander in relation to West College Scotland
- Douglas Mundie in relation to the University of St Andrews and the Institute of Directors
- Professor Ewart Keep in relation to his role as an Associate Fellow of the Scottish Centre for Employment Research, University of Strathclyde.
- Andy Kerr in relation to South Lanarkshire College and New College Lanarkshire
- Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam in relation to Glasgow School of Art
- Professor Peter Mathieson in relation to the University of Edinburgh
- Dr Veena O'Halloran in relation to the University of Strathclyde
- Professor Lesley Yellowlees in relation to Edinburgh Napier University
- Caroline Stuart in relation to Dumfries and Galloway College.

**20/47 Chief Executive's Report (SFC/20/31)**

The Council received and noted a paper providing a report from the Chief Executive on matters of current interest.

The Chief Executive confirmed that Council staff were in relatively good health and the response to the vacancies advertised had been of a very high standard, which should help the stretch being experienced across the organisation.

**20/48 Capital Funding (SFC/20/32)**

The Council received a paper requesting it:

- Agree the distribution of an additional £10 million of capital funding for college and university estate maintenance provided by Scottish Government as part of its 'Return to Work' investment package, and to agree the use of conditions of grant to satisfy the SFC's objectives for such a one-off allocation (Section A); and

- Agree to the utilisation of additional capital funding to target digital poverty for learners in receipt of hardship funds (Section B).

The following members noted a direct conflict of interest and left the meeting during the formal discussion and decision:

- Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam in relation to Glasgow School of Art
- Professor Peter Mathieson in relation to University of Edinburgh
- Dr Veena O’Halloran in relation to University of Strathclyde
- Professor Lesley Yellowlees in relation to Edinburgh Napier University
- David Alexander in relation to West College Scotland
- Andy Kerr in relation to South Lanarkshire College and New College Lanarkshire

In discussion, the Council:

- Welcomed and acknowledged the hard work, under unprecedented circumstances, that had gone into the production of the paper.
- Welcomed the additional funds.
- Noted the restrictions on the use of the funds
- Received clarification on how the funds would be allocated

The Council Board:

In relation to section A:

- **Approved** the recommended option for distribution of the £10 million additional investment (i.e. based on the 2020-21 capital maintenance grant allocations) and the proposed use of conditions of grant to reinforce the expectation of delivery against the outcomes.
- **Delegated** authority to the Chief Executive to finalise the details, including conditions, of the distribution

In relation to Section B:

- **Delegated** authority to the Chief Executive to agree the criteria, following further discussion with Scottish Government and SAAS,

for distribution of the additional capital investment for digital poverty, including conditions of grant.

**20/49**    **Next meeting: 20 August 2020**