FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
Draft Minutes of meeting held on
Thursday 29 May 2025 at 1.30pm
in the Boardroom and by MS Teams

Present:
David Patterson
Grenville Johnston
Caroline Webster (via MS Teams)
Ralph Luck (via MS Teams)

In Attendance:
Alex Hastings (Minutes)
Eleanor Melton (Clerk)
Murray Easton (Left at 15.10)
Michaela Munro (Left at 15.10)
Derek Duncan (Left at 14.40)
Samantha Scott (Left at 14.30)

Item		Action	Date
F.25.02.01	**(i) Resignations**		
1.1	There were no resignations.		
	(ii) Appointments		
1.2	There were no appointments.		
F.25.02.02	**Apologies for Absence**		
2.1	There were no apologies for absence.		
F.25.02.03	**Any Additional Declarations of Interest including specific items on this Agenda**		
3.1	Murray and Michaela agreed to leave the meeting so that the Committee could discuss the SLT Staffing Update.		
F.25.02.04	**Draft minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 6 March 2025**		
4.1	The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes meeting held on 6 March 2025 were accepted as a true and accurate record: Proposed: Grenville Johnston Seconded: Caroline Webster		
F.25.02.05	**Matters Arising from Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 6 March 2025**		
5.1	**9.1** – Complete – Due to the insurance excess, the college will not be claiming. **10.1** – Ongoing – This action has been pushed to the next F&GP Committee meeting.		
F.25.02.06	**Financial Position**		
	(i) 2024/25 Forecast		
6.1	Murray supported the paper, advising that there is no indication of any surprises that would impact the full year forecast for 2024/25.		

	Muray provided some background information on the Job Evaluation procedure, informing members that this will not affect the AOP but will be itemised in the statutory accounts. The Committee noted the report.		
	(ii) 2025/26 Draft Budget		
6.2	Murray advised that the 2025/26 estimate is not currently viable. Once Murray has received an updated draft, this will be circulated to Committee members.		
F.25.02.07	**Estates**		
	(i) RAAC Options Appraisal – Final Report		
7.1	Derek supported the paper, advising that there is too much information in the papers for the Committee to discuss at today's meeting. Following a discussion regarding the options provided by the surveyors, Caroline advised that if the College wishes to improve use of the Speyside Wing as part of a roof replacement, then it is important to be aware of the cost implications of this. Caroline added that the costing presented in the report is for a like-for-like roof replacement, so costing of any improvements would need to be known prior to agreeing what option to take. The Committee agreed to set up a meeting to focus on the options available for the Speyside Wing once Derek has gathered more information from the surveyor. It was agreed that SLT would be invited to this meeting. Derek's update was noted by the Committee.		
ACTION	Derek to gather further costing information from the surveyor so that the Committee and SLT can meet to discuss options fully.	**DD**	
	(ii) Estates Update		
7.2	Derek provided an update on key Estates issues, highlighting the situation surrounding replacement water coolers, where several Red Button complaints were received from staff and students regarding access to drinking water. The Committee noted this update.		
F.25.02.08	**Policies Due for Review**		
	(i) Travel and Subsistence Policy		
8.1	Derek supported the paper for approval of the policy, in which has been amended to align with HMRC guidance.		

	Following approval, this policy would be effective from 1 August 2025. The Committee agreed to approve the policy.		
F.25.02.09	**Moray Growth Deal Update**		
	(i) BE Hub		
9.1	Murray and Sam provided an update on the commercial phase of the project, advising that there has been a slight slippage in terms of timelines of the project. Sam is working as a project manager for the BE Hub, with Murray working on the finance side and further support provided from Ralph and Caroline. The Committee discussed the fixed price agreement with Robertson and why this has not been agreed yet. Murray advised that there would need to be a conversation with Robertson around potentially reducing interior scope and design of the building. Sam added that Robertson had to make changes to design which had to be approved by their stakeholders, causing further delays and affecting whole design and total integration prices. Caroline pointed out that a fixed cost will not be agreeable until testing on site is completed for load bearing and ground conditions. Ralph advised that this has not taken place yet due to ongoing archaeological works scheduled to last five weeks. David highlighted that Elgin Library is now promoting a Business Hub with Business Gateway which is causing confusion. David was advised that this project is small in comparison to the BE Hub. Murray pointed out that the Committee is not due to meet until October 2025. Murray advised that any updates will be sent to Grenville between this time that the Committee should be aware of. This update was noted by the Committee.		
	(ii) Moray Engineering & Energy Innovation Centre - Verbal		
9.2	David provided an update, advising that the MGD Programme Board met a month ago to discuss projects and agreed to drop the Moray Leisure Centre project. The remaining two projects are still being considered, with discussions taking place regarding making a hybrid project from the two. David highlighted the key concern from local partners being UHI's involvement, adding that there is a damaged		

	relationship due to UHI pulling out of MAATIC. Despite this, the new CEO of Moray Council backs MEEIC. David will be presenting the project to councillors with Kerry McInnes and Sam Scott. The Committee noted this update.		
F.25.02.10	**Emerging Issues**		
	(i) SLT Staffing Update - Verbal		
10.1	David provided an update on the recruitment of a Director of Finance and Deputy Principal. Six candidates have been interviewed for the Finance Director role. David stated that the Finance Director role has been difficult to get traction for due to location, salary and the state of the college sector. David added that Aspen has had more success with the Deputy Principal role. Shortlisting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 3 June. There will be a push to get as many applicants attending interviews in person as possible. The Committee noted this update.		
	(ii) Target Operating Model - Verbal		
10.2	David reminded members of the three options being taken forward to the FBC. Option 4 of having mergers has almost dropped off the table. David advised that the other options are not being taken forward at the moment, as the focus has shifted to look at four pathfinder projects. These projects will be taken forward by developers to outline what it will look like for the partnership. David's update was noted by the Committee.		
	(iii) Deloitte – External Audit		
10.3	Murray informed members that a meeting took place with Deloitte to ensure that the College does not get subjected to the same surprises that arose last year. The planning meeting took place with Deloitte this week, with the Audit Plan being presented to the Audit Committee on 3 June. The audit is now being led by a Deloitte director based in Aberdeen, who will be attending the Audit Committee meeting in person. The Committee noted this update.		
F.25.02.11	**Date of next meeting – TBC**		
11.1	The provisional date for the next Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting is scheduled for 26 September 2025. The Committee discussed the suitability of this date, as Murray advised that only provisional financials will be		

	available at that stage. It was agreed that Murray would give feedback on the 2025-26 Board schedule, which is being presented for approval on 12 June.		
ACTION	Murray to provide feedback on the 2025-26 Board schedule at the next Board meeting.		
RESERVED ITEMS			
F.25.02.12	**Draft Reserved Minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 6 March 2025**		
12.1	This item is reserved, and the minute held in confidence.		
F.25.02.13	**Reserved Matters Arising from Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 6 March 2025**		
13.1	This item is reserved, and the minute held in confidence.		
	Meeting closed at 3.20pm		