Minutes of APUC Board Meeting held at 10:15 a.m. on Monday 19 February 2018 at the Cottrell building, University of Stirling.

Present

Jim McGeorge (Chair)	University of Dundee
Sheena Stewart (SS)	Abertay University
Janet Thomson (JT)	Glasgow Clyde College
Carol Turnbull (CT)	Dumfries and Galloway College
Pete Smith (PS)	Borders College
Fiona Gavine (FG)	Independent
Douglas MacKellar (DM)	Independent
Stuart Paterson (SP)	Independent
Angus Warren (AW)	APUC Ltd (Chief Executive)

In attendance

Brian Dearden	APUC Ltd (for agenda item 12 only)
Michael Caithness (MC)	APUC Ltd

Welcome and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Liam McCabe, University of Stirling and Martin Fairbairn, Scottish Funding Council.

1   The new Chair introduced himself and expressed his pleasure at joining the Board and taking on the Chair's role. There was a round the table introduction to allow the Chair to become familiar with the other Board members and their backgrounds.
Chair noted that AW would present the Finance report in EM's absence on leave and that BD would join the meeting to present an update on the Institutional Procurement Services work-stream.

Minutes of Previous Board Meeting

2   The minutes of the 15 November 2017 Board meeting were approved subject to correction of a typo in paragraph 30.

Matters Arising: APUC/01/2018

3   All matters arising from the previous Board meeting had been actioned or scheduled as outlined in paper APUC/01/2017.
SS noted that the item numbers were not correct. (**ACTION: MC to update**)

4   Item 15: AW advised that narrative regarding the level of reserves will be included in the next annual accounts.

5   Item 31: AW informed the Board that a meeting with a QC regarding the CSG status was scheduled for the following Friday and that he would subsequently update members as appropriate.

6   FG asked how much the consultation with a QC would cost and AW advised that it would be around £5k but that there was insurance in place that would cover it.

7   Item 72: AW advised that the Risk Register would be amended to remove unnecessary items in time for the next Board meeting at which the Risk Register is scheduled to be tabled. **[ACTION: MC/AW]**

Summary Report: APUC/02/2018

General Update

AW gave the following updates on the Summary Report:

8   There are currently 180 collaborative agreements plus 9 C1 agreements available to client institutions.

9   SS asked if the percentage collaborative spend was being impacted by changes in overall spend. AW confirmed that as spend in the sector was increasing (quite considerably in some cases), an increase in value of actual collaborative spend by value is required just to maintain the same percentage level. The Board noted that the increase in the percentage level was therefore even more noteworthy.

10   FG suggested the addition of a column to reflect targets where applicable and AW agreed that it would be helpful, noting that targets already exist for a few of the metrics on the high-level table. **[ACTION: AW to update Summary Report for Future meetings]**

11   The migration of electronic data to the APUC internal SharePoint site is now complete and OneDrive is being used extensively for more single person data storage.

12   Initial investigation work has been carried out in readiness for APUC to undertake the Cyber Essentials Plus certification process. There is no legal obligation to do this, but it is a strong direction of travel desired by the Scottish Government and may be included in outcome agreements.

13   The final e-enablement of the Finance system is about to go live with the implementation of an e-procurement module.

14   Western Isles Council were extremely impressed with Hunter functionality and are now preparing a business case with a view to implementing in Spring 2018, if approved.

15   Chair asked if these Hunter opportunities would be easy to support and AW confirmed that they would require minimal effort.

16   A Regional collaboration initiative is now in place (although not a regional team as such) in the Tayside region, initially consisting of Abertay University, Dundee and Angus College and Perth College UHI. This has been structured to enable the University of Dundee to take part when it wishes.

Staffing

17   AW explained the recent staff changes.

Health and Safety

18   AW confirmed that there were no H&S issues in the reporting period.

Scottish Cross Sector Benefits Methodology

19   The Scottish Cross Sector Benefits Methodology has been revised and approved at a cross sector level. The main area of change is in definition of BT3 benefits and the new BT14 Sustainable Based Benefits section. Hunter now has the functionality to record these BT14 savings.

Contracting Priorities Workshop (CPW)

20   AW advised that the CPW on 1 February went well.

21   SP asked if commodity areas previously considered to be 'not worth pursuing' remained as such and AW advised that this was generally the case. He added that all possible candidate areas are reviewed and reconsidered in the annual CPW and noted that one or two existing contracts per year were 'killed off' as they were not being used. Due to the more steady-state nature of contracting, the CPW is planned to move to bi-annually.

Finance System Framweork

22   A discussion took place re performance issues regarding a supplier on the Finance system framework agreement and how APUC might get involved in supporting resolution of the issues. JT asked if she could have a chat with the Head of Category on this subject. **[ACTION: AW to ask Michael McLaughlin to contact JT].**

Sustain

23   AW advised that a total of 73 suppliers have now been requested to complete the online Sustain supply chain assessment.

Responsible Supply Chain Category Guides

24   AW advised that the "Protecting Human Rights In The Supply Chain" document published in collaboration with LUPC and CIPS is now available as an eLearning package on the APUC website.

Modern Slavery Act

25   AW noted that a second bill related to the UK Modern Slavery Act is currently progressing through Parliament and aims to make public bodies accountable (currently, only commercial bodies (including colleges and universities) are accountable)

D&S - Workshops

26   AW informed the Board that the D&S team will be running Spend Workshops to assist members with methods and types of data gathering, available tools and sources of data, benefits and good practice sharing.

D&S - Training and Development

27   AW informed the Board that there are now 8 APUC eLearning modules available via APUC SharePoint site.

D&S – Supply Chain Management Programme & Apprentice+

28   AW advised that the latest 3 trainees all commenced on the programme on 6 November 2017.

D&S Charity of the Year

29   AW expressed his sincere thanks to all who contributed to the £3,000 funds raised for the homeless via the Sleep Out in Princes Street Gardens last December.

Financial Management Report: APUC/03/2018

30   AW highlighted the main features detailed in the Financial Management Report APUC/03/2018 which included a summary of the actual income and expenditure for the period to the end of December 2017, the forecast balance sheet as at 31 December 2017 and the cash profile for 2017-18. He advised that the figures were close to target and in line with the previous report.

31   AW noted that a reconciliation has taken place in relation to overhead utilisation allocated to the shared service staffing for 2016/17 AY in line with CSG rules.

32   FG asked what the status of a potential property purchase was, and AW advised that the market was being constantly monitored for any possible options that included planning permission for office use.

33   The Chair, on behalf of the Board, formally noted the contents of the Financial Management Report and thanked AW for the report.

Brexit Update

34   AW reported that there was not much to be updated at this stage.

InfoSec Review

35   AW explained that an 18-month review of the InfoSec offering had taken place in November 2017 and that it was found that some aspects were working well and some were not. 6 members of the service took part in the review, which concluded that there was support for the option to revert to a simpler model of a shared CISO across all institutions.

36   AW advised that, consequently, a formal consultation period was in place with a view to changing the model.

DPO Shared Service

37   AW advised that there was support for a DPO Shared Service that could cover over half of the membership.

38   CT noted that it was a real bonus for colleges to have access to shared services for roles where there was only a part-time need from both a cost-effective and resilience perspective.

39   AW advised that it was the intention to recruit 6 DPOs. They will each have an institution as their base office but will be required to mostly travel across their area of responsibility.

40   AW added that there was interest from the rest of the UK for DPO and InfoSec Shared Services, although APUC had declined to offer any solution for those locations.

eLearning – Board access

41   AW stated that the D&S eLearning packages could be made accessible to the Board and that login credentials could be made available if there was interest. Office 365 would be

required to access the packages and a special area might need to be set up for the Board. (**ACTION: MC to review and enable**)

42   Chair asked for recommendations on the most appropriate packages to access from a Board perspective once this was set-up. (**ACTION: AW**)

Board Performance Survey Report

43   MC gave an overview of the outcome of the survey, noting that most of the comments were in the overall Board performance section.

44   There followed a discussion on possible follow up options for consideration:

45   PS suggested a method of giving feedback to staff on issues discussed at the Board meeting might be useful.

46   AW suggested that MF should be invited to take part in the next survey.

47   DM suggested that 'key practitioners' should be invited to present to the Board from time to time on relevant topical subjects, say one per year. AW asked the Board to provide suggestions for people and topics. (**ACTION: Board members**)

48   SS recommended that terms of reference for Board committees should be reviewed annually as a matter of good practice – possibly as part of the agenda at the next committee meetings. (**ACTION: MC to add to agendas**)

49   It was suggested that some Board meetings should be held in more remote locations served by APUC and that a member of the local institution should be invited to present at the meeting on the institution and its involvement with APUC. It was agreed this could be explored during further 2018 meetings (locations had already all been agreed for 2018) for implementation in 2019.

50   SS noted that the gender balance on the Board appeared broadly appropriate but drew attention to the Scottish Government's recent gender balance requirements. It was noted that if SP's replacement later in the year was female a 50:50 gender balance would be achieved.

51   Succession planning was raised as an important issue and AW advised that it is considered annually and suggested that it is included on the agenda for one meeting a year. (**ACTION: MC to add to agenda for August meeting**)

52   AW noted that the Board membership is ideally for a 3-year cycle and that there is a desire to restore that principle in HE where it has become out of sync. He added that a proposal will be shared with the relevant members before being made to Principals as to how APUC will re-establish the cycle.

53   The Chair concluded by noting that the survey had generated some excellent suggestions for enhancing the work of the Board and that it would be useful to track the implementation of the agreed actions over the next year..

GDPR Preparation

54   AW advised the Board that data actions and project plans are in place. Experience-sharing on organisation readiness was being done with SCIGG, which Kerry Simpson held a seat on.

55   AW advised that a high-level guidance document and a Contract Assurance document (created by APUC in partnership with SHEIP) have now been developed and distributed to the sector at the end of January (it had been hoped the ICO would create the latter document but it is suffering from severe staff shortages). These tools will now be used to assess all GDPR relevant framework agreement suppliers. A project plan has been created to monitor this activity with senior management review meetings taking place every 2-3 weeks until GDPR goes live.

56   He added that the Contract Assurance document was to enable due diligence to be carried out on how suppliers handle their data.

57   The Chair asked if APUC was satisfied that it will be ready in time and AW stated that he was confident that it will as a corporate entity and that, although it is difficult to be sure regarding all supplier due diligence, the organisation was doing everything possible to enable it.

Work stream review – Institutional Procurement Services

58   BD joined the meeting to present an update on the Institutional Procurement Services work stream. This was delivered with the following PowerPoint slides:

    Slide 1:   Overview diagram of the service features
    Slide 2:   Delivery structure
    Slide 3:   Service delivery models
    Slide 4:   Team structure
    Slide 5:   Statutory Compliance
    Slide 6:   Reporting
    Slide 7:   Regional/National collaboration
    Slide 8:   E-Tools

59   Questions and discussion took place during the presentation as follows:

60   SP asked if all the 36 IPS staff were direct reports to BD and BD advised that only 10 reported directly to him.

61   Chair asked if staff based in institutions experienced any conflicts or issues with the different terms and conditions of local staff. BD advised that there some issues arose from time to time but nothing that could not normally be easily resolved.

62   SP asked if staff have 'dotted line' reporting to local managers and BD and AW confirmed that they have a customer service and delivery reporting line to the local senior stakeholder.

63   SS noted that APUC staff in Abertay University appear as an integrated part of the organisation to internal customers.

64   CT asked if APUC staff had any involvement in the 'national pay bargaining' in the college sector at their local institutions and BD advised that they did not. AW noted that all APUC staff in colleges were on a common grading scale and as almost all college procurement staff worked for APUC, they effectively already had a national arrangement in place.

65   DM noted that the presentation had not covered customer feedback and asked if this was done. BD informed the Board that annual and bi-annual customer satisfaction surveys are offered based on a common format to get feedback on how the service is performing. He added that feedback was good and that what the customer wants and needs is paramount to the success of the service.

66   AW advised that a general APUC wide customer satisfaction survey is also conducted every 2 years.

67   SP asked if there were any statistics on usage of SMEs and AW advised that at the last review 52% of HE/FE spend was with SMEs, which was much higher than most other sectors and much higher than the position in the public sectors in other parts of the UK.

68   CT noted that information on spend with SMEs (and Micro-businesses) can be helpful to colleges and universities in dialogue with local businesses, especially in more remote locations. AW advised that this could be provided from HUB data on request as and when required.

Any Other Business

69   Since one member of the Board was not present, it was agreed that a discussion on how future dates are agreed would be deferred until the May meeting.

70   There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12:40.

Date of Next Meeting

71   The next Board meeting will be held on 17 May 2018 in the afternoon in Stirling.