



**Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Held at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday 27 February 2020  
The Boardroom, 100 Bothwell Street, Glasgow G2 7JD**

**2.1**

<b>Present:</b>	Andrew Wathey	Interim Chair	AW
	Paula Sussex	Chief Executive Officer	PS
	Mary Curnock Cook	Non-Executive Director	MCC
	Simon Devonshire	Non-Executive Director	SD
	David Gravells	Non-Executive Director	DG
	Charlotte Moar	Non-Executive Director	CM
	Stephen Tetlow	Non-Executive Director	ST
	David Wallace	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	DW
	Jacqui Smillie	Chief Financial Officer	JS
	Gary Womersley	Company Secretary	GW
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Sinead O’Sullivan	DfE	SOS
	Ivan West	DfE (by phone)	IW
	Gareth Allen	Scottish Government	GA
	Chris Williams	Welsh Government	CW
	Jonny O’Callaghan	NI Government	JOC
	Stephen Campbell	CIO	SC
	Derek Ross	Executive Director of Operations	DR
	Bernice McNaught	Executive Director of Repayments and Counter Fraud	BMC
	Morven Spalding	Executive Director, People	MS
	Stuart Brydson	Board Secretary (Secretariat)	SB
	Peter Robinson	Corporate Planning & Performance Manager (for Item 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 only)	PR
	Adam Treslove	Head of Corporate Affairs (for Item 3.1 and 4.4 only)	AT
	Angela Donaldson	Interim Head of Finance (for Item 3.2 only)	AD
	Jackie Currie	Head of Operations Glasgow (for Item 4.1 only)	JC
	Anthony Deans	Accelerated Service Improvement Lead (for Item 4.1 only)	AD
	Christine Nunn	Head of Service Improvement (for Item 4.1 only)	CN
	David Thomson	Head of Operations Darlington (for Item 4.1 only)	DT
	Stephen Baker	Director of Policy, Design and Change (for Item 4.3 only)	STB
	Steven Darling	Director of Repayments and Counter Fraud Strategy (for Item 4.4 only)	SDA

# OFFICIAL SENSITIVE – COMMERCIAL – LEGALLY PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL

<b>Apologies:</b>	Paul Kett	DfE	PK
	Ben Connah	DfE	BC
	Richard Leeman	NI Government	RL

## 1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS / DIRECTORS' MATTERS / DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

AW welcomed everyone to the meeting, his first as Interim Chair, and explained changes that had been made to the regular agenda order.

Apologies had been received from Paul Kett, Director General, Higher and Further Education, Department for Education; Ben Connah, Deputy Director, Student Loans Company Strategy and Sponsorship; and Richard Leeman, Head of Student Support, Department for the Economy, and were noted.

AW noted that IW was attending by telephone.

There were no declarations of interest.

## 2. CHAIR UPDATE

### 2.1 Update from the Chair on relevant matters

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AW noted that he intended to circulate his draft article on student loans language to the Board members following the meeting. This had been written as an opinion piece, was still very much in draft form and had still to be considered by DfE etc. As such the version that would be shared was primarily for information and he was not seeking detailed drafting comments at this stage.

AW noted the current COVID-19 Coronavirus situation and asked what action was being taken within SLC. PS confirmed that communications had been issued to staff in line with current Department of Health guidance and that the situation was being monitored by the appropriate teams. MS confirmed that People have a working group set up in conjunction with SLC's business continuity team.

MCC provided further insight into how some organisations were planning and a discussion took place on SLC's plans should one of the company's major sites be compromised by COVID-19.

## 3. STRATEGIC ITEMS

### 3.1 CEO Report

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PS introduced the CEO Report, noting the areas of focus.

The following key matters were highlighted:

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**Peakon Employee Engagement Survey**

PS discussed the results of this year’s survey which had shown an improvement across all scores. It was noted that while welcome, SLC’s results were still below the ‘true benchmark’ scores and that there was more work to be done.

MS also noted the survey high completion rate, which at 82%, was a good result. The results were viewed as an indicator of the success of some of the early People Strategy initiatives like the low pay case.

MS noted that each directorate will be reviewing their own results and creating action plans to drive further improvement. Using the Peakon survey would allow for year on year comparison going forward. In addition, the intention was to carry out more regular pulse surveys following delivery of future People Strategy initiatives.

The Board welcomed the improvements particularly given that they were evidenced as being in all areas. It was noted that the survey would be discussed in detail at the RPODC meeting on 30 March. CM asked that details by Directorate, location, gender, grade etc be brought to this meeting for more detailed discussions. MS confirmed that this would be done.

**ACTION: RPODC to review Peakon engagement results in detail by directorate, location, gender, grade etc and report back to the Main Board.**

### **Evolve Workshop**

PS noted that an Evolve Workshop would be arranged for Board members and would likely be in London sometime in the next few months.

**ACTION: Evolve Workshop for Board members to be arranged.**

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### **3.2 CFO Report**

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JS introduced the CFO Report, noting that this included the latest FY 2019-20 results and updated on the position in respect of the FY 2020-21 budget.

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**ACTION: FY 2020-21 budget options to be discussed at the March Board meeting.**

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### **3.3 SLC Corporate Performance**

JS introduced the Corporate Performance paper.

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IW agreed with DW's views and confirmed that work was progressing with SLC and DfE colleagues and would also include consultation with other SLC shareholders.

CM thanked those involved in the work on FY 2020-21 APRA targets.

Board noted and welcomed SLC Corporate Performance.

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#### **4. PRIORITY BUSINESS**

##### **4.1 Deep Dive – AY 2019/20 Application Cycle Operations Service Review**

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DR introduced the deep dive into the AY 2019/20 Application Cycle and Operational Service Review.

DR noted that the Operations management team had looked back over the full year to review the customer service offered. It was noted that performance had returned to the desired levels from January 2020.

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CM noted the good work that had been done to review service and thanked the team for this good example of a lessons learned exercise working well.

Board noted and welcomed the deep dive into AY 2019/20 Application Cycle Operations Service Review.

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##### **4.2 Evolve Full Business Case summary presentation**

BM introduced Evolve Full Business Case summary presentation.

BM talked to the published presentation slides.

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DG asked that the summary presentation and FBC are published on the Knowledge section of Boardpacks.

**ACTION: Evolve summary presentation and FBC to be published on Knowledge section of Boardpacks.**

There followed discussion around assurance of the FBC and the work being carried out to ensure it is ready for the Investment Committee. BM noted that the FBC is, as one would expect, not that different from the OBC. BM also noted that there had been a Cabinet Office Infrastructure and Projects Authority review. Following a discussion on assurance, PS confirmed that the IPA, as the recognised area of expertise, is the key assurance function and it was agreed that this would be discussed at a future Board.

**ACTION: IPA report to be discussed at Main Board.**

PS noted that the Evolve FBC was a still going through DfE keyholder reviews and that there would be further opportunities for the Board to engage on this.

Board noted Evolve Full Business Case summary presentation.

### **4.3 Evolve: Policy Commissioning / Policy Simplification & Rationalisation**

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DW introduced the Policy Commissioning / Policy Simplification & Rationalisation paper and emphasised to the Board that this was one of the key Evolve workstreams.

DW noted that a version of the paper was due to be presented to the DfE Permanent Secretary, Jonathan Slater, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2020.

DW updated the Board on a discussion that had taken place since the last Board meeting with the Evolve sub-committee, noting key differences including 'user stories' which had been annexed to the main paper.

STB talked to the published presentation slides.

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AW thanked DW and STB for a clear paper and a good presentation.

Board agreed, noted and welcomed Evolve: Policy Commissioning / Policy Simplification & Rationalisation.

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#### **4.4 ORS Progress, Communications and Media Plans**

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BM and then DW introduced ORS Progress, Communications and Media Plans.

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DW noted that the final slides of the presentation focussed on the media approach and that AT would welcome feedback on this. AW confirmed that he felt the plans were well thought-through.

Board noted and welcomed ORS Progress, Communications and Media Plans.

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### **5. PAPERS FOR NOTING**

#### **5.1 ARC Chair Report**

CM introduced ARC Chair Report.

CM noted that the Internal Audit plan for FY 2020-21 would soon be complete and that the External Audit for FY 2019-20 was on schedule.

CM noted that a future Board discussion on risk would be useful and that she was recommending this to the secretariat.

Board noted ARC Chair Report.

#### **5.2 Evolve Full Business Case**

There were no further questions on Evolve Full Business Case.

Board noted Evolve Full Business Case.

### **6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

#### **6.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2020**

The minutes of the SLC Board meeting held on 30 January 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record.

## **6.2 Matters arising from previous meetings**

The matters arising document was approved as accurate and no further questions were asked.

## **7. Any Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

## **8. Date of Next Meeting**

11:00 am, Tuesday 31 March 2020, The Boardroom, 100 Bothwell Street, Glasgow G2 7JD.

There being no other business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 14:57 pm.

***NB: Where asterisks appear within a numbered item, these sections have been excluded from the minutes before placing on the website as the subject under discussion falls within one or more of the exemptions contained in Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and can be reasonably withheld.***