Board of Directors

Board Meeting will commence at 1400 and conclude at 1600 on Wednesday 26 March 2025
Venue: Kildean Suite, Forth Valley College (Stirling Campus), Drip Rd, Stirling FK8 1SE

Agenda

A confidential (*Non-Disclosure*) Strategic Session took place prior to the Board Meeting.

Item No.	Item	Information/ Paper No.	Speaker
3.	**Welcome and Apologies**	Verbal	*Ken Thomson*
3.1	**Declarations of Interest**	Verbal	*Ken Thomson*
4.	**For Discussion/Agreement**		
4.1	Minutes of Last Meeting		
	• 11 December 2024 Minutes	CDN/260325/1	*Ken Thomson*
4.1.1	• Rolling Action Points	Paper	*Ken Thomson*
4.1.2	• Matters Arising	Verbal	*Ken Thomson*
5.	**Standing Items**		
5.1	• Chair's Report	Verbal	*Ken Thomson*
5.2	• CEO's Report	CDN/260325/2	*Marie Hendry*
6.	**For Discussion/Approval**		
6.1	Strategic Dashboard	CDN/260325/3	*Vicky Underwood/ Gordon Hunt*
6.2	SFC Review	Verbal	*Ken Thomson/ Marie Hendry*
6.3	Choose College Update	CDN/260325/4	*Gordon Hunt*
6.4	Finance Update	CDN/260325/5	*Kimberly Williams*
6.5	Risk Register	CDN/260325/6	*Marie Hendry*
7.	**AOCB**	Verbal	*Ken Thomson*
8.	**Date of Next Meeting** • Wednesday 25 June from 1400 to 1600 (online)	Verbal	*Ken Thomson*

Minute of College Development Network Board of Directors Wednesday 26 March 2025 from 1400 to 1600 (FVC, Stirling Campus)

Present	
Ken Thomson (KT) (Chair)	Marie Hendry (MH)
Julia Belgutay (JB) (Online)	Stella McManus (SMcM)
Louise Burnett (LB)	Colin McMurray (CMcM)
Angela Cox (AC)	Jason Miles-Campbell (JM-C)
Susan Elston (SE)	Sam Stirling (SS)
Jen Henderson (JH)	
In Attendance	
Gordon Hunt (GH)	Kimberly Williams (KW)
Victoria Underwood (VU)	
Apologies	
Marian McMorland (MM)	

1. Declaration of Interests

Agenda Item: 1 | Paper No: Verbal | Lead: KT

There were no updates to the declarations of interest.

2. Welcome and Apologies

Agenda Item: 2 | Paper No: Verbal | Lead: KT

The Chair welcomed everyone, and specifically JH to her first CDN Board meeting. Attendance was noted as above.

3. For Discussion/Agreement

3.1 Agenda Item 3 | Paper No: CDN/111224/1 | Minutes of Last Meeting | Lead: KT

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11 December 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.

3.1.1 Agenda Item 3 | Paper No: CDN/111224 | Rolling Action Points | Lead: KT

The Board noted the rolling action points and verbal updates.

3.1.2 Agenda Item 3 | Paper No: Verbal | Matters Arising | Lead: KT

There were no matters arising.

4. Standing Items

4.1 Agenda Item: 4 | Paper No: Verbal | Lead: KT (Chair's Report)

KT provided his Chairs report

The Chair thanked each of the Board members for their time and input to their 1:1 sessions, including their input to and feedback on the CEOs objectives. These will be reviewed later in the year.

The Chair advised the Board that following a competitive recruitment process and interview Jen Henderson has been appointed to the Board. The Chair and Board members welcomed Jen to her first Board meeting. It was confirmed that Colin McMurray remains Chair of the Audit Committee, whilst also taking up the new role of Vice-Chair of the Board. Louise Burnett is confirmed as Chair of the newly established Remunerations and Nominations Committee.

The Chair informed the Board of continuing positive engagement with Colleges Scotland's Chair and Chief Executive which included participation in a series of regular joint Chairs and CEO meetings.

4.2 Agenda Item: 4 | Paper No: CDN/260325/2 | Lead: MH (CEO's Report)

MH provided an overview of key areas of strategic activity in the CEO's Report.

MH welcomed SFC's engagement with the CDN Senior team in relation to the SFC Review process and report and for their engagement with the Board, and particularly their attendance at the Board's Strategic Session today. The CEO confirmed that positive discussions continue to take place with SFC with regards to the 2025/26 funding agreement. It is likely that funding will continue to be provided to support CDN's activities in support of its strategic priorities in relation to enhancement, improvement and staff and college board development, with a developing focus on CDNs role in the tertiary quality framework system.

MH noted that CDN and Colleges Scotland senior teams are now meeting regularly on a face-to-face basis as well as Marie's regular meetings with Colleges Scotland CEO.

Partnership work with CS and other agency partners continues, eg.in relation to the College Digital Strategy roll out where CDN are playing a critical enabling role in bringing partners together and undertaking research with practitioners to ascertain the scale and scope of requirements to inform a potential Digital Academy.

The Board asked about the Herald Awards extending their award criteria into FE. MH and GH confirmed that whilst it was recognised that colleges would take the opportunity to participate in the Herald Awards, the CDN College Awards are well established and play a particular, valued and crucial role in recognising the work and commitment of colleges, their staff and students. It was also confirmed that discussions have taken place with the Heralds organising team on potential reciprocal partnerships in the future.

A discussion took place around the definition of periods of sickness absence and the manageability of staff absence in an operating environment where there is a reduced staff complement. It was confirmed that staff capacity is being carefully monitored and alternative provision being made available as required. It was noted that the introduction of

new roles as part of the restructure has helped to manage capacity due to absence as staff are better able to pick up and cover activity.

The Board raised a query on the scheduled Health and Safety review. MH confirmed that CDN's HR advisors Croner are scheduled to undertake this review and that this would have a different scope given the organisations move to hybrid working.

5. Items for Discussion

5.1 Agenda Item: 5 | Paper No: CDN/260325/23| Lead: VU/GH (Strategic Dashboard)

GH provided an overview of the paper and an update on the evaluation/impact work.

It was noted by the Board that the dashboard shows the level of work being carried out by CDN and should be used to promote CDN and its scope of delivery to other partner agencies.

Action

- Going forward all activities marked 'amber' in the dashboard to have an explanatory note provided in the risks section of the dashboard.

5.2 Agenda Item: 5 | Paper No: Verbal | Lead: KT/MH (SFC Review)

KT advised that this slot on the agenda was provided for any comments following the morning session with SFC. A discussion took place on CDN's role vis a vis other partners agencies in relation to the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF) and the consequent requirements and funding in the 2025/26 SFC Funding Agreement. There were no further questions from Board members.

5.3 Agenda Item: 5 | Paper No: CDN/260325/4 | Lead: GH (Choose College Update)

GH provided an overview of the paper which the Board noted.

GH noted that Choose College is a campaign driven and owned by the CDN Marketing and Communications Network and whilst CDN support the facilitation of this campaign, this is not a CDN campaign.

5.4 Agenda Item: 5 | Paper No: CDN/260325/5 | Lead: KW (Finance Update)

KW provided an overview of the financial position for February 2025. The Board were asked to note the reduced income target from £322k to £138k, whilst recognising the aligned reduction in associated expenditure. It was noted that an anticipated additional c£16k of income is expected to be achieved from the Changing Learner programme. The originally forecast year end surplus of 75k remains the same. The total income for the year, including the Changing Learner income, is forecast to be £1,525k.

The Board discussed the update and raised the following:

- The variance relating to external speakers. KW noted that the costs were included in the original budget under other staffing, but the costs incurred in year now sit under external speakers.
- If it is possible to see what projects are making surplus/deficit. KW confirmed that all income and expenditure is accounted for per project and it was agreed that a project breakdown will be added to the finance Board papers going forward.

- The staffing cost ratio asking if CDN are planning for growth or looking for structural efficiency. MH noted that as per the agreed 'return to surplus plan' there was an immediate and urgent requirement to ensure operational efficiency in the first instance. Strategic growth and additional income would be likely to require additional staffing capacity and resource to achieve as the team are working at full capacity to deliver our current work.
- The £7k increase in core staffing forecast compared to the original budget. KW noted that the increase is due to an increase in two members of the team's salary during year.
- The dilapidation provision. KW confirmed this provision remains on the balance sheet as CDN have not yet received the final invoice from the University of Stirling.
- If CDN still plan to increase the 4.5 months of reserves to 6 months. KW and MH confirmed this is the plan but noted the need to ensure that reserves are managed effectively to ensure that funding is not subject to 'clawback'.

5.5 Agenda Item: 5 | Paper No: CDN/260325/6 | Lead: MH (Risk Register)

MH provided an overview of the paper. MH advised the Board that there have been positive movements within the Risk Register in relation to CDNs funding, relationships with partners and customers and our messaging this has been due to much hard work and relationship building by the team.

Board members noted that they like the summary sheet.

6. AOCB

There were no items discussed under AOCB.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place online on Wednesday 25 June 2025 from 1400 to 1600.

Signed_____ Date_____