

Draft Minute of Board Meeting held on Monday 27 April 2020

| Present | |
|--|---|
| Janie McCusker (Chair) | Caroline MacDonald |
| Alisdair Barron | Ed McGrachan |
| Dave Brown | Maureen McKenna |
| Paul Buchanan | Alastair Milloy |
| Moira Connolly | David Newall |
| Lesley Garrick | Ian Patrick |
| Clare Ireland | Jackie Russell |
| Karen Konkon | Aranka Szilassy |
| In Attendance | |
| Martin Boyle (Executive Director) | Paul Little (Principal CoGC) |
| Frances Curran (EIS FELA) | Wendy Odedina (Executive Assistant) |
| Penny Davis (Board Secretary) | Derek Smeall (Principal GKC) |
| Dylan Duff (Student President CoGC) | Jon Vincent (Principal GCC) |
| Jim Godfrey (Finance and Resources Director) | Amwulika Umeh (Co-opted Committee Member) |
| Breaa Keenan (Communications Lead) | |
| Apologies | |
| Michael Cullen | Charlie Montgomery |
| Chris Greenshields (Unison) | |

1. Introduction

Paper No: Verbal

1.1 Discussion

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting.

The Chair welcomed back Wendy Odedina from maternity leave and asked that thanks be recorded to Natalie Webster for her work in covering the Executive Assistant post.

The Chair informed members that the purpose of the Board meeting was to ensure business continuity during the immediate period in order to allow key functions to progress. She noted that recovery planning was actively ongoing with regards to the current COVID-19 crisis.

2. Apologies

Paper No: Verbal

2.1 Discussion

Apologies were received for Chris Greenshields.

Michael Cullen and Charlie Montgomery were not present at the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

Paper No: Verbal

3.1 Discussion

The Chair notified members that it is each Member's personal responsibility to indicate to the Chair at any time during the meeting if they have, or may be perceived as having, a conflict of interest under any item on the agenda.

- Assigned College Chairs and Principals declared an interest in item 11;
- Assigned College Chairs declared an interest to respective parts of item 9;
- The Board Secretary declared an interest in part of item 9.

4. Chair's Business

Verbal

4.1 Discussion

The Chair provided board members with an update on meetings she had undertaken since the last meeting with key internal and external stakeholders, including her engagement with Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council and Colleges Scotland on the national response to Covid-19.

5. Covid-19 Reports

Paper No: Verbal

5.1 Discussion

The three assigned college Principals provided the Board with an update from their respective colleges with regard developments and actions taken as a result of Covid-19 and the closing of college buildings. They outlined their support for students, staff and local communities; the significant financial implications on colleges; and challenges in planning for the next academic session.

The Board discussed the financial implications on the region to which the Finance and Resources Director noted that the analysis of Mid-Year Returns is underway in order to gather accurate information and understanding of the regional financial position. The Board also discussed the importance of mental health support and utilising resources effectively across the region.

The Executive Director provided an update noting the impressive response from the Glasgow region. He reinforced the statement from the Chair at the start of the meeting in ensuring that competent board business continues, and in particular that funding decisions are expedited, whilst also ensuring that GCRB remains agile and responsive to ongoing developments, engaging with key stakeholders at all levels.

The Student Presidents provided an update on the support they are offering students with drop-in video call sessions noting key issues emerging as concerns around assessments and digital poverty.

5.2 Decision

The Board **noted** the verbal reports.

It was **agreed** that the Executive Director should meet with Student Presidents to discuss how GCRB can support Student Associations at this time.

6. Minute of Board Meeting held on 27 January 2020

Paper No: BM3-A

6.1 Decision

The minute of the board meeting held on 27 January 2020 was **agreed** as an accurate record.

7. Matters Arising

Paper No: BM3-B

7.1 Discussion

Further to the last Board meeting and nominations received from board members, the Chair proposed Paul Buchanan as Vice Chair of the Board, and Moira Connolly as Senior Independent Member.

The Executive Director provided an update on the other matters arising from the previous meeting as outlined in the paper. He wished to highlight the success of the Big White Wall Project funded by GCRB through the Programme for Action.

7.2 Decision

The Board **endorsed** the appointments of Paul Buchanan as Vice Chair and Moria Connolly as Senior Independent Member.

The Board **noted** the report.

8. Risk Register

Paper No: BM3-C

8.1 Discussion

The Executive Director presented the risk register highlighting the inclusion of three additional risks: Covid-19; the fraud at City of Glasgow College; and an overarching risk relating to stress testing. He noted that the risk pertaining to learner outcomes had increased due to current circumstances.

The Board discussed the impact of social distancing upon college functions and how this may affect the physical community of colleges.

8.2 Decision

The Board:

- **considered** the risk register and summary of related activity from February 2020 to April 2020;
- **considered** the evaluation of the risks within the risk register;
- **considered** the mitigating actions;
- **agreed** to include more detail relating to the impact of Covid-19 on learning.

9. Recommendations from Nominations and Remuneration Committee

Paper No: BM3-D

9.1 Discussion

The Chair of the Nominations and Remuneration Committee outlined recommendations from the Committee firstly in relation to the extension of appointments of the assigned college chairs of Glasgow Clyde College and City of Glasgow College and secondly in relation to non-executive board member appointments at City of Glasgow College.

The Chair of the Committee then outlined the recommendation to recruit a climate change officer for a fixed term appointment. The Board discussed this recommendation and the benefits of pausing recruitment in light of recent developments arising from the COVID-19 crisis. Recognising climate change as an existential crisis, the Board acknowledged the importance of the post however accepted the rationale for timing to be delayed should the role need to be adapted as a result of current developments.

The Committee's recommendation relating to the increase of the Board Secretary's working hours was taken at the end of the meeting when the Board Secretary would leave the meeting.

The Committee Chair finally asked the Board to note the post-meeting approval of the Glasgow Kelvin College voluntary severance scheme business case. The representative in attendance on behalf of EIS requested that this decision be re-considered by GCRB noting opposition from EIS representatives. The Chair of the Board explained that GCRB's role is to ensure due process, as opposed to approving the rationale, and that the Committee, who have authority to approve voluntary severance schemes, explored the process in depth and were content that a proper process had been followed. The Chair of Glasgow Kelvin College noted that at a local college level, he had received no opposition from EIS members who are in attendance at the college board meetings and no representation had been made to withdraw the scheme. He also reinforced that the scheme is voluntary.

9.2 Decision

The Board:

- **Agreed** to delegate authority to a Panel comprising the Board Chair, Chair of Nominations & Remuneration Committee and Assigned College Senior Independent

Member to approve the extension, as appropriate, of Assigned College Chair appointments.

- **Agreed** to delegate authority to the Nominations & Remuneration Committee to approve, by correspondence if necessary, and as appropriate, the extension of City of Glasgow College Non-Executive Member appointments, subject to receipt of information still awaited.
- **Approved in principle** the recruitment of a Climate Change Officer for a fixed term appointment however **agreed** that the recruitment should be delayed for a period of approximately 6 months. The Board **requested** the Nominations and Remuneration Committee consider the detail and make further recommendations to the Board as appropriate.
- **Noted** the post-meeting approval of the Glasgow Kelvin College voluntary severance scheme business case.

10. Regional Outcome Agreement 2020-21

Paper No: BM3-E

10.1 Discussion

The Executive Director presented that Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) for 2020-21 noting that it had been considered in detail at the Performance and Resources Committee. He explained that the ROA was written in advance of the COVID-19 and whilst it is presented as such, a statement has been added to explain that its achievement will be affected by current circumstances and it will require ongoing review and adjustment.

10.2 Decision

The Board **agreed** that a statement regarding the effects of COVID-19 should be made more prominent in the Regional Outcome Agreement 2020-21.

The Board wished to **note** their appreciation of the work gone into the Regional Outcome Agreement and the clear aspirations that it outlines.

11. Allocation of Funding 2020-21

Paper No: BM3-F

11.1 Discussion

The Finance and Resources Director presented the indicative funding allocations for 2020-21 noting that the matter had also been considered by the Performance and Resources Committee. He explained that the final allocation will be submitted to the June meeting of the Board for approval.

The Board discussed the immediate and long term financial pressures facing the colleges and the region, both as a result of the COVID-19 situation and those that existed before. They

discussed the need to address these challenges early and to need to consider new ways of working and mechanisms to enable change.

The Board also discussed the Chair of the Board may wish to write to the Minister for Higher and Further Education, at an appropriate time and when more information is available, raising awareness of Glasgow's challenges however also offering solutions to address these. The Principal of City of Glasgow College offered to work with the GCRB Chair and Executive Director on the proposed letter.

11.2 Decision

The Board:

- **Noted** the Indicative Funding Allocations for 2020-21 issued by the SFC;
- **Requested** that the Performance & Resources Committee consider the outstanding matters at its next meeting;
- **Requested** that the final allocations for 2020-21 are considered by the Board at its next meeting;
- **Requested** that the Chair of the Board consider writing to Ministers at an appropriate time, outlining challenges and solutions, on behalf of the Glasgow region.

12. Board Annual Self-Evaluation Report 2019-20

Paper No: BM3-G

12.1 Discussion

The Board Secretary provided an overview of the paper explaining that findings of the evaluation have helped to inform the subsequent paper on the agenda in relation to board development.

12.2 Decision

The Board **considered** and **approved** the report and **noted** that findings from the self-evaluation survey have informed the draft Development Plan 2020-21.

13. Board Development Plan 2020-21

Paper No: BM3-H

13.1 Discussion

The Board Secretary provided an overview of the paper which she highlighted included the plan for 20-21 and also a review of the previous year's progress (19-20).

She explained that the Nominations and Remuneration Committee review board development on an ongoing basis, noting that activities will very likely have to take place remotely in light of COVID-19 and social distancing.

13.2 Decision

The Board:

- **Considered** and **approved** the areas of development set out in the plan, for submission to the Scottish Funding Council and publication on the GCRB website.
- **Agreed** that the Nominations & Remuneration Committee should retain oversight of the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on development activity and, if necessary, consider options for holding key events remotely.

14. Committee Minutes

Paper No: BM3-I

14.1 Decision

The Board **noted** the minutes of the Committee meetings that had taken place since the last board meeting.

15. Communications Update

Paper No: BM3-J

15.1 Decision

The Board **noted** the past activity in respect of GCRB communications and the future plans.

16. Use of Delegated Authority

Paper No: BM3-K

16.1 Decision

The Board **noted** the report on use of delegated authority.

17. Long Term Agenda

Paper No: BM3-L

17.1 Decision

The Board **agreed** the long term agenda adding COVID-19 update to the next meeting.

18. Review of Disclosable Status

Paper No: Verbal

18.2 Decision

The Board Secretary confirmed the following papers as non-disclosable:

- BM3-C: Risk Register;
- BM3-D: Recommendations from N&R Committee;
- BM3-I: Audit Committee minutes;

Other papers noted as temporarily non-disclosable subject to board approval, were now deemed disclosable.

At this stage the Board Secretary left the meeting.

The Board then considered the recommendation from the Nominations and Remuneration Committee to increase the hours of the Board Secretary from 2 to 2.5 days per week, and this recommendation was **agreed** by the Board.

19. Date of Next Meeting

Paper No: Verbal

19.1 The date of the next meeting was **agreed** as Monday 15 June.