

Draft Minute of Board Meeting held on Monday 15 May 2023

Present	
Janie McCusker (Chair)	Sheila Meikle
Alisdair Barron	Alastair Milloy
Dave Brown	David Newall
Helyn Gould	Ian Patrick
Clare Ireland	Sakshi Sircar
Ed McGrachan	Paul Smart
Emma Leslie (items only)	Verity Watson (item 8 onwards)
In Attendance	
Martin Boyle (Executive Director)	Jill Montgomery (EIS FELA)
Penny Davis (Board Secretary)	Megan McLellan (Chair, GCRSE)
Jim Godfrey (Finance and Resources Director)	Paul Little (Principal CoGC)
Breea Keenan (Communications Lead)	Derek Smeall (Principal GKC)
Wendy Odedina (Executive Assistant)	Jon Vincent (Principal, GCC)
Apologies	
Des McNulty	Moira Connolly
Chris Bones	Chris Greenshields (Unison)

1. Introduction

Paper No: Verbal

1.1 Discussion

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting and thanked them for accommodating the change in date of the meeting due to the delay in the national funding announcement.

She welcomed Jill Montgomery, new EIS observer on the board, replacing Frances Curran.

The Chair noted the resignation of Sunita McKenna from her post as Student President at Glasgow Clyde College and therefore also a GCRB board member.

The Chair noted that an external speaker had been due to present to the board at this meeting however they advised that they could no longer attend due to illness.

2. Apologies

Paper No: Verbal

2.1 Discussion

Apologies were noted for Chris Greenshields, Des McNulty, Chris Bones and Moira Connolly.

3. Declarations of Interest

Paper No: Verbal

3.1 Discussion

The Chair notified members that it is each member's personal responsibility to indicate 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.

The assigned college Principals and Chairs declared an interest in the indicative funding allocation.

4. Chair's Business

Paper No: Verbal

4.1 Discussion

The Chair provided an update the internal and external meetings she had held since the last meeting of the board.

She noted with the regard to the regional review that she had written to the Chief Executive of the SFC requesting a timeline as per the decision at the last board meeting. She noted that she received a response to confirm that the SFC have made recommendation to the Minister and this is being considered as a high priority however there is no timetable available on next steps. The Chair confirmed that she has also written to the new Minister for FEHE to seek a meeting. She provided assurance to the board that she will continue to pursue the matter.

4.2 Decision

The Board noted the verbal report.

5. Executive Director's Business

Paper No: Verbal

5.1 Discussion

The Executive Director provided a verbal report on his key areas of work including engagement with SFC on the regional review, funding, estates and regional planning. He provided an update on a cross regional meeting with the wider Glasgow area colleges on economic regeneration and that this work will continue through the Principals with the Executive Director, led by Derek Smeall.

He wished to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the GCRB staff team through what continues to be a challenging period.

5.2 Decision

The board noted the verbal report.

6. Minute of Previous Meetings

Paper No: BM5-A

6.1 Decision

The minute of the meeting held on 30 January 2023 was **agreed** as an accurate record.

The board noted the decision by correspondence taken on 12 April with regard to appointments and extensions of board appointments on the three assigned college boards.

7. Matters Arising

Paper No: BM5-B

7.1 Discussion

The Executive Director presented the matters arising paper detailing progress and completion of previous actions.

7.2 Decision

The board **noted** progress against actions agreed at earlier meetings.

8. Delegated Decisions

Paper No: BM5-C

8.1 Discussion

The Executive Director presented the paper outlining the decision he had taken via the scheme of delegation, as per the agreed procedure.

8.2 Decision

The board noted the following decisions taken by the Executive Director:

- Additional funding for counsellors for the remainder of the financial year 2022-2023 of £136,000 split equally between the three Glasgow colleges.
- Additional funds for discretionary (student) funding to the Glasgow colleges for the Academic Year 2022-23, totalling £1,229,286 of additional discretionary funding to address the pressures arising from cost-of-living, and fuel poverty, pressures. Funds are allocated in proportion to colleges' share of core student support funds.
- Additional funds of £663,912 of funding for Young Persons Guarantee to each college in Glasgow for the period 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023.

9. Thriving Learners

Paper No: BM5-D

9.1 Discussion

In light of the external guest not being able to attend to present this report, the Executive Director provided a brief overview. He noted that GCRB continues to have mental health as one of its key priorities and has proposed making an allocation for counsellor support through the programme for action later on the agenda. He also outlined the work undertaken by non-executive board member Moira Connolly to seek to provide useful connections in this area.

Jon Vincent, as lead Principal within the sector for mental health, provided an update to the board on counsellor funding noting the extensive work undertaken to seek to confirm this with the Scottish Government. He noted that colleges are in the position where it is extremely challenging to maintain the level of service, which in itself does not meet the demand.

9.2 Decision

The board **considered** the report and its recommendations.

10. Regional Strategy

Paper No: BM5-E

10.1 Discussion

The Executive Director presented the paper following feedback from members at the last meeting of the board. He noted that the proposed strategy tries to be pragmatic and takes account of the context of the regional review. He noted that this strategy will remain a live document and will likely turn into a transition strategy pending the outcome of the regional review.

With regard to strategy trackers, the Executive Director noted that these are to be developed in due course and in line with the outcome of national reviews on skills and qualifications, both of which may have a significant impact. He confirmed that an operational plan will also be developed to sit beneath the strategy, once approved.

The board welcomed the document and noted the context within which it has been developed. They discussed tracking of performance and delivery, ownership of actions, and using non-executive board members as champions of relevant actions.

It was agreed to expand the position statement to further highlight the significance of the Glasgow region within the sector, and its need for investment.

10.2 Decision

The board **approved** the proposed *Glasgow Region Strategic Plan 2023* and its associated activity plan, acknowledging that it is:

- a live, internal document which will be updated as activity and priorities emerge; and

- a limited-time document which will likely be superseded by the impending outcome of the Glasgow region review, which is currently under consideration by Scottish Government.

The board **approved** progress to develop a new risk register, including a development workshop with internal auditors, and associated risk appetite development.

11 Risk Register

Paper No: BM5-F

11.1 Discussion

The Executive Director presented the risk register noting that it will be revised in the new academic session further to agreement of the new strategy under the previous item.

He spoke to risks one, seven and eight recommending that these remain at the highest level. He spoke to risk three, recommending that this is raised. He highlighted risk twelve as a risk to monitor with regard to the GCRB executive team and the uncertainty around the regional review potentially impacting GCRB's ability to deliver.

11.2 Decision

The Board **noted** the position of the current risk register and **approved** the recommended changes to the GCRB risk register.

12 Programme of Action

Paper No: BM5-G

12.1 Discussion

The Executive Director presented the proposed Programme of Action for 23-24 noting that this had been considered by the Performance and Resources Committee and recommended for approval. He noted that the intention is to safeguard projects that have a clear and direct benefit to students and noted that additional spend has been directed to support mental health counsellors in the assigned colleges.

12.2 Decision

The Board **noted** that this indicative Programme of Action 2023-24 was **endorsed and recommended for approval** by the GCRB Performance and Resources Committee of 15 March 2023.

The board **approved** the proposed approach to the Programme of Action 2023-24, subject to final budget allocation.

13. Draft GCRB Budget

Paper No: BM5-H

13.1 Discussion

The Finance and Resources Director presented the report noting that it flows from the previous report and takes into account the proposed Programme of Action for 2023-24.

He noted that the draft budget has also been considered by the Performance and Resources Committee and a final budget will be brought to the June meeting of the board in line with the final funding allocation.

13.2 Decision

The board **noted** that the indicative GCRB Budget for 2023-24 was considered by the Performance and Resources Committee on 15 March 2023 and **approved** the indicative GCRB Budget for 2023-24.

14. Indicative Funding 23-24

Paper No: BM5-I

14.1 Discussion

The Finance and Resources Director presented an overview of the report. He outlined the context of difficult financial position for the sector and the region, noting a deficit of £9.1M within the Glasgow college region, and that cost reductions are required. He noted the flat cash settlement, reduction in the volume target, and the rising costs as indicators that the sector is contracting.

With regard to the regional allocation of funding, he noted that the proposed split between the three assigned colleges is straightforward and follows the national allocation given the timescales in which this was received.

The board discussed the financial sustainability of the sector and impact on the skills infrastructure nationally. The board discussed measures being undertaken by the colleges to address the deficit including proposed compulsory redundancies at City of Glasgow College. They discussed the impact of this on students, regional planning, and received assurance that all other cost saving measures have been exhausted including cutting essential services to a bare minimum.

14.2 Decision

The board:

- **Noted** the financial context, and current challenges, facing the Glasgow college region in 2022-23.
- **Noted** the indicative funding allocations for 2023-24 issued by the Scottish Funding Council on Thursday, 13 April 2023.
- **Noted** the Scottish Government's decision to withdraw the promise of £26 million transition funding to the college sector for 2023-24.

- **Agreed** the indicative regional funding allocations for 2023-24.
- **Requested** that the final funding allocations for 2023-24 are considered at the next meeting of the Performance and Resources Committee

15. Revised Board Regulations

Paper No: BM5-J

15.1 Discussion

The Board Secretary presented the revised board regulations, to be known as the standing orders, further to the decision at the last meeting of the board to set up a short life working group to review these.

She summarised the proposed changes for board approval.

15.2 Decision

The board **considered** and **approved** the Standing Orders.

16. Board Evaluation

Paper No: BM5-K

16.1 Discussion

The Board Secretary presented the outcome of the board evaluation and questionnaire that had been completed by board members, noting the low response rate.

She summarised the responses and main themes which primarily related to the regional review and clarifying the respective roles and responsibilities of GCRB and the assigned colleges.

16.2 Decision

The board **considered** and **approved** the report and **noted** that findings from the self-evaluation survey have informed the draft Development Plan 2022-23.

17. Board Development Plan 2022-23 – Year End Report

Paper No: BM5-L

17.1 Discussion

The Board Secretary presented the report which she noted had also been considered by the Nominations and Remuneration Committee. She summarised the progress of achieving actions within the development plan for 2022-23 noting the impact of the regional review as an evident factor in this.

She confirmed that there were no compliance risks associated with the report.

17.2 Decision

The board **noted** the report.

18. Draft Board Development Plan 2023-24

Paper No: BM5-M

18.1 Discussion

The Board Secretary presented the draft board development plan for 2023-24 which she noted is required under the code of good governance. She noted that pending the outcome of the regional review process it may be appropriate to revisit this plan. In that light, she noted that the report has been split into two sections; the first containing actions that can be taken forward as usual, and a second section which is dependent on the review process.

18.2 Decision

The board **approved** the format and content of the development plan 23-24 with a view to revisiting the plan once regional governance structures are determined.

It was **agreed** that the Board Chair, Board Secretary and Executive Director should review section two and bring a proposal to the Nominations and Remuneration Committee, who have oversight of the development plan, on whether these items should be suspended or removed entirely.

19. Committee Terms of Reference

Paper No: BM5-N

19.1 Discussion

The Board Secretary presented proposed changes to the terms of reference for the Nominations and Remuneration Committee and Performance and Resources Committee as agreed by both committees at their last meetings.

19.2 Decision

The board **approved** the changes to the terms of reference for the Nominations and Remuneration Committee and Performance and Resources Committee.

20. GCRSE Update

Paper No: Verbal

20.1 Discussion

The Chair of the GCRSE noted the challenging year and context that the student presidents have been working within, meaning that regional work has not progressed as well as they would have initially hoped, as they focussed on internal matters. She encouraged as much support as possible for future student presidents in the hopes that the regional perspective can improve in the future.

20.2 Decision

The board **noted** the verbal report.

21. Communications Update

Paper No: BM5-O

21.1 Discussion

The Board **noted** the report.

22. Use of Delegated Authority

Paper No: BM5-P

22.1 Discussion

The Board **noted** the report.

23. Committee Matters

Paper No: BM5-Q, R, S, T

23.1 Discussion

The Board **noted** the draft minutes from committees and the committee annual reports.

24. Long Term Agenda

Paper No: BM5-U

24.1 Discussion

The Board **agreed** the long-term agenda.

25. Review of Disclosable Status

Paper No: Verbal

25.1 Discussion

The board secretary confirmed the disclosable status of the papers noting papers E, F, I, K, L, M, Q and T as non-disclosable.

26. Date of Next Meeting

Paper No: Verbal

26.1 Discussion

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 19 June 2023.

