

Draft Minute of Board Meeting held on Monday 28 October 2024

Present	
Janie McCusker (Chair)	Alastair Milloy
Dave Anderson	Jill Montgomery
Caroline Bysh	David Newall
Moirra Connolly	Darren Pirie
Clare Ireland	Andria Reid
Ciara McCarthy	Sakshi Sircar
Sean McGovern	Paul Smart
Ed McGrachan	Martina Tuskova
Des McNulty (item 7 onwards)	Verity Watson
In Attendance	
Penny Davis (Board Secretary)	Paul Little (Principal CoGC)
Jim Godfrey (Finance and Resources Director)	Derek Smeall (Principal GKC)
Breea Keenan (Communications Lead)	Jon Vincent (Principal, GCC)
Wendy Odedina (Head of Service)	Abbie Todd (Interpreter)
	Andy Gardiner (Interpreter)
Apologies	
Sheila Meikle	Chantel McCallum (GCRSE Chair)
Helyn Gould	Ian Patrick

1. Introduction

Paper No: Verbal

1.1 Discussion

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting and thanked Glasgow Clyde College for hosting the meeting.

The Chair welcomed in particular returning student board member Martina Tuskova, and new student board member Ciara McCarthy. She noted that Chantell McCallum, Student President at Glasgow Kelvin College will be chair of the Glasgow Colleges Regional Student Executive (GCRSE), and also invited to every GCRB board meeting, however is unable to attend today's meeting.

The Chair also welcomed Abbie Todd and Andy Gardiner who were providing interpreting assistance for Ciara. She reminded all members to raise their hand if they wish to ask a question or make an intervention, and keep statements succinct. She also reminded members to review the guide to working with interpreters that was sent out via email.

The Chair confirmed that items for information are taken as read unless any members wishes to raise a particular point (items 11-13).

2. Apologies

Paper No: Verbal

2.1 Discussion

Apologies were noted for Sheila Meikle, Helyn Gould, Ian Patrick and Chantell McCallum.

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.

4 Chair's Business

Paper No: Verbal

4.1 Discussion

The Chair wished to note her thanks to the GCRB team who have taken on additional responsibilities since the departure of the Executive Director at the end of July 2024.

She provided an overview of meetings she had attended since the last meeting of the board, and noted that she would provide a fuller update on meetings with the Scottish Government regarding regional reform under item 8 on the agenda.

The Chair sought board approval on two matters:

- to agree the continuation of the co-opted member on Performance and Resources Committee, Anwulika Umeh, for up to one year; and
- to confirm the appointments of Ciara McCarthy and Martina Tuskova to the Board as per email communication and to approve committee membership of Martina Tuskova to the Performance and Resources Committee and Ciara McCarthy to the Nominations and Remuneration Committee.

4.2 Decision

The board **agreed** the two decisions brought forward by the Chair regarding student appointments and the co-opted member.

5 Minute of Meeting of 10 June 2024

Paper No: BM1-A

5.1 Decision

The minute of the meeting held on 10 June 2024 was **agreed** as an accurate record. The Chair confirmed for the record the two decisions by correspondence taken by the board since its last meeting as follows:

- decision by correspondence taken on 1 August 2024 regarding executive leadership arrangements.
- decision by correspondence taken in September 2024 to confirm the board's response to the Scottish Government consultation on regional strategic bodies.

6 Matters Arising

Paper No: BM41-B

6.1 Discussion

The Board Secretary presented the matters arising paper detailing progress and completion of previous actions. With regard to the informal meeting of board members on 16 September, it was confirmed that a minute was not taken at this meeting, as it was an update meeting, and no decisions were taken.

6.2 Decision

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

With regard to the short life working group, the Chair **noted** that she would follow this up with the Interim Chief Officer, following formal appointment.

7. Future of the College Sector

Paper No: BM1-C

7.1 Discussion

The Finance and Resource Director noted the two reports that had been provided to members which look to the future of the college sector regionally and nationally. He noted that these were provided for information and awareness as follows:

- OECD Report on Future Proofing the Skills System in the Glasgow City Region
- Audit Scotland Report on Scotland's Colleges

The board had a full and wider ranging discussion on the recommendations of the OECD report and received input from members and attendees who had been involved in discussions on the potential to take forward the recommendations. The board discussed regional structures, increased collaboration and the need for coordinated skills planning.

The board also discussed the Audit Scotland report and registered the statements that the college sector is unsustainable with the current level of funding. It was discussed that change is long overdue and action is needed urgently from the SFC and Scottish Government.

7.2 Decision

It was **agreed** that the Chair would meet with the college Chairs and Principals and Interim Chief Officer (following formal appointment) and agree the contents of a letter to the Minister, to be signed by all four Chairs. Suggested themes for the letter included advocating for the return of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund, to reduce inflexibilities and

simplify current systems, and to revise the funding model which currently disadvantages Glasgow.

It was **agreed** it may be helpful to invite Kevin Rush to a future meeting with College Chairs and Principals if purposeful, and this would be agreed outside of the board meeting.

8. Reform of Glasgow Regional Strategic Body

Paper No: Verbal (non-disclosable)

8.1 Discussion

The Chair informed members of her meeting with Scottish Government officials confirming 24 responses to the consultation on regional strategic bodies. She noted that the Minister's stated preferred option is to dissolve the RSB, however other options will be presented to him, and no final decisions have been taken. She noted that feedback is the Minister is keen to make an announcement sooner rather than later however no definite timescales were provided.

The Chair noted that she sought assurances about transition planning, noting the GCRB team had begun scenario planning with SFC regarding the practical dissolution of GCRB as an organisation, and discussing timing implications, particularly around the annual accounts process.

She finally noted that she received confirmation that she will be informed of the decision before it is made public in order to tell staff members who will be directly affected.

8.2 Decision

The board **noted** the verbal update.

9. Recommendations from Nominations and Remuneration Committee

Paper No: BM1-D

9.1 Discussion

The Board Secretary provided an overview of the paper with two recommendations, the first pertaining to the appointment of an Interim Chief Officer and the second regarding the teaching staff board member position.

Regarding the Interim Chief Officer, the Board Secretary outlined the process, proposed salary, and recommended candidate for the role. She noted that the role description was included as an annex to the paper which outlined the differences in this role from that of Executive Director.

Two members raised a query regarding the closed recruitment process and the potential perception that this was not transparent. The Chair explained the rationale for this, noted that this was discussed in depth at the Nominations and Remuneration Committee, and confirmed that she had written confirmation from SFC that it was appropriate in the specific circumstances, and that SFC had also agreed the role description. Members of the Nominations and Remuneration Committee also spoke to provide context on their recommendation.

Regarding the teaching staff board member position the Board Secretary noted the recommendation of the committee to defer the election process to appoint a new teaching staff member until an announcement has been made on GCRB's future. Such an announcement is expected imminently and the Committee proposed that the current teaching staff member should be invited as an observer to the January board meeting.

The board heard representation from members and attendees that they would prefer that an election takes place sooner, and it can be made clear in the documentation that the future of the board is unknown.

9.2 Decision

The Board agreed:

- the appointment of Alan Sherry as Interim Chief Officer of GCRB on a 0.4 FTE basis at a salary of £99,500 pro rata, commencing 1 November 2024 with a review date of 31 March 2025. Jill Montgomery dissented from the decision on basis of the process and the recommended candidate.
- to initiate the process to elect a new Teaching Staff Board Member.

10 Risk Register

Paper No: BM1-E

10.1 Discussion

The Finance and Resources Director presented the risk register and spoke to risks 1-5 and risk 7 suggested these are maintained at current levels.

Members discussed the host of challenges that the region and sector face and the expectation that the further challenges lie ahead. They noted that colleges have tried to contain the crisis as best they can, however it is clear that the system is unsustainable, and risks are becoming intolerable.

10.2 Decision

The board **agreed** to increase risk 1 to the highest level of risk, 5x5. All other risks were maintained.

The board **agreed** that that Chair should consult with the Chairs and Principals group if the points raised around risk would help strengthen the letter to Minister raised under item 7.

11. Communications Update

Paper No: BM1-F

11.1 Discussion

The Board **noted** the report.

12. Use of Delegated Authority

Paper No: BM1-G

12.1 Discussion

The Board **noted** the report.

13. Committee Matters

Paper No: BM1-H, I, J, K

13.1 Discussion

The Board **noted** the draft minutes from committees.

14. Long Term Agenda

Paper No: BM1-L

14.1 Discussion

The Board **agreed** the long-term agenda noting that this is also subject to change depending on the outcome of the consultation on the future of GCRB.

15. Review of Disclosable Status

Paper No: Verbal

15.1 Discussion

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

- BM1-D: Recommendations from N&R Committee
- BM1-J and BM1-K Minutes of N&R Committee
- Verbal discussion on agenda item 8

16. Date of Next Meeting

Paper No: Verbal

16.1 Discussion

The date of the next planned meeting was confirmed as Monday 27 January 2025. The Chair noted that an earlier meeting may be required should there be a Ministerial announcement in advance of this date, and she would seek to provide as much notice as possible.