

Board Meeting

Date of Meeting	Monday 6 October 2014
Paper Title	GCRB Progress Report
Agenda Item	9
Paper Number	BM3-G
Responsible Officer	Julia Henderson, Advisor to the Board
Status	Disclosable
Action	For Information

1. Report Purpose

- 1.1 To update the Board on progress made since its last meeting, which is not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The report is for information.

3. Appointment of members to the Board

- 3.1 At their meeting on 11 July 2014 the Nominations and Remuneration Committee agreed that the Board should seek to recruit an additional non-executive board member with financial expertise who would be in a position to chair the Audit Committee. This vacancy was advertised in the press, through the professional accountancy bodies, the public appointments website and various other online resources. Unfortunately we received an insufficient response from people who met the minimum criteria. We are currently considering our options.

4. Financial Memorandum between Regional Strategic Bodies and Assigned Colleges

- 4.1 It was reported at the last Board meeting that the Financial Memorandum (FM), which is currently being drafted by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), was due for imminent release and the Board gave authority to the Chair to agree the memorandum and instructed the Advisor to the Board to facilitate and coordinate the agreement process. However, at the time of writing the FM has not been released. The SFC has indicated that it would wish the FM to be agreed by the end of November 2014 but as time passes this date seems to be unrealistic.

5. Fundable Body Status

- 5.1** As the Board is aware the SFC's Accountable Officer (Laurence Howells, CEO) must satisfy himself that the Board has in place robust systems of governance and accountability before responsibility for funding can be passed to the Board. The main focus of the criteria is the practical aspects of the Board's governance structure and the key supporting functions (planning, financial control and risk management). The criteria cannot be fully applied and assessed until the Board and its operational support is established and has been up and running for a period of time. We have already passed SFC all governance documents which have been approved by the Board to date and continue to add to the evidence on an on-going basis. The Advisor to the Board will continue to work with SFC to ensure that momentum is maintained and that all necessary steps are taken to ensure that the process is expedited. The SFC's current projected timeframe for completion is end March 2015.

6. Finance and Funding Project

- 6.1** The Board asked the Advisor to the Board to work with the SFC's Finance Director to produce a project specification and project plan for this project. This was approved at the Nominations and Remuneration Committee and the project is underway. The project outcome will be the design of financial, funding and performance reporting systems. The terms of the project stipulate that the solution devised must provide the Board with good quality, accurate and appropriate information to enable it to fulfil its statutory responsibilities and comply with principles of good governance. The SFC's Finance Director is leading the project and ultimately responsible to the Chair of the Board, though day- to-day liaison and hands on management is being carried out by the Advisor to the Board. The project will report to the December Board Meeting with a projected completion date in December 2014.

7. Effective Communications and Relationships Framework

- 7.1** A meeting was held with the Advisor to the Board, College Principals and the Glasgow Colleges' Strategic Partnership (GCSP) Development Co-ordinator on 4 September. There is an amount of work still to be done before this matter can be usefully reported back to the Board.

8. UCAS Progress/Glasgow Application and Support System

- 8.1** With the approval of the Board, an exploratory session has been arranged with UCAS Progress for 3 October with a range of attendees from across the colleges, Glasgow City Council Education Department and Skills Development Scotland. The session has been jointly planned by GCRB staff and college staff. The second half of the session will be an internal workshop to agree priorities and next steps for the Glasgow Region and partners. A verbal update can be provided at the Board meeting.

9. Risk Analysis

- 9.1** The risk of not having an FM in place remain, as identified in the report to the Board in May on establishment (BM1-A.) - *“The need for clarity in relation to the accountabilities and relationships to be governed by the Financial Memorandum to ensure that the Board has clarity in relation to its relationships with SFC and the assigned colleges. The risk in not having clarity is that the Board is hindered in the proper and effective fulfilment of its governance responsibilities”.*
- 9.2** However, the good progress made so far in the Finance and Funding Project starts to address the Board’s need for reliable data and systems in order to monitor the performance of the assigned colleges.
- 9.3** There is a risk to the Board in not securing at least one member with an accountancy/ financial qualification to chair the Audit Committee. This risk is being actively mitigated through the exploration of other methods of recruitment.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1** Contained within the body of the report.

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1** There will be cost implications for the further Board member recruitment exercise required.