

## Board Meeting

Date of Meeting	Monday 26 October 2020
Paper Title	SFC Review Update
Agenda Item	11
Paper Number	BM2-E
Responsible Officer	Martin Boyle, Executive Director
Recommended Status	Disclosable
Action	For Decision

### 1. Report Purpose

- 1.1. To update the board on the current position with the *SFC Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability*, the *SFC Review of Regional Strategic Bodies* and to consider GCRB's options for further strategic engagement and planning.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the board **note** the content of Scottish Funding Council's first-phase report into the findings of the *SFC Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability (annex A)*;
- 2.2. That the board **note** the content of the Scottish Funding Council's *Review of Regional Strategic Bodies Glasgow Region* report (annex B);
- 2.3. That the board **agree** to hold a single-item additional board meeting on Monday 9 November 2020 to more fully consider and plan based on the reviews.

### 3. Report

- 3.1. Scottish Funding Council initiated a review of Scotland's three Regional Strategic Bodies in 2019, seeking to assess GCRB's effectiveness in meeting its core statutory duties and wider aims of regionalisation. Publication of the reviews was held back until autumn 2020 as the aims of the review became interlinked with report into the broader Scotland-wide tertiary education systems.
- 3.2. As confirmed to board on Monday 15 June 2020, the Minister for Further and Higher Education provided an update on 4 June 2020 in his letter to Mike Cantlay, Chair of the Scottish Funding Council, *entitled SFC Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability*.
- 3.3. In this letter, the Minister focused on the 'recovery' and 'renewal' stages of the Covid-19 response, emphasising the role of the education sector in contributing to 'the regrowth and renewal of Scotland's prosperity'. This letter was a significant indicator of the requirement for sectoral change, with the Minister stating: "It is clear to us all that existing models of funding, governance, collaboration and delivery will need to shift in order to meet new challenges and exploit new opportunities."

- 3.4.** The Minister charged the Scottish Funding Council with leading this process of “securing coherent provision by post-16 education bodies, and the undertaking of research in these changing times. We expect this will cover future provision, delivery, outcomes and targets, funding models and support for research activity across the college and university sector in Scotland.”
- 3.5.** The review was directed to cover the following:
- consider how best to achieve coherence in the further and higher education sectors;
  - sector should be fit for purpose to address the outcomes;
  - the changes needed to existing funding, operations, and accountability frameworks in order to respond effectively to these new challenges and opportunities; and
  - to provide advice, where appropriate, to Scottish Ministers on relevant changes to policy, funding and accountability frameworks for tertiary education and research in Scotland.
- 3.6.** Given the significant implications to the sector and region, GCRB continues to engage with, and support, the review, and maintain our offer of additional support to both Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council. Since the previous board meeting, GCRB, via its Executive Director, has a seat on one of the advisory groups working directly with SFC on the report representing Regional Strategic Bodies. In addition, the Executive Director continues to meet regularly with SFC colleagues and attend the Colleges Scotland College Principals’ Group where the review is regularly discussed and updates provided.
- 3.7.** We are now able to present to board the *Review of Regional Strategic Bodies* report into the Glasgow region, as well as the phase-one findings of the review.
- 3.8. Review of Regional Strategic Bodies**
- 3.9.** The review provides a historical background narrative on the creation and development of the Glasgow RSB, an overview of the progress made, and provides a significantly positive endorsement of the activity of the RSB in delivering its role.
- 3.10.** The report provides core ‘improvement actions’ for consideration of the board, and it is recommended that these recommendations as well as the recommendations of the broader sector review provide the framework for GCRB board activity and development of strategic direction.
- 3.11. SFC Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability**
- 3.12.** The key recommendations and findings of the RSB Review are brought forward into the broader sector-wide review to provide specific recommendations and key prompts for direction of travel in the Glasgow region.
- 3.13.** As above, it is recommended that the content of this review, in association with the content of the RSB Review provide the framework for activity as GCRB develops strategy for 2021 onwards.

3.14. Below are links to the full set of documents published by the SFC

- **Coherence and Sustainability: A review of Scotland's Colleges and Universities Phase One Report: Insights to Develop Further**

[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications\\_sfccp052020/Reviewof\\_Coh erent\\_Provision\\_and\\_Sustainability\\_Phaae\\_1\\_Report.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/Reviewof_Coh erent_Provision_and_Sustainability_Phaae_1_Report.pdf)

- **The Financial Sustainability of Colleges and Universities in Scotland – Review Report**

[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications\\_sfccp052020/Financial\\_Sus tainability\\_Analysis\\_report.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/Financial_Sus tainability_Analysis_report.pdf)

- **Review of Regional Strategic Bodies – Overview Report**

[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications\\_sfccp052020/Overarching\\_RSB\\_Review\\_report.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/Overarching_RSB_Review_report.pdf)

- **Review of Regional Strategic Bodies – Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board**

[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications\\_sfccp052020/GCRB\\_RSB\\_R eview\\_report.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/GCRB_RSB_R eview_report.pdf)

- **Review of Regional Strategic Bodies – Lanarkshire Board**

[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications\\_sfccp052020/Lanarkshire\\_RSB\\_Review\\_report.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/Lanarkshire_RSB_Review_report.pdf)

- **Review of Regional Strategic Bodies – University of Highlands and Islands**

[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications\\_sfccp052020/UHI\\_RSB\\_Rev iew\\_report.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/UHI_RSB_Rev iew_report.pdf)

- **International Benchmarking by Delivery Associates**

[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications\\_sfccp052020/Scottish\\_Fun ding\\_Council\\_-\\_Benchmarking.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/Scottish_Fun ding_Council_-_Benchmarking.pdf)

- **Context to support the Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability – Phase 1 Report**

[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications\\_sfccp052020/Context\\_and\\_Evidence\\_to\\_Review.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/Context_and_Evidence_to_Review.pdf)

- **Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework**

[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications\\_sfccp052020/Scottish\\_Cred it\\_and\\_Qualifications\\_Framework.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/Scottish_Cred it_and_Qualifications_Framework.pdf)

#### **4. Risk Analysis**

**4.1** There is significant risk across the region posed by the Covid-19 crisis, as well as significant financial implications associated with the positions outlined in both reports. The interim letter and letter to SFC outline this and it is reflected in GCRB's current Risk Register.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

**5.1.** There are no specific legal implications at this time beyond those highlighted in reports.

#### **6. Resource Implications**

**6.1.** There is a risk that delays or changes in the communication and provision of resources will have a material impact on the ability of the region to deliver.

#### **7. Equalities Implications**

**7.1.** There are no specific equalities implications at this time.

#### **8. Strategic Implications**

**8.1** There is a risk that current strategic goals will be impacted by the crisis, and that future strategic work will be delayed. There are broader strategic implications associated with the content of both reports.