

Board Meeting

Date of Meeting	Monday 15 June 2020
Paper Title	Communications Update (May and June 2020)
Agenda Item	15
Paper Number	BM4-L
Responsible Officer	Breea Keenan, GCRB Marketing and Communications Lead
Status	Disclosable
Action	For Noting

1. Report Purpose

- 1.1** To provide an update in respect of GCRB communications and progress against GCRB's communications strategy, as presented at the October 2019 Board Meeting.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Board is asked to **note** the past activity in respect of GCRB communications and future plans.

3. Communications Activity

- 3.1** In April- June 2020, communications activity continues to focus on the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting key information, positive stories and successful regional and collaborative work, including:

- Chair's Briefings prepared and issued to Board members
- Ebulletin update issued to highlight GCRB's continued project work around live mental health sessions during lockdown
- Communications briefings and updates with three Glasgow colleges and stakeholders to monitor strategic communications positioning, messages and press coverage.
- Social media updates from GCRB, sharing key college and stakeholder information as situation evolves.

3.2 Digital update

As part of our Communications Strategy, we committed to highlighting stories of progress and success, showing a clear line of sight from policy to people and showing positive impact and value for money generated by regional coherence and collaboration.

- GCRB took part in relevant social media campaigns and activities. During Mental Health Awareness Week (18-24 May), videos featuring advice from our mental

health partners Charlie Waller Memorial Trust were published each day on Twitter with advice around topics including managing self, self care and remote working. The initiative was also highlighted on GCRB's LinkedIn page.

- Graphics refresh carried out on social media and we continue to increase our presence and grow our social media audience. In the last 28 days alone (May 2020), we have:
 - Increased our following and no of Tweets issues and shared
 - Tweets impressions (no of times a Tweet shows on someone's timeline) has increased to 9,123, which is an increase of 144.1%
 - GCRB profile visits have increased by 107.4%

3.3 E-bulletins issued include:

- [collaborative work](#) across the region was issued in April
- [live mental health sessions](#) for Glasgow college students was issued in May
- [laptops for care-experienced students](#) in lockdown was issued in June.

3.4 Website

- GCRB website is due to be upgraded as part of a planned series of updates with City of Glasgow College's IT team. This will take place over the summer months and planning is underway with regards to features and content.
- Our current website's home page has been updated to present our latest company news and highlight our successes:
 - The homepage of GCRB's website has been updated to include a news section, highlighting our news stories in chronological order
 - Our Twitter widget has been placed prominently on the front page, showing live feed details shared by GCRB
 - A new Spotlight section now features on the landing page, giving us space to promote GCRB project work. This section is currently populated with our Action for Children project video, featuring care-experienced students, college and support staff and the First Minister.
 - The news section has been updated with our most recent statements, news stories and staff newsletters

4. Strategic documents and reports

Finalising GCRB's Regional Outcome Agreement for 2020-2021.

5. News and media

- Glasgow colleges are highlighted in a national [Times Educational Supplement](#) (TES) article about how colleges are supporting mental health in lockdown.

- We worked with Action for Children on a press release on laptop funding for care-experienced students. The press release was issued to the media in early June and, to date, has been featured in the Glasgow Times. Sandra White MSP for the Glasgow Kelvin region highlighted the initiative in the Scottish Parliament. The Motion is included below:

Scottish Parliament

1. Motions

S5M-21966 Sandra White: Glasgow College's Regional Board, STAY and Action for Children Support Care-experienced Students—That the Parliament welcomes the action taken by Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board (GCRB) in its allocation £5,000 of regional funding to support students as part of its collaborative STAY project with Action for Children, which works across Glasgow's three colleges and aims to improve outcomes for care-experienced young people attending college; notes that care-experienced college students in Glasgow have received brand new laptops during lockdown to assist them in completing their current college year and future studies; further notes that STAY support workers have continued to offer emotional and practical support during the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdown, delivering parcels containing toiletries and food items to students; acknowledges the importance of the support offered by GCRB, STAY and Action for Children, and commends their actions during these unprecedented times. Supported by: David Torrance*, James Dornan*, Stuart McMillan*, Emma Harper*, Stewart Stevenson*, Fulton MacGregor*

6. Relationships

- GCRB Marketing and Communications' Lead continues to develop relationships with key partners and stakeholders' communications managers, including three college teams, Action for Children, Colleges Scotland and other stakeholders.
- A quarterly communications meeting with GCRB and the three colleges' communications managers has been established. The group met on 30 April 2020 and are due to meet again in June 2020.

7. Future Activity

Communications activity for the following months will include developing plans in line with our Communications Strategy, including:

- Communications plans around the COVID-19 situation, keeping Board members informed via regular Chair's Briefings, highlighting key information from the sector/stakeholders and staff/students and sharing messaging via social media.
- Developing communications plans, where appropriate, around specific GCRB and partnership projects, such as mental health.
- Website content review and planning for new website in progress
- Continue to increased GCRB's social media focus and engagement to share key messages and highlight collaborative and regional success
- Quarterly communications meeting to be held via videoconferencing in June 2020
- Writing, publishing and distribution of next Staff Newsletter
- Communications planning for 2020/21

8. Risk Analysis, Equalities Implications, Legal Implications, Financial implications and Strategic Plan implications

8.1 There are no additional factors to note.