

## Item 12

### For Approval / Endorsement

#### Glasgow Kelvin College

#### Board of Management Meeting of 28 August 2024

#### Board of Management Self-Evaluation Outcomes 2023/24 and Process 2024/25

#### Report by Secretary to the Board of Management and Director of Corporate Services

### 1 Introduction and Purpose

The Board's governance arrangements require that the Board conducts an annual self-evaluation of the operation of its activities, its standing committees and of each individual Board member. This report provides members with feedback on the exercise undertaken during 2023/24 and provides an update on evaluation arrangements for 2024/25.

### 2 Board of Management/Standing Committees – Self-Evaluation 2023/24

- 2.1 The Board of Management undertook an evaluation process during 2023/24 which, although a slightly lighter touch than in previous years, fully met the requirements of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges. The Board agreed to a lighter touch approach as an Externally Facilitated Evaluation Exercise is scheduled to commence in November 2024 as part of the 2024/25 self-evaluation process. The 2023/24 exercise comprised of a questionnaire issued to all board members followed by a session to review and discuss the results and comments arising from the questionnaire. The discussion was held as part of a Board Self-Evaluation and Development session on 19 June 2024. The comments from the questionnaire were included in an update paper issued for that session which is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 2.2 The self-evaluations of the main standing committees comprised a member discussion at the conclusion of each of the last committee meetings of the academic term, together with a short questionnaire to gather feedback on the performance of the individual committee chairs. The notes of those discussions were circulated to the Committee members. There were no issues arising from the questionnaires and the comments have been passed to the Committee Chairs.
- 2.3 The feedback from the discussions held at the end of the Committee meetings was extremely positive as regards the standard of papers, the openness of the senior team and the quality of the discussions. A recommendation arising from those discussions was the suggestion that the Senior Team members should again be asked for their views on the value of the Board as part of the self-evaluation exercise. As a result, the Board Secretary invited the Principal and Vice Principals to provide an update on their view of the value of the Board and Committees. The main areas arising are reflected below.
- 2.4 The feedback from the Board, the Committees and the Senior Team evaluations were very positive and provides assurance on the Board's governance and decision-making arrangements. Board members' comments included the comprehensive nature and quality of the papers, the good level of debate and discussion, the inclusive environment where members felt able to speak up, and the very good support from the Secretariat. The Senior Team stated that the College Operating Plan. They noted that positive outcomes were recognised, and appreciate constructive challenges from the Board and the support for a milestone-based approach and that there was strong engagement and diverse input which aided discussions. Suggestions for changes/improvements included reducing paperwork, using varied information delivery methods and trying to reduce meeting length and information overload.

2.5 The Board and Committee evaluation sessions also identified areas for improvement or action and Board members are invited to consider the points set out below, and if appropriate agree that these are included in the Governance Action Plan to be progressed during the academic year:

- Meeting length and agenda management was discussed. It was acknowledged that several actions had been adopted following the evaluation exercise in 2022/23 and that these were positive steps. One member suggested that the Board should be aiming for a maximum of 2-hour meetings. Another comment related to the better use of PowerBI that echoed a suggestion from 2022/23, which is set out below:
  - *Wherever possible Power BI should be used during board meetings to reduce the need for board papers, particularly to provide key performance information. Power BI should be more accessible for Board members between meetings. It is recognised that this will involve another development session.*

The Board Self Evaluation and Development Session on 19 June 2024 included a further discussion on the use of PowerBI which was positively received by Board Members. It was agreed that the Executive would take action to allow board members access to the information discussed at the session via the Board Portal.

- It was suggested that it would be useful for new board members to have more awareness of industrial relations issues and how disputes function in the college sector, i.e. national bargaining etc. This could be addressed as part of the board member induction process. Assigning a board buddy or mentor was also suggested as a useful way to bring new board members up to speed more quickly.
- There was discussion around fostering a stronger sense of being part of a team and improving board relationships, which seemed to have weakened over the previous year. One comment stressed the importance of all board members, including staff and students, being comfortable expressing their views. It was agreed that team building was everyone's responsibility. One suggestion was that returning to more face-to-face meetings might assist this, although the general feedback from Committee members was that the current arrangements (2 x face to face and 2 x online) worked well. It was recognised that due to time and work pressures it was difficult to provide more opportunities to build board relationships and noted that events such as the board dinner had not been particularly well attended.
- It was suggested that it would be useful to undertake deep dives into the same key subject/issue across all Standing Committees to gather views and support from board members to drive actions forward.
- The amount of time spent on the annual self-evaluation process was discussed with one comment highlighting that board members might only manage to attend three out of four committee meetings in the year before they are required to set aside time as a committee to undertake the next annual evaluation. It was suggested that the College should commit to undertaking an EFER every 4 years and if agreed the self-assessment exercise should be undertaken every two years. A method or process could be agreed whereby an individual member could flag, through agreed channels, if they believed an ad hoc review was required.

2.6 It is proposed that members note the summary above and the feedback attached as an appendix to the report. If agreed the areas identified for action will be incorporated into the Board's Governance Action Plan (GAP) for consideration and development during the academic year. Updates on progress will be incorporated into the regular update reports on the GAP both to the Audit and Risk Committee as well as to the Board at its December and June meetings.

- 2.7 The annual review of the Board Chair was undertaken by the Senior Independent Member (SIM), John Hogg who led a private session of the Board, (in the Chair's absence), to discuss the performance of the Chair. The output from that session was circulated by the Board Secretary to members who had been unable to attend that session, and further comments were invited. The note of the session and all additional comments were forwarded to the SIM in advance of his feedback session with the Chair on 4 July 2024. This issue is covered in a separate report on this agenda.
- 2.8 Individual reviews were undertaken with each Board Member by the Board Chair. Any individual actions or development areas arising for members will be progressed by the members themselves or through the Secretary to the Board. Should there be any broader issues for consideration they will be fed into the GAP.

### **3 Annual Evaluation Exercise 2024/25**

- 3.1 Members may recall that under the Code of Good Governance Colleges are obliged to undertake an Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review every 3 years. However, Colleges may extend the timescale to every 5 years, provided the most recent review of the College has a positive outcome.
- 3.2 Following discussion and agreement by the Board in 2022/23 the Board Secretary advised David Archibald of Henderson Loggie that GKC intended to arrange its next Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review (EFER) in 2024/25 (four years after the last EFER) and asked if he would be willing to undertake the exercise. David Archibald, who acted as the Independent Assessor for the College's External Effectiveness Review in 2020/21 agreed to the request and advised that he will commence work on the Review in November 2024. This arrangement and timescale fully satisfy the requirements of the Code of Good Governance.

### **4. Resource Implications**

- 4.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

### **5. Equalities**

- 5.1 No adverse impacts on individuals with protected characteristics have been identified as a consequence of this report.

### **6. Risk and Assurance**

- 6.1 By taking the above action, the Board is mitigating the risk of failing to meet the highest standards of corporate governance. Assurance is provided through implementation of an effective self-evaluation process and associated reporting.

### **7. Data Protection**

- 7.1 There are no data protection implications arising as a consequence of the Board's evaluation processes.

### **8. Impact on Students**

- 8.1 There are no impact on student arising as a consequence of the Board's evaluation processes.

### **9. Environmental and Sustainability**

- 9.1 There are no environmental and sustainability implications arising as a consequence of the Board's evaluation processes.

## **10. Recommendations**

Members of the Board of Management are recommended to:

- i) note the contents of this report and the appendix.
- ii) endorse the findings from the Board evaluation and agree that the development actions identified through the self-evaluation exercise in 2023/24 be incorporated into the Governance Action Plan.
- iii) note the key outcomes from the committee evaluations and the senior team comments and that the feedback from questionnaires had been passed to the Committee Chairs.
- iv) note that David Archibald will lead the Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review for 2024/25 commencing in November 2024.

## **11. Further Information**

Members can obtain further information on the contents of this report from Linda Ellison, Secretary to the Board at [lindaellison@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk](mailto:lindaellison@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk) or Lisa Clark, Director of Estates and Corporate Services at [lisaclark@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk](mailto:lisaclark@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk).

**Glasgow Kelvin College**  
**Board Annual Self-Evaluation Session 2023/24**  
**19<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to provide Board Members with an update on the annual board self-evaluation exercise for 2023/24 and to share a summary of the output from the Board self-evaluation questionnaire. The paper also seeks any additional views or comments that members would like included in the evaluation.

### **Status**

The Code of Good Governance requires College Boards to undertake an annual self-assessment exercise, which comprises a number of elements. These elements are set out below with the current status:

- Board Self-evaluation *(Questionnaire issued)*
- Committee Evaluations *(Discussions held - May/June meetings)*
- Committee Chair Evaluations *(Questionnaires issued)*
- Chair's Evaluation/Appraisal *(Session note circulated to all members)*
- Chair's 1:1 meetings with Board Members *(Complete)*
- Senior Independent Member's Appraisal of and Feedback to the Chair *(Complete)*

The output from all of these elements is summarised in a paper prepared by the Board Secretary and presented at the August Board meeting. Members may be aware that in recent years the Board has held a face-to-face session to complete the Board evaluation exercise, however it was agreed that there would be a lighter touch this year given that an Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review, due every 3 – 5 years, would be undertaken by Henderson Loggie in the 2024/25 academic year.

### **Board Self-evaluation**

The summary of the output from the Board self-evaluation which was undertaken via a questionnaire is attached. There were responses from 9 Board Members and their comments are also included below.

### **Board Evaluation Commentaries:**

I still think that we could do better with the length of Board meetings, especially given they are in person. We should be striving for a maximum of 2-hour meetings and should be open to ideas and suggestions from board members on how this could be achieved.

Very effective Board I think but if I had to identify something - keeping contributions brief and focussed (delivery of reports and questions and answers) together with avoiding repetition may encourage more participation from quieter board members.

we could make more / better use of power BI, that would reduce paper prep time

N/A

In my first year of being a board member I don't feel there are any areas for improvement. Board runs very effectively

This has been a challenging year and , in my opinion, the BoM has navigated this

well.

unsure

Perhaps some more sensitivity and awareness of industrial relations issues and how disputes function in the college sector, i.e. national bargaining, negotiations, etc.

Board buddy/mentor when you join, keen to see deep dives on same subject matter across all committee groups to gather wider input to then pull that back into specific actions to drive forward. Would be good to revisit these and see progress made, should cut down on staff time if covering same area just presenting to different audiences could use this platform to also drive further support from board members wider than attending committee and board meetings.

Although the make up of the board is mixed, each member must feel comfortable enough to give their views, including staff and students

Recent letters to staff from the Chair and Principal contradict this point

**Recommendation**

Board members are asked to:

- i) note the comments above and
- ii) provide any additional comments or input at the self-evaluation session.

Linda Ellison  
Secretary to the Board of Management  
17/06/24