

**GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE**

**Learning and Teaching Committee: 8<sup>th</sup> March**

**Flexible Workforce Development Fund**

**Report by the Director of Business Development and the Senior Commercial Executive**

**1. Introduction**

This paper informs the Learning and Teaching Committee on the nature of the College's Flexible Workforce Development Fund and how that curriculum delivery and engagement supports the College's strategic objectives.

**2. Flexible Workforce Development Fund: College Delivery**

The activities outlined in this paper support a range of the College's strategic objectives. Whilst many objectives are supported to a greater or lesser degree, the following are particularly strongly supported by this activity;

<b>1</b>	<b>Deliver an Inspirational and Inclusive Student Experience</b>
1.1	Develop employment and life skills through high quality learning teaching and assessment
<b>2</b>	<b>Strengthen our Communities and Environment</b>
2.2	Deepen employer and industry engagement, earn our reputation as a Centre of Excellence and be the partner of choice
<b>3</b>	<b>Create a High Performing, Resilient and Responsive College</b>
3.3	Achieve financial sustainability and maintain strong and effective governance

**Flexible Workforce Development Fund:** The Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) was introduced during session 2017/2018 by The Scottish Government with the aim of providing £15,000 of funding to UK Apprenticeship Levy paying employers in Scotland to upskill their workforce. In session 2020/2021, the FWDF was extended to include an Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) fund of £5,000 for smaller employers. Glasgow Kelvin College is successful in the delivery of both these programmes.

### **Flexible Workforce Development Fund – 2021/2022:**

From the 2021/22 Fund, the FWDF generated £633,000, exceeding its income target by £45,000 whilst generating a margin for the College.

Twenty two of the employers accessing the fund were SMEs with 35 being larger employers. The College has successfully engaged and retained employers such as Coca Cola, BBC Scotland, Allied Vehicles, The MacTaggart Group, BT and The National Lottery.

### **Flexible Workforce Development Fund 2022/2023**

Whilst the College delivers an extremely successful portfolio of commercial programmes, the Flexible Workforce Development Fund generates the greatest proportion of commercial income with a significant amount of repeat business. The reason for this is the employer-focused approach taken by the College where programmes are designed to meet specific employer needs. Feedback from employers to the commercial team suggests that many colleges offer a set list of programmes which suits a particular College's delivery but is not what employers require.

The launch of the FWDF for 2022/2023 was significantly delayed due to the Scottish Government's Emergency Budget Review and was not announced until the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023. The fund is usually released mid August. Despite the late confirmation of funding, delivery deadlines remain the same and the College therefore has a shorter window to implement training.

For 2022/23, there was a significant budget cut across the national FWDF programme. For Glasgow Kelvin College, this equates to around 45% reduction in the Levy Fund allocation and 26.5% reduction for the SME Fund allocation from last year's allocation total of £588,000. The College's total allocation for FWDF 2022/2023 is £322,939.

Application allocations remain the same at £15,000 for Levy payers and £5,000 for SMEs. The college considered reducing the amount available to each employer to enable a greater number of projects but was advised by the Scottish Funding Council that this would not be possible. The consequence of this is that there will be an overall reduction in the number of customers that can access the College's FWDF.

To distribute the Levy funds fairly, the Commercial Team has been liaising with customers to ensure they are able to implement training in the shorter time frame. As a result of this, the college has allocated 17 Levy funds. The SME funds will be allocated on a first come, first served basis as per previous years and the College has a high degree of confidence that FWDF activity and spend targets will be met.

Recently, the Glasgow Colleges Regional Board (GCRB) has informed the College that it is looking to distribute additional funds to FWDF 2022/2023 to supplement the funds already allocated.

These additional GCRB funds have been collated from previous years FWDF allocation that had remained unspent. It is proposed that Glasgow Kelvin College, along with City of Glasgow College are allocated these funds. Glasgow Clyde College did not meet their previous targets and are therefore not in line for additional funding allocation. This is subject to confirmation by the GCRB.

For Glasgow Kelvin College, the additional allocation will be around £107,000 which will be allocated across the Levy and SME funds. Release of these funds will be discussed at the GRCB Board meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March. However, the College is already considering how this additional funding will be utilised in anticipation of a successful allocation.

The original driver behind the FWDF was to engage more effectively with employers and assist them with meeting the skills gaps they have within their organisations. Because of the successful approach taken by Glasgow Kelvin College, demand continues to outstrip supply of FWDF and the College is in the position of having to decline existing and new customers. The additional funding will considerably alleviate this situation whilst adding additional margin to the College.

### **Allocations 2022/2023**

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) allocate the funds across Scottish colleges dependent on the numbers of Levy and SME employers in each area. In the Glasgow Region, the FWDF allocation goes to the GCRB which then allocates funding on the basis of total credit activity. The 2022/2023 allocations are shown below:

<b>Flexible Workforce Fund 2022-23 (Levy Payers)</b>	<b>City of Glasgow College £'000</b>	<b>Glasgow Clyde College £'000</b>	<b>Glasgow Kelvin College £'000</b>	<b>Total £'000</b>
<b>Initial allocation</b>	£587,066	£414,759	£258,174	<b>£1,259,999</b>
<b>Flexible Workforce Fund 2022-23 (SMEs)</b>	<b>City of Glasgow College £'000</b>	<b>Glasgow Clyde College £'000</b>	<b>Glasgow Kelvin College £'000</b>	<b>Total £'000</b>
<b>Initial allocation</b>	£147,271	£104,047	£64,765	<b>£316,083</b>

For this year's allocation, Glasgow Kelvin College will be working with 17 Levy customers and 13 SME customers including McTaggart Group, Cruden Group, Coca Cola and Allied Vehicles. This will increase on confirmation of the additional £107,000 funding in March.

### **3. Flexible Workforce Development Fund: Scottish Government Review**

During the first half of 2022, the Scottish Government commissioned an evaluation of the FWDF which included liaising with employers which had accessed the Fund for their training needs. This survey found that the Fund appears to be "working well and is delivering against its original purpose".

There was a strong rationale for the Fund to continue to focus on workforce development and support economic growth as Covid 19 pandemic recovery continues.

The largest bulk of training supported by the FWDF, according to the review, was in the following areas:

- Business Management
- Computing and Information Technology
- Health & Safety

For colleges, the Fund has allowed for greater employer engagement than would have been possible without it. In Glasgow Kelvin College's case, this means that, in 2022/23, brand new employers such as Crow Wood Golf Club and Scoop Restaurants are now accessing the SME fund through the College.

The survey acknowledges that the college sector can vary with regard to resource and capacity. This has been addressed by some colleges through engaging in a variety of approaches to manage the Fund and adapt training requirements that suits customers' needs. This is an approach that Glasgow Kelvin College has taken from the outset of the Fund and finds this works best for customers and is why they return to the College year after year.

Overall, the review stated that *"The FWDF is largely working well and delivering against its original purpose and based on the findings from this evaluation, should therefore continue substantively on the same basis. The recommendations, presented in the Executive Summary, are generally light touch although we believe they would offer some improvements to the current Programme."*

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/evaluation-flexible-workforce-development-fund-fwdf/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/evaluation-flexible-workforce-development-fund-fwdf-key-findings/>

#### **4. Resource Implications**

There are no Resource implications arising directly from this report.

#### **5. Risk and Assurance**

There are no Risk and Assurance implications arising directly from this report.

#### **6. Equality**

There are no Equality implications arising directly from this report.

#### **7. Data Protection**

There are no Data Protection implications arising directly from this report.

## **8. Impact on Students**

There are no Impact on Students arising directly from this report.

## **9. Environmental and Sustainability**

There are no Environmental and Sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

## **10. Recommendations**

Members are recommended to:

- i. note the contents of the report.

## **11. Further Information**

Members can obtain additional information on the contents of this report from Robin Ashton, Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement.