# **Glasgow Kelvin College – Finance and Resources Committee**

## Self Evaluation 11 May 2021

#### In attendance:

Laura Birch (Chair); Robert Doyle (Vice Chair); Derek Smeall (Principal); Mohammed Razaq; Ian Patrick; Marion Allison; Heather McNeil; Stephen Birrell

Douglas Wilson; Clerk to the Board attended as facilitator to the meeting; and Mary Connelly also attended and recorded the following outcomes from the self-evaluation.

# **Apologies:**

No apologies were received.

# **Summary of Discussion**

D Wilson, Clerk to the Board of Management, reminded members of the annual process of self-evaluation while recognising this year we had also been subject to a very positive external governance review. He advised that the outcomes from the committee self-evaluations would be incorporated into the Board's annual self-evaluation report and reported to the Board of Management at its' first meeting of the new academic year.

D Wilson opined that members would want to consider the impact of the recently merged Finance and Resources Committee, following the merger of both the Financial Control Committee and the Human Resources Committee.

D Wilson advised that it would also be helpful to get some initial views on the experience of online meetings recognising that further consideration would be given to this matter at the Board Evaluation session due to be held on 28 June. It was recognised that going forward there would be a mixture of face to face and online meetings but how that blended mix would specifically look had yet to be determined.

# Finance and Resources Committee's Relationship with College Senior Management Team

- Committee members agreed that they had a good relationship with the College Senior Management Team.
- Committee members considered that any initial concerns about the potential size of the agenda had been allayed and this had been efficiently managed.
- Committee members welcomed the summary reports including the executive summary provided at the start of those reports.
- Committee members felt that that Senior Management acted and reported back to members or the committee on any matters raised.

## **Committee Membership Skills Mix**

- Members discussed the current committee skills mix and agreed that it was important
  to continue to ensure a mix of members with financial and non-financial background
  knowledge. It was felt that some additional financial or HR experience may be helpful
  to the committee but was not at this point considered crucial. Overall, the committee
  mix and balance was determined to be working effectively.
- Members felt that the financial session led by J Evans was helpful and assisted members understanding of the overall financial position.
- Members agreed that the merging of both Committees was beneficial, thus allowing discussions around non financials and demonstrated "it wasn't just about the money".
   It was helpful to have both finance and HR issues considered at the one committee.

# Agenda Management / Terms of Reference/ Reporting to the Board

- Members agreed that the agenda was substantial but manageable.
- Members suggested that it would be helpful to add a hyperlink to each agenda item to allow easier navigation between items.
- Members felt there can be some confusion regarding "Endorsement/Approval" items by Committee or Board.
- It was suggested that the order of the agenda could be mixed to avoid an over emphasis on purely financial matters.

# **Online Meeting Experience**

- Members agreed that the online meetings have worked well, allowing better attendance, but recognised the value and need for personal engagement and contact.
- New Board members, for example, appointed a year ago had yet to meet any other Board member in person.
- Members favoured a "blended" model of meetings combining online and face to face
  meetings to ensure there is an opportunity for personal interaction which is a key
  element of effective governance and enabling better understanding of the ethos of the
  college.

# **Reporting Arrangements and Quality of Reports**

- Members agreed that the quality of reports were comprehensive and provided sufficient context to enable full consideration.
- Members wanted to ensure a good balance between financial and non-financial matters.

### **Training and Developing Opportunities**

- Members agreed that they were provided with sufficient training opportunities with sessions well attended.
- Members requested that perhaps an annual financial overview session may be helpful.

#### **Added Value of Committee**

 Members felt the Committee provided added value by fulfilling the terms of reference of the Committee, engaging in the business of the Committee and providing constructive challenge and support.

- Members also felt that they provided benefit to the Board of Management through their financial scrutiny and by all members feeling comfortable and able to contribute to discussions.
- Members agreed that in the current rapidly changing environment, it provided reassurance and invaluable feedback to the Senior Management Team.
- The merged committee had allowed better understanding of broader corporate challenges across the college.

## **Areas for Improvement / Action**

- Members considered that there could be more reference on impacts on student experience and community implications in reports.
- Members felt the Committee, with some justification given the experience of the past year, had been focussed more on financial aspects than on staff and students but that this should be recognised and addressed in future reporting both at committee and Board level.
- Members suggested that the agenda order could be varied with finance items not always first on the agenda.
- Members suggested that there could be scope for other inputs to the committee / Board on broader policy issues. The presentation at the December Board on Glasgow's economic recovery was provided as a useful example.