

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING OF 13 DECEMBER 2021

**THE ROLE AND EXPERIENCE OF A BOARD SECRETARY AS A GOVERNANCE
PROFESSIONAL IN SCOTLAND'S COLLEGES**

COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK RESEARCH REPORT

REPORT BY CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges (2016) includes a section highlighting the importance of the Board Secretary role in advising the board, its committees and individual board members and supporting good governance. The CDN report '*Overview of the Externally Facilitated Reviews for Scotland's Colleges*' highlighted the understanding of the role could be improved. As a result, the Research and Enhancement Centre of CDN carried out a review into 'The Role and Experience of a Board Secretary as a Governance Professional in Scotland's Colleges'.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 In carrying out the research for the report the authors issued a questionnaire to the 27 people carrying out the role in Scotland's Colleges and received 18 responses. In addition, they interviewed (a) a panel of Board Secretaries and (b) a panel of 2 College Chairs and 2 College Principals.

The full report is available at <https://www.cdn.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/The-Role-and-Experience-of-the-Board-Secretary-as-a-Governing-Professional-in-Scotlands-Colleges.pdf>

3. Report Recommendations

- 3.1 The main recommendations for Boards of Management arising from the report are as follows:
- Review the nomenclature of 'Board Secretary' in relation to status and performance
 - Each college should review the terms and conditions for the Board Secretary to ensure
 - [a] sufficient time for delivery of the expectations for the role
 - [b] sufficient administrative support for the expectations for the role
 - [c] appropriate salary for the status and responsibilities of the role
 - Ensure the expectations of the Code of Good Governance are implemented as stated

- Ensure a working assumption of governance communications to Chair, Principal and Board Secretary to strengthen the operation of the triangle

4. Implications for Glasgow Kelvin College

4.1 Having discussed the report and its recommendations with both the Board Secretary and the Director of Corporate Services the collective view is that no action is required to be taken to meet any of the recommendations. The rationale for this is as follows:

- (a) The Board recently approved a change in the title of the role to Board Secretary and at present.
- (b) Unlike in the majority of other Colleges the role of Board Secretary does not involve minute taking or collation and distribution of Board and Committee papers. The Governance and Executive Support Manager Secretariat and provide the necessary administrative support required. A revised Job Description for the role was recently approved by the Board and objectives for the postholder were discussed and agreed by the Chair and noted by the Board.
- (c) The postholder in conjunction with the Director of Corporate services ensure adherence to Code of Good Governance. Board members are fully aware of the role and responsibilities of the Board Secretary.
- (d) Relationships between Chair, Principal, Board Secretary and Director of Corporate Service are excellent and ensure that the highest standards of corporate governance are maintained.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 There are no additional resource implications as a consequence of this report.

6. Equalities

6.1 There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

7. Risk and Assurance

7.1 No significant risks are identified as a result of this report

8. Recommendations

8.1 It is recommended that members note the contents of this report.

9. Further Information

Further information can be obtained from Ian Patrick, Chair of the Board of Management.