Item 12

For Approval

Glasgow Kelvin College

Board of Management Meeting of 30 August 2021

Board of Management Self-Evaluation Outcomes 2020/21 and Process 2021/22

Report by Clerk to the Board of Management and Director of Corporate Services

1 Introduction and Purpose

1.1 In terms of the Board's governance arrangements, the Board is required to conduct 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 2020/21 and provides an update on evaluation arrangements for 2021/22.

2 Board of Management/Standing Committees – Self-Evaluation 2020/21

2.1 The Board of Management undertook an evaluation process during 2020/21. In addition, the Board was subject to an externally facilitated review in line with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges. This was reported to the Board at its meeting in March 2021 and provided positive external assurance with regard to governance arrangements.

2.2 Our own self-evaluation fully met the requirements of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges and included an annual self-evaluation session held on 28 June 2021. The outcomes from that have previously been circulated to Board members and are attached as appendix 1.

2.3 With respect to self-evaluations of our main standing committees, those took place with a member discussion at the conclusion of each of the last meetings of the academic term. Those are also attached for member reference and will be reported via the individual committees. In addition, feedback on individual committee chairs is also noted.

2.4 The feedback from the Board evaluation was overwhelmingly positive and provides assurance with regard to the Board's governance and decision making arrangements. The outcomes from that session are attached. The key actions will be incorporated in to our Governance Action Plan (GAP). The Board will want to endorse the key issues arising and seek that those are progressed through the academic year, in particular, the following key priorities:

- Full support for our overall mission that should be articulated as our key message – 'Transforming lives through education' with a clear and undoubtable focus on outcomes for students and learners
- Learner / student focused with greater emphasis on this in Board reporting
- Community focused ensuring a continued commitment to community learning and development
- Partnership and stakeholder engagement
- Raising the visibility and profile of the college
- Financial sustainability, staff development and highest standards of governance
- Effective business management and reporting ensuring that reports are written for Board members providing members with the necessary context and assurance to enable them to take decisions

2.5 The Board will also keep under review its meeting arrangements with agreement for a blended model of in person and online meetings in line with outcomes from the evaluation.

2.6 Consequently, it is proposed that members note the summary above and the detailed survey feedback attached as an appendix to the report. The areas identified above for action would be incorporated into the Board's Governance Action Plan (GAP) for consideration and development during the academic year. Updates on progress will of course be incorporated into our 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 former senior independent member, Mohammed Razaq, supported by the Clerk to the Board utilising feedback received via the Chair evaluation questionnaire issued to all Board members. 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 through the Clerk to the Board. Should there be any broader issues for consideration they will be fed into the GAP.

3 Annual Evaluation Exercise 2021/22

3.1 The process for 2021/22 will follow a similar pattern to recent years, in line with the Board's preferences and the requirements of the Code of Good Governance.

4 College Development Network Governance reports

4.1 Members will be aware that each College Board was required to undertake an external review during the last academic year. The findings from those reviews are currently being incorporated into an overview report prepared through the College Development Network (CDN). This has been prepared in consultation with college governance professionals. The Clerk to the Board attended a focus group session on 20 July to consider the draft report.

4.2 In addition, CDN are also in the process of producing a specific report on the role of the governance professional within the college sector in Scotland.

4.3 Both reports are due to be formally published in September. On receipt it is proposed that the Board Secretary, in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Director of Corporate Services, consider and report back to the Board on any issues or matters for consideration.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

6. Equalities

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

7. Risk and Assurance

7.1 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.

8. Data Protection

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

9. Recommendations

Members of the Board of Management are recommended to:

i) note the contents of this report and appendices;
ii) endorse the findings from the Board evaluation and agree the development actions identified through the self-evaluation 2020/21 be incorporated into the Governance Action Plan;
iii) note the outcomes from the committee evaluations and that those be reported to the individual committees in the next round of meetings
iv) agree that the scheduled CDN reports on externally facilitated reviews and the role of the governance professional be subject of a future report to the Board; and
v) note the self-evaluation for 2021/22 will be progressed in line with the Board's agreed process and timescales.

10. Further Information

Members can obtain further information on the contents of this report from Douglas Wilson, Clerk to the Board at douglaswilson@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk or Lisa Clark, Director of Corporate Services at lisaclark@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk

Appendix 1

Glasgow Kelvin College Board of Management

Self-Evaluation Session

Monday 28 June 2021 at 4.30 p.m. (via Microsoft Teams)

Note of Meeting

1 Sederunt

Ian Patrick, Chair
Robert Doyle, Vice Chair
Michael O'Donnell
Mohammed Razaq
Stephen Birrell
Elaine Clafferty
John Hogg
Gerry Lyons
Heather McNeil
Dr Marion Allison
Deborah Thomson
Colm Breathnach, Teaching Staff Member
Lauren McLaren, Student Association Member

Apologies

Fiona Taylor, Support Staff Member
Laura Birch

In attendance:

Dermot Grenham, prospective Board member
Douglas Wilson, Clerk to the Board
Lisa Clark, Director of Corporate Services
Debbie Friel, Committee Coordinator (ICT/MS Teams support)
Annette McKenna – Governance and Executive Support Manager *(for recording purposes)*

2 Introduction and Welcome

The Chair welcomed members to the session and highlighted that the new member of the Board of Management, Dermot Grenham, was in attendance and would take up his tenure on 1 August 2021.

He informed members that the Vice Chair of the Board of Management, R Doyle, would lead the self-evaluation session.

3 Overview of Session

The Vice Chair of the Board of Management provided an overview of the session for members. He highlighted the discussion topics provided by D Wilson:

- TOPIC 1: Format for our Board Meetings, Standing Committee Meetings, ad-hoc Committee Meetings and Strategy/Development Sessions 2021/22
- TOPIC 2: Board and Committee Business Management Arrangements
- TOPIC 3: Key College Priorities 2021/22

He added that two discussion groups would be formed to consider the discussion topics, facilitated by M O'Donnell and E Clafferty. L Clark and D Wilson would support the respective group deliberations.

4 Ice Breaker

The Vice Chair invited members to go around the virtual room and feedback on what they had learned during the course of lockdown and what they wouldn't change.

5 Board of Management Context and Issues Arising 2020/21

The Clerk to the Board spoke to the note previously circulated to Board members and provided members with a summary of the content that included:

- key requirements of an annual self-evaluation exercise;
- UK Good Governance Standard for public services – 6 core principles;
- key duties of College Board members;
- key aspects of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges;
- individual responsibilities of Board members as set out in the Code of Conduct for members of the College Board;
- Glasgow Kelvin College's key governance principles;
- Self Evaluation 2019/20 – key outcomes;
- Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review – key findings and recommendations; and
- Issues arising during 2020/21 including
  - Board agendas, minutes and reports
  - Online meetings / hybrid meetings.

He highlighted that the initial outcomes from individual member feedback and the committee self-evaluations were highly favourable with respect to the:

- Board's overall governance arrangements
- management and performance of the respective committees
- effective relationships between members and officers
- well run committees
- effective reporting and scrutiny.

It was emphasised that the Board had very high standards of governance as clearly evidenced through the externally facilitated review. It was important that this was fully recognised and that we build on the many strengths of our governance which compared highly favourably across the sector.

6 Specific areas for member discussion

Members split into two discussion groups and considered the topics noted above.

Glasgow Kelvin College

7 Group Feedback and Conclusions

M O'Donnell and E Clafferty feedback to members on the discussions held within their groups as follows:

Does the board fulfil its remit?

- Clear agreement and consensus that the Board fulfils its remit
- Identified areas for development included preparation of a performance 'dashboard '(real time where possible) to provide members with clear and succinct information on performance against key priorities. This would not prevent the preparation of a more detailed reporting but would assist to provide an overview of performance of the college
- Agreed need to shift emphasis of reporting to learning and outcomes recognising reasons for more focus in past year or so on finance / pandemic response

Board Development Programme for 2021/22

- recognise need for succession planning and providing committee vice chairs appropriate development opportunities
- Overview of community learning and development
- Continued opportunity to engage with broader regional economic and social recovery planning
- Annual financial overview
- Internal Auditor session with new audit and risk members
- Potential for Vice Chairs to Chair individual committee meetings and member's able to observe other meetings e.g. Academic Board
- Campus 'tours'
- Stakeholder engagement session (on campus)
- New member committee induction meetings to be re-established

Topic 1 – Format of board meetings, standing committees etc.

- Clear acceptance of need for balance between in person and online meetings i.e. blended meeting model. There must be scope to have in person meetings involving all board members with opportunities for personal engagement and interaction recognised especially for new members.
- broad acceptance that in general board meetings would primarily (if not all) would be in person
- Agreed that ad hoc committee meetings in general would be online i.e. executive committee meetings and remuneration committee meetings
- Nominations Committee meetings to be determined as per each recruitment process
- Standing committees (Audit and Risk, Finance and Resources and Learning and Teaching) meet 4 times per year – general acceptance that a mixture of 2 online and 2 in person is reasonable
- Board development sessions – generally felt those could be online unless it was considered it was important for team-building / development needs
- Important that we test technology and operational viability of hybrid meetings i.e. where some members are in meeting room and others online

Topic 2 – Board and Committee Business Management Arrangements
Recognition that the Board agendas can be 'heavy' with items and that this is somewhat inevitable given the role and responsibilities, however, must ensure that:

- meetings focus on key items especially those for decision
- potential to remove or at very least minimise any information items
- need for officers to provide a generally short verbal overview to any report
- general acceptance that the list of 'reserved' items for the Board were correct and beyond that it would be a case of effective business / agenda planning initially through the SMT and then, in consultation, with the Chair and the Clerk to the Board
- agreed that our agenda and minute format should generally be maintained and managed through the Director of Corporate Services / Secretariat
- ensure clarity when it comes to items for decision, noting, endorsement etc.
- acknowledged that some recent reports had not adequately covered the key issues for the Board hence longer and more detailed discussion so it is important that reports provide sufficient detail / assurance for members
- committee chairs could provide greater assurance for items referred to the Board in terms of scrutiny provided at committee
- encourage members to contact report authors in advance as appropriate – recognised this may have reduced due to online meetings
- ensure use of hyperlinks
- It was considered that meeting times of 5p.m. were still the preferred option; some discussion about having 6 rather than 5 Board meetings but either way need for meetings to last generally no longer than 2 hours

Topic 3 – Key college priorities
- Overall mission and that it should be articulated as our key message – 'Transforming lives through education' with a clear and undoubtable focus on students and learners
- Learner / student focused with greater emphasis on this in Board reporting
- Community focused ensuring a continued commitment to community learning and development
- Partnership and stakeholder engagement
- Raising the visibility and profile of the college
- Financial sustainability, staff development and highest standards of governance
- Recognised that the undernoted key recommendation arising from the externally facilitated review required to be progressed and reported to the Board '
- There is a need to clearly articulate the way in which the various College initiatives which are ongoing or are planned will link into the local, regional and national priorities and to develop performance measures which will allow the impact of this range of activity to be captured. This will allow a more cohesive approach to demonstrating impact and allow the story of success to be presented in a meaningful way to multiple stakeholders'.

Other comments
- The board should be more visible to key stakeholders and staff
- We should look to become a more dynamic board – maximising future opportunities

- In the next year we should focus on horizon scanning and ensuring we are responding to national priorities
- The board would like to understand more about who our key partners are and what are the priorities for our partners?
- The board want to know more about what/who our stakeholder landscape looks like
- It was noted the support staff have been and are highly helpful/ valuable to the board
- Can we contextualise better the positive outcomes our learners have – where are the going and use these real word stories to help with the college marketing and communications
- When reporting on our priorities assess why we are doing it? What does success look like? And how do we know?

The Chair informed members that the Director of Digital Services had delivered a presentation on the development by the College of a Dashboard using Power BI, he added that this could be delivered to the full Board.

I Patrick agreed that Board reports required to be written for Board members who may not have the same background knowledge as the Executive. Reports required to provide members with the necessary assurance to enable them to take decisions. He also agreed the need to shift emphasis of reporting to learning and teaching outcomes whilst recognising reasons for the focus in the past year or so was on finance / pandemic response. He highlighted the need to raise the College profile post Covid19.

He thanked members for their comments and noted he was heartened with the discussions.

8 Summary and Close

The session finished at 6.25pm with the Vice Chair thanking all for their attendance and contribution.