Item 11
For Information

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE MEETING – 23 MARCH 2021

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS MONITORING

JANUARY 2020 - DECEMBER 2020

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

1. Introduction

Members will be aware that the College is required to ensure that it complies with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act (2002).

The purpose of this paper is to provide reassurance to members that Freedom of Information requests received are responded to in accordance with the requirements of the Act and an overview of the requests submitted in calendar year 2020.

Members should note that responsibility for Freedom of Information (FOI) is contained within the remit of the Director of Corporate Services.

2. Freedom of Information Monitoring, Control and Quarterly Returns

As members will be aware the College has an approved procedure for ensuring that all FOI requests are dealt with in accordance to statutory requirements and in accordance with the Board of Management commitment to transparency in corporate governance. As part of that procedure, all Freedom of Information requests received by the College are reviewed by the appropriate managers in order to ensure there is no ambiguity in respect of what is being requested. Should there be any such doubt as to what is being requested, contact is made with the requester to clarify matters. An appropriate deadline control system is well established and monitored effectively to ensure that compliance with the 20-day deadline for responses is achieved.

A summary of the number of requests received between January 2020 and December 2020 is provided in the table below:

Description	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Totals
The number of requests received	13	3	2	3	**21**
The number of requests which received a response within the statutory timescales	13	3	2	3	**21**
The number of requests for which information was provided in full	7	1	2	3	**13**
The number of requests for review received	0	0	0	0	**0**

For comparison purposes, in calendar year 2019, the College received 24 requests.

The compliance rate for the College for the period January 2020 - December 2020 in relation to responding in the relevant timescales was 100%. The College received no requests for a review and there have there been no appeals to the Information Commissioner during 2020.

The analysis of the requests under this legislation has identified, as in previous years, most enquiries have been received from trade unions, NUS and individuals using the "*what do they know*" website.

The quarterly returns required by the Information Commissioner were also completed and returned well ahead of deadline dates.

Members should note that various members of the Senior Management Team review all FOI responses as part of the College approach to transparency in corporate governance.

Furthermore, members should note that much of the information requested is available to the public as a consequence of the commitment of the Board to transparency in corporate governance.

3. Resource Implications

There are no additional resource implications for Glasgow Kelvin College arising from the continued compliance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Responding to these requests continues to place a workload burden on those managing and preparing responses and staff throughout the College, particularly within the Student Records, Finance and Procurement and HR/Payroll teams.

4. Assurance and Risk

As a public body, Glasgow Kelvin College continues to ensure that requests for information from applicants and the Information Commissioner are actioned in the timescales required. Failure to comply with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 can lead to an intervention by the Information Commissioner's Office - ICO.

This report highlights the processes in place within Glasgow Kelvin College to manage the risk in relation to freedom of information are working effectively as the achievement rate for compliance continues to be 100%.

5. Equality

No negative impacts on people with protected characteristics have been identified as a consequence of this report.

6. Data Protection

There are no data protection implications as a consequence of this report. Cognisance is given where requests are received in which a response may contain personal data. When drafting responses to these requests the relevant exemption is applied.

7. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

i) note the contents of this report;

ii) note the number of FOI requests received for the period January-December 2020;

iii) note that the College has produced the required quarterly reports for the Information Commissioner; and

iv) note that the College will continue to have due regard for the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and adhere to timescales required.

8. Further Information

Members can obtain further information on the contents of this report from Lisa Clark, Director of Corporate Services – lisaclark@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk

Lisa Clark
Director of Corporate Services
January 2021