

Board of Management

Date of Meeting	26 March 2025
Paper No.	BoM3-C
Agenda Item	2.2
Subject of Paper	Chair's Report
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Dave Anderson Chair of the Board of Management
Date of production	13 March 2025
Action	For Discussion

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. To discuss the Chair's quarterly report to the Board of Management.

2. Consultation

- 2.1.** In progressing the matters outlined in the Chair's report, colleagues in the College and across the sector have been engaged.

3. Key Insights

- 3.1.** The Chair is responsible for the leadership of the Board of Management as the College's governing body. The Chair works in partnership with the Board and the Principal to set the strategic direction of the College, monitor performance and ensure high-quality learning and outcomes are delivered for students. The Chair also has an ambassadorial role for the Board within the College, and also for the College with external stakeholders.

4. Impact and Implications

- 4.1.** The Chair's report ensures that Board members remain informed of the Chair's recent activities and other key developments and activities of interest to members.

Appendix 1: Chair's Report

Chair's Report to the Board of Management: March 2025

1. Since our Board meeting on 11th December, I have been involved in a wide variety of meetings in the College and with my fellow Chairs across Scotland.

Annual Reviews

2. In mid-January, I completed annual reviews both in person and over Teams with all our Board Members. Thank you for your candour and feedback. I summarised the key areas identified by Board members as opportunities for improving how we perform as a Board.
3. There was a common thread on points such as the need for tighter timekeeping, the introduction of short cover papers and more informal time outside of Board meetings to get to know fellow Board members better. I have since had discussions with the Principal and Associate Director of Governance & Risk about how we can introduce changes over the course of the next year to improve how we operate as a Board.
4. Paul Hillard, our Senior Independent Member, also completed my annual review on 5th March. My thanks to those of you who provided feedback to Paul. It was highly constructive and has given me valuable insight into how I have managed the role in the first eight months since my appointment.

Board Committees

5. I attended the Development Committee on 6th February where we reviewed the updated Social Media Policy and issues relating to the future development of the College's estate – including the Riverside Innovation Centre (RIC) and the redevelopment of the Charles Oakley Building. The RIC business case should be completed by June.
6. On 12th February I joined the meeting of the People and Culture Committee. I was particularly interested in listening to and participating in discussions about the issues identified in the Robertson Cooper staff wellbeing and engagement survey and hearing more about the points highlighted in the EIS-FELA survey.
7. The challenges of change in the College arising from the resource pressures faced in the past few years and the disruption that has resulted from extended industrial action have seen extra demands placed on staff. It was helpful to have an open discussion on the issues and to learn that the Vice Principal People & Corporate Support and his colleagues in HR are working with staff across each faculty to prepare action plans addressing concerns highlighted by staff.
8. Where new pressures have emerged, it will be important to consider what support can be given to alleviate staff concerns e.g. providing additional staff training and development. Extra funding will likely be in short supply and so there will be a need to find innovative solutions to ensure staff continue to feel well-supported.

City of Glasgow International (CGI) Ltd

9. On 6th February I attended a meeting of the CGI Board at which I intimated my intention to stand down as Chair of CGI. Given my role as Chair of the Development Committee, which has supervisory responsibility for CGI, I believe it is more appropriate to separate these responsibilities. I will remain on the CGI Board as a Director to ensure continuity for and oversight of the company on behalf of the Board.

Disciplinary Appeal

10. A significant amount of time has been spent on a staff appeal process, ensuring due process and fairness in line with College policies and procedures. I appreciate the valued support from fellow Board members Audrey Sullivan and Roddy Gillespie, as well as Katrina Daly, Associate Director of People and Culture.

Depute Principal Recruitment

11. I have participated in two meetings with the Principal and Paul Hillard, alongside recruitment consultants Aspen People, to review a long list of candidates for the role of Depute Principal & Chief Operating Officer. Following a rigorous process, with candidates throughout the UK and beyond, Roy Gardner – currently Vice Principal Corporate Development & Innovation – was appointed to the role to replace Dr Sheila Lodge. I know the Board will wish to join me in extending congratulations to Roy on his appointment.

Burns Supper

12. On 23rd January I was delighted to attend the College's Burns Supper in Scholars' restaurant. The food for the evening was prepared by our catering and hospitality students under the supervision of Scotland's National Chef, Gary McLean, who had only just returned from organising a major Burns Supper in New York the previous weekend.
13. The quality of the food and service was first-class and is a testament to the quality of education provided to our students. Several guests spoke with me afterwards and were highly complimentary of the evening. Council Leader Susan Aitken delivered an exceptional 'immortal memory' and our own Vice Chair, Douglas Baillie, delivered a passionate address to the haggis.

Regional Engagement

14. I was accompanied by the Principal to the Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board (GCRB) meeting on 27th January. The meeting received annual reports from each of the three Glasgow colleges before proceeding to deal with the transition timetable to the expected wind-up of the GCRB, at the end of July subject to final approval by the Scottish Parliament.
15. On 6th February we held the inaugural meeting of principals and chairs of the three Glasgow colleges which will form the Glasgow Leadership Group (GLG) once the GCRB is dissolved. This group will enable the colleges to coordinate our regional work

and ensure our provision remains accessible, coherent, relevant and of high quality and anticipates and responds effectively to the ever-changing needs of the city region economy and labour market.

16. We have agreed as a group to meet on a bimonthly basis with each college taking it in turn to host a meeting and each host chair overseeing arrangements for secretariat support, issuing agendas and minutes and chairing proceedings. We have written to the Minister to advise him that the GLG has now been established and to share our plans.

Sector Engagement

17. I have also attended two meetings of the College Chairs Group in recent months. Discussions centred on the Scottish Government's budget settlement which poses further challenges for the college sector in the year ahead.
18. There remains some uncertainty about how the Scottish Government will support colleges with the rise in Employers' NI contributions and other pressures. Some new funding for renewable energy skills £3m and social care skills £0.5m was announced subject to the sector developing business cases to deliver courses in these areas. The Principal is engaged in discussions to ensure that the College can attract some of this new funding.
19. I have also been asked to review opportunities for colleges to share good practices and collaborate on non-executive Board member recruitment. I am working with Sue Cook, Chair of West Lothian College, on this and will share our thoughts on this with you as soon as they are well formed.
20. I attended a meeting of College Employers Scotland (CES) to discuss the sector's approach to collective bargaining once the current pay agreement ends. Although I wasn't involved in the last round of pay negotiations those who were felt that there must be a better way to manage discussions without matters escalating to industrial action as they did.
21. The support staff trade union side has set out its initial pay claim for the post 2025/26 period and it is being costed by CES, who are aiming to negotiate a pay settlement that is fair for support staff and that protects the longer-term sustainability of colleges.

Parliamentary Engagement

22. The Principal has invited me to accompany him on 21st March for a visit to the College by Anas Sarwar MSP, Leader of the Scottish Labour Party. This visit provides an opportunity to highlight the College's key contributions to education and skills development, and to discuss how the sector can be further supported.