

Board of Management

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 1 October 2025
Paper No.	BoM1-F
Agenda Item	3.2
Subject of Paper	Chair's Report
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Chris Deery Chair of the Board of Management
Date of production	23 September 2025
Action	For Discussion

1. Recommendations

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

2. Purpose

- 2.1.** To update the Board of Management on the Chair's activities since the last meeting of the Board.

3. Consultation

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

4. Key Insights

- 4.1.** 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.

5. Impact and Implications

- 5.1.** 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.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Chair's Report

Chair's Report to the Board of Management

September 2025

Chris Deery, Chair of the Board

1. Introduction and Reflections

It is a privilege to present my first Chair's Report to the Board of Management. Since my appointment on 30th July, I have been warmly welcomed by colleagues across the College and sector, and I am grateful for the support and openness shown during my onboarding. I've had the opportunity to introduce myself to staff across the College, and I've been struck by the professionalism, pride, and passion that define our community.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the leadership of my predecessor, Dave Anderson, whose tenure as Chair helped guide the College through a period of significant challenge and transformation. I am pleased that Dave will continue to contribute to the College as a member of the Development Committee and a Director of our College company, and I am delighted to note he has been awarded a Fellowship of City of Glasgow College — a well-deserved recognition of his service and impact. This honour will be formally conferred at our graduation ceremony in November.

2. Tribute to Audrey Sullivan

I also want to take a moment to reflect on the untimely passing of Audrey Sullivan, a long-serving and deeply respected member of our Board, who chaired our Learning, Teaching & Student Experience Committee with exemplary diligence. Although I did not have the opportunity to meet Audrey, it is clear from conversations with the Principal and colleagues that she served with distinction and was a passionate advocate for our students and staff alike. Audrey was also known for her caring support of new Board members, helping them navigate their roles with enthusiasm and encouragement. Her passing in August was met with great sadness, and I know I speak for all Board members in expressing our deepest heartfelt condolences to her family and friends. I know that the Principal, 2 former Chairs and members of the Board past and present attended her funeral, as well as some senior staff of the College which is testament to how well respected Audrey was.

3. Celebrating 15 Years of City of Glasgow College

On 4 September, I had the pleasure of attending the College's 15-Year Anniversary Gala Dinner. The event brought together students, staff, alumni, civic leaders, and leading political representatives, including the First Minister and two of his Ministers, and was a powerful reminder of the College's reach and excellent reputation. It was particularly inspiring for me to meet former Chairs and Board Members and hear their perspectives on the College's successful evolution. Their immense pride in what City of Glasgow College has become was palpable, and it reaffirmed for me the importance of our role as stewards of the next illustrious chapter.

The Gala Dinner was not just a celebration of our past — it was also a moment to reflect on the scale of our ambition and the shared responsibility we carry to shape what comes next. As we look ahead, I am keen that the Board continues to challenge itself to think boldly, act strategically, and ensure our governance supports the College to thrive in a rapidly changing and complex environment.

4. Board Transitions and New Appointments

We welcome several new members to the Board this academic year as well as some role changes for existing members:

- Flora Irvine-Hall (Student President) and Samantha Campbell (Student Vice-President) join us as our new student representatives.
- Kathleen Davis, Robbie Young, and Stewart Robison have been appointed as new non-executive members.
- Charandeep Singh has been appointed as Vice Chair, and Laura Heggie as Senior Independent Member.

I would also like to advise the Board that Ann Butcher, our Governance Officer, is retiring to spend more time with her family and friends, and this will therefore be her last Board meeting supporting us. Although I have only known Ann for a few weeks, I am aware that she has conscientiously supported the Board since merger in 2010 and has diligently served City of Glasgow College and one of its legacy colleges for over 40 years. Ann will be greatly missed by both the Board and the Executive Office.

Sadly, Douglas Baillie has had to resign from the Board for health reasons. Douglas was a much-valued member of the Board, serving two periods including as College Chair. We thank him for his significant contribution and wish him well, trusting that we will see him from time to time as a College Fellow.

This period marks a significant renewal for the Board. We have seen considerable change over the past year, and we now have a more diverse group of members. I believe this diversity in background, experience, and perspective is a strength and positions us well to contribute meaningfully to the College's future. As we enter a new era as a Regional College, our governance responsibilities are more vital and strategic than ever. The transition has been smooth and affirms the confidence placed in the College to lead with autonomy, agility, and ambition. I am confident our Board is well positioned to provide clear, purposeful and right-sized governance that supports the Principal and his senior leaders alongside the needs of our students, staff, and partners.

5. Committee Engagement and Early Observations

Since taking up the role, I have attended meetings of the Conveners Committee and the Finance Committee. These have provided valuable insight into the College's operational and strategic priorities.

Key takeaways from the Finance Committee highlight both the College's prudent financial management and the continued challenges ahead — particularly around structural funding, financial sustainability, capital investment, and income diversification. These important issues will require continued scrutiny and creative thinking from the Board as we navigate an ever more complex financial landscape.

The Conveners Committee continues to play a vital role in ensuring governance effectiveness, with their recent work including Board recruitment, senior staff performance review, and oversight of strategic risks. I was particularly encouraged by the Committee's commitment to transparency and its role in shaping the Board Development Plan and Self-Evaluation. These meetings are not just procedural, they offer a clear signal of where we are as a Board and ultimately where we need to focus to add greatest value. The emphasis on strategic clarity, stakeholder engagement, and Board culture will be central to how we shape our work this year.

6. Board Member 1:1s and Strategic Planning

As part of my integration, I have been conducting 1:1 meetings with Board members. These conversations have been invaluable in helping me understand the strengths of our governance culture and the areas where we can continue to grow. A recurring theme has been the desire for the Board to play a more active role in shaping the College's strategic direction, a theme that aligns well with our upcoming Strategic Planning Day on 5 November. I am particularly excited about this opportunity to come together with the Executive Team and begin shaping the next iteration of our Strategic Plan. I look forward to continuing my 1:1 meetings with other members of the Board in the coming weeks.

7. Sector Engagement and Onboarding

I have begun engaging with key sector stakeholders and will attend several important forums in the coming weeks:

- Chairs & Principals Forum – 23 September
- Glasgow Colleges Leadership Group – 6 October
- College Chairs Group Forum – 7 October

I am also planning meetings with College Development Network, Colleges Scotland, and the Scottish Funding Council, among others. These engagements will be critical in building relationships and ensuring City of Glasgow College remains well positioned and where possible prominent within the national conversation.

I also attended a Scottish Government Onboarding Day, which provided a helpful overview of the policy landscape, governance expectations, and sector priorities. I found the session both informative and affirming, and I look forward to contributing to the sector's development in my new role as Regional Chair.

8. Closing Remarks

As I begin my tenure as Chair, I am struck by the strength of the College's foundations and the ambition of its people. We face challenges but we also have a Board, Principal and Executive Leadership Team that is committed, skilled, and ready to lead. I look forward to working with you all in the months and years ahead.