



The eighty-first meeting of the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council was held on Friday, 10 April 2015 at 10.00am, at the SFC offices, Edinburgh

Present: Professor Alice Brown (Chair)
Laurence Howells (Chief Executive)
Robin Crawford
Audrey Cumberford
Ali Jarvis
Paul McKelvie (Vice-Chair)
Lorraine McMillan
Douglas Mundie
Dr Keith Nicholson (by teleconference)
Professor Albert Rodger (by teleconference)
Alan Stannett
Marlene Wood

Officers: Brian Baverstock
Riona Bell
David Caldwell (Interim Secretary)
Stephen Crowe
Martin Fairbairn (Secretary)
Linda McLeod
Claire Taylor

Scottish Government: Michael Cross

Apologies: Professor Maggie Kinloch
Professor Anton Muscatelli

15/22 Welcome

The Chair welcomed Michael Cross of the Scottish Government.

15/23 Chair's business: Declarations of interest

The Chair reminded Council members of their responsibility to indicate if they have, or may be perceived to have, a conflict of interest under any item.

15/24 Chair's business: Items for report

The Chair had no items for report.

15/25 Update on developments in college sector in Glasgow (SFC/15/13)

The Council received a paper describing developments in relation to both the Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board and Glasgow Clyde College.

Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board (GCRB)

The Council noted that:

- The GCRB had not agreed to the SFC's full package of measures:
 - The undertaking by SFC of a review
 - Acceptance that SFC was willing to work, with GCRB, towards fully-operational fundable body status by 1 August 2015, that was not guaranteed
 - Recruitment for an Executive Director should proceed, on the conditions described in SFC's letters of 20 March 2015 (including that the interview panel should include external members of which the SFC Chief Executive will be one)
 - The secondment of Martin Fairbairn, on the terms set out in SFC's letter of 5 March 2015
- Four board members had resigned
- Progress with recruiting the Executive Director post had been delayed because of the lack of supporting information from GCRB and despite the Council executive having provided practical assistance.

- Noted a proposal from GCRB that its costs be funded by a resource transfer from the Council's running costs, rather than through efficiencies within the overall region (consistent with the Scottish Government's stated assumptions).

The following paragraph is withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs

[] × 1 paragraph

Martin Fairbairn temporarily withdrew from the meeting.

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[] × 1 paragraph

Martin Fairbairn returned to the meeting.

Glasgow Clyde College

The Council noted that:

- SFC provided clarified terms of reference for its Review on 25 March 2015
- The investigatory stage had commenced, and the first interviews were held on 9 April with the interviewees who had responded to the issues invitations
- None of the 'lay' members of the board had responded to the invitations to be interviewed and the College's lawyers had requested that the work be put on hold because the College was unable to furnish them with instructions due to the current holidays

Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board and Glasgow Clyde College

In relation to both the Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board and Glasgow Clyde College, in discussion the Council:

- Underlined both the primacy of maintaining a high quality of

educational provision and its duty of care to all the Council staff involved in these matters.

- Noted the risk that the many indications and examples of positive progress in the college sector risked being overlooked as a result of the current developments in Glasgow.
- Recognised the Council executive's very positive working relationship with the Scottish Government on this matter, but also the importance of being clear about the distinct roles of the Council and Scottish Government, and that the Council should communicate formally its assessment to Scottish Government.
- Noted that the Council's reputation had generally been enhanced as a result of the approach it was taking.
- Noted from the Scottish Government representative that Scottish Ministers continue to be greatly concerned about developments at the GCRB and Glasgow Clyde College, wish to see satisfactory resolutions, and back the Council's actions to date.

The Council **agreed**:

- To fully support and endorse the approach taken by the Council executive.
- That it was agreeable to the secondment of Martin Fairbairn to the GCRB in conjunction with the acceptance of associated and necessary conditions

15/26 Date of next meetings

The next meetings were planned to occur as follows:

- Strategic Development meeting – 15 May 2015
- Business meeting – 19 June 2015