

Glasgow Kelvin College
Board of Management Meeting of 08 October 2025
Principal's Update Report
Report by Principal

Read time: 5 Minutes

1. Introduction

This report provides the Board of Management with an update on strategy and partnership opportunities since the last board meeting held on 11th June 2025.

2. Context

The Principal provides regular updates to the Board of Management on a range of activities across the College, not included in other reports pertaining to stakeholder engagement and strategic activity. This report covers activities July 2025 – September 2025.

3. Strategic Implications

3.1 Opportunities

3.1.1 College Partnership West

Glasgow City Deal (Glasgow City Region) has requested a devolved skills approach to the Scottish Government, and while this has not had traction as yet, there is further work being undertaken on a Glasgow City Region (GCR) Devolution Deal with an emerging proposal presented at the Glasgow City Region Regional Partnership meeting on 18 September 2025.

GCR is looking for an Integrated Settlement of £400m per annum, to deliver financial parity with Greater Manchester and West Midlands combined authorities, and a Single Outcome Agreement which will focus on innovation, business support, skills, infrastructure and transport.

They believe that this deal could begin immediately, with already established structures, processes, infrastructure and transport in place. With this in mind, a refresh of the College Partnership West (CPW) is to be taken forward. The group has united the six colleges of the Greater Glasgow City Region on a single platform that has begun to command the attention of policymakers, engage communities and forge stronger partnerships with employers.

3.1.2 Employer Engagement

As part of the refresh of our college strategy and in keeping with our growth and income diversification ambitions, a significant amount of activity has been focused

on strengthening our employer connections and positioning of the college as a provider of choice. Positive discussions have been held with the NHS Academy, Rail Industry representatives, Engineering sector representatives and several other employers. Similarly, there has been discussions with Skills Development Scotland relating to the investment in Maritime Skills and I am pleased to report that GKC is now able to contribute to the proposed skills intervention.

3.1.3 College Positioning

Ahead of the publication of political party manifestos, the college has commissioned a public affairs agency, Message Matters, to raise the college profile whilst simultaneously helping inform the various policy asks. Leaning into the work of GKC and linking to the programme for government, particularly activity to tackling child poverty, has been key to raising our profile. We are hoping to convene an employer roundtable in the parliament later in the Autumn. A series of meetings cross party representatives are being scheduled. Members will note further in the paper a number of opportunities the college executive team have taken to strengthen our profile over that last few months.

3.1.4 Values and Behaviours Project

The College is working with Leading Kind to refresh the College's values and behaviours; as shown in **Appendix 1**, attached to the report, excellent progress has been made:

- 10 Ambassadors have been supporting the process throughout and will be the common thread that supports communication of the values and implementation
- Staff survey asking for positive behaviours we see and would like to see more of.
 - Circa 100 responses
 - What we currently do at Kelvin College that makes us great: Positive responses especially around Welcoming, Supportive, Inclusive and high-quality teaching
 - Current positive behaviours that help me to do my job well: Teamwork, collaboration, communication, supportive management came up highly
 - What do we need to do more of to be "Nowhere like Kelvin": Student centred, communication, respect, inclusion came up a lot – need more focus here potentially
- Themes were elicited from the survey responses on behaviours to align with the strategy, around students, staff, partners and community. These formed the basis of the workshops
- 5 x 3 hour workshops and 1 x 1 hour workshop were held (9-15 people in each) to allow many staff to input their thoughts on behaviours and values they'd like to see
 - Important that this is owned by the staff
 - Staff voted on their favourites each workshop
- Ambassadors worked with Leading Kind to choose the values to be voted on by staff (taken from the workshop voting results)
- Survey filled out by staff who ranked 6 value options within each of 4 themes

- Indicative values from the voting (these may change):
 - Staff like the short phrases (not just one word)
 - want to be different “Nowhere like Kelvin” and
 - want them to be meaningful
 - *Welcoming and inclusive* is likely to be one
 - *Opportunities for all* or Connected to our Communities is likely to be one
 - Likely to be one around Trust/integrity/professionalism
 - Another one also (perhaps around moving forward, innovation, empowerment)
- There is still work to be done on:
 - how we present these,
 - the descriptors which sit alongside
 - the behaviours which sit underneath
- The values we are moving towards give plenty of scope for ensuring the key themes and words are captured

A report of the refreshed Values and Behaviours will be brought to the Board of Management meeting in December 2025.

3.2 **Stakeholder Engagement**

3.2.1 Below are key stakeholder engagements which I have undertaken over the course of the last quarter:

- Matt Addicott, Platform (GEAC)
- Tour of Learning Centre, Rosemount Learning Centre
- Tour of Learning Centre, Tollcross Advice and Learning Centre
- Collette Filippi, Pro Active Business
- John McKendrick, Commissioner for Fair Access
- Paul Sheerin, Scottish Engineering
- Kenny Anderson, SWAPWest
- Peter Costello, CEO, FARE
- Gave evidence at the Education, Children and Young People, Parliamentary Committee
- Stuart Grieg, Head of Governance & Assurance, Scottish Government
- Update Sessions for staff
- Innovation Visit to Clyde Gateway
- Gavin Donaghue, CEO, Colleges Scotland
- Andy McIver and Kirsty Leiper, Message Matters
- Glasgow Leadership Group Meeting
- Neil Rennick, Director General for Education and Justice
- Shirley Laing, Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills
- One to One meeting with new Members of the Board
- One to One meeting with Chairs of the Standing Committees
- Anne Campbell, Principal, West College Scotland
- Kenny MacInnes, Principal, Forth Valley College
- Tom Hall, Colleges Scotland
- Heather Thomson and Anna Ashton, The Data Lab
- Gregor Hollerin, Story Shop
- Richard McConnell, Janet Grant and Martin Boyle - Open University

- Ross Tuffee, Iceberg
- Jennifer Tempamy and David Reid, Powering Futures
- Graeme Day, Minister for Higher and Further Education; and Minister for Veterans
- Prof Joe Little, Business School - Stirling University
- Marie Hendry, College Development Network
- Scottish Chamber of Commerce Council Meeting
- Pam Duncan Glancy - MSP
- Mandy Morgan - Scottish Pantry Network
- Simon Hewit, Principal – Dundee & Angus College
- Nick Page, CEO, SQA
- Maureen Burke, MP
- Gary Hay and Zoe Welsh, Jobs & Business Glasgow
- Kevin Rush - Director of Regional Economic Growth, Glasgow City Council
- India Consol General
- Joe Pacitti, CEED Scotland
- Board, Staff & Stakeholder Strategy Consultation events
- Community Partnership, Stakeholder Consultation event
- Prof Kevin Kelman, NHS Scotland
- R Lochhead, MSP – Minister for Business and Employability
- Prof Jeffrey Sharkey, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
- College Partnership West meeting
- Robin Ghurbhuran, JISC

3.3 Challenges

Work continues on national job evaluation. Further work to develop a business case ahead of the next stages of the project is causing delay. As a college we can however, continue with the preparatory work required as a college for when the project does begin.

Members will be aware of the need for NRPA reform following a desire by UNISON and Unite to have a separate NRPA for their members. Discussions have been ongoing with teaching and support trade union representatives to agree on a separate NRPA. At this stage no agreement has been reached.

Support Staff are seeking a multi year pay settlement (2025-28) which is still outstanding. The employers have tabled an offer of 3% each year, for a period of three years, with years 1 and 2 having an additional 1.25% and 0.4%, subject to written confirmation of additional funding from the Scottish Government. The additional funding has yet to be confirmed and until such times no agreement has been reached.

3.3.1 Financial sustainability continues to provide challenge to the college and more broadly across the sector. Members may be aware of media reporting of this following the publication of the most recent SFC report on Financial Sustainability of Colleges in Scotland 2022-23 to 2027-28. The report paints a stark picture stating that 17 of the 24 colleges were running a deficit in the last financial year and a worsening cash position across the sector.

3.3.2 Colleges Scotland are preparing a draft budget submission for 2026-27 on behalf of the sector outlining 4 scenarios with separate budget asks. These range from

flat cash to investment of £131m to allow the sector to respond to economic opportunities and also address backlog lifecycle maintenance. This was presented at a recent Chairs and Principals meeting. The Scottish Budget is set for 15 January 2026, slightly later than usual which gives a very tight planning window.

4. Resource Implications

Additional resource may be required for any additional skills training for sectors identified in this report. This will require a degree of agility in responding and flex to meet employer demand.

5. Impact on Students

There could be a negative impact on the student experience should the wider sector budget allocation fail to cover inflationary costs in 2026/27. Mitigations will be considered in due course once the budget allocation is known.

6. Risk and Assurance

Financial risks are outlined in the corporate risk register along with mitigations. Whilst the draft budget is yet to be determined, Mitigations will be considered in due course once the budget allocation is known.

7. Equality

There are no equality issues arising as a consequence of this report.

8. Data Protection

There are no direct data protection issues arising as a consequence of this report.

9. Environmental and Sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability issues arising as a consequence of this report.

10. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- i) note the contents of this update report.

11. Further Information

Members can obtain further information on the contents of this report from Joanna Campbell, Principal at JoannaCampbell@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk

Glasgow Kelvin College
JC
September 2025

Appendix 1

Progress – Values and Behaviour's Project

