

Committee Self-Evaluation

1.0 PURPOSE OF PAPER

For discussion

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to present to the Committee with the results of the Committee Self-Evaluation for 2024-25.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Four out of seven members of the Committee responded to the questionnaire and the scores and comments have been collated and anonymised.
- 2.2 On the whole feedback is very positive with all responses at either level three (agree) or four (strongly agree).
- 2.3 Following feedback and discussion across all Committees the questions have been changed slightly from the previous year and we have included a free text box against each score – ‘How do you know this?’. The collated responses are included in Appendix A.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended the Committee note the results and discuss any actions to be taken.

4.0 MAIN BODY OF PAPER

- 4.1 The two lowest scoring areas were B2: F&R Committee members have the right skills and expertise to enable them to challenge effectively and E7: The Committee is aware of its role in terms of its compliance with legislation and regulations and their associated reporting obligations with these. Both areas still scored an average of 3.5 out of 4.
- 4.2 With regard to B2 Members are reminded that there is CDN training to help gain skills in particular areas and of particular relevance for this Committee are the courses on Financial Management for Board Members, All you Need to Know about College Funding and Advanced Financial Decision Making. There are also useful videos on Good Governance and Effective Questioning Skills which may help with effective challenge.
- 4.3 E7 is perhaps harder to provide training for and unfortunately there is no set list of legislation and regulations we have to comply with. The Board Secretary draws together the meeting agendas with the relevant members of the Exec Team and

between them there is the knowledge of what is required and when. There may be an element of 'you don't know what you don't know' when answering this question and perhaps this could be a discussion point at a future meeting – how do Members get this assurance?

5.0 IMPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications from the contents of this report.

5.2 Learner Implications

There are no direct learner implications from the contents of this report.

5.3 Staff Implications

There are no direct staff implications from the contents of this report.

5.4 Equality and Diversity Implications/Equality Impact Assessment

There are no direct equality implications from the contents of this report.

5.5 Sustainability/Environmental Implications

There are no direct sustainability implications from the contents of this report.

6.0 RISK COMMENTARY

- 6.1 There are a number of implications and risks associated with Board Committees not operating as effectively as they could, not least non-compliance and reputational damage.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Members are asked to discuss the results and identify areas for improvement.

I Earp, Board Secretary

Previous Board or College Committee Approvals:

None

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Appendix A

Finance and Resources (F&R) Committee Self-Assessment Review 2024-25

Self-assessment of the work of the F&R Committee is an important part of the whole College's continuous improvement and quality agenda. The results of this questionnaire will be collated and findings reported to the Board.

Please answer each of the following questions using the rating scale shown.

Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4	Not sure 5
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A	The Role of Members	Score	How do you know this?
1	F&R Committee members clearly understand their roles and responsibilities, the part they play individually in the Committee and the Committee's Terms of Reference.	Member 1 4	Revised scheme of delegation for the Committee and TORs for the Committee are clear.
		Member 2 3	Committee members are actively engaged during meetings, asking questions to challenge contents of reports presented by executive members. These conversations demonstrate that members understand their role in ensuring that the decisions made by the College are soundly tested and always in alignment with their strategic plan. We could always do better but overall, I would agree that we understand our roles and responsibilities.
		Member 3 4	Committee operates well with good level of challenge and support.
		Member 4 4	From the conduct, questions and discussion at committee meetings.
		<i>Av Score</i> 3.75	
B	Committee Member Skills and Expertise		
2	F&R Committee members have the right skills and expertise to enable them to challenge effectively.	Member 1 3	The Committee performs well under the effective stewardship of the Chair and challenges the Executive effectively. The College continues to look for someone with formal financial experience/qualifications to add weight to the skills and knowledge of the Committee.

		Member 2 3	The ToR for the committee covers several areas. The various skillset of members is sufficient to provide scrutiny. The College staff have also been great in providing support where needed if further clarity is needed on any of the papers.
		Member 3 4	Good skills mix enables different perspectives.
		Member 4 4	There are some very, very experienced people on the committee but to me it seems all of us have an appropriate level of experience to understand or question the information presented to us and to make suitable decisions.
		<i>Av Score</i> 3.5	
3	The Chair has the appropriate skills and experience and encourages open discussion and effective scrutiny.	Member 1 4	Although the Chair is new in post as Chair, he is an experienced and highly regarded Board member who encourages participations and contributions from Committee members before sharing his own views. The Chair effectively draws out the key issues and challenges the Committee need to address.
		Member 2 3	Wouldn't completely say the Chair has all the skillset in finance. However, the College staff have been great in simplifying board papers to make them easily understandable. The Chair also has pre-committee meetings with the Finance team to seek clarity in any areas that are needed.
		Member 3 4	The Chair clearly prepares well for the committee and offers others the opportunity to comment first.
		Member 4 4	The Chair always has a number of suitable questions for each agenda item but ensures others have the opportunity to ask - Ugo will invite individual contributions, usually before he asks his questions.
		<i>Av Score</i> 3.75	
4	There is training available for Members that is useful and relevant.	Member 1 4	The College has directed all members to the modules available via CDN to enhance their knowledge and skills and to providing bespoke training for members for skills gaps not covered via CDN.

		Member 2 4	Various forms of training are provided by the Board and the College. E.g. L4L, CDN. The College staff also actively support members in whatever way they can.
		Member 3 4	CDN training promoted for all Board members, enhanced by development sessions.
		Member 4 4	Yes, but see also comments below about online training.
		<i>Av Score</i> 4	
C	Behavioural and Operational Aspects of the Committee		
5	Committee business is adequately reported to the College Regional Board both following each meeting and in an annual report.	Member 1 4	There is a well established reporting mechanism for reporting the outcomes from Committee business to the main Board. Significant items such as the accounts and budget will typically receive additional scrutiny from the full board.
		Member 2 4	Board secretary, Ingrid Earp has been very helpful in supporting the committee. She compiles the committee reports that are presented at each Board meeting. The committee also receives support from the likes of Suzie Hartley and Lorraine Sulo who make sure that the meeting minutes are an accurate reflection of what has been discussed.
		Member 3 4	Reports to the Board are appropriately pitched with relevant detail, and enhanced by verbal update.
		Member 4 4	Committee reports to the Board succinctly but comprehensively reflect committee business. Having missed one meeting, I found the report submitted ahead of the Board meeting to bring me up to speed.
		<i>Av Score</i> 4	
D	Information and Support		
6	The F&R Committee receives reports that are	Member 1 3	The reports to Committee have improved and there is clearly a good relationship between the Chair and Executive lead that is contributing to this. There are still

	comprehensive, concise, tailored to their needs, submitted timeously and with a clear direction to Board members on what is being asked of them.		occasions where papers come very late which leave the Committee with less-than-optimal time for effective scrutiny.
		Member 2 4	Completely agree that the reports are comprehensive and compiled in a manner that ensures committee members can understand the contents. For example, majority of the committee members do not have a financial background. This was discussed with the finance team, and they've changed the layout and contents of the finance reports, making it easier to read and understand without compromising on important details.
		Member 3 4	Board papers well formatted and consistent.
		Member 4 4	Papers arrive about a week in advance and in a regular format that aids navigation.
		Av Score 3.75	
E	Activities and Functions		
7	The Committee is aware of its role in terms of its compliance with legislation and regulations and their associated reporting obligations with these.	Member 1 3	Although all of this is clearly documented the College Board could do more to remind or re-enforce the Committee members of their compliance and reporting obligations.
		Member 2 3	Very similar to question 1 above. We could do better in understating our roles in compliance with legislation and regulations. The information is available, and committee members will be encouraged to refresh themselves on the contents.
		Member 3 4	This is clear in ToRs.
		Member 4 4	Yes, I believe so as in my answers to 1 and 2 above and I think governance is a College strength generally. Finding it slightly harder to pinpoint the evidence but that might be more of a learning or memory gap for me to fill.
		Av Score 3.5	
F	Review of Committee Effectiveness		
8	The Committee assess its performance and effectiveness on a regular basis.	Member 1 3	This remains a work in progress both within this Committee and between the Committees. While the Committee does review its effectiveness the means by which this happens remains under ongoing review.

		Member 2 4	We have an annual appraisal process (as evidenced by this survey). Besides that, committee members are encouraged to continuously appraise the performance of the committee and suggest ways of improving it where possible. One of the outcomes of this process has been the reshaping of the format of the finance reports as mentioned earlier.
		Member 3 4	Now in regular cycle of self-assessment.
		Member 4 4	Annual self-evaluation.
		<i>Av Score</i> 3.75	

Qualitative Questions

1. What does the Committee do well?

Effective scrutiny of financial papers and reports presented to the Committee. Meetings are effectively Chaired with evident pre meeting preparation between the Chair and the Executive lead. Effective contributions and participation from all members of the Committee.

We are actively engaged during meetings, discussing papers, challenging College decisions and providing suggestions/support where needed. We work very well as a team. The balance of members on the committee (non-executive, executive and College staff) also ensures that the right skillset is always available at meetings.

Really good focus on what matters.

I like the approach to addressing risk – it's right that there's scrutiny and mitigation but I feel it's practically balanced with other competing needs which need to be considered and it feels like positive risk-taking is something that sits fairly comfortably within the committee (as it does with the Board as a whole).

The chair is inclusive and ensures everyone has the opportunity to contribute.

2. What does the Committee need to do better or different to improve?

Source a qualified accountant to provide additional skills and knowledge that may provide additional scrutiny and rigour to the Committees work

We could do better in understanding our roles and responsibilities with respect to the Terms of Reference, and our role in terms of its compliance with legislation and regulations and their associated reporting obligations with these. As mentioned, this information is available and going forward, committee members will be encouraged to refresh themselves on the contents of any documents out there.

Really, nothing is jumping out in relation to this.

3. With all colleagues now having completed their CDN training modules [or verified they were competent in these areas of governance] what additional training might improve the efficiency or effectiveness of the Committee?

I can't comment on this. This needs to be addressed by the members of the Committee themselves

As a committee, we probably need to discuss this internally and provide areas we think we do need more support. I believe the agreement was for members to complete the CDN training modules and then get back to the Board Chair and Secretary with any further training needs. This will be reinforced at the next meeting, so we can have a clear idea on the specific training needs of the committee.

I've not checked if it's possible to revisit modules that have already been completed. Online training is really convenient and economical but my own experience and that of many people I know is that it doesn't necessarily have the same impact of in-person training. So, if it is possible to revisit modules, maybe it's worth reminding Board members that it can be used as refresher training too. Constructive feedback is always something I value – if there's advice or signposting on how I could contribute more effectively then I'd appreciate being told. I'm not saying they would need it, but I assume other members would find this useful too.

If you have answered not sure or disagree to any statement, please provide a short explanation as to why to assist in finding a way forward to improve the Committee's performance.

Please use this space if you would like to provide any further comments.