**The Lanarkshire Board**

**Self – Evaluation Report 2024 and Board Development Plan 2024-25**

**“The Board must keep its effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process. There should also be an externally facilitated evaluation of its effectiveness every three to five years.”**

*Extract from the Code of Good Governance for Scotland’s Colleges*

**Self-Evaluation Review**

Over a 3-month period in the spring of 2024 the Lanarkshire Board undertook a self-evaluation exercise on its effectiveness as the Regional Strategic Body for Lanarkshire as required by the Code of Good Governance for Scotland’s Colleges.

The assessment is based on the principles contained in the sector’s Code of Good Governance; the Board Effectiveness questionnaire (Appendix 3) reflects the various sections in the Code. The sections take on board the principles of the Code but are adapted to the position of The Lanarkshire Board as a multi college region.

**Background**

The Lanarkshire Board is the Regional Strategic Body (RSB) for Lanarkshire comprising New College Lanarkshire (NCL) and South Lanarkshire College (SLC). SLC undertakes a separate evaluation of its own Board and retains responsibility for staffing and estates (The Lanarkshire Order 2014).

The gathering of information from RSB members was an iterative process undertaken over a number of weeks.

The **1:1 sessions with the Chair** were initiated in March 2024 and 99% completed by the end of May 2024. The missing sessions being because of the work commitments of the Board members concerned and are scheduled to take place as soon as their availability allows. The outline questionnaire for 1:1 discussions and Personal Development Plans, is attached for information at Appendix 2.

The survey of the **Board’s operational effectiveness** and **RSB Committees were** circulated together in May 2024 to all committee members and the chairs of the respective committees.

The **Board operational effectiveness** survey asked members to provide comment on specific aspects of Board operation as well as offering the opportunity for Board members to reflect on Board activity over the previous 12 months and identify their ambition for the Board in the coming 12 months. The questionnaire is at Appendix 3.

The questionnaire relating to the **RSB Committees** is attached at Appendix 4.

The comments and suggestions gathered in the 1:1 sessions, the Board Effectiveness questionnaire and the survey of the RSB Committees are collated into the **Board Development Plan** at Appendix 6.

The Senior Independent Board Member carried out an **appraisal of the Regional Chair** and contacted all members of the Board for their views. A summary of his report is at Appendix 5.

This report covers:

1. The Board self-evaluation process undertaken during 2024;

2. Feedback from the 1:1 discussions with the Regional Chair;

3. Analysis and findings of the Board Operational Effectiveness survey, section by section, including general comment on the structure of the Committees;

4. Feedback on the effectiveness of the 4 main RSB committees;

5. Appraisal of the Regional Chair (Confidential);

6. The Board Development Plan for 2024-25;

7. Next steps;

8. List of appendices:

* Appendix 1 The Lanarkshire Board self-evaluation process 2024;
* Appendix 2 Outline questionnaire for 1:1 interviews and Personal Development

Plans;

* Appendix 3 The Board Operating effectiveness questionnaire;
* Appendix 4 The Committee operation and structure questionnaire;
* Appendix 5 Appraisal of the Regional Chair (Confidential);
* Appendix 6 Board Development Plan 2024-2025

1. **Board self- evaluation process: Appendix 1**

The stages of the self- evaluation process are described in more detail in Appendix 1.

We have included the following broad areas which we believe meet the requirements of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland’s Colleges:

* Personal Development Plans for Board members following 1:1 discussions with the Regional Chair;
* A separate evaluation of the effectiveness and operation of the 4 main RSB Committees;
* A full Board operational effectiveness review including a general question on the Committee structure covering:
  + leadership;
  + quality of student experience;
  + accountability and staff governance;
  + overall effectiveness;
  + relationships and collaboration.
* An evaluation of the Board Chair carried out by the Senior Independent Member;
* Board development Plan: next steps to address the issues and ideas generated in the different sections of the evaluation.

The full Board operational effectiveness questionnaire elicited responses from **12** members of The Lanarkshire Board. At the time of the survey 2 of the 5 Board members from SLC elected not to respond to the questionnaire. In the autumn of 2023, 6 new Board members were recruited to the RSB, 5 of whom were from the private sector and unfamiliar with the processes and procedures in the education sector. They were very new in post, therefore, when the Board self-evaluation process was initiated in 2024 and were not in a position to reflect on the Board’s performance over the preceding 12 months. Following the resignation for personal reasons of the newly elected Student President in the autumn of 2023, the elections had to be re-run. There was therefore some delay before the new NCL Student President took up her post and her place on the RSB.

In addition, at the start of the evaluation process the status on the decision on the dissolution of the Region, as recommended by SFC in its report ‘Coherence and Sustainability: A review of Scotland’s Colleges and Universities Phase One Report: Insights to Develop Further’, published in October 2020, was unknown. In May 2024 the Minister announced in Parliament his decision to proceed with the consultation on dissolving the Lanarkshire RSB and the Glasgow Regional Colleges Board. In effect this is likely to mean that the current structure of the RSB is removed and that New College Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire College will become independent of each other with their own Boards of Management. The timescale is unconfirmed, however the Minister anticipated that it would take 6-9 months.

1. **Feedback on the 1:1s and Personal Development Plans**

Questionnaire/outline for discussion at Appendix 2

The opportunity for face to face meetings was broadly welcomed, although the convenience of Zoom to access meetings was acknowledged. Remote meetings were considered particularly counterproductive for the newest members of the Board for which this format did not provide the opportunity for informal discussion with longer serving members which would normally have taken place around face to face meetings. Some found this had proved to be a considerable drawback to their understanding of the sector and the more complex issues concerning the region considered by the Board and inhibited their contributions to meetings.

**Follow up actions to address the points raised in the discussion sessions**:

**Induction:**

Given the number of new Board members the comments on the induction process was common in the feedback during the 1:1 discussions. All acknowledged the value of the induction they had been given but would welcome additional induction sessions to familiarise themselves with the operating context and procedures in the public sector as well as more specifically in the college sector in Scotland.

**Information sessions:**

There was particular Interest in information sessions on:

* finances in the college sector and how they are organised, specifically income streams;
* the organisation of the college sector in Scotland and the roles of partner agencies;
* sector jargon and acronyms;
* regional strategic planning;
* cyber security.

**Additional actions:**

* Reintroduction of the buddy/mentor scheme;
* In addition to sessions organised by the Board Secretary of the RSB, ensure members have the opportunity to attend development modules such as those offered by the College Development Network on governance, and relevant modules provided by the NCL Staff Development Academy;
* Where possible ensure there is opportunity around meetings and events to allow for Board members to get to know each other;
* Investigate how to improve the presentation of papers for meetings and ensure that a context/summary is always provided;
* Follow up with the Principal and his senior team on the development of more regular strategy sessions with the Board;
* Develop closer links with the NCL senior team to gain better insight into potential strategic issues requiring Board decisions;
* Improve updating members on key issues between Board meetings, especially around decisions taken in the Chairs’ Committee where time constraints had not enabled full Board discussion prior to the event.

1. **Feedback on the Board Effectiveness questionnaire**

A copy of the questionnaire is attached at Appendix 3

***Please note that the questionnaire has a rating scale 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)***

**Summary**: The overall feedback on the Board’s operational effectiveness was positive; the majority of the responses were “1”s and “2”s (strongly agree/agree) with a smattering of “3”s. Taking into account that approximately one third of the Board members are newly appointed (ie within the last 6-9 months), this is a very encouraging finding.

Alongside the “3”s, the comments made by some Board members indicate the areas we need to focus on in order to maintain and improve Board performance. The comments will also guide us on how we can help the newer Board members to engage confidently in Board discussions.

**SECTION 1 of the questionnaire: THE BOARD’S LEADERSHIIP AND STRATEGY ROLE**

This section was subdivided into:

* ethical leadership
* strategic leadership and
* corporate social responsibility

The majority of Board members scored “1” or “2” (strongly agree/agree); one scored “3” in the 3 subdivisions in this section but there were no scores “4” or “5”. In addition to being asked to rate Board performance, Board members were invited to give their comments on “what we did well in the last 12 months” and “developments I would like to see in the next 12 months”.

Among the comments on the leadership section of the survey some examples are:

**What we have done well over the last 12 months**:

* Working well with South Lanarkshire College presenting as a region;
* The clerk to the board keeps on top of declarations of interest and this is on every meeting agenda over and above the data collection exercise;
* We have continued to work very well with the NCL Management Team/Executive Board during a time of severe difficulty within the FE Sector as a whole;
* The strategic side in my opinion is very open and inclusive. The range of experience in the group is fit for purpose;
* The Board responded rapidly to a range of challenging circumstances which arose across the year;
* In particular the use of the Chairs’ group to tackle situations quickly worked well;
* Despite the grim financial position and outlook this year the Board has continued to be outward looking supporting new exciting partnerships with a clear focus on creating greater learning opportunities for Lanarkshire’s young people.

**Developments I would like to see in the next 12 months:**

* The positive and effective integration of the TU nominated Board Members;
* As I am in my first year, it is challenging to look at Developments at this current time, I would hope with more experience, to be able to offer more, however at this time I am not able to confirm any developments;
* While the two colleges have continued to work well together – certainly compared to the majority of previous post-regionalisation years – there needs to be a conclusion to the long-running dialogue on the dissolution of the current Lanarkshire Region operating model.

**SECTION 2 of the questionnaire: QUALITY OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

The subsections covered here are:

* student engagement
* relevant and high-quality learning
* quality monitoring and oversight.

At each of its meetings the Board is updated on student projects and activities by the Students’ Association Presidents from both colleges; the Board has maintained its strong relationship with both Students’ Associations. The Chair has an open access policy to all Board members, especially the Student Presidents, should they wish to raise any issues with him outwith regular Board and Board Committee meetings.

Feedback in the questionnaire from Board members was very positive in relation to the Student Associations’ contributions with some constructive ideas for further development. All questionnaire respondees marked this section with “1” and “2” (“1” = strongly agree/agree) with one “3” in the section on ‘quality monitoring and oversight’.

Comments in relation to the quality of the student experience section include:

**What we have done well over the last 12 months:**

* In my opinion, the student experience is the focus from the meetings I have been involved in. It is clear to see that the students are the primary focus, ensuring that the facilities, the support and the services are fit for purpose;
* At a time of ongoing cost of living concerns, the College has continued to provide and enable very strong social and community based activities – provision of meals, in-house charity clothing exchange and the ongoing work of the Foundation are examples;
* The student presidents’ reports are fantastic, this is about the only good news as board members we hear on a regular basis due to the financial issues being so heavy;
* Promotion of positive partnerships to support learning experiences.

**Developments I would like to see in the next 12 months:**

* The continuing positive interaction between the Board, staff and students, particularly at a time when finances and thus delivery are severely impacted upon;
* As I am in my first year, it is challenging to look at Developments at this current time, I would hope with more experience, to be able to offer more, however at this time I am not able to confirm any developments.

**SECTION 3 of the questionnaire: ACCOUNTABILITY**

This section has subsections:

* Accountability and Delegation arrangements
* Risk Management
* Committee Structure

Predominant responses in the 3 subsections are “1”s and “2”s, (strongly agree/agree) however there are several “3”s in the first two subsections given by 1 individual Board member. These could be interpreted be as ‘don’t knows’, or that the Board’s performance in these areas is perceived as average and needs to be tightened up. Further information is required before appropriate action can be decided.

The **Committee structure** was supported by the majority of respondees with “1”s and “2”s. There was one “3” and one “4”. The “3” was given by one of the new Board members who may have felt that they were not in a position to respond definitively at this stage, and the “4” needs to be the subject of further investigation.

Please see section 4 of this report for the detailed feedback on the 4 main RSB committees.

Comments in relation to Accountability include:

**What we have done well over the last 12 months:**

* Papers have been generally in plenty of time to allow scrutiny prior to meetings. Having the papers on Teams makes it easier as no longer need to print them all;
* Despite the various difficulties being faced across the FE Sector, I believe that the Board, in tandem with the college Management Teams, has continued to operate in a professional and wholly appropriate manner, all for the benefit of staff, learners and the businesses we aim to support;
* Everyone that I have come across within the Board Meetings has shown a commitment and dedication to display a supportive, engaging network. Everyone is engaging and wants to be there, which can be the greatest challenge. Open communication at this time seems to be the key.

**Developments I would like to see over the next 12 months**:

* A stronger show of confidence in and support for the Sector from the SFC and the SG. Currently I do not see this as being as robust as I believe it could/should be and thus adds to the pressures being faced at local and national levels by Boards and their Committees;
* As I am in my first year, it is challenging to look at Developments at this current time, I would hope with more experience, to be able to offer more, however at this time I am not able to confirm any developments.

**Staff Governance**

The majority of responses in this section were either “1” or “2” with two Board members giving a “3”.

Comments include:

**What we have done well over the last 12 months**

* I believe that we have provided strong and effective support to the Management Teams/Executive Boards and that this, consequently, has brought broader benefits to those in the Lanarkshire Region;
* I have had a meeting with the principal as part of my onboarding, which demonstrated an enthusiasm in engagement and a desire to have open communication. From what I have seen in my limited time, there is nothing negative towards staff engagement and governance;
* Senior Independent Board member makes himself available to discuss any concerns that are not deemed appropriate to discuss as staff rep with Chair or Exec Board.

**Developments I would like to see over the next 12 months:**

* The positive and effective integration of the TU nominated Board members will be a crucial element going forward;
* Board members making themselves known amongst the college staff & trade unions.

**SECTION 4 of the questionnaire: EFFECTIVENESS**

Sections in this part of the survey were:

* The Regional Chair
* Board members
* Board Secretary
* Board member recruitment, induction and development
* Board evaluation and Development Plan

Feedback on the role of the Regional Chair was overwhelmingly positive with “1”s and “2”s, as were the comments on the knowledge and skills of Board members and the role and effectiveness of the Board Secretary. One Board member gave a number of “3”s in their responses in this section.

The question which received the most negative response was on Board member recruitment, Induction and Development ‘All new board members take part in effective, formal induction process which can be tailored to the needs of individuals. Induction also emerged as a concern in the 1:1s with the Chair. The Chair and the Board Secretary/Governance Professional are actively looking into how this can be improved to the satisfaction of new Board members.

Comments include:

**What we have done well over the last 12 months**

* The chair offers clear guidance, makes himself available and is inclusive in the way that he operates. He is happy to share his experience, while at the same time is open to listen to other people’s opinions and points of view. This inclusive approach makes is stronger and easier to engage well. The secretary keeps you informed and always available to help with an issues or challenges, ensuring everyone is included and informed. The recruitment I have just gone through was including and positive;
* Recruited to, renewed and refreshed both membership of the Lanarkshire Board and its various Committees, while at the same time continued to deal professionally with and wholly appropriately to the numerous difficulties being faced locally and nationally across colleges and the FE Sector;
* Agendas and papers have been sent to board members in a timely fashion allowing better scrutiny prior to meetings. Board Secretary’s knowledge is fantastic and a great asset to the Board Chair and all board members;
* Successful recruitment of new board members with further familiarisation opportunities for new and existing board members planned.

**Developments I would like to see over the next 12 months**

* A conclusion to the dialogue around the dissolution of the current Lanarkshire Region operating arrangements. While it’s been some time now since a decision was made to end the model in place currently, very little progress appears to have been made. For the benefit of the colleges and the region itself, forward movement is paramount;
* A more structured and robust support/mentor/engagement programme for Board Members – particularly given the substantial recruitment exercise that took place earlier in the year;
* As part of the induction process, maybe informal meetings outwith the committee meetings for new members especially as this can be daunting in the first year of being a member;
* I would like to see some development in admin, for example investigate more efficient ways of working such as Docusign for expenses and to have board packs in one file with fewer last minute papers;
* Implement mentoring scheme for new and existing board members linked to expressed needs.

**SECTION 5 of the questionnaire: RELATIONSHIPS AND COLLABORATION**

The responses to this section were very positive, mainly “1”s and “2”s. One Board member gave two “3”s against ‘effective involvement with local and regional planning’ and ‘ensures effective partnership working with local and national bodies’.

Comments include:

**What we have done well over the last 12 months**

* The chair keeps people informed of what is happening in the bigger scheme of things with feedback from other bodies, organisation and regionally to ensure that we are able to understand the focus and priorities. There is no exclusion of omission of information;
* Working Closely with SLC Senior Team;
* Under current funding constraints the board promotes well the finances at the heart of the student;
* The Lanarkshire RSB does fully consider the needs of learners and the suitability of provision.

**Developments I would like to see over the next 12 months**

* Again, at present I have seen nothing that would make me reduce the scores overall, hopefully with more experience and exposure, I will be able to offer a strong validation and add more value to the board;
* I think the staff promote these relationships and the board can find ways to improve on this;
* Further consideration needs to be given to the future of each college, as South Lanarkshire College has been impacted more negatively than its regional counterpart by the reduction in funding and credits, so risk mitigations should be considered. However, this is very difficult as NCL is SLC’s funding body which would conversely mean having a negative impact on NCL should SLC receive additional funding.

**4. Feedback on the Committee structure**

A sample copy of the questionnaire is attached at Appendix 4

***Please note that the questionnaire has a rating scale 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). A copy of the relevant Committee Terms of Reference was circulated with this questionnaire.***

There are 4 main RSB Committees which meet quarterly before regular Board meetings:

* Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)
* Curriculum, Student Affairs and Outcome Committee (CSAO)
* Finance Committee
* Resource and General Purposes Committee (RGP)

There are also 3 ad hoc committees which meet as necessary:

* Chairs’ Committee
* Nomination and Search Committee
* Remuneration Committee

**Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)**

Responses to the questionnaire for the ARC were very strong; members are happy with the way this committee is chaired and how it operates

Comments include:

**What we have done well over the last 12 months:**

* We have ensured that the risks on the risk register are fully reflective of what is and isn’t within our control, particularly in the financial area.

**Developments I would like to see in the next year**:

* I would like to see us have more effective close out on audit recommendations to ensure they are all completed on time and do not feature again on follow up internal audit reports.

**Curriculum, Student Affairs and Outcomes Committee (CSAO)**

Overall members think this is a strong committee which is well run. There was one comment regarding ‘Ensuring Colleges’ funds to support students’ welfare including Bursaries, Hardship Funds and Access Funds are utilised effectively’ which indicated that this member felt the CSAO should give more attention to this area. Another member thought there were several areas, scoring “3”, where the committee’s work could be strengthened. It is important to follow this up to ensure the CSAO works most effectively on behalf of the students.

Comments include:

**What we have done well in the last 12 months:**

* The revised format of the committee works very well and is a very thorough committee;
* Ensured that the main focus has been to facilitate a student led committee to prioritise the key issues pertaining to students;
* The committee has developed an approach which enables and encourages curriculum leads to demonstrate improvements in the quality of learning and teaching and the positive impacts on students. Reports and presentation demonstrate approaches which reflect critical/honest reviews and plans for improvement.

**Development I would like to see in the next year:**

* More work required to streamline course provision to ensure the courses which are more likely to have positive outcomes are resourced. Work to be done to secure more student buy-in to this;
* In this last year the committee has begun to develop a growing awareness of the financial challenges within the Region. This should continue.

**Finance Committee**

Committee members’ responses were very broadly in the “1”s category ‘strongly agree’, however there were some “3”s mainly in relation to ‘is the committee forward looking’, and ‘do members have sufficient knowledge to contribute’. The comments on this were helpful. One member gave a “4” to ‘Members feel they have sufficient knowledge to contribute meaningfully. Where there is a personal development/mentoring requirement it is addressed appropriately’. This concern is currently being addressed by the Regional Chair and the Board Secretary with the re-introduction of the Mentoring/Buddying scheme alongside the planned information sessions for all Board members. The quality and accuracy of the minutes of the meeting were strongly supported, dissatisfaction was expressed by the nature of the reports received by the Finance Committee. The Regional Chair will discuss how to address this with the Chair of the Finance Committee.

Comments include:

**What we have done well in the last 12 months:**

* Under the current financial crisis the sector as a whole is in the finance committee operates in a supportive manner to the EB [Executive Board] of the college. It has been difficult times but as a committee we make decisions based on the information provided by the EB;
* The committee has worked diligently to ensure compliance with all external timescales.

**Developments I would like to see in the next year:**

* I would like to see more strategic development days to move forward and think out the box. These days can be valuable;
* As I do not have a technical financial background it would be helpful to receive more narrative reports which highlight the key issues emerging in the accounting period.

**Resources and General Purposes Committee (RGP)**

Responses were mainly “1”s and “2”s though there were several “3”s. These were in relation to being forward looking and around engagement with strategic partners but also to regional aspects such as receiving reports from South Lanarkshire College, the assigned college, particularly around estates, although this is a function wholly within the remit of SLC, nevertheless the RSB, via the RGP, should receive reports of SLC estates activity as defined by the current legislation.

**What have we done well in the last 12 months**

* Refreshed and renewed Committee membership as a result of successful recruitment of new Members to the Lanarkshire Board. To date the new Committee Members have contributed positively to the sessions and as they become more knowledgeable and versed in activities, subjects and their roles related to them, it is anticipated that this will develop further.
* The Committee, its Chair and its Members consider and make a significant contribution across a wide spectrum of College activities. This requires not only a solid knowledge base, but also a willingness to listen and to be as adaptable as possible to help ensure the best possible outcome for the College, its staff and its learners. Notwithstanding the current learning curve of new Members, I believe that the Committee makes an informed, appropriate and positive contribution to College “life”.
* The committee is open to discussion, it is open to listening to opinions in an open way. We are given all the relevant information and people are very open to communication and support when people are struggling with concepts. The education sector is different from commercial sectors and it can be challenging when you start to work within this environment, however people are very open and supportive to ensure information is make clear and informative to ensure everyone is able to support and openly offer opinions.

**Developments I would like to see in the next year:**

* From a wider perspective, we need to see progress on/a culmination of the Lanarkshire Regional operating model dialogue;
* Greater clarity and operation around a “lead” Committee structure. We have continued to see topics being discussed at more than one Committee, the possible outcome being that different perspectives are being taken. Examples of this include i) expenditure and related progress around the Motherwell Campus issues, ii) the repurposing of estates maintenance budgets to enable IT equipment replacement/enhancement and iii) the nursery review and outcomes;
* A couple of the gradings above relating to engagement with SLC are showing as “3”. I have marked them in this way because the Committee’s remit states clearly that it should receive appropriate reports from the Assigned College. It doesn’t, despite attempts by the Committee Chair during the year to change this but SLC does provide reports for consideration by the RSB at its meetings. We need to either ensure it happens or change the Committee remit.
* I have been included in both Health and Safety meetings and invited to be involved in the tender process for transport. This has allowed me to gain more information in respect to the operations of the college. One area I think I could offer value is within HR. HR can be the backbone if the business, however it can also be a distraction if it’s not proactively engaging the workforce. I feel that I still have a lot to learn in respect to the operations of the college, however this will come through time.

**5. Regional Chair’s Annual Performance Appraisal: Appendix 5**

This was undertaken by the Senior Independent Member. His full report is at Appendix 5.

**Summary, June 2023/24**

As noted in previous summaries, the challenges being faced then continued into the 2023/24 year and indeed, remain with us still. While not limited to such as the dissolution of the current Lanarkshire operating arrangements – the Lanarkshire Order, associated regional needs and the financial situation affecting the whole of the FE Sector in Scotland, their ongoing inclusion has undoubtedly been the source of continuing concern and uncertainty.

Notwithstanding this, it remains clear that the Chair continues to be seen as an effective leader of the Board, that he communicates well and inspires surety and confidence in his governance and guidance around procedures and issues. The Board has welcomed several new Members during the year and the Chair’s attitude and engagement have been both welcomed and recognised, as all have endeavoured to increase their knowledge and to contribute ever more meaningfully. This has been true also of the Chair’s relationships with the more experienced Board Members and the College’s Executive Board, where his availability, knowledge and input around such as the Motherwell Campus build issues, the development of the NCL Foundation and the financial matters being faced, have all been appreciated and beneficial.

It is acknowledged that more requires to be done, however and steps have been and are continuing to be taken to enable further progress and improvement. And as, hopefully, greater clarity asserts itself around, for example, the dissolution of the Lanarkshire Order, the pressing sectoral financial matters and Post-16 Education Reform, these will prove invaluable to Board Members, staff and learners across the College and the region as a whole.

**6. Board Development Plan 2024-25: Appendix 6**

Arising from the questionnaires (Appendices 2, 3 and 4) a number of constructive suggestions were put forward by Board members:

* + To broaden and strengthen the Induction programme for new Board members;
  + To revise and reintroduce the mentoring/buddying programme;
  + To provide opportunities for social interaction between Board members around meetings and events where possible;
  + To have Information sessions on:
    - Sector context in Scotland;
    - Sector jargon and acronyms;
    - Sector finances and how they are constructed;
    - Partner agencies, their structure and how they interact with colleges;
    - Cyber security;
  + To work with the senior team at NCL to ensure members have sufficient and appropriate information to enable them to participate in discussions at the Board and in committees;
  + To consider better interaction between the Board Committees on key issues especially in relation to finance and risk where crossover meetings between the Finance and Audit and Risk Committees could be beneficial;
  + How to involve more Board members in important matters outwith Board meetings;
  + Having strategy sessions outwith the regular Board meetings which of necessity are heavily laden with process issues leaving little time for discussion and the generation of new ideas;
  + Closer collaboration between the Lanarkshire colleges and the region’s agencies;
  + Setting a defined annual meeting date for the Remuneration Committee;
  + To review how papers are presented to the Board and to ensure there is a cover sheet setting out the context with clear direction for the Board on the action needed.

**7. Next steps following approval by the RSB:**

1. To put in place regular information sessions as noted in the sections above, and to advise members of forthcoming events run by third parties;
2. To research and implement additional methods of induction for new Board and Committee members;
3. To work with the Principal and his senior team on future strategy events with Board members;
4. To investigate ways to improve the presentation of papers at Board and Committee meetings;
5. To consider how to we engage the wider board members in a more active and participative manner;
6. To continue to engage closely with, and give support to, the students through the Students Association;
7. To find more timely ways to keep Board members informed of developments, especially when decisions have been taken in the Chairs’ Committee because of the need for speedy action.

**8. Appendices:**

Appendix 1 The Lanarkshire Board self-evaluation process 2024

Appendix 2 Outline questionnaire for 1:1 interviews and Personal Development Plans

Appendix 3 The Board Operating effectiveness questionnaire

Appendix 4 The Committee operation and structure questionnaire

Appendix 5 Chair’s appraisal undertaken by the Senior Independent Board Member

Appendix 6 Board Development Plan 2024-25