

Board of Management

MINUTES of the BOARD OF MANAGEMENT ONLINE MEETING held via Microsoft Teams on 26 March 2024.

PRESENT: Mark Sheridan, Chris O'Neil, Dee Bird, Rojan Kumar Subramani, Michael Beveridge, Sally Blyth, Russell Edwards, Stephen Sheridan, Innis Montgomery, Wendy Grindle, Janette Campbell, Jane Davidson, James Millar, Arvinder Kainth, Matthew Millward, Gillian Galloway, Donald MacKenzie

CHAIR: Mark Sheridan

APOLOGIES: Amy Goodbrand, Elizabeth Keegan, Holly Pearce, Pauline Tuthill

IN ATTENDANCE: Vice Principal – Curriculum, Student Experience and Quality
Vice Principal – Curriculum, Operations and External Relations
Director of Finance and Estates
Director of Centre for Living Sustainability
Director of Research - Biodiversity and Freshwater
Operations and Commercial Manager
Information Systems Manager
Governance Officer

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Closed Session – Board Creative Space (CONFIDENTIAL)**FUTURES GROUP**

The Chair introduced the closed session, during which the remits of the newly created Futures Group will be presented to the Board.

Closed CONFIDENTIAL Session – Futures Group Presentation.

A confidential closed session took place (Note of Session: CSN-01-032024).

Declarations of Interests

Dr Dee Bird and Director of Centre for Living Sustainability & Director of Research - Biodiversity and Freshwater joined the meeting.

No declarations of interest, statements of connections or transparency statements were noted.

1. MINUTES

a.) Meeting of the Board of Management held on 13 February 2024

Decision: The minutes of the Board of Management Meeting held on 13 February 2024 were **AGREED** as a correct record and were **APPROVED**.

b.) Closed Session Note (CSN-01-022024) held on 13 February 2024

Decision: The Closed Session Note (CSN-01-022024) of the Board of Management Meeting held on 13 February 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED**.

c.) Closed Session Note (CSN-02-022024) held on 13 February 2024

Decision: The Closed Session Note (CSN-02-022024) of the Board of Management Meeting held on 13 February 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED**.

d.) Confidential Note (CN-BoM-01-022024) held on 13 February 2024

ITEM 1.a

Decision: The Closed Session Note (CN-BoM-01-022024) of the Board of Management Meeting held on 13 February 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED**.

e.) Meeting of the Board of Management Board Away Day held on 14 February 2024

Decision: The minutes of the Board of Management Board Away Day held on 14 February 2024 were **AGREED** as a correct record and were **APPROVED**.

f.) Confidential Note (CN-BAD-01-022024) held on 14 February 2024

Decision: The Closed Session Note (CN-BAD-01-022024) of the Board of Management Board Away Day held on 14 February 2024 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED**.

Innis Montgomery joined the meeting.

2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

- **Confidential Annex - Partnership Working – ONGOING** - The Principal advised the Board that we are continuing to look at partnership working. The Board noted that a collective decision had been made to cease the move to ITrent and that we are currently going through the procurement process again, in conjunction with others in the partnership, in respect of a combined Payroll and HR System. Suzanne Stewart, Information Development Manager, has recently made recommendations to data sharing model.
- **UHI 2024 – ONGOING** - The Governance Officer will circulate to the Board a note of the UHI 24 Curriculum Update, which was provided to staff as part of the Wee Connect update in May 2023.
Workshop will take place on 19 January 2024.
- **Finance Training Sem 2 – ONGOING** - The Governance Officer will arrange a further follow up session for Board Members. Speaking to Rhona Morrison about another session to be offered in Sem 2.

- **Finance Training HISA – COMPLETE** - Training session with Finance Team to be organised for HISA Board members.
Session to take place in February 2024.
Action: Training session took place on 20 February 2024.
Decision: It was **AGREED** that this item could be removed from the list.
- **Principal’s Report: Enquiring Minds Scheme Update – ONGOING** - An update on Enquiring Minds project to be presented to the Board during one of the Board Creative Space sessions. Session will be provided during June meeting.
- **UHI Inverness College Annual Audit by Deloitte – ONGOING** - We are in the first year of contract with the new provider. An action has been proposed to monitor and evaluate the failure by new external auditors Deloitte to complete audit reports on time.
- **Health & Safety induction module – ONGOING** - Health & Safety module for Board induction to be looked at and updated if needed.
- **Contract Strategy Review – Cleaning Services Tender – COMPLETE** - Tender documents to be emailed to F&GP Committee Members for approval.
Action: Approved as Chair’s Action on 21/02/2024.
Decision: It was **AGREED** that this item could be removed from the list.
- **Futures Group: Principal’s Plan – ONGOING** - Principal’s 5-year plan to be shared with Board members only.

3. POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

a.) Anti-fraud & Corruption Policy

The Board had been advised that this policy had been subject to FG&P Committee review who had recommended it to the Board for final approval.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy.

b.) Health & Safety Policy

The Board was advised that this policy had not been to a Committee for review. The Board noted that this policy had been developed in line with sector policies and has been subject to an annual review and approval process.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Health & Safety Policy.

c.) Special Leave Policy and Procedure

The Board had been advised that this policy had been subject to HR Committee review and had not been approved as Committee members sought clarification regarding financial implications of this policy. Since then, more information had been provided and circulated to Committee members via email and the policy had been approved and recommended to the Board for final approval.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Special Leave Policy and Procedure.

d.) Information Security Policy

The Board had been advised that this policy had been subject to Audit Committee review and had not been approved as Committee members sought clarification regarding changes in legislation and job titles of this policy. Since then, more information had been provided and circulated to Committee members via email and the policy had been approved and recommended to the Board for final approval.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Special Leave Policy and Procedure.

4. STUDENT RECRUITMENT REPORT

Information Systems Manager joined the meeting.

Information Systems Manager spoke to her report to provide the Board of Management with an overview of current recruitment for 2024/25 which states

that the number of FE and HE applications is greater than in the previous 3 years. It had been highlighted that both, FE and HE applications, are at the highest level since 2020, with HE numbers exceeding the HE funded target.

Information Systems Manager confirmed that HE recruitment numbers look better than last year and contributed this trend to staff's hard work, involvement in open days and a robust application process in place.

The Board welcomed the report and expressed their thanks to all staff and teams involved in achieving such positive recruitment numbers.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Student Recruitment report.

Information Systems Manager left the meeting.

5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Principal spoke to his CONFIDENTIAL report (CSN-02-032024) which provided the Board with an overview of new and continuing activity.

6. FUTURES GROUP (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Chair of the Futures Group spoke to her CONFIDENTIAL verbal update (CSN-03-032024) which provided the Board with an overview of the terms of references of this new subgroup.

7. FINANCE SERVICES

Director of Finance and Estates spoke to his report to provide an update to the Committee on the current forecast position at January 2024, in terms of the revenue and capital finance monitoring for the 12 months ended 31 July 2024.

Overall, the management accounts position is currently forecasting a draft operational deficit of £1.044 million, (assuming pay inflation at 5% for 2022/23 and 3% for 2023/24), compared to the original budget deficit of £418,000.

The Chair thanked the Director of Finance and Estates for his detailed verbal update.

The Board expressed their concerns regarding reported budget deficit and the Director of Finance and Estates confirmed that several measures had been put in place to mitigate the risk and decrease the deficit: budget review meetings with budget holders, looking at potential savings for next year and working hard to reduce the staffing cost.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Finance Services verbal report.

8. HEALTH & SAFETY – QUARTER 1 – 2024

Director of Research - Biodiversity and Freshwater left the meeting.

The Principal spoke to the report on behalf of Health, Safety and Sustainability Manager which provided the Board with an update on Health and Safety compliance during the period 01/12/23 to 29/02/24. The report highlighted the incident reporting, fire and evacuations plans, ongoing training and the review of current procedures.

The Chair thanked the Principal for the detailed report.

The Board expressed concerns regarding higher level of injuries reported due to new reporting system being introduced. It had also been suggested that this detailed level of reporting details could be in the future presented to the Committees, with a general summary being presented to the Board.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Health & Safety Quarter 1 2024 report.

9. GOVERNANCE UPDATE

a) Schedule of Meetings for Academic Year 2024/25

The Governance Officer spoke to her report which provided members with the draft schedule for the Academic Year 2024/25. The Board was advised that the dates have been altered to ensure that there is sufficient time for all committee minutes to be included within circulated Board papers.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Schedule of Meetings for the Academic Year 2024/25.

b) Review of Terms of Reference

The Governance Officer spoke to her report which provided members with current terms of reference for all Board Committees.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Terms of Reference.

c) General Update

The Governance Officer spoke to her report which provided the Board with an update on all governance matters and highlighted:

- Vice Chair Position – Dee Bird elected as the new Vice-Chair of the Board of Management.
- HR Committee – looking for additional member.
- Trade Union Nominees on Board – UNISON confirmed that no representative has come forward. No similar information received from EIS and GMB.
- HISA 2024 Spring Election Results – current HISA Board members had been re-elected for positions of Inverness President & Inverness Depute President.
- OSCR & Deloitte – external financial audit has not been completed by Deloitte, with the revised date for completion now being the end of April 2024. OSCR annual return is due on 30th April. There is a high

risk that if the external financial audit will not be completed by end of April it will, in turn, affect our OSCR return audit.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Governance General Update report.

d) Board Development Plan

The Governance Officer spoke to her report which provided members with ongoing and planned for 2024/25 training opportunities for the Board.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the Board Development Plan report.

10. UHI COURT – QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Board had been advised that UHI Court – Quarterly Update report will be provided in due course.

11. DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF BOARD COMMITTEES (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Board noted the contents of the DRAFT meetings of the:

- PR&R Committee held on 09 November 2023
- Chairs Committee held on 29 February 2024
- F&GP Committee held on 07 March 2024
- HR Committee held on 08 March 2024
- LT&R Committee held on 12 March 2024
- Audit Committee held on 14 March 2024 – to follow.

The Chair has asked members to send any comments regarding minutes attached to himself and the Governance Officer.

12. KPI MATRIX UPDATE

Due to meeting running late the Chair asked all members to familiarise themselves with the KPI Matrix update provided by the Operations and

Commercial Manager and to send any comments regarding the report to himself and the Governance Officer.

13. AOCB

Nothing raised.

14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 25 June 2024 at 4.30 p.m.

Signed: 

Date: 25/06/2024