

# Board of Management

## Minutes

**Meeting reference:** Board2013-14/02

**Date and time:** Wednesday 18 December 2013 at 5.30pm

**Location:** Room 308

**Members present:** Mark Bell, Derek Forgan, Dolores Garden, Harold Gillespie, Ian Mathers, Margaret Munckton, Alistair Napier and Norman Wilson.

**Apologies:** Penny Brodie, Heather Greig, Ian Jackson and John McDonald

**By invitation:** Mike Baxter, David Littlejohn and Fiona Shepherd

**In attendance:** Susan Bald, Director of Human Resources and Communications  
Kirstie Graham, Clerk to the Board  
Iain Neilson, Director of Finance and Resources  
Pam Wilson, Acting Assistant Principal

**Chair:** Ian Mathers (Mark Bell for part of item 14.6)

**Minute Taker:** Kirstie Graham

**Quorum:** 8

Summary of Action Items			
Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
7	Respond to government consultation that UHI should not be designated and colleges assigned until August 2014 at the earliest.	MM/KG	17 January 2014
8	To communicate the Board's approval in principle for the Shared Services Business Plan for the delivery of ICT shared services to the Project Board and Shortlife Working Group.	MM	January 2014
9	Circulate a draft response to the consultation on the Code of Governance to the Board for approval prior to submission.	KG/SMT	By 20 Jan 2014
14.4	To arrange induction of new Board members, including membership of PVG scheme	KG	Report to 26 March Board

## Item

### 1 Welcome and Apologies

Ian Mathers welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted that the Board Chair, Penny Brodie, was unwell and that he would therefore chair the meeting.

He welcomed Mike Baxter, David Littlejohn and Fiona Shepherd to meeting. They had been recommended by the Search and Nominations Committee to the Board for appointment, as was Grant Myles, who was unable to attend the meeting.

## Action

He noted that a starring system is being used with only starred items for discussion. He informed members that item 12 was to be unstarred and item 14.5 starred.

Apologies were noted.

## **2 Additions**

There were no additions to the agenda.

## **3 Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item**

There were no declarations of an outside interest in any agenda item.

## **4 Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 16 October 2013**

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

## **5 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

The actions taken following the last meeting were noted.

## **6 Students' Association Update**

The Chair noted that Heather Greig, the student board member, had forwarded her apologies to the meeting. An update on the Students' Association's recent activities had been circulated and he invited Pam Wilson, Acting Assistant Principal, to speak to this.

Pam Wilson noted that the Union space had been active and with the extended opening hours was busy day and evening. SRC meetings had been well supported, with over 40 representatives in attendance at meetings and the Quality Unit was supporting this activity to embed good practice.

Information about the arrangements for the elections of new convenors would be forwarded to the Engagement Committee's February meeting. A student partnership agreement was being developed and this would be forwarded to the Board for approval, via the Engagement Committee.

Pam Wilson noted the issue of access down the woodland path from Brahan to Goodlyburn for wheelchair and pushchair users raised in the report and informed the Board that this had been discussed at the last Health and Safety Committee meeting and alternative options would be

explored in January.

## **7 Scottish Government Consultation on Designating and Assigning Colleges**

Margaret Munckton, acting Principal and Chief Executive, updated members on the recent Scottish Government Consultation on Designating Colleges as Regional Colleges and Assigning Colleges to Regional Strategic Bodies. The consultation was in two parts, with a closing date of 17 November 2013 to respond to questions 1 to 3, concerning designating colleges in single college regions. This did not involve Perth College UHI and Margaret Munckton had responded on behalf of Perth College that the voice of the college's concerned should have primacy in considering responses.

The closing date for the second half of the consultation is 17 January 2014, and questions 4 and 5 are highly relevant to Perth College as they proposed designating UHI as regional strategic body and assigning colleges to it in May 2014.

Margaret Munckton has been liaising with the academic partner Principal's to encourage a common response to the consultation that Colleges should not be assigned to UHI until August 2014 at the earliest. This is due to a number of governance and management processes requiring to be finalised and embedded, including recruitment of a permanent UHI Principal following James Fraser's retirement and establishment of a new Court.

**Agreed:** to submit a response to the government consultation stating that UHI should not be designated as a Regional Strategic Body and colleges assigned to it until August 2014 at the very earliest.

## **8 Shared Services Update**

Margaret Munckton reminded members that there had been an agreed need identified for shared services and work had been ongoing on this for around four years. At Fort Augustus 3, a draft Business Plan had been presented by the Project Board. This had been subject to indepth discussion and the Project Board had been open and responsive to feedback from all the partners, which included UHI.

In response to feedback, the Business Plan was updated and circulated, to be approved in principle by all the partner's governing bodies at their December meetings. There were still some issues to be addressed, but this would enable it to be progressed with the aim to have the first shared service, ICT, in place on 1 April 2014.

EO had then submitted a counter proposal to UHI's Finance and General Purposes Committee. This was not a fully worked up

Business Plan, however F&GPC was not minded to support the Project Board's Business Plan and referred the matter to Court for a decision.

Court had met yesterday. The Chair of the Shared Services Project Board had not been permitted to attend F&GPC or Court to present the Business Plan, or to submit a paper to Court. He therefore took the unprecedented step of writing a paper and emailing it to all the Court members that he knew of.

Verbal feedback from the Court meeting was that Court had set up a Short Life Working Group to consider the issues raised by F&GPC to report to the next F&GPC meeting in January 2014. Membership comprised the Chair of F&GPC, Chair of the Shared Services project Board, the University Triumvirate (Crichton Lang, Mike Devenney and Ian Bryden) and Lorna MacDonald, UHI Finance Director.

Margaret Munckton reiterated that Perth College UHI is 100% committed to being an academic partner with UHI but that this demonstrated that there are considerable challenges around how to make the partnership work. It is hoped that the new Court will bring a new and more supportive approach to partnership working.

The establishment of the Short Life Working Group will undoubtedly delay implementation of shared services. Margaret Munckton recommended that to minimise delays, the Board should proceed with consideration and approval of the Business plan in principle, as circulated by the Project Board and uploaded onto the Board Portal.

**Agreed:** to approve in principle the Shared Services Business Plan for the delivery of ICT shared services.

## 9 **Consultation on development of a Code of Good Governance for the College sector**

Kirstie Graham reported that under section 14 of the Post 16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013, SFC could impose as a condition of funding that colleges comply with principles of good governance. SFC had invited the Regional Leads to convene a Steering Group to develop a draft Code of Good Governance for Scottish Colleges.

A consultation document had been circulated, for response by 20 January 2014. Kirstie Graham recommended that the Board should respond, with the position that any governance Code took a high level, principles based approach to governance and highlighting the good practice already taking place in the sector. She would develop a response on that basis with the Senior Management Team and circulate it to the Board for approval before submission to the Steering Group.

**Agreed:** to respond to the governance consultation, as above.

## 10 **Chair's Report**

Ian Mathers informed members that all substantive issue he would wish to address were covered by the agenda.

## 11 **Principal's Remarks**

Margaret Munckton updated the Board on recent college activity.

The capital programme was progressing on schedule. As part of the development of a Sports Centre, there had been productive discussions with St Johnstone Football Club. St Johnstone are supportive of the venture and will hold training sessions on campus in advance of the sports facilities being built. The Sports Subject leader had been active in establishing good links with St Johnstone, which included hospitality training.

There had also been discussion with other organisations to understand their requirements and the Scottish badminton and hockey teams are interested in using the new sports centre as a base for training and to host international competitions.

An ambassador for the centre was being discussed and there had been conversations with David Smith MBE, gold medal paralympian. He was born in Fife and based in Aviemore and was interested in giving advice on disability access and linking into health and well being.

Margaret Munkton had recent meetings with Perth and Kinross Council. She met with John Fyffe to discuss the Wood commission interim report and its impact on school college partnerships and modern apprentices. She had also attended a CPD event for councillors to deliver a presentation.

She had attended James Frasers retiral dinner and had presented him with a picture of Plockton Harbour, which was well received.

Crichton Lang will take over as acting Principal from 1 January 2014. The recruitment process for a permanent Principal was well advanced. Diane Rawlinson, Principal of Inverness College UHI will sit on the selection panel.

Margaret Munckton had met with Ian Bryden, Associate Principal for specialist institutions and Vice Principal for research. He had excellent background across the University sector a clear focus on how to progress research activity within UHI, which was welcomed.

The Colleges early retention rate appears to be up from last year. 2013/14 recruitment targets should be achieved. The student led unplugged events and increased Union opening hours had been nominated for a Colleges Scotland Annual Award and been Highly

Commended.

Ian Mathers thanked Margaret Munckton for her comprehensive update and commended all the College staff for their hard work.

**12 Board Development Day – 2 November 2013**

**Noted:** The file note from the Board Strategic Away Day on 2 November 2013

**13 Board CPD evening – 20 November 2013**

**Noted:** The file note from the Board CPD evening on 20 November 2013

**14 Minutes of Standing Committees**

**14.1 Academic Affairs Committee – 3 December 2013**

**Approved:** Minutes of the meetings held on 3 December 2013

**Noted:** The College's Curriculum Strategy had been updated for 2013-16. This was an important document and its updating enabled the College to clearly articulate funding needs within the regional structure to address skills requirements in the locality.

**14.2 Audit Committee – 3 December 2013**

**Approved:**

- Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2013
- Financial Statements for the year to 31 July 2013
- Audit Committee Annual report to the Board
- Audit Committee Terms of Reference

**14.3 Finance and General Purposes Committee – 28 November 2013**

**Approved:**

- Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2013
- Membership of the Sports Hall (including Multi-Sports Area) and Old Halls Repurposing Project Board as follows: Penny Brodie, Ian Mathers, Norman Wilson and Margaret Munckton from the Board. Iain Neilson, Kevin Lynch (Estates Manager), and the Project Manager from Turner Townsend.

**Noted:** Ian Mathers noted that the College is now a living wage employer.

#### **14.4 Search and Nominations Committee – 11-13 November 2013**

**Approved:**

- Minutes of the meeting held by email circulation 11-13 November 2013
- The appointment of the following 4 new Board members for an initial 4 year term, subject to satisfactory induction:
  - Michael Baxter
  - David Littlejohn
  - Grant Myles
  - Fiona Shepherd.

#### **14.5 AST Board of Directors - 9 December 2013**

**Approved:** Minutes of the meetings held on 9 December 2013

#### **14.6 Chairs' Committee – 11 December 2013**

**Approved:**

- Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2013.
- The reappointment of Mark Bell and Derek Forgan for a second four year term.

Ian Mathers relinquished the Chair and Mark Bell chaired the meeting:

**Approved:**

- The reappointment of Ian Mathers to 31 August 2015

Mark Bell relinquished the Chair.

**Noted:**

Following the Board Strategy Day on 2 November 2013, it was agreed to work up two possible options for Perth College within the regional structure for discussion with the Cabinet Secretary. A working group comprising SMT and Kirstie Graham had undertaken an analysis of the options. This was considered by the Chairs' Committee and a summary of the findings had been attached as an appendix to the minutes.

It was noted that the 5 incorporated academic partners in UHI would be meeting with senior SFC officials on 23 January 2014 to discuss how to mitigate ONS within UHI, as it was the only University to be impacted by regionalisation.

A meeting had been agreed for Penny Brodie and Margaret Munckton

on 27 January 2014 with senior civil servants. It was agreed that ONS had no benefit for the College and all ways of mitigating this should be explored. Accordingly, Option 2 was the preferred option as it was a collegiate approach that removed ONS and benefitted the partnership as a whole. However, Option 1 should be kept open as an alternative position, as appropriate and Penny Brodie and Margaret Munckton were authorised to negotiate on that basis.

**16 Date and time of next meetings:**

- Wednesday 26 March 2014 at 5.30pm

**17 Review of meeting**

There were no substantive issues raised. Ian Mathers was commended for stepping into the Chair.

**18 Following the meeting, the Chair of the Board and acting Principal signed the accounts and related returns for the year to 31 July 2013, for submission to the Scottish Funding Council**

**19 Documents uploaded onto Board Portal**

**Noted:** documents uploaded onto the portal since the last Board meeting, as follows:

- UHI ICT Shared Services – Final Business Case and Business Plan
- UHI ICT Shared Services – Executive Summary
- College Funding & Income Streams – slides from CPD evening on 20 Nov 13
- Colleges Scotland Governance Newsletter Issues 19 & 20
- Board/SMT/CMT Bulletin – October & November 2013
- Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce – Interim Report (Wood Commission)

Information recorded in College minutes are subject to release under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOI(S)A). Certain exemptions apply: financial information relating to procurement items still under tender, legal advice from College lawyers, items related to national security.

Notes taken to help record minutes are also subject to Freedom of Information requests, and should be destroyed as soon as minutes are approved.

**Status of Minutes**      **Open** ☒      **Closed** ☐



An **open** item is one over which there would be no issues for the College in releasing the information to the public in response to a freedom of information request.

A **closed** item is one that contains information that could be withheld from release to the public because an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies.

The College may also be asked for information contained in minutes about living individuals, under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1988. It is important that fact, rather than opinion, is recorded.

Do the minutes contain items which may be contentious under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1988?      Yes ☐      No ☒