

Board of Management

Minutes

Meeting reference: Board2013-14/03

Date and time: Wednesday 26 March 2014 at 5.30pm

Location: Room 308

Members present: Mike Baxter, Mark Bell, Penny Brodie, Derek Forgan, Dolores Garden, Harold Gillespie, Ian Jackson, David Littlejohn, Grant Myles, Margaret Munckton, Alistair Napier and Fiona Shepherd

Apologies: Ian Mathers, John McDonald and Norman Wilson

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: Penny Brodie

Minute Taker: Kirstie Graham

Quorum: 8

Summary of Action Items			
Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
5.3	Respond to Governance Code consultation through Chairs' Committee	Chair & Clerk	End May 2014
8	Update on ICT Shared Services	Principal	Board meeting 25 June 14
9	Circulate response to consultation of Board member appointments	Clerk	30 May 2014
16	Organise campus tour to precede June board meeting	Director of Finance & Estates	Board meeting 25 June 14

Item

1 Welcome and Apologies

Penny Brodie welcomed everyone to the meeting.

She noted that a starring system is being used with only starred items for discussion.

Apologies were noted.

2 Additions

There were no additions to the agenda.

Action

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 18 December 2013

The minutes were approved as a correct record subject to including Ian Jackson as an apology.

5 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

The actions taken following the last meeting were noted.

5.1 Response to Government Consultation on Assignment Date

Penny Brodie informed members that the outcome of the consultation was still awaited, but the Scottish Government had informed the sector that no arrangements will come into force in May 2014 for the highlands and islands region. Further information about the plans for the region and the timescale is awaited.

5.2 Induction of New Board members

The Chair informed the Board that all four new board members had completed their induction. One PVG check remained outstanding, this has been pursued and is expected next week.

5.3 Governance Code Consultation

The Clerk informed members that the draft Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges was expected to go out to the sector for consultation in the next week or so, with responses required by mid May. The Board agreed to coordinate a response through the Chairs' Committee.

Chair/Clerk

6 Students' Association Update

Heather Greig, the student board member, provided the following update:

- The Student Representative Council continued to meet monthly, with around 40 in attendance at each meeting;
- The Student Convenors were receiving excellent support from the Quality Unit;
- There had been a number of activities in the Union, including Diwali; Chinese New Year, Freshers Fair and UHI selfies;

- The process for the election of new convenors had begun with nominations opened on 14 March. The new convenors will start on 1 July 2014 and it was hoped to have a handover;
- The issue of the woodland path between Brahan and Goodlyburn had been raised with SMT and taken to the College's Health and Safety Committee. The student representatives had organised a petition on this subject.

Susan Bald responded to the issue of the woodland path and explained that this had been discussed fully at the Health and Safety Committee. Resurfacing the path was prohibitively expensive. There was a path running parallel that was owned by Perth and Kinross Council, so the College's Estates Manager has been in discussion with the council about sharing the cost of resurfacing that path. In the meantime, a shuttle bus would be provided three times a day between Brahan and Goodlyburn.

The Chair thanked Heather for her report and commended the introduction of a shuttle bus.

7 Principal Appointment Process

The process used for the recent appointment of the College Principal and Chief Executive was noted. This was an open recruitment process that had been resourced in house, which had led to a significant cost saving on using an external recruitment agency.

Members warmly congratulated Margaret Munckton on her appointment.

8 ICT Shared Services Update

The Principal reminded members that there had been an agreed need identified for shared services and work had been ongoing on this for around four years. A draft Business Plan had been circulated, to be approved in principle by all the partner's governing bodies at their December 2013 meetings, to enable the Plan to be progressed with the aim of having 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. Court had set up a Short Life Working Group to consider the issues raised by F&GPC. It had soon emerged that a Cost Sharing Group was the only viable option currently available for the delivery of shared services which did not incur unacceptable levels of VAT liability.

The Shared Service Programme Board therefore intended to offer a shared ICT service to the University and Academic Partners based on the business plan issued to the Partnership in November 2013, and agreed in principle by Perth College Board of Management at its 18

December 2013 meeting.

The Shared Service must start on or before 1 August 2014 if the partnership is to avoid paying VAT on the current arrangements. The Shared Services Project Board was now working to catch up following the four month delay and is confident that with the co-operation of all parties the revised target implementation date can be met and the new service operational on 1 August 2014.

The impact on the £2.1m of transition funding from SFC was still to be confirmed. It should be noted that the SFC Outcome Manager for the highlands and islands region had recently tendered her resignation, so this may lead to communication delays.

Outstanding issues include the transfer of pensions and the governance of the Shared Services Company, which would have an initial turnover in the region of £6m.

The Principal commended the professionalism of the approximately 80 staff affected in continuing to provide a good service whilst this issue was very publicly worked through.

The Chair thanked the Principal for her report and noted that there would be a further update at the June Board meeting.

MM

9 **Draft Response to Scottish Government Consultation on Ministerial Guidance for Board Member Appointments**

An initial draft response to the Scottish Government's Consultation had been circulated with the Board papers. Board members were asked to submit any comments to the Clerk, who would circulate a final response before the deadline of 30 May 2014.

Clerk

10 **Balanced Scorecard**

The Board received a summary of the actual performance of the College with respect to the Balanced Scorecard measures in AY 2012-13. Pam Wilson, acting Assistant Principal, reminded members that the individual items had already been considered in detail at the appropriate Board committees.

She therefore drew members' attention to the section outlining the College's overall contribution to the Highlands and Islands Regional Outcome Agreement. She informed members that where previously there had been two separate outcome agreements for FE and HE, it was now a single document, albeit with two different frameworks.

Most of the work to date had been concerned with setting up the structures and identifying baseline measures. Going forward, it will be essential to understand the basis on which funding will be distributed to

Colleges by the FE Regional Board and the ROA will provide the basis for this distribution.

In that context, there were concerns about how the Academic Partner Colleges informed the development of the ROA, particularly the HE element. UHI has appointed a new Principal and Vice-Chancellor and Professor Clive Mulholland will take up post on 1 June 2014. The College has a meeting scheduled with him on 13 June 2014 and this may be an opportunity to begin to raise some of these issues.

There was discussion on how the Balanced Scorecard is used within the College and members were informed that the disaggregated information that sits below the high level measures is used by the operational teams. An example was the Environmental Sustainability Group, which is planned to re-activate as a result of the Amber Carbon Footprint measure, in order to refocus the College on environmental sustainability.

It had been agreed that the next iteration of the Balanced Scorecard would include a narrative section to provide context to the outcome measures.

The Chair commended the Balanced Scorecard approach and the progress against the measures in 2012-13.

11 Update from Regional Lead

The Board received a paper prepared by Michael Foxley, Regional Lead, in February, updating on developments.

It was noted that Michael Foxley had campaigned hard on the issue of the year end date for incorporated Colleges in the highlands and islands region following reclassification by ONS. Iain Neilson reported that this had been successful and that the five incorporated colleges in the highlands and islands would retain a year end date of 31 July, in line with the academic year, providing they could provide robust financial information by 31 March, the year end date for the incorporated colleges in other regions.

The issue of insurance following reclassification was raised, as currently the College commercially insures but government organisations self insure. Colleges have been informed that they may continue to insure until 31 March 2015, during which time a business case should have been created for College insurance.

It was noted that Perth College was a member of the new sector Arms Length Foundation and would transfer £6.4m in total before 31 March, in order to fund future investment projects, including capital investment plans.

There was discussion of European funding. Perth College had

received assurances from the UHI Head of European Funding that they could access European funding in partnership with UHI. However, there were concerns about the criteria, which is usually based on the residence of the beneficiaries, that has prevented Perth College accessing funding through UHI in the past.

It was important to ensure that projects in Tayside were not compromised by Perth College's involvement in the highlands and islands and the College was aware of the challenge and would work with whichever grouping was appropriate to maximise delivery to its learners.

12 Chair's Report

The Chair updated members on the Further Education Regional Board meeting 12 March 2014, the papers for which are on the Board portal. An action from this was the development of a Short Life Working Group to look at the implementation of the FERB's Terms of Reference. Perth College is represented on this SLWG by both the Chair and the Clerk. It will be chaired by Drew Ratter, Chair of Shetland College and the academic partner member on the new Court.

The Chair recently met with members of a research group looking at student representation across the highlands and islands region. She had also met with the Investors in People team.

13 Principal's Remarks

The Principal informed members that the Investors in People team had been in the College for four days and the College had retained its liP status, which it had held for over twenty years. The Senior Management Team had decided they wished to use the liP visit as a development process and had therefore requested feedback providing areas for further development, to be used as a tool to work with the college management team for continuous improvement.

The SFC will visit the College on 23 April 2014 for a Strategic Dialogue Meeting and the College has been asked to provide three topics. These will be the College's interface with its locality and region; student support funding; and the impact of ONS, including on capital and estates development.

Education Scotland will have an Annual Engagement visit on 15 April 2014. The focus of this will be on low Performance Indicators and on learner engagement. A small number of programmes have been highlighted for discussion and work is ongoing on these.

The Principal gave members a detailed breakdown of her recent visit to China. This had been precipitated by an inaccurate listing of UHI by the Chinese Government. It was still listed as UHI Millennium Institute,

which meant UHI was not a recognised University.

Although this had been the driver for the visit, the Principal had taken the opportunity to identify and maximise potential opportunities to increase international business, through the signing of new agreements and the identification of programmes that could be delivered in partnership. It was an impactful visit with a number of actions to take forward.

The Principal reported that the College had been awarded 28 hospitality Modern Apprenticeships and had increased its allocation of Modern Apprenticeships by 65. The College is hosting an Apprenticeship recruitment session for SSE.

The Principal will chair a VC Timetabling Project Group on behalf of UHI.

The Chair commended the Principal for all the work she had undertaken since her appointment.

14 Minutes of Standing Committees

14.1 Academic Affairs Committee – 11 March 2014

Approved: Minutes of the meetings held on 11 March 2014

14.2 Audit Committee – 4 March 2014

Approved: Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2013

14.3 Finance and General Purposes Committee – 12 March 2014

Approved:

- Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2014
- Term Loan Arrangements

14.4 Strategy and Futures Committee – 12 February 2014

Approved: Minutes of the meeting on 12 February 2014

14.5 Engagement Committee – 20 February 2014

Approved: Minutes of the meeting on 20 February 2014

14.6 AST Board of Directors - 27 February 2014

Approved: Minutes of the meetings held on 27 February 2014

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

- Wednesday 14 May 2014 at 5.30pm (Optional)
- Saturday 31 May 2014 at 9.00am (away day)
- Wednesday 25 June 2014 at 5.30pm

16 **Review of Meeting**

It was noted that the meeting had a more student focus, which was positive. The Chair asked the Director of Finance and Estates to give a brief overview of estates developments. The Principal suggested that given the scale of current and planned estates developments, it may be appropriate to offer a campus tour for Board members, preceding the June Board meeting. This was agreed to be a good idea and would be progressed.

IN

17 **Documents uploaded onto Board Portal**

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

- Highlands & Islands Region Progress Report ROA 2012-13
- UHI Outcome Agreement Performance Report
- Update on Implementing the Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act
- Draft Ministerial Guidance on Board Appointments
- Colleges Scotland Governance Newsletter Issues 21-23
- Board/SMT/CMT Bulletin – December 2013 & January & February 2014
- Papers for Shadow FE Regional Board on 14 January 2014 & 12 March 2014

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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 ☒