

Extraordinary Finance & Resources Committee

Minutes

Meeting reference: F&R2024-25/04b

Date: Wednesday 20 August 2025

Location: Online

Members present: Elaine Piggot, Chair
Deirdre Joy, Board Member
Ian Robotham, Board Member
Alistair Wylie, Interim Chair of Board
Catherine Etri, Interim Principal
Patrick O'Donnell, Staff Board Member
Andi Garrity, Student Board Member

In attendance: Lynn Murray, Deputy Principal (Operations)
Fiona Cameron, Interim Director of Finance
Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board

Apologies: Liz Stewart, UHI Court

Chair: Elaine Piggot

Minute Taker: Ian McCartney

Quorum: 4

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MINUTES

Item		Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and noted apologies.</p>	
2.	<p>Additions to the Agenda</p> <p>A verbal update on the Section 22 response was agreed to be taken as Item 4.3.</p>	
3.	<p>Declaration of Conflict of Interest in any Agenda Item</p> <p>There were no declarations made.</p>	
4.1	<p>UHI Perth DRAFT Financial Recovery Plan – RESERVED ITEM</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) briefly summarised principals behind Paper 1, noting the timescale and next steps for formal approval of the Plan.</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) advised that comments had been received very recently from the Financial Consultant supporting the process, and that a meeting with the UHI CFO had been scheduled for tomorrow to discuss the draft Plan. Depute Principal (Operations) further advised that the draft Plan had also been shared with the Internal Auditor as part of their review. Depute Principal (Operations) noted that both the Financial Consultant and Internal Auditor were expected to be in attendance at the Board meeting on 27 August.</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) highlighted the cashflow at Table 7 within the Plan, which had been prepared on an annualised basis against budget cashflow, and that the cashflow balance noted for 1st August differed to that shown previously. Depute Principal (Operations) advised that monthly cashflow updates were to be provided following further analysis.</p> <p>Chair queried whether full cashflows would be available for Board meeting. Interim Director of Finance advised that these should be available from early next week with month-by-month phasing, however the opening position needs further work.</p> <p>Chair stressed importance of having starting balance as a base for projected cashflow, and suggested adding a footnote outlining potential differences. Interim Director of Finance agreed that clarity was required, however noted that it had been agreed to provide monthly cashflow updates to SFC so they are already aware of the improved position.</p>	

Committee then worked through Recovery Plan section by section to raise specific queries by exception:

1 – Executive Summary

Chair suggested more emphasis on minimising job losses as this is a key issue for ScotGov. Interim Chair of Board advised that this should not be emphasised without context, in particular retention of academic staff. Board Member agreed that care was required about including anything that could not be guaranteed. Interim Chair of Board suggested that language can be softened without making commitments, which was **AGREED**.

2.2 – UHI Perth Strategic Vision

Chair queried whether Strategy would need to be reviewed in line with FRP. Interim Principal noted that some alignment work had taken place around Strategy and associated risk, but this would need more substantial work for full alignment. Chair suggested Strategy be reviewed within the Academic Year, which was **AGREED**.

2.5 – Process to Formulate the Financial Recovery Plan

Chair suggested emphasising the steps already taken, eg emergency spending measures. **AGREED**.

3.2 – AY 2025/26 Budget & Financial Plans for following 2 years

Depute Principal (Operations) noted change from “worst case” to “projected case” and the provision of clarity over deferred cash position with SFC, although it was hoped that this could be mitigated. **NOTED**.

Board Member sought clarity over percentages based on figures provided. Depute Principal (Operations) advised that this was due to costs being higher than income due to being in a deficit position, however **AGREED** to make this clearer in the Plan.

3.3.1 – Income

Chair queried whether income from recent China trip had been realised. Depute Principal (Operations) advised that these had not been included in the Plan as figures are not yet known.

3.3.2 – SFC Capital Grants

Board Member sought clarity around CDEL/RDEL. Depute Principal (Operations) advised that EO had been asked to look into what capacity exists for flexibility in this area, but a response is awaited.

Chair queried whether there was a Plan B in place if flexibility is not permitted. Principal confirmed there was.

5.1 – Income Growth

Chair suggested it would be useful for SFC to see any updates re steps taken so far around restructuring, possibly shown within the

covering documentation rather than within the FRP. Interim Principal would be happy to provide this.

Board Member sought clarification that the Income Growth Risks were reflected in the mitigations in the document. This was **AGREED** and confirmed to take the form of a summary of such risks/mitigations rather than individual breakdowns.

Board Member queried whether a RAG rating around risk of achieving growth requires context around what determines Red, Amber and Green, and whether this is something the ERM would provide options for. Interim Principal noted that mitigations are included within the overall risk analysis, but it was **AGREED** that this option be reviewed to see if an existing mechanism can be adapted.

Board Member suggested that there might be value in a separate scenario planning document to accompany RAG, which could be tabled at Financial Planning Monitoring Committee for discussion and monitoring. This was to be discussed at FPMC.

5.5 – Summary of Estimated Financial Impact

Depute Principal (Operations) suggested that information in this section be kept at high level for the main document, however more details could be provided within appendices. This approach was **AGREED**.

5.6 – Further Actions Towards Financial Recovery

Chair sought comfort with plugging gaps in Years 2 and 3 rather than actioning some items immediately. Depute Principal (Operations) noted that work had been carried out previously in these areas but there had been limited capacity to take forward in a meaningful way, and it was a struggle to see time being available to achieve prior to Year 2/3.

Chair queried impact of 55-minute timetable slots. Interim Principal advised that extensive consultation with Unions would be required and there was a reticence to over-commit to specifics. Interim Chair noted there would be a need for some breathing space to explore in more detail, and was comfortable to leave as is.

5.7 – Improve Financial Information

Chair clarified that it was an absolute requirement of the Board that financial information needs to be provided quickly and accurately.

5.8 – Monitoring the FRP

Chair noted that the Recovery Plan Monitoring Committee will be reporting directly to the Board and action can be taken immediately if Committee deems it necessary, and that this would be reflected in the Terms of Reference.

	<p><u>Appendix 2 – Implementation Plan</u> It was noted that the year in the table for Appendix 2 required amending.</p> <p><u>General Comments</u> Chair recognised the huge amount of work done in getting the Plan to this stage.</p> <p>Board Member agreed with this sentiment, however Board needs to be evaluating the levels of risk of achievement of the Plan at every opportunity.</p> <p>Chair checked with Committee whether there were any areas that needed further checking prior to going forward to Board. Interim Chair of Board sought confirmation that the Internal Audit review of the Plan would be issued ahead of Board. Interim Principal advised that this was the assumed position, but specific timescales have not yet been advised.</p>	
4.2	<p>Financial Reporting Templates</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) advised that a meeting with Finance Directors across the UHI partnership had taken place to discuss standardised reporting templates with a view to allowing high-level mapping against FFR. Depute Principal (Operations) noted that UHI Perth's systems were not currently at a stage to provide this without some investment of time, which would be looked at over the next few weeks, and proposed that this be actioned once the FRP and Budget had been approved, as some priority will need to be given to monitoring progress against FRP.</p>	
4.3	<p>Section 22 Update</p> <p>Depute Principal (Operations) noted that the draft Section 22 report had initially been scheduled for submission yesterday prior to a meeting with Audit Scotland, however the report wasn't felt to be ready to be issued. The meeting with Audit Scotland will proceed as planned, however there has been no definitive date provided for final submission. Board would be kept apprised of developments.</p>	
5	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday 29 September 2025 @ 5pm (rescheduled date) 	
10	<p>Review of Meeting</p> <p>Committee confirmed that the meeting had been conducted in line with its Terms of Reference.</p>	

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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 – 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 2018. 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 2018? **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐