Recovery Plan Monitoring Committee

Minutes

Meeting reference: RPMC 2025-26/07
Date and time: Monday 20 April 2026
Location: Online

Members present: Deirdre Joy, Chair
Chris Whatley, Board Member
Catherine Etri, Principal & Chief Executive
Andi Garrity, Student Board Member
Richard Fyfe, Staff Board Member
Ronnie Dewar, Trade Union Board Member (from Item 5)

In attendance: Jill Elder, Depute Principal
Gail Dunn, Chief Financial Officer
Fiona Cameron, Interim Director of Finance
Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board of Management

Apologies: Kirsty Campbell, Risk & Project Officer

Chair: **Deirdre Joy**
Minute Taker: Ian McCartney
Quorum: 5

Minutes

Item		Action
1.	**Welcome and Apologies** Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies.	
2.	**Additions to the Agenda** There were no additions to the agenda. Chair noted that Item 7 would include a discussion around frequency of future meetings.	
3.	**Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item** There were no declarations of a conflict of interest.	
4.	**Minutes of the meeting held 16 March 2026** The minutes were **AGREED** as being an accurate record of the meeting.	
5.	**Matters Arising from Previous Minutes** All Matters Arising were considered to be included in Agenda items for the meeting. Chair requested that an Action Tracker be added to future Minutes, and that future Agendas should include a standard item re potential escalations to Board.	Clerk
6.	**Recovery Plan Dashboard** Chair noted progress on cost controls but expressed concern re income levels which prompted focus on key income risks. Chair proposed meeting would focus on the following areas: • International • ASW • Reconciliation of targets re Years 2 and 3 • Areas requiring Board support/escalation <u>International</u> Depute Principal advised that a number of pipeline projects continued to be worked through. Ministerial approval still awaited from authorities re large project in	

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	China, and meetings were ongoing re 5 other projects. Outcomes of these would determine deliverability for Years 2 and 3. Travel is booked in May to take discussions forward around fee negotiations, etc. Interim Principal advised that the visit to China for Graduations also provided opportunity for other negotiations around extensions to current contracts, however there are challenges around the lack of progress being made by UHI around Rankings, which would present a substantial threat moving forward and requires a concerted effort driven by UHI. While this is a complex process, there may be a lack of expertise at UHI senior management level in this area. Chair queried whether the matter needs escalated to the Board and/or UHI Court given the credibility issues this presents. Board Member noted that the issue underlines the importance of constitutional change within the Transformation Project. Trade Union Board Member expressed frustration at lack of progress from UHI around Rankings as colleges supply UHI with all the relevant data. Interim Principal advised that the China Trip presents an option to lobby senior staff within UHI before potentially escalating the matter. This approach was **AGREED**. <u>Years 2 & 3</u> Chief Financial Officer advised that 2026/27 was currently being worked on, however the process had identified some areas where income was not quite hitting targets. In addition, a recent meeting with SFC had confirmed that the income related to Resource Group was to be treated as an advance from their perspective, albeit with no specific deadlines to pay bank. SFC noted during discussions that there is in effect no such thing as “additional income”. Chief Financial Officer noted that a formal letter of complaint had been issued to UHI on this matter, to be communicated onwards to SFC. Chair noted that the conclusion of this matter needs to be escalated to the Board, and suggested that this be pulled together in conjunction with the Interim Principal. This action was **AGREED.** Chief Financial Officer advised that indicative allocations for Capital and Estates funding for 2026/27 showed an increase in income of £600k, which is in effect a Flat-Cash position due to considerations around Resource Group, therefore will need to look at what can be off-set during the budget process. Chair noted that this consideration would be included in the note to the Board. Trade Union Board Member queried whether the issue around	Interim Principal Chair/Interim Principal

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	additional funding should be elevated to local politicians. Interim Principal advised that there were restrictions around this during Purdah, per an advisory note recently received from Colleges Scotland. Board Member suggested that the college needs to consider political lobbying after the election period. Interim Principal advised that a meeting with John Swinney has been requested on conclusion of the Purdah period. Chief Financial Officer concluded briefing by noting that, above issues excepted, good progress was being made, especially around cost controls. <u>ASW</u> Chair sought clarification over who was taking lead on ASW. It was confirmed that overall responsibility lay with Depute Principal. Depute Principal advised that an initial meeting had been held with the Campus Transformation Officer with a view to ring-fencing circa £130k to refresh ASW building. Local income streams were also being looked at however there is an exposure to risk with increased competition coming on-stream which is likely to impact on ASW membership numbers, as the proposition being offered by the new competitor was different to that initially envisaged. To this end, a specific ASW Recovery Plan was being pulled together. Chair noted that ASW is a key risk area so this needs to be closely monitored. Interim Director of Finance noted that external 3rd-Party sponsorship was being considered to allow membership fees to be subsidised. Interim Principal advised that ASW needs to be considered as a learning space as well as a gym and the building is not costing as much as it would do if it wasn't making contributions. The ASW building needs to be able to provide for the curriculum no matter what else takes place there. <u>Staffing Costs</u> Interim Principal noted that staffing costs were being monitored every week by SLT. <u>Commercial Courses</u> Interim Principal advised that an evidence paper was being developed around income generation related to commercial courses, with Vice Chair looking in particular at part-time degree options.	

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	Interim Principal noted that a Master in Social Work programme had been rejected at the Approval stage. This programme will be review with the potential to re-submit at a future point.	
7.	**Any Other Business** Clerk advised that all Committees will be discussing in Cycle 4 how future meetings will be run (eg in person, online, or some mixture of both) ahead of the draft Calendar for 2026/27 being presented to the full Board in June. Clerk noted that this also offered an opportunity for Committee to discuss whether the frequency of meetings is now at the right level as the next phase of the Financial Recover Plan is entered. Chair requested that Committee Members consider the options available and email Chair directly ahead of further discussion at the next meeting.	All
8.	**Date of Next Meeting** • Monday 18 May 2026	
9.	**Review of Meeting** Committee agreed that meeting had been conducted in line with the Terms of Reference.	

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Action Tracker – as at 15 May 2026

Action	Date Raised	Action Owner	Target Date	Status	Evidence
Action Tracker to be added to future Minutes	20/04/2026	Clerk	18/05/2026	Complete	Included in minutes
Agendas to include standard item re potential escalations to Board	20/04/2026	Clerk	18/05/2026	Complete	Included on agenda
UHI to be lobbied re Rankings during China trip	20/04/2026	Interim Principal	22/05/2026	Unknown	
Board to be advised re SFC decision re additional income	20/04/2026	Chair & Interim Principal	ASAP	Complete	Communication issued to Board 21/04/2026
Committee Members consider the options and email Chair directly re future meeting options	20/04/2026	All	18/05/2026	Unknown	

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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 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 ☑**

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