



Board of Management

MINUTES of the MEETING of the BOARD OF MANAGEMENT held at the Scottish School of Forestry, Balloch on Thursday, 11 October 2018

PRESENT: Hazel Allan, Andrew Bowie, Sarah Burton, Jaci Douglas, Andy Gray, Brian Henderson, Shawna Mackinnon, Helen Miller, Chris O'Neil, Fiona Neilson, Gavin Ross, Tom Speirs, Neil Stewart, Steve Walsh, John Wilson

CHAIR: Neil Stewart

APOLOGIES: Robyn Kennedy, Carron McDiarmid, Innis Montgomery

IN ATTENDANCE: Director of Organisational Development
Director of Finance
Director of Business Development
Head of Research Development
Head of Curriculum
Board Secretary

The Chair welcomed Dr Fiona Skinner, Subject Network Leader - Applied Life Studies who would be making a presentation on the UHI School of Health, Social Care and Life Sciences.

He was pleased to be able to welcome Tom Speirs as a full member of the Board. The University Court had approved the recommendation that Tom be appointed to the position recently vacated by Ollie Bray. On behalf of the Board, he expressed his thanks to Ollie for his contribution as Vice Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee and as a member of the Board.

He welcomed Andrew Bowie and Shawna Mackinnon to their first Meeting as Student Board members.

He advised that he wished to include two items under "AOCB" namely the UHI Assembly and Longman Disposal.

He proposed that a Board Away Day be held in January 2019. All Members agreed that this would be useful.

He referred to the late issue of all agendas and papers during the current cycle of meetings and requested that Management ensure that in future, papers were provided to the Board Secretary so that they could be issued in a timely manner.

Steve Walsh entered the meeting.

Presentation by Dr Fiona Skinner, Subject Network Leader – Applied Life Studies

Dr Skinner provided an overview of the UHI School of Health, Social Care and Life Sciences. She focussed on the curriculum delivered within Applied Life studies at

both HE and FE level and referred to the year on year increases in enrolments since 2013-14 as well as the future UHI Health/Care education activities.

The Chair thanked Dr Skinner for an interesting and informative presentation.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Management held on 26 June 2018 were **AGREED** as a correct record, were **APPROVED** and were signed by the Chair.

Matters arising

GDPR

A training session on GDPR and e mail usage and retention would be organised.

Board member Development

A number of members had still to complete the mandatory Information Security and GDPR training and also, members of the Audit Committee, the online module within the Governance Hub.

2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Board **NOTED** the actions that had been completed and those that were still outstanding. The list would be updated accordingly.

Student Residences

A response had not been received from the Chair of Court to the joint letter from the Board Chair and HISA Inverness President (dated 13 April) despite numerous reminders.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee, at its last meeting in September had once again expressed serious concerns at the low occupancy rates of the student residences and had highlighted the financial risks to the University partnership.

UHI had entered into a contract with Cityheart to manage the residences and 100% occupancy had to be achieved. Inverness College had no involvement in the management of the residences. There was a full and robust discussion and the following key points were made

- Opportunities for students were not being maximised
- The current structure undermined the College's ability to attract RUK and international students. The academic offer needed to include a package which included both the course and accommodation.
- Subsidising the cost of the residences was one way to increase occupancy rates.
- Scholarship funds should be made available for accommodation costs
- There was a significant concern that UHI would amend the level of the top slice to meet the costs of under occupancy.
- Safeguarding and security of IC students was paramount
- There was a reputational risk to the College and its students
- The sporadic nature of the meetings of the Residences Project Board and Residences Operational Group was of concern

It was incumbent upon the Board of Management to highlight these concerns to UHI.

The Board of Management **AGREED** that

1. The Board Chair write again to the Chair of Court
2. HISA Inverness consider writing to both the Chair of Court and Independent Court Members
3. the Chair of Audit raise the financial, reputational and other key risks associated with the residences at the Joint Audit Committee Chairs meeting in November
4. the Principal and Senior Management Team highlight the Colleges vicarious liability and duty of care with Executives within EO
5. the Board Secretary investigate how these concerns could be escalated through governance channels
6. Reference to all previous discussions on the residences be gathered so that there was a complete audit trail.
7. All responses to the communications and actions above be shared with all board members

3. **ANNUAL BOARD EVALUATION EXERCISE**

All Board members had completed the annual board evaluation exercise in advance of the meeting in June. Because of the volume of business, the item had been deferred to this meeting. The evaluation questions were split across the five sections within the code of good governance for Scotland's Colleges. The Director of Organisational Development had collated the responses and had identified that the one area which required further consideration was "relationships and collaboration".

It was acknowledged that there was a high level of stakeholder engagement across the college but this was perhaps not communicated effectively to the Board.

The Board of Management **AGREED** that the Board Away day in January should include a session on engaging the Board. Thereafter, areas for improvement would be determined and appropriate actions identified and taken forward.

4. **E MAIL USAGE AND RETENTION POLICY**

The Audit Committee at its meeting held on 18 September 2018 had recommended the E mail usage and retention policy to the Board of Management for approval.

There was discussion as to how the College would enforce the policy. Assurance was given that it would be enforced through education and monitoring as well as the use of the disciplinary procedures if necessary. The Board also acknowledged that all board members would have to comply with the policy.

The Board of Management **APPROVED** the e mail usage and retention policy.

The Chair referred to the recent data breach which had been reported in the press. The Director of Organisational Development confirmed that the breach had been reported to the Information Commissioner and that no fine would be levied. The procedure had been amended to ensure that the Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Audit Committee would be advised of any data breaches as soon as possible.

The Chair suggested that item 9 on the Agenda, National Bargaining, be considered as the next item of business as it would inform discussion of the Finance Strategy and the SFC FFR 2018. This was agreed.

5. NATIONAL BARGAINING

A report by the Director of Organisational Development provided an update on National bargaining, confirming the conclusion of negotiations on national terms and conditions as well as providing a progress update in terms of cost of living pay negotiations for 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Although the Scottish Government, through SFC, was providing financial support for the implementation of the lecturer and promoted lecturer national pay scales, this did not extend to cost-of-living pay rises or the impact of changes to terms and conditions. The Government saw these as being the responsibility of each college.

There was real concern that despite the significant enhancement to lecturers pay that came with the implementation of national pay scales, EIS FELA was seeking cost of living rises that they believed should reflect the relaxation of public sector pay guidelines and an end to austerity. This continued push for unaffordable pay rises from EIS could have a devastating impact on the finances of academic partners if these were not met by SFC support.

The Board of Management **NOTED** with significant concern, the current position.

6. FINANCE STRATEGY

The Finance and General Purposes Committee at its meeting held on 27 September had considered the Finance Strategy for the period 2018/19 – 2022/23 which had been prepared taking into account other College strategies, an appreciation of the financial risks to the institution, and an understanding of opportunities and areas for development. The suggested key performance indicators flowed from KPIs commonly used. Some of these were used by SFC when assessing financial performance.

The Chair suggested that the strategy outlined objectives that the College could control but it did not address many of the key issues upon which there was still a lack of clarity, including, for example, national bargaining and Brexit. The context upon which the strategy was based needed to be expanded to clearly outline the exceptional challenges facing the college. Financial sustainability was the key medium to long term objective and scenario planning was required to give an understanding of how this could be achieved.

There was a long discussion on the need to increase student numbers, increase income, drive down costs, improve access to data and maintain quality.

The Board of Management **REQUESTED** that, at as a first step, Senior Management review the context and wording of the strategy. Scenario planning would be considered at the Board of Management away day in January 2019.

7. SFC FINANCIAL FORECAST RETURN (FFR) 2018

The Finance and General Purposes Committee, at its meeting held on 27 September 2017 had considered a report by the Director of Finance which referred to the annual requirement for colleges to complete a Financial Forecast Return (FFR) by the SFC. This formed part of the SFC's financial health monitoring framework. The FFR provided financial projections over a six year period, the current academic year (as at June) and the following five years. The 2018 FFR spanned the period to July 2023. In line with SFC guidance, the draft FFR 2018 had been signed by the Principal and submitted to SFC by 28 September.

The Board of Management **APPROVED** the SFC FFR 2018.

8. EQUALITY OUTCOMES ANNUAL REPORT

The Human Resources Committee at its meeting held on 28 September had considered the equality outcomes annual report which outlined the progress made in 2016/17 and developments in 2017/18 in anticipation of formal reporting by April 2019. The College had published its mainstreaming report in April 2017 and a review of progress was due for publication by April 2019.

The Board of Management **WELCOMED** the positive report.

9. EDUCATION SCOTLAND – DRAFT EVALUATIVE REPORT AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN 2018-19

A report by Depute Principal advised that under the revised External Quality Arrangements for Scotland's Colleges, each college was required to produce an Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP) by the end of October. The Evaluative Report covered the preceding academic year and the Enhancement Plan covered the next three years (previously one year). This was the second year of the arrangements.

The Board of Management

1. **APPROVED** the draft report which would be considered at the pre-endorsement meeting on 17th October
2. **APPROVED** the proposed grades within the draft report and
3. **AGREED** that e mail approval be sought from the Board following the pre-endorsement meeting

10. RISK REGISTER / RISK

A report by the Principal provided details of the ongoing review of the risk register by the SMT, referred to the red risks across the UHI partnership and to the proposed development of a rolling scenario plan as part of the continuing consideration of high level risk management.

The financial risks, which included the student residences would be considered at the Joint Audit Committee Chairs meeting in November.

The Board of Management **NOTED** the position.

11. PROGRESS AGAINST STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020 INCLUDING KPIS FOR 2017-18

A report by the Principal provided details of the progress which had been made against the strategic objectives and provided details of the delivery of the KPI's. He suggested that the college was delivering on all of the strategic aims but he had some concerns with strategic aim 4, namely organisational development. The College was engaging well with students but needed better engagement with staff. Similarly, the college was moving forward in reaching the targets set for the KPIs but more rapid progress was needed in some areas.

The Board requested that the Financial KPIs be shown as percentage changes rather than absolute figures.

The Board of Management **NOTED** the position.

12. STUDENT OUTCOMES AND SATISFACTION RATES FOR 2017-18

A report by the Depute Principal provided a summary of provisional performance indicators (PI) for student outcomes and satisfaction rates for 2017-18.

The Board of Management **WELCOMED** the positive report and acknowledged that it was encouraging to see the upward trends.

13. STUDENT ACTIVITY 2017-18 AND STUDENT RECRUITMENT 2018-19

A report by the Depute Principal advised that the outturn for FE student activity in 2017-18 was currently just over 100% of target, pending the final return to the Scottish Funding Council. The outturn for HE was also just over 100% of target.

Early indications of the recruitment for the current academic year were broadly in line with this time last year. The target for FE in 2018-19 was slightly down on last year, and the target for HE was similar to the 2017-18 outturn. Close attention would be given to monitoring recruitment and FE credits in particular.

The Board of Management **NOTED** the positive position.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

The Audit Committee, at its meeting held on 18 September 2018, had considered the health and safety annual report 2017-18. During the last academic year, there had been some significant developments in the management of Health and Safety within the College. The HASMAP standard adopted by the College had been working well, especially with regards to auditing. The "SHE" centralised system of reporting and recording H&S information, which had been introduced in 2017 had become a vital part of the management of H&S. Another positive factor had been the reduction in hand injuries compared to the previous year and the increase in the reporting of incidents.

The Board of Management **NOTED** the positive report.

15. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

A report by Principal provided the Board with an overview of new and continuing activity including:-

- Finance/Funding
- New Depute Principal Post
- Quality Conversation
- Curriculum review/ barometer/ HEIDI+

The Board of Management **NOTED** the wide range of activity referred to in the report.

16. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF BOARD COMMITTEES

The Board **NOTED** the minutes of the committee meetings as follows:

- a. Chairs Committee – 13 September 2018
- b. Audit Committee – 18 September 2018
- c. Learning, Teaching and Research Committee - 25 September 2018
- d. Finance and General Purposes Committee- 27 September 2018
- e. Human Resources Committee - 28 September 2018

Items 17 and 18 were included in the agenda for noting only and therefore no discussion took place at the meeting.

17. UHI COURT

A quarterly update from UHI SMT and academic partners had been considered by the UHI Court at its meeting in September.

18. UHI RESIDENCES – UPDATE

A report by the Head of Governance and Records Management, UHI provided a comprehensive update on the student residences.

19. AOCB

Longman Disposal

The Director of Organisational Development provided a brief update on the Longman disposal project. Central Demolition Ltd had been appointed as the demolition contractor and insurance issues were progressing to procurement. The tenants on the site, Vodafone and THUS had now given consent to the demolition.

The College, SFC and SFT had only recently been made aware that Ministerial consent was required for the funding from SFC as the figure was over £1M. This had to be received before 26 October otherwise the contract would have to be put out to tender again.

The Board of Management noted the significant risks and **AGREED** that the Principal should make contact with Fergus Ewing MSP to make him aware of the contract deadline.

UHI Assembly

The Chair provided an update on the UHI Assembly meeting which had been held on 26 September. Following this meeting, a Programme Board was

being established with a wide ranging membership including students, staff, UHI Court and partner Boards of Management members as well as senior executives from UHI and the academic partners. Three themes had been identified, namely staff progression and development, resource allocation and governance. These would be prioritised by the Programme Board.

20. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 18th December 2018 @ 3.30 P.M.

Signed by the Chair:

Neil Shanks

Date:

18/12/18