

Board of Management

MINUTES of the MEETING of the BOARD OF MANAGEMENT held in the Inverness College Board Room, Inverness Campus on Thursday 24 March 2016

PRESENT: Hazel Allen, Brenda Dunthorne (Co-opted Member), Brian Henderson, Louise James, Mick Longton, Ryan MacIntyre, Helen Miller, Lindsey Mitchell, Lizzie Munro, Diane Rawlinson, Neil Stewart, John Wilson

CHAIR: Neil Stewart

APOLOGIES: Dominic Thierry, Steve Walsh

IN ATTENDANCE: Director of Organisational Development
Interim Director of Corporate Services
Head of Curriculum
Head of Student Services
College Secretary

The Chair was pleased to note that Dominic Thierry, the teaching staff member on the Board, although not present at this meeting, had returned to work after a period of ill health.

He welcomed Stephen Wells, the interim Director of Corporate Services to his first Board Meeting and also the new members of the board following their formal appointment at the start of 2016.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Management held on 17 December 2015 were **AGREED** as a correct record and were **APPROVED** and signed.

2. BANK SIGNATORIES

A report by the Financial Services Manager advised that an update to the signatories authorised to conduct business on the College bank accounts was required as a result of changes at both senior management and board level.

In order to simplify the process and negate the need to return for Board approval following each change of relevant personnel, the Board was asked to formally approve a number of roles as authorised signatories on the College bank accounts:

The Board of Management **AGREED** to designate the Financial Services Manager, Director of Corporate Services, Principal and Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board of Management as authorised signatories in accordance with the signing groups A, B and C as outlined in the report.

3. **POLICIES/STRATEGIES**

a. Waste Management

The Audit Committee, at its meeting on 1st March, had considered the draft waste management policy which was necessary to ensure that Inverness College UHI was meeting (and exceeding where possible) legislative requirements on waste management.

The Board of Management **APPROVED** the waste management policy.

b. Annual Health and Safety Statement

The Audit Committee, at its meeting on 1st March, had considered the annual health and safety statement. No changes had been made to the current statement approved in 2015.

The Board of Management **APPROVED** the annual health and safety statement which was duly signed by the Principal and the Chair of the Board of Management.

c. Staff Development Strategy

The Human Resources Committee, at its meeting on 2nd March, had considered the staff development strategy which had been developed in partnership with the SMT and was aligned to the other enabling strategies in particular the HR, Learning and Teaching and Research Development Strategies.

There was discussion on how progress in implementing the strategy would be monitored. The Principal confirmed that it was planned that the annual staff survey would be reintroduced but it was important that the College did not duplicate any work undertaken by UHI.

The Board of Management **APPROVED** the staff development strategy.

b. Core Skills

The Learning and Teaching Committee at its meeting on 8th March had considered the revised core skills policy which included the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. These core skills were now a key element in all FE courses.

There was discussion on how progress in implementing the policy would be monitored. The Principal advised that one measure was the improvement in PIs and a significant change in attainment levels across courses.

The Board of Management **APPROVED** the revised core skills policy subject to a small amendment to the approval dates within the document.

4. **EQUALITY OUTCOMES ANNUAL REPORT – APRIL 2016**

The Human Resources Committee, at its meeting held on 2nd March, had considered a draft annual report which set out the progress made over the last year in implementing the equality outcomes which were published in the Inverness UHI Equality Outcomes 2013-2017 report.

It was noted that two of the outcomes for student performance was to improve achievement rates in mature students and for students with a declared disability by 0.2% year on year. Both these targets had been easily exceeded and it was agreed that they be set at something more ambitious for the future.

The Board of Management **APPROVED** the annual equality outcomes report.

5. **BOARD EVALUATION - COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP REPORT**

A report by the College Secretary referred to the background to the formation of a short life working group on communications and outlined the conclusions from a questionnaire which had been issued to all board members and from the working group discussions.

The Board of Management **NOTED** the conclusions and **AGREED** that the following actions be progressed.

- Report authors to review level of operational detail in reports to the Board and to be made more aware of their audience.
- Appropriate access rights to the G drive be set up for board agendas and papers for the four main standing committees – in the short term, members receive agendas and papers via sugarsync
- Improve communication of upcoming college events and good news stories
- Raise awareness of the CREATE website
- Colleges Scotland daily monitoring reports to be circulated to all members for a trial period.
- Guidance notes to be produced on how to make the best use of the facilities on the iPad /tools such as Adobe reader
- Guidance notes to be produced on how to sync the college calendar on Board Member iPads with other devices.

Lindsay Mitchell declared an interest and left the meeting during discussion of the following item.

6. **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

A report by the Principal gave some background to and information on the plans by UHI to create a school of Health, Social Care and Well-being in Inverness. At the heart of these plans was the proposed transfer of nursing provision from Stirling University to UHI and national plans to develop a post-graduate medical school. In addition, NHS had developed plans for a new acute care facility to be built on the Campus and HIE had resurrected discussions for the relocation of a primary care facility which featured in the original Inverness Campus plan.

There were opportunities for the College to expand further by providing higher education opportunities which were currently unavailable and also to develop a level of expertise in courses over-subscribed elsewhere to attract inward migrating students. However, these opportunities could be lost due to a lack of access to capital funding.

There was however, an opportunity for the College to use the UHI/HIE plans for the development of a medical school to grow student numbers and

expertise through the development of an associated wrap around curriculum that could prove attractive to potential students.

In order to be confident of UHI support (in terms of curriculum development funding) and HIE/UHI support for co-location of College activity, any development plans would have to be closely linked to the health/STEM agenda.

It was proposed that the College investigated the potential development of a suite of courses that could lead to careers associated with health. The Inverness College UHI curriculum could then complement the work of the medical school and give it sufficiently broad a base to make it sustainable.

The Board of Management discussed the proposal and **AGREED** that market research be carried out to establish whether there was a market for further development of curriculum such as that described above and that a business case be developed that specified the required investment to support diversification and expansion of the curriculum over a three year period.

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

A report by the Principal summarised the key activities of Inverness College UHI and sector-wide developments that had emerged during the past three months:-

Funding 2016/17

Further Education funding had been confirmed as a flat cash settlement, in effect a stand-still budget. The Higher Education budget had been confirmed at regional level as incorporating a cut of a little over 3% in teaching grant.

Discussions were yet to take place regarding the distribution of funds for 2016/17 at a sub-regional level, along with associated targets at FE. HE FTE targets were discussed at the Partnership Planning Forum. Inverness College UHI was planning for moderate growth in 2016/17.

Curriculum planning would be modified to fit sub-regional activity targets as more information emerged during the next few months.

Corporate Parenting

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 detailed the responsibilities of organisations, including colleges, to care experienced young people. The Act was supplemented by the Guidance for Corporate Parents published in August 2015, and led to a review of college processes.

The Scottish Care Leavers Covenant was being used by Highland Community Planning partnership to inform a regional response. The SMT had made a commitment to realisation of the aims and ambitions of the Scottish Care Leavers Covenant. This commitment would lead to a further review and fine-tuning of internal processes, building on earlier work.

Academic Partnership Agreements

A further two workshops had been held to discuss the draft Academic

Partnership Agreements. Legal representation had been commissioned on a collective basis by UHI academic partners and the current draft was with lawyers for review.

Although the Academic Partnership Agreement was still contractual in nature, UHI had conceded several points which had diluted its impact to an extent. It was anticipated that final drafts would come to the Board of Management for approval in June.

Residences

The first phase of the UHI Residence Project was under construction and was expected to be completed by September 2016. Discussions were underway with UHI to determine an admissions policy with appropriate priority groups. Phase 2 would be completed by 2018.

The Scottish School of Forestry

The Scottish School of Forestry at Balloch was officially opened on Friday 12th February by Ian Ross OBE. Guests enjoyed a tour of the facilities before Professor James Pendlebury, honorary professor of Inverness College UHI, gave his inaugural lecture.

Three Chimneys

Inverness College UHI recently hosted a 'pop-up restaurant' in conjunction with the Three Chimneys of Skye fame. The event, which was the first in a programme of events planned for 2016, was organised to increase the profile of careers in the hospitality industry across the Highlands and Islands and to raise funds for UHI's charitable student hospitality scholarship fund. A 5 course tasting menu was provided by head chef Scott Davies who led his team with support from Inverness College UHI students.

Lantra Awards

Annabel Martin, who was studying for a HND in Forestry was recently announced as runner-up in the Higher Education category at Lantra Scotland's Land-based and Aquaculture Learner of the Year Awards 2016. At the same event, Lisa Askham, an aquaculture apprentice from Lochcarron, won the Aquaculture category. Lisa had recently completed a Modern Apprenticeship SVQ Level 2 in Aquaculture at Inverness College UHI while working as a Freshwater Operative at The Scottish Salmon Company's Russelburn Hatchery in Kishorn.

Industrial Action

Strike action had taken place on Wednesday 17th March and half the lecturing staff had taken part. The further planned strike days had been suspended following negotiations between the management side and EIS. The next step was for EIS to ballot their members on the revised offer.

8. EDUCATION SCOTLAND REVIEW

The Principal congratulated the Depute Principal on all the work which he had coordinated leading up to the Education Scotland review which had taken place during the week beginning 7th March. She confirmed that the college had received a very favourable report, with Education Scotland advising that the outcome of the review was that the college was "effective". Education

Scotland had listed many strengths across many areas and had encouraged further development in a small number of areas.

The Chair congratulated the Principal and her team and looked forward to the next stage which was the report accuracy check. It was hoped that the final report would be formally presented to the next meeting of the Board in June.

9. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF BOARD COMMITTEES

The Chairs made reference to some specific matters which had been discussed at the committee meetings

a) Special Chairs Committee – 28 January 2016

The Chair highlighted that the Committee had agreed that it would be beneficial to invite Fiona Larg, the Chief Operating Officer and Secretary to a future Board meeting to UHI to advise the board on the structure and roles within Executive Office.

b) Search and Nomination Committee – 28 January 2016

c) Chairs Committee – 25 February 2016

The Chair advised the College was receiving support and advice from SFT on the GTFM contract. They had also offered financial support to the college to mount a defence to any legal action taken by Morrisons in relation to the Compensation Event.

d) Performance, Review and Remuneration – 25 February 2016

e) Audit Committee – 1 March 2016

The Chair was pleased to report that the college had received a very clean report on the audit carried out on student experience – quality / student recruitment and retention.

Unfortunately, UHI were still sending auditors directly into the college without first advising any member of the SMT of the audit process. In addition, the college was not receiving a copy of the final audit report. The Chair would write to the Chair of the UHI Audit Committee on these matters.

f) Human Resources Committee – 2 March 2016

g) Learning and Teaching Committee – 8 March 2016

The Chair referred to the reports on the new credit system of funding and it was agreed that these be circulated to all members of the Board.

h) Finance and General Purposes Committee – 10 March 2016

The Chair referred to the two areas which were out of use causing disruption to business continuity, namely the Sports hall due to a fallen roof tile (for the second time) and the HR office due to contamination of fumes from extract into the air handling.

The Principal advised that the HR office would be reopened next week and provided an update on the issues relating to the sports hall roof. Reports had been requested from Morrisons to confirm that the ceiling

and fixings were fit for purpose and in addition, a "belt and braces" solution was being sought.

The Board of Management **NOTED** the minutes of the aforementioned meetings.

10. ETHICAL STANDARDS FRAMEWORK

The Chairs Committee, at its meeting on 25th February, had considered three guidance documents which had been developed by the Standards Commission for Scotland on the role of Standards Officers within the Ethical Standards Framework together with advice for Board Members on the use of social media and on their relations with employees. The aim of the advice notes was simply to supplement any guidance or rules a body might have in place already.

The Board of Management **NOTED** the guidance documents and **AGREED** they should form part of the induction material for new Board Members.

11. FERB

The Chair advised that the academic partner Chairs would, in future, meet three weeks in advance of each FERB meeting. Also, Andrew Campbell, Chair of Argyll College, had been appointed as Vice Chair of FERB

12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 15 June 2016 at 4.00 p.m. (Training session from 3.30 p.m.)

Signed by the Chair: _____



Date: _____

