

MINUTES of the MEETING of the BOARD OF MANAGEMENT held via Microsoft Teams, on Tuesday 29 June 2021

- PRESENT:** Robyn Kennedy, Innis Montgomery, Chris O’Neil, Ruth McFadyen, Gillian Galloway, Sally Blyth, Donald MacKenzie, Arvinder Kainth, Mark Sheridan, Russell Edwards, Tina Stones
- CHAIR:** Mark Sheridan
- APOLOGIES:** Kelly Mackenzie, Samantha Cribb, Leanne MacKenzie, Amy Goodbrand
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Assistant Principal – Finance and Audit
Assistant Principal – Operations and External Relations
Assistant Principal – Student Experience and Quality
Assistant Principal – Academic and Research
Board Secretary
Laurie Symon, Student Association Coordinator
- OBSERVER:** Bonnie Crawford

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were noted.

The Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Death of Student

The Board took the opportunity to reflect on the recent loss of student Lee Shewan and passed on their deepest sympathies and sorrow to all who knew Lee. The HISA President extended thanks to both the Principal and EMT members for the support which had been offered to both students and staff members in the wake of this tragedy.

Chair of Board of Management

The Board noted that Sarah Burton has resigned from her role as Chair of the Board of Management, and offered their thanks for all her commitment to Inverness College over the years.

The Board noted that the recruitment process for a new Chair would be carried out in partnership with the University of the Highlands and Islands and that whilst this process is taking place we would appoint an Interim Chair for the period of up to 6 months.

ITEM 01a

The Board Secretary highlighted that a call for nominations for the role of Interim Chair was made on 24 June 2021 and that Mark Sheridan had been nominated and seconded. Mark took this opportunity to set out his position and experience for the role.

Members of the Board of Management were asked to support the nomination via a secret ballot on JISC Surveys.

Decision: The Board Secretary advised that the results of the ballot were 9 votes supporting the nomination of Mark Sheridan, 0 votes against and 0 abstentions. The Board of Management was advised that UHI would now have to ratify this decision and formally appoint Mark Sheridan to the role of Interim Chair.

Presentation – HISA Elections 2021

The Student Association Coordinator took the Board of Management through the results of the HISA Elections for 2021. The Board congratulated the coordinator on the detail and quality of the data presented, noting that such elections normally drew a lot of support due to the community nature of the events. The Board also noted that the number of students voting had decreased across the whole of the UHI partnership and the reasons that may have contributed to this were discussed. The Board of Management highlighted the increased number of complaints received during the election process and was advised that HISA were not unduly concerned with this as the anecdotal evidence suggests that this is fairly representative of the entire sector. However the Student Association Coordinator did advise that if the level of complaints remains high or further increases during the 2022 elections then this may prove a cause for concern and will be further investigated.

The Board of Management thanked the HISA Team for the comprehensive set of data and for the work that they have undertaken to ensure that the elections were conducted appropriately.

The Board extended their congratulations to all those elected.

The Student Association Coordinator left the meeting.

1. MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING HELD ON 01 APRIL 2021

Decision: The minutes of the Board of Management Meeting held on 01 April 2021 were **AGREED** as a correct record and were **APPROVED**.

2. OUSTANDING ACTIONS

Number of Committee Meetings per year – the Board Secretary advised that the review of the Committees is due to take place over July-August in conjunction with the Inverness College Committee review.

ITEM 01a

Action: An update on the review of Committees including a review of the frequency of meetings will be brought to the October meeting for further discussion.

3. POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

a.) Freedom of Information Policy

The Board of Management considered the updated Freedom of Information Policy which had been recommended for approval by the Audit Committee.

Decision: The Board of Management **AGREED** to the proposed changes to the Freedom of Information Policy.

b.) Food Safety Policy

The Board of Management considered the updated Food Safety Policy which had been recommended for approval by the Audit Committee. The Board discussed food allergies and how this is feed into the policy and was advised that we continue to ensure that we remain compliant and engage with all current legislation to ensure best practice and that all staff are trained to the appropriate level.

Decision: The Board of Management **AGREED** to the proposed changes to the Food Safety Policy.

c.) Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

The Board of Management considered the updated Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy which had been recommended for approval by the Audit Committee.

Decision: The Board of Management **AGREED** to the proposed changes to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

d.) Marketing and Communications Policy

The Board of Management considered the updated Marketing and Communication Policy which had been recommended for approval by the Audit Committee.

Decision: The Board of Management **AGREED** to the proposed changes to the Marketing and Communications Policy.

e.) Professional Review and Development Policy

The Board of Management considered the updated Professional Review and Development Policy which was recommended for approval by the HR Committee. The Board welcomed the additional recognition within the policy surrounding the quality of lecturing and endorsed the inclusion of a mid-year review.

Decision: The Board of Management **AGREED** to the proposed changes to the Professional Review and Development Policy.

f.) Student Support Funds Policy

The Board of Management considered the updated Student Support Funds Policy which was recommended for approval by the F&GP Committee. The Board noted that was a partnership wide policy.

Decision: The Board of Management **AGREED** to the proposed changes to the Student Support Funds Policy.

g.) Tertiary Learner Support Policy

The Board of Management considered the updated Tertiary Learner Support Policy which was recommended for approval by the LT&R Committee. The Board noted that this too was a partnership wide policy.

Decision: The Board of Management **AGREED** to the proposed changes to the Tertiary Learner Support Policy.

h.) UHI FE Waiver Policy

The Board of Management considered the updated UHI FE Waiver Policy which was recommended for approval by the F&GP Committee. The Board noted that the revisions to this policy were driven by updates to legislation.

Decision: The Board of Management **AGREED** to the proposed changes to the UHI FE Waiver Policy.

4. PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The Principal spoke to his paper providing the Board of Management with a background to the Partnership Agreement. The Board noted that legal advice had been sought to review the proposed agreement and a number of serious concerns had been highlighted as a result of this advice. The Principal advised that today an email had been circulated by the Chair of Perth College which clarified their position.

A lengthy confidential discussion around the agreement took place which focused on mutuality within the agreement, our knowledge of the local area, costs surrounding legal advice, current partnership initiatives and shared policies, risks of not signing the agreement and how agreement may be achieved.

Decision: The Board of Management **AGREED** to the acceptance of the proposed review of the agreement timeline; but **DID NOT AGREE** to the signing of the agreement in its current form.

Action: A progress update on the timeline will be taken and discussed at each Board Meeting to ensure that the Partnership is delivering on the agreed timescales.

Action: The Interim Chair will prepare a response on behalf of Inverness College which will clarify our position. This response will be circulated to Board members for comments before the final version is circulated to the University of the Highlands and Islands and Partner Colleges.

5. REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE 2021/22

The Assistant Principal – Finance and Audit advised the Board that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee is due to be held on 01 July 2021 to discuss and approve the Revenue Budget and Capital Expenditure for 2021/22.

Discussions on this year's position, the anticipated position for 21-22 and concern over the implementation of flat funding for 22-23 was discussed.

Action: The Board Secretary will circulate the Revenue Budget and Capital Expenditure papers to all following the Extraordinary Finance and General Purposes Committee being held on 01 July 2021. A poll for potential dates for an Extraordinary Board of Management meeting to review and give final approval to these papers will also be sent out. The Board noted that the deadline for approval of these documents is 31 July 2021.

6. COVID 19 AND PLANNING FOR 21/22

The Assistant Principal – Operations and External Relations spoke to the jointly prepared paper which provided the Board with an update of our response to the ongoing pandemic and the impact of this on planning for 21-22 highlighting in particular deferred learning, additional credits which have been allocated to us to support students, the potential move to no mandatory social distancing from 10 August 2021 and the guidance on hybrid working which has been produced.

The Board discussed the potential move to no social distancing, vaccinations for younger age groups and lateral flow testing and noted that Inverness College would continue to follow all Scottish Government advice and that Heads of Departments are continuing to adjust timetables to ensure that classes can be taught both onsite and online

A lengthy discussion around student resilience took place with the Board noting that the SFC have made additional funding available for student mental health.

The Board gave their thanks to all staff for their hard work over the past year to ensure that our core business has continued to be delivered to a high standard.

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal spoke to his report, addressing again the tragic death of a student within the halls of residence. The Board noted that once all necessary formal

processes have been completed we will review our policies and procedures relating to the halls of residence.

The Board noted that the EMT Restructure is now complete with 3.6 Assistant Principal positions now filled. The Board Working Group for the restructure met for a final time on 21 May 2021 and expressed confidence with how the process was carried out. A lengthy discussion surrounding the Distributed Leadership Model took place.

Presentation – Talent Management Framework

The Assistant Principal – Operations and External Relations took the Board through her presentation on the talent management framework highlighting that feedback from staff was currently being sought and that the framework would be subject to further scrutiny from the HR Committee with significant work still to be implemented before the strategy document would be available to bring to the Board of Management for final comment and decision.

The Board was advised of the areas which are to be prioritised such as workforce planning, recruitment and selection, induction and engagement, professional development, organisational performance management and succession planning.

The Board welcomed this analysis and gave their thanks for the Assistant Principal – Operations and External Relations for this presentation.

8. GOVERNANCE UPDATE

The Board Secretary spoke to her report and reiterated the process for appointing a new Chair and that the review of all committees and their terms of reference will be carried out over the summer. The Board was also updated with regards the annual review of the Code of Good Governance and the development of a questionnaire for Board Members in relation to hybrid meetings.

The Board Secretary advised that the previously approved Schedule of Meetings for 2021/22 had been amended to reflect a change of date for the Joint Audit and Finance and General Purposes meeting. The Board noted that this amendment has been at the request of our External Auditors.

Decision: The Board **AGREED** the change to the Schedule of Meetings for 2021/22.

Action: The Board Secretary will make the updated version available on our website.

The Board Secretary advised that following discussions Sally Blyth had agreed to take on the role of Vice-Chair for the HR Committee and Arvinder Kainth had agreed to take on the role of Vice-Chair for the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee.

Decision: The Board **RATIFIED** the appointment of Sally Blyth as Vice-Chair for the HR Committee and the appointment of Arvinder Kainth as Vice-Chair for the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee.

9. DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF BOARD COMMITTEES

The Board of Management noted the contents of the following minutes:

- Minutes of the HR Committee held on 11 March 2021
- Minutes of the LT&R Committee held on 16 March 2021
- Minutes of the Estates Legacy Project Board held on 17 March 2021
- Minutes of the Estates Legacy Project Board held on 27 April 2021
- Minutes of the HR Committee held on 27 May 2021
- Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 01 June 2021
- Minutes of the Chairs Committee held on 03 June 2021
- Minutes of the LT&R Committee held on 08 June 2021
- Minutes of the F&GP Committee held on 10 June 2021

10. UHI COURT – QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Board of Management noted the contents of the report for the period 01 March – 31 May 2021.

11. NOTES FROM REGIONAL STRATEGIC COMMITTEE MEETING

The Board of Management noted the contents of the minutes of the Regional Strategic Committee Meeting held on 04 May 2021.

12. HEALTH AND SAFETY AND WELLBEING MINUTES

The Board of Management noted the contents of the minutes of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee Meeting held on 10 March 2021.

13. AOCB

ELCC Lease

The Board of Management was advised that approval for the ELCC Lease to be signed by the Interim Chair was required. The Assistant Principal – Operations and External Relations took the Committee through the pertinent points of the lease highlighting in particular the start and end dates along with break out clauses.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the signing of the lease for the ELCC.

Harbourside Lease

The Board of Management noted that this lease had been signed and that a copy of the lease had been provided for information purposes only.

Other Business

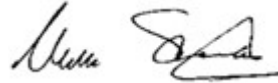
The Interim Chair gave thanks to all staff and board members for their hard work over the past year.

Bonnie Crawford, HISA Representative was introduced to the Board. The Board Members welcomed her and look forward to seeing her at future meetings.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- A further Board of Management Meeting will be arranged for July 2021 to approve the Budgets for 2021-22.
- Tuesday 5th October 2021 at 4.30 p.m.

Signed by Interim Chair of the Board of Management:



Date: 05-10-21