

## Board of Management

Meeting	Chairs Committee
Date and time	Thursday 28 May 2020 at 8.30 a.m.
Location	Microsoft Teams via Calendar Link

Board Secretary  
Thursday 21 May 2020

### AGENDA

#### Welcome and Apologies

#### Declarations of Interest

**1. MINUTES**

Meeting of the Committee held on 5 March 2020

**2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Action List

**3. GOVERNANCE**

External Effectiveness Review Report by Board Secretary

**4. FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN - CONFIDENTIAL**

Financial Recovery Plan Progress Report by Director of Finance & Principal  
Outcomes of Financial Recovery Plan Report by Principal

**5. SMT REPORT**

Report by Principal including strategic review of international students –  
Principal  
Regional Strategic Committee – Verbal Update from Chair

**6. PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL UPDATE REPORT**

**7. AOCB**

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**MINUTES of the MEETING of the CHAIRS COMMITTEE held in the Board Room,  
1 Inverness Campus on Thursday 5 March 2020**

**PRESENT:** Hazel Allen via VCR link, Gavin Ross, John Wilson, Tom Spiers, Innis Montgomery

**APOLOGIES:**

**CHAIR:** Sarah Burton

**ATTENDING:** Principal  
Secretary to the Board of Management

**1. MINUTES**

The minute of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20 November 2019 was **ACCEPTED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED** and signed by the Chair. Subject to one minor change to page 3 'subject to conditions.'

**2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Committee **AGREED** which actions had been completed and could be signed off and those which were still outstanding and would remain on the list.

**3. SMT REPORT**

Principal outlined in his report that Inverness College UHI was facing a significant financial challenge and with savings of £1.3m to be made.

The Strategic Recovery Plan had been agreed and consisted of the following:

- Streamline our management structures to ensure they are fit for purpose and continue to deliver a dispersed leadership approach to all of our activity.
- Review and rationalise our curriculum and Academic staffing to realise savings and deliver a curriculum that ensures we continue to respond to demand and deliver to activity targets, locally and in light of the partnership delivery model for HE.
- Review all support area staffing structures and activity to realise savings while continuing to provide effective support to students and efficient business processes, potentially in collaboration with other UHI partners.
- Review our Research staffing and grant capture to ensure it is sustainable now and into the future.
- Review and reset all revenue budgets and ensure they are rigorously and regularly monitored

Following the Board meeting of the 20 of February it was agreed that a financial recovery plan would be developed.

The principles behind the recovery plan were-

- To create a sustainable and resilient model.
- To respond to the changing demands of the region and market.
- To create efficiency through partnership engagement.
- To maintain our commitment to high quality staff and resource provision
- To further promote the high-quality student provision.

The committee **AGREED** that a Strategic review in terms of International Students needs to be undertaken with monitoring taking place as an going issue with regular updates and a Standard item on agendas in terms of all meetings.

#### **4. UHI GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

A report by the Chair confirmed that the consultation document had been circulated to all board members for comments and the responses had now been compiled and submitted to the Governance Working Group.

No further comments it had been **NOTED** where to be added.

#### **5. AOCB**

A request for a Sports Development Project Board to be established was **NOTED** and **AGREED**.

**6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 28 May 2020 - 8.30 a.m.

**Signed by the Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Outstanding Actions - Chairs Committee

<b>12 March 2019</b>				
<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time line</b>	<b>Actioned</b>
Board member evaluation	Evaluations to be completed	All Chairs	By end <b>June 2019</b>	
Finance Strategy	Targets to be set for each of the KPI's to enable F&GP to scrutinise progress at its quarterly meetings	Finance & General Purposes Chair	For June F&GP meeting <b>Revised Timeline - ongoing</b>	
<b>5 March 2020</b>				
	Strategic review in terms of international students to be undertaken with monitoring taking place. Committee to be given regular updates.			

## Board of Management

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	External Effectiveness Review
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Lisa Ross, Board Secretary
<b>Meeting:</b>	Chairs Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	Thursday 28 May 2020
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	Thursday 21 May 2020
<b>Brief Summary of the paper:</b>	Background to the last External Effectiveness Review and options for how to proceed with the 20/21 review.
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion of options then recommendation for how to proceed.
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance</li> <li>• partnership services</li> <li>• risk management</li> <li>• strategic plan</li> <li>• new opportunity/change</li> </ul>	Compliance with the Code of Good Conduct for Scotland's Colleges.
<b>Resource implications:</b>	Yes <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Cost of carrying out the review
<b>Risk implications:</b>	No <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Operational: Organisational:
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	No <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

<b>Status</b> – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non-Confidential		
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should <b>not</b> be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp> and

[http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public\\_Interest\\_Test.pdf](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf)

## **Background**

The Code of Good Governance for Scottish Colleges states that all Boards must keep its effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process and that there should also be an externally facilitated evaluation of its effectiveness every three to five years.

Our last external effectiveness review was began in October 2016. At this time the decision was made for Contracts and Procurements to request quotes from organisations to enable us to source an external facilitator to carry out this review and produce a report on the effectiveness of our Board of Management.

Following this tender stage Henderson Loggie were successful in procuring the contract and they issued their final report in March 2017.

## **Current**

Due to the current climate the Good Governance Steering Group has considered the timescales for completing future external facilitated effectiveness reviews and has agreed alongside the Scottish Government and SFC to give extra time to conduct these reviews and the deadline for completion is now April 2021 when all external review reports must be submitted to the SFC. This deadline will continue to be reviewed in line with any further developments around Covid-19 so may be subject to change.

In order to ensure that the Board have time to review and consider all findings from this report we would aim to have the review completed and the final report issued by the end of February 2021. This would allow the report to be discussed at the March 2021 Board of Management before being submitted to the SFC in April 2021.

## **Discussion**

There appears to be three options we could consider to begin this review:

1. Colleges Development Network now have a bank of Board Review Facilitators who can carry out this review and the Board Secretary can seek a proposal from them.
2. Contracts and Procurement prepare a tender process as they did for the previous review.
3. We get both a proposal from CDN and Contracts and Procurements complete a tender process and the committee review these and make a decision on which proposal best meets our needs with a view to the cost of carrying this review out in the current circumstances.



<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Financial Recovery
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Roderick M Ferrier Director of Finance (Shared)
<b>Meeting:</b>	Chairs Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	28 May 2020
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	21 May 2020
<b>Brief Summary of the paper:</b>	The paper sets out progress on Financial Recovery and Sustainability
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Noting ahead of Finance Committee
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance</li> <li>• partnership services</li> <li>• risk management</li> <li>• strategic plan</li> <li>• new opportunity/change</li> </ul>	Finance Risk
<b>Resource implications:</b>	Yes – staffing will be affected
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes / No <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Operational: Yes Organisational: Yes
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	No
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	
<b>Status – [Confidential/Non confidential]</b>	Confidential
<b>Freedom of Information</b>	No

Can this paper be included in "open" business* [Yes/No]			
*If a paper should <b>not</b> be included within "open" business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp> and

[http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public\\_Interest\\_Test.pdf](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf)

## Board of Management

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	SMT Update
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Professor Chris O'Neil
<b>Meeting:</b>	Chairs Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	Thursday 28 May 2020
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	Thursday 21 May 2020
<b>Brief Summary of the paper:</b>	To provide the committee with an update from the Senior Management Team.
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance</li> <li>• partnership services</li> <li>• risk management</li> <li>• strategic plan</li> <li>• new opportunity/change</li> </ul>	
<b>Resource implications:</b>	Yes / No <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes / No <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Operational: Organisational:
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	Yes/No <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	

<b>Status</b> – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non confidential		
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should <b>not</b> be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp> and

[http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public\\_Interest\\_Test.pdf](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf)

## SMT Update

### Introduction

The period from the start of the year to now has been challenging for a number of well-known and understood reasons. The key areas of overarching work and associated challenges facing SMT include –

- Working closely with the Board of Management to develop and deliver a Financial Recovery Plan
- Closing the campus in response to COVID 19 and moving all work online
- Engaging in a re-structuring/design of the finance function with North Highland College
- Engaging in the work of the Programme Board to develop joint services, common student expectations, Partnership Council change and financial review
- Working with the partnership to address a collective deficit

### Ongoing Work

This list is in addition to the ongoing work necessary to the maintenance of the college's ongoing business, but usefully, some of the ongoing work has been enhanced by the above. Financial reporting, as a consequence of the changes made to the finance function, now means the budget holders have access to monthly reports (although COVID 19 and remote working has interrupted the efficiency of this). This is a critical development in ensuring the middle managers have the necessary tools and insights to work efficiently and with responsibility. It also means that the budgeting process can now be managed in a proactive and informed manner, cognisant of the demands of the FRP.

Student numbers and recruitment have been impacted by COVID 19 in year. FE Funding credits relating to student numbers for 2019/20 have impacted with in-year activity curtailed across the whole sector. Our credits are approximately 1000 (at 95%) below target and last year's level but the SFC will not require any claw-back.

Applications for FE for 20/21 are currently 1932, compared to 2105 at the same time last year. Offers made are slightly up 969 compared to 885 at the same time last year and we are entering an historically critical point of recruitment. The sense is that targets will be difficult to achieve but FE credits are more secure than HE target numbers. As predicted and reported elsewhere, this year's HE FTE is approximately 80 below target (at 94.8%) and looking forward HE applications are down slightly at 1304 compared to 1314 at the same time last year. Offers made are up at 989 against 893 at the same time last year. The impact of COVID 19 makes the market highly unpredictable thus Marketing & Communications has become key across the partnership. Actions include -

- Virtual open days.
- Centralised marketing strategy
- Extended clearing period

A key risk to Inverness and the partnership are the apprenticeship programmes and the necessary support of the SDS to finance and support. There has been significant concern within the sector that has been raised to ministerial level that the SDS are expecting 'business as usual' at a time when the majority of apprentices across Scotland are furloughed and they, and some of their employers are unsure of their future. There has been ministerial support for our concerns co-ordinated by Colleges Scotland and we await actions.

### **International**

Despite the impact of COVID 19 we have had one of the highest numbers of international applications to Inverness for UG study in recent times. We have had 41 applications, all of which are now pending and are very uncertain. A decision is pending in the forthcoming Partnership Council as to whether or not we reduce our international recruitment effort across the partnership. This is a decision based upon low numbers anyway and sector wide assumptions that international recruitment may decline between 50 and 95%.

### **COVID 19**

We have been in lockdown since the end of March and have moved effectively to online delivery. A key concern now is how to re-open. There is a central working group which is planning for the re-opening of our campuses. It is both locally focussed, and it links into and is informed by both UHI and Colleges Scotland meetings.

The following is a set of current activities to prepare for reopening:

- 1) Transition operational management group has been formed and is chaired by Ken Russell with Melanie Smith as the Deputy. The scope of the group is to:
  - To consider and plan the logistics of transition from lockdown to post-lockdown operations with particular regard to health and safety, estates, infrastructure, and human resource aspects.
  - To liaise with: curriculum and support managers; and student representatives to scope and plan scenarios and contingencies and evolve these as the environment changes.
- 2) The remit and membership have been formally endorsed at the SMT Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> May. Core team members cover: Health and Safety, Human Resources, Estates, ICT, Data Control, and Marketing and Communications.
- 3) The group held its kick-off meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> May and instigated the use of the Alcumus COVID-19 Returning to Work Package. The first stage of this is a gap analysis that leads to a set of prioritised actions and a risk assessment and management plan. The initial gap analysis was presented to the group on the 21<sup>st</sup> May to determine next step priorities.
- 4) Prior to lockdown a protocol was produced to manage business critical access to the building, and this has been highly effective. The protocol is a working document and will be updated and approved by SMT as the situation evolves.
- 5) In parallel with and informing/informed by the Alcumus work package is a series of related work streams involving social distancing, supporting staff with an Access to Work assessment, traffic management within the building including signage, and specialist cleaning operations.

- 6) The next statutory review of the COVID-19 arrangements in Scotland will be released on the 28<sup>th</sup> May. It should be noted that the peak in the number of cases in the Highlands is anticipated in late May and into June.
- 7) A further update will be provided to the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> June by the DP – Academic Development.

**FRP related activity**

The Early Learning and Childcare Centre remains a concern as an area at risk so we continue to try to improve its effectiveness. The ELCC Manager has developed a plan which includes a number of recommendations to improve the financial position through –

- Parents with fee debt will not be provided a childcare place until debt is cleared.
- All invoices to parents/guardians will be issued directly from ELCC through the child connect system and managed accordingly.
- Monthly invoices to be paid within 7 days.
- Open the childcare service to wider customer base to supplement income.
- All funded hours (30 hours) to be used at ELCC in 3 x 9 hour blocks, plus 1 x AM, or 1 x PM session (funding not split with other providers)
- Academic Holiday care will be provided based on the best client mix for staff/child ratios and income generation.

The intention behind these actions are to make the ELCC more attractive to another agency.

We have begun the process of drafting the Workforce Plan 2020 – 2023 to ensure we -

- Have a flexible workforce
- Meet future workforce demand
- Maintain recruitment and retention
- Have effective succession planning

Workforce planning against the Curriculum Plan is ongoing. Partnership Council is now committed to a curriculum review in which we will play a full role to ensure that the relationship between financial viability, the success of the offer and the staffing is balanced.

Professor Chris O'Neil

## Board of Management

<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Partnership Council Update
<b>Author:</b> [Name and Job title]	Professor Chris O'Neil
<b>Meeting:</b>	Chairs Committee
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	Thursday 28 May 2020
<b>Date Paper prepared:</b>	Thursday 21 May 2020
<b>Brief Summary of the paper:</b>	To provide the committee with an update from Partnership Council
<b>Action requested:</b> [Approval, recommendation, discussion, noting]	Discussion
<b>Link to Strategy:</b> Please highlight how the paper links to, or assists with:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance</li> <li>• partnership services</li> <li>• risk management</li> <li>• strategic plan</li> <li>• new opportunity/change</li> </ul>	
<b>Resource implications:</b>	Yes / No <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Risk implications:</b>	Yes / No <b>If yes, please specify:</b> Operational: Organisational:
<b>Equality and Diversity implications:</b>	Yes/No <b>If yes, please specify:</b>
<b>Consultation:</b> [staff, students, UHI & Partners, External] and provide detail	



<b>Status</b> – [Confidential/Non confidential]	Non confidential		
<b>Freedom of Information</b> Can this paper be included in “open” business* [Yes/No]	Yes		
*If a paper should <b>not</b> be included within “open” business, please highlight below the reason.			
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research (S27)		Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs (S30)	
Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation (S33)		Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court (S36)	
Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (S38)		Other (please give further details)	
For how long must the paper be withheld? (express either as the time which needs to pass or a condition which needs to be met.)			

Further guidance on application of the exclusions from Freedom of Information legislation is available via

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/ScottishPublicAuthorities/ScottishPublicAuthorities.asp> and

[http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public\\_Interest\\_Test.pdf](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/web/FILES/Public_Interest_Test.pdf)

## **Partnership Council Update**

### **Introduction**

After some difficult and challenging discussions around the role and function of the Partnership Council, a clearer understanding of the standing and responsibilities of the Partnership Council has been achieved in addition to the related establishment of a Regional Strategic Committee. There was concern and confusion as to the remit of Partnership Council in that the Terms of Reference were not fully developed and consequently, there were conflicting interpretations around even basic functions such as whether or not it was a decision-making body or simply advisory. This conflict has contributed to stasis and was increasingly a risk to the partnership.

### **Programme Board**

The establishment of a Programme Board to oversee the evolution of the UHI partnership examined and continues to examine a number of concerns including the governance of the wider organisation and the management via Court and the Executive Office of their combined responsibilities to act as the Regional Strategic Body (RSB) for the UHI partnership region. The RSB administers and distributes the HE related funding provided by the Scottish Funding Committee (SFC) whilst the distribution of FE credits and associated funding was managed by the Further Education Funding Board (FERB) with input from partnership Chairs who contextualised the local outcome agreements from the SFC. The management of the apprenticeship offer which includes both FE and HE level delivery, but alternate funding streams, was managed and overseen through a number of channels but ultimately reporting to a management group with discussion around strategy and delivery often reported and examined by Partnership Council.

The Programme Board, with the support of Court and Chairs concluded that the establishment of a tertiary committee was desirable and consequently, the Regional Strategic Committee (RSC) was formed and has recently concluded its first meeting. The Terms of Reference and membership are at appendix 1.

The clarity achieved by the Terms of Reference for the RSC have better defined the non-executive function of the RSC and in particular its role to hold the wider executive to account. The Partnership Council is thus defined and confirmed as a decision-making body with an executive responsibility. The Partnership Council Terms of Reference have been re-drafted and will be subject to a review in June.

### **Work Streams**

A concern and frustration regarding the effectiveness of the Partnership Council, other than the confusion as to its standing, was a failure to deliver to agreed work streams. The executive and non-executive relationship now defined has led to the establishment of a work-streams matrix whose agenda, progress and delivery will be monitored by both bodies within the context of national or local policy or need.

The current agreed workstreams are to be delivered in the context of the Programme Board's imperatives, the financial concerns across the partnership and COVID 19.

They are as follows and subject to refinement and agreed 'ownership' and delivery dates –

1. Campus Operations – 20/21
2. Curriculum Preparation - 20/21
3. Curriculum Review – 21/22
4. Strategic Positioning
5. Branding and Positioning
6. Maximising Intake – 20/21
7. Maximising Income Generation
8. RAM Reform
9. Financial Planning
10. Mitigating Financial Impact
11. Common Finance Service
12. Operational Requirements for Regional Delivery
13. Aligned and Common Services
14. Development of Partnership Priorities
15. Embedding Governance Changes
16. Staffing Terms and Conditions
17. HR Strategic Lead
18. Student Recommendations
19. Research
20. EO Evaluation

Whilst some of the work above is underway, there are areas of work that are crucial and have not commenced, particularly around the curriculum. Equally, the principals are concerned and discussing omissions such as the residencies and the Tech One project. The list will, however, be subject to debate and confirmation in the June Partnership Council.

Professor Chris O'Neil

## Appendix 1

### Regional Strategy Committee – Terms of Reference

#### Constitution

The Court has established a committee of the governing body known as the Regional Strategy committee.

#### Membership

Chair (University court member)	Garry Coutts
<b>Members</b>	
University court members (4), including: Chair of university court Further Education Regional Lead University court member University court member	Garry Coutts Michael Foxley (Vice-Chair) Fiona McLean Willie Printie
External independent member (2)	Bruce Robertson Vacancy
Academic partner board chairs (7)	Beverly Clubley (Vice-Chair) (Orkney) Andrew Campbell (AC) Blair Sandison (NHC) Brian Crichton (PC) David Sandison (NAFC) Diane Murray (SAMS) Sarah Burton (IC)
Principal and Vice Chancellor ( <i>ex officio</i> )	Crichton Lang
President of the Highlands and Islands Students Association (HISA) ( <i>ex officio</i> )	Alan Simpson
<b>In attendance</b>	
Secretary & Chief Operating Officer	Fiona Larg
Director of Corporate Resources	Niall McArthur
Vice Principal FE	Diane Rawlinson
Vice Principal Research & Impact	Neil Simco
Vice Principal Strategic Development	Gary Campbell
Vice Principal Tertiary	Lydia Rohmer
Governance and Policy Officer	Nicholas Oakley (Clerk)

#### Terms of Office

Members who are members of the Court shall have periods of office co-terminous with their appointment to the Court. Members who are *ex officio* shall have periods of office co-terminous with their appointment as chair of a relevant college board or their employment at the University of the Highlands and Islands; independent members shall be appointed for a period of three years and shall be eligible for re-appointment for one further period of three years and may, in exceptional circumstances be reappointed for one further period of three years, but thereafter shall not be eligible for reappointment.

Two vice-chairs will be appointed by the committee, including the Further Education Regional Lead and one of the academic partner board chairs.

### Authority

The Committee is authorised to determine all matters delegated to it and to consider and advise the university court on all other matters within its terms of reference.

The Committee is authorised to obtain independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of non-members with relevant experience and expertise, if it considers this necessary.

### Proceedings

The Committee should normally meet not less than four times per year.

### Terms of Reference

The primary role of the regional strategy committee is to bring together university court members, the chairs of the academic partners and other key partners to ensure the university partnership delivers high quality tertiary education strategically across the university partnership. To advise the Court on financial and related matters in general and to oversee the whole system of financial control and administration.

The functions of the committee shall include:

1. Working with the university court, to advise on and monitor the implementation of the university strategy for further and higher education, research and knowledge exchange provision across the region the university serves.
2. To advise the university court on all matters relating to the implementation of the university strategy for further and higher education, research and knowledge exchange, including the regional capital and infrastructure priorities and the ways that the university and individual academic partners are implementing the strategy.
3. To advise the university court, through the finance and general purposes committee, on the allocation of funding to the academic partners and the priorities for capital expenditure.
4. To oversee the mapping, planning and allocation of further and higher education funding and curriculum provision across the region ensuring equality of access and delivery
5. To ensure that the university's strategy and resource allocation are based on evidence of future need, including the skills needs, economy and the social and cultural needs for our region, its localities and Scotland and that the UK and international context of these plans are understood
6. To ensure that the educational needs (including support needs) of potential students are understood
7. To oversee the development of and advise the court on the appropriateness of the outcome agreement with the Scottish Funding Council
8. Hold the senior executive of the partnership, through the university principal and vice-chancellor, to account for the delivery of the university strategy and outcome agreement with Scottish Funding Council
9. To oversee the content of a local outcome agreement with each of the academic partners and hold each to account for its delivery
10. To monitor performance of individual academic partners to ensure that the outcome agreement is delivered collectively, that quality is high and that the impact of education on the well-being of the students, former students, partner localities and Scotland is understood, ensuring that corrective action is taken if required
11. To promote the use by the partners of appropriate credit and qualification frameworks
12. To liaise with the university court's finance and general purposes and audit committees to ensure adequate administrative and support resources are in place to enable accurate and timely reporting, accounting and audit assurance of education provision

13. To ensure that risks associated with the planning and delivery of further and higher education, research and knowledge exchange are identified and managed in line with the university risk management policy
14. To ensure that all reporting requirements to internal and external stakeholders relating to the university's provision are met accurately and timeously
15. To provide a focal point for engagement with national and regional partners and ensure oversight of local college links with community planning partnerships
16. To encourage and support innovation within and between the university and academic partners
17. To encourage sustainable development
18. To advise the chair of the university court and the principal and vice chancellor on the use of their right to attend and address any meetings of an academic partner as may be deemed appropriate
19. To ensure effective regional communication, where appropriate consulting and collaborating, or ensuring consultation or collaboration, with its colleges, representatives of trade unions, student associations, local authorities, employers, training providers, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Qualifications Authority, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Enterprise

**Reporting**

The minutes (or a report) of meetings of the regional strategy committee will be circulated to all members of the university court and academic partner boards.

Reviewed and agreed by the Regional Strategy Committee	
Approved by Court	