

NWH Board of Management Meeting

South Uist/Hybrid via MS Teams (T)

18th June 2025 at 3.15pm

Chair – Derek Lewis

Board Members Present

Chris Alliston, Independent Board Member (T)

Derek Lewis, Chairman of the Board of Management UHI NWH

Diana Macleod, Support Staff Board Member

Ian MacEachern, Independent Board Member

Lydia Rohmer, Principal & Chief Executive UHI NWH

Michael Foxley, Independent Board Member

Neil Hope, Vice Chair & Independent Board Member

Rupert Marshall, Independent Board Member

Shaun Escott, Teaching Staff Board Member

Shona MacDougall, Senior Independent Board Member

Struan Mackie, Independent Board Member (T)

Willie Macdonald, Vice Chair & Independent Board Member

Also, in Attendance

Debbie Miller, ELT, Vice Principal Strategic Development

Derek Bond, ELT, Vice Principal – Resources & Enterprise (CFO)

Ellen Campbell, Secretary to the Board of Management

Keith Coyne, SFC (T)

Hannah Ritchie-Muir, ELT, Vice Principal Academic

1. Establishment of quorum, welcome & apologies – Derek Lewis (Chair)

The Chair welcomed Shaun Escott in his new role as Teaching Staff Board member. Sarah Fraser had recently resigned her post of Independent Board member due to health reasons. The Board requested that Sarah be thanked for her many years of dedicated service.

Apologies were received from Alex Macdonald, Independent Board Member.

2. Declarations of interest & connection (Chair)

3. Starring (Chair)

Items 6, 7 were requested to be starred.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 26th March 2025 (Chair)

Approved

5. Matters arising

None

6. Confidential item

Withheld

7. Confidential item

Withheld

1550 – Chris Alliston (CA) joined the meeting via MS Teams.

8. Closed item

Withheld

9.2 External Audit

Noted

9.3 Internal Audit - Budgetary and financial reporting

Noted

9.3.1 Internal Audit - Health and safety

The Board noted the weak rating of the Health and Safety internal audit report and the need for remedial action.

Action: Action plan to be put in place to address the areas identified in the Health and Safety internal audit.

10. Students experience strategy (Restricted item) Hannah Ritchie-Muir (HRM)

Approved

11. Research and Knowledge Exchange strategy – Stuart Gibb (not present)

Approved

12. Cnoc Soilleir – Derek Lewis / Lydia Rohmer

DL reported that discussions held earlier that day with Cnoc Soilleir and Ceolas Board members had resulted in agreement to move forward with minor changes to the paper on this item. Board members would have a maximum three-year term with an option to be elected for a further three years. It was agreed to proceed with drafting revisions to the articles of association and to

draft operating agreements, with a view to be approval by the end of July 2025. The Board was content to employ solicitors to finalise the drafts on behalf of UHI NWH.

Noted

13. Performance and planning report – Tracy Kerr (not present)

Noted

14. HISA report – Caroline Macpherson (not present)

Noted

15. Principal's report – Lydia Rohmer (CEO)

LR reported on the work-related stress survey of staff. It had been bench marked against 60 other organisations and had achieved a 41% participation rate. Out of the 220 respondents, 54 felt they had been subject to bullying, 92 said they had been harassed. These results were to be shared with the unions the following day. There would be immediate action to review the dignity at work policy. An action plan to address the issues raised would be put in place urgently and it was hoped to reinstate a working with the unions for this purpose. There was a commitment to run the survey again in 12 months' time. The Board asked that statements be prepared for press, unions and staff and that these be circulated to the members at the earliest opportunity.

Action: Statements be prepared and circulated to Board members.

Noted

16. Risk register – CEO

Noted

17. Chair's report - Chair

DL reported on progress of the UHI transformation programme and recruitment of new board members.

Noted

18. Revision of Committee Terms of reference – Board Secretary

Approved

19. Internal Board effectiveness review – Board Secretary

It was agreed that the merger and recovery might be affecting the scores. The Board Secretary was asked to address the volume of paperwork coming to the board and committee meetings.

Action: Board Secretary to address the volume of paperwork being presented to Board

Noted

20. Chair's appraisal - Shona Macdougall, Senior Independent Board Member (SIM)

This item was presented after all other agenda items had been completed. The Chair then left the meeting. The SIM had consulted with the vice and committee Chairs, collating their feedback to assist in the formulation of her report which concluded that the Chair had demonstrated exceptional and outstanding leadership. Areas where the Chair could be

supported further included improving governance in the quality of board and committee reporting, board recruitment and succession planning and training and mentoring for new Board members to be put in place.

Noted and agreed

21. Financial policies for approval – Kevin Mallet (not present)

Travel and expenses policy

Procurement policy

Approved

22. Committee meeting minutes

Noted

AOB

None