

NWH Board of Management Meeting

Stornoway campus and via MS Teams

17th June 2026 at 4.15pm

Chair – Derek Lewis

Board Members Present

Alasdair Macleod, Student Board Member – HISA Outer Hebrides (via Teams), Ally Macleod, EIS Board Member (via Teams), Chris Alliston, Independent Board Member (via Teams), Derek Lewis, Chairman of the Board of Management UHI NWH, Ian MacEachern, Independent Board Member, Jacqui Barclay, Professional Services Staff Board Member, Michael Foxley, Independent Board Member (via Teams), Neil Hope, Vice Chair & Independent Board Member, Rupert Marshall, Independent Board Member, Shaun Escott, Teaching Staff Board Member, Shona MacDougall, Senior Independent Board Member, Willie Macdonald, Vice Chair & Independent Board Member

Also, in Attendance

Candy Munro, CDN EER observer, Derek Bond, ELT, Vice Principal – Resources & Enterprise (CFO), Ellen Campbell, Secretary to the Board of Management, Emma Sinclair, NWH Management Accountant, Hannah Ritchie-Muir, ELT, Vice Principal Academic (HRM), Julia Maclean, Head of Marketing and Communications, Keith Coyne, SFC (via Teams), Neil Holmes, CEO Hydrogen Scotland CEO (pre-meeting presentation only)

1615 – The afternoon commenced with Joe MacPhee introducing Nigel Holmes (NH), who proceeded to give a brief presentation on Hydrogen development opportunities throughout Scotland. NH intimated that hydrogen projects had been attracting international interest, the following presentation (attached to this minute) would tie in with the paper submitted by JM at item 19, and the Board Members visit to the hydrogen facility at the Arnish industrial site in Stornoway tomorrow morning. Water extraction must be considered carefully from the outset when developing hydrogen production projects.

The cost of producing hydrogen was now close to diesel processing costs post Iraq (as fossil fuels have heavy taxation). Hydrogen was currently three times more expensive to produce than natural gas.

The probable reasons for Orkney and Shetland developments looking huge compared to those within the Western Isles, may be attributed to connection challenges to the Orkney grid. The Western Isles had recently been doing well through general hydrogen courses at the college. NH advised that the college find a Champion(s) for the Western Isles to drive the projects. There were large sums of money available for capital projects involving hydrogen production, though there had been little actual activity. The role of colleges was to engage with the future work force requirements. The percentage of hydrogen energy hydrogen in Scotland in 10 years' time is linked to the renewable market as a whole. Places with grid connectivity issues were particularly of interest, with Danish and German markets already growing. The Scottish Government ambition for 2045 was to export 100twh hydrogen or derivatives of hydrogen.

NH left at 1647

1. Establishment of quorum, welcome, apologies

Apologies were received from Alex Macdonald, Independent Board Member, Dave McKay, Independent Board Member, Debbie Miller, Vice Principal strategic developments, Lydia Rohmer, Principal & Chief Executive UHI NWH. The Chair welcomed Joe MacPhee, Emma Sinclair and Julia Maclean as observers to the June meeting of the North, West and Hebrides Board of Management.

The Chair introduced Candy Munro, CDN, who was in the final stages of conducting the governance external effectiveness review. Candy further explained the reasoning for the college to have a 3–5-year periodic external review was a requirement of grant and compliance with the COGG 2025. There would be a short workshop to follow, where she would feedback her observations and findings.

2. Declarations of interest and connection

Rupert Marshall declared a connection, referencing his role as NWH representative on the Cnoc Soilleir board.

3.Starring

The Chair proposed to un-star items 12 – Cnoc Soilleir (CS) report, 16 – with any questions to be fed back to the Board Secretary, item 17 – the Principal’s report as she was absent from this meeting. Item 19 would be starred to invite questions from the members.

Agreed bar item 12, MF requested to speak to his report on Cnoc Soilleir (CS).

4.Minutes of the meeting held on 18th March 2026

Approved

The action tracker was reviewed, noting that all items outstanding were included within today’s meeting reports. The UHI NWH view the quarterly Health and Safety (H&S) report at all committees, with A&RM committee having overall responsibility. The report is available to all Board Members. Any urgent / imminent H&S issue would be reported to Neil Hope, Chair of A&RM committee.

Approved

5.Confidential item - withheld

6.Confidential item - withheld

7. UHI Transformation Update – UHI Accord – Derek Lewis (DL)

DL reported that there had recently been two summits, which had led to the conclusions that pursuit of option 6, or a similar version, was not viable, mainly due to the primary legislation required. There would be a transformation focussed on shared services and integrated curriculum delivery. UHI had drawn up an accord document, as presented to NWH Board Members, there would be specific commitments, to which all would be bound after signing. The accord would be discussed at the next Court meeting on 30th July 2026, with a request that all academic partners subscribe to the document. Further work would commence in September 2026. DL asked for NWH Board endorsement of the accord.

Endorsed – unanimous Board endorsement received. DL would report the NWH Board endorsement to Court.

8. Confidential item - withheld

9 Confidential item – withheld

Noted

10 Strategic risk register

In the absence of Lydia Rohmer (The Principal & CEO). Neil Hope (NH), Chair, Audit and Risk Management committee, confirmed that the contents of the register had been endorsed at A&RM committee on 13th May 2026.

Approved

11. Confidential item - withheld

12. Confidential item - withheld

13. NWH Curriculum restructure – Hannah Ritchie Muir (HRM)

HRM introduced her paper, reporting that the IIP and further reports had led to the new curriculum structure. Consultation had taken place during 26th March to 5th June 2026, with detailed feedback received. The initial proposal had been changed after considering feedback. HRM invited the Board to refer to her report for more detail. NWH wanted to minimise any impact on teaching hours. Workload had been redistributed, the structure looked different in moving towards five departments, the fifth department would be student support services, etc.

Overall, the process had been complicated and intense, resulting in a structure that had largely received positive feedback from the Unions.

The Chair asked that HRM pass on the Boards appreciation to her team for their diligence in delivering a difficult target on time.

Noted

14. Cnoc Soilleir (CS) annual report to Board - Michal Foxley (MF)

MF reported that Phase 2 of CS had been delivered on time and within budget. Funding was underway. He asked that the curriculum team concentrate their effort in providing GME curriculum, as there was a huge demand within the CS encashment area.

Noted

15. Health and Safety Report

Noted

16. HISA Reports – no presenter

Any questions relating to the three reports submitted should be emailed to the Board Secretary for onward to Simon Varwell, HISA.

Elections report – **noted**.

Referendums – **noted**.

Articles of Association – **noted**.

17. Principal's report – **Deferred** to September 2026 Board

18. Chairs report – Derek Lewis (DL)

Discussions had started between the Chair, HR, Marketing and Communications and the Board Secretary to update the current Board Member recruitment pack to attract new independent members to the NWH Board. Present Board Members were invited to note the new committee membership. Being relatively new to NWH, Dave McKay had not been assigned to a committee as yet. The Board welcomed Willie MacDonald's permanent posting as Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Research committee after a period of having served as interim Chair to same.

Neil Hope, having recently attended the College's Scotland event in Fife, informed that the Organisation had developed a list of persons interested in joining Boards in the college sector.

The Principals' appraisal had been completed, though objectives for the coming year had not yet been agreed. There would be an opportunity to discuss this matter further at the next meeting of the Chairs in July 2026.

Board papers were still too content heavy, with reports being overly long, where two to three pages for each item would suffice. Further discussions would be had with the executive to achieve the required reporting standard.

The next meeting of the Local Advisory Committee Chairs would take place over the coming weeks.

The Chair deferred re-appointing NWH Board members to serve on the Cnoc Soilleir Board.

1828 MF left

Noted

19. Hydrogen report – Joe MacPhee (JM)

International opportunities were opening up. If NWH were to receive UTF and offshore wind funding, would be making efforts to release staff to drive these projects.

School pupils were being informed through STEM centres, the mobile hydrogen equipment would be taken to Uist and Barra,

The Chair thanked JM for arranging for Nigel Holmes to be with the Board today.

1833 KC, HRM, DL, DB, JM left the room.

Noted

20. Annual review of the Chair – Shona MacDougall (SMD)

Endorsed

1842 DL, DB rejoined the meeting.

21. A.O.B.

The Chair extended the appreciation of the NWH Board to the outgoing CFO, Derek Bond, for his expertise and hard work over the years and through merger, the Members extended their gratitude.

Meeting closed at 1849.

