

NWH special meeting of the F&GP Committee

MS Teams (T)

16th December 2024 at 0830

Chair – Shona MacDougall

Present

Shona MacDougall, Chair F&GP

Chris Alliston, F&GP Committee Member

Alex Macdonald, F&GP Committee Member

Doug Rattray, Interim Head of Estates

Minutes – Ellen Campbel, Board Secretary

Apologies

Apologies were received from Principal & Chief Executive Officer, Lydia Rohmer this morning. Having previously read the paper presented by Doug Rattray for this meeting, the Principal electronically endorses the content.

The meeting was quorate.

The Chair gave an introduction to the Committee, informing that capital projects had already been approved by this Committee in August 2024. This meeting had been called as there was a time restricted opportunity to apply for discretionary funding from a £2.5m Scottish Funding Council (SFC) grant scheme. The criteria was very strict with tight time constraints on applications. Doug Rattray was asking for approval to apply for three projects within NWH which fit the specific criteria. The spend required to be implemented or committed to by 31st March 2025. All three committee members present confirmed that they had read the documents and project summaries circulated and now being presented by Doug.

Doug explained that the £2.5m total was being offered across all Scottish colleges. The NWH projects were deliverable within timescale and acceptable to the SFC. There were a wide range of projects throughout NWH but the three chosen for application were the best fit for the strict criteria. These would address high risk projects Health & Safety.

Project 1 was addressing the Fort William heating system. The biomass part failed in November 2024, then the backup up oil system couldn't take any more oil as it was corroded. Therefore,

there was no heating system during the cold snap. The heating system was now back online. This had been an unplanned and unexpected issue. NWH would ask the SFC to fund the full project. Works had been completed but were not budgeted for. This had been an emergency repair. The works amounted to a £44k total spend excluding VAT. The system was aging and although regularly inspected, the corrosion had not been identified prior to breakdown and was therefore not seen as urgent until the system failed.

Project 2 was affecting student experience. The E Tech building in Thurso, had an h vac system and we are therefore unable to maintain heating in the building during extreme weather (hot or cold). The air handling unit had been identified as a high-volume complaints source through the red button system. Work was planned for few years' time but now needs to be addressed imminently.

The Chair asked if this was a preference to do the work sooner rather than an urgent requirement?

Doug clarified that this was an underperforming system as opposed to one that is not working properly.

Project 3 was to replace the leaking windows on Fort William campus.

The Chair noted that approval was given for £96k at the last F&GP Committee meeting and asked Doug that if the grant was to be successful, would it allow the whole wall side to be done rather than the scaled down version that had been approved? Doug agreed stating that the works required were part of a curtain wall which was much more complicated. The funding of £135k would complete the repair fully.

The Chair summed up that Doug was seeking approval to apply for £227k excluding VAT for all three projects.

Doug reiterated that this was a short notice opportunity to apply for funding and NWH would put these three projects forward as they meet the criteria and were deliverable within timescale.

0850 Derek Lewis joined the meeting. The Chair gave a brief re-cap of the conversation already had.

The Chair and committee were content that Doug had explored and satisfied why these projects had been chosen.

Approved

Meeting closed 0855