

Item	
Committee	Finance and General Purposes Committee
Date paper prepared	11/12/2024
Date of committee meeting	16/12/2024
Subject	SFC Emergency Capital Funding Applications 2024-25
Author	Doug Rattray
Action requested	<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> For recommendation <input type="checkbox"/> For Endorsement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Approval
Purpose of the paper	The purpose of this paper is to introduce three projects to be issued to SFC in application for SFC Emergency Capital Funding in 2024-25.
Brief summary of the paper	The paper provides context to the SFC Emergency Capital Funding discussing the key criteria for accessing funds. Following this, the paper introduces the three projects selected by UHI NWH for submission to this fund.
Consultation How has consultation with partners been conducted?	Consultation has been undertaken within the UHI NWH Estates Team.
Resource implications What are the risks with this proposal?	Estates team and APUC staff time will be required for scoping works, engagement of professional services and facilitating and overseeing on-campus works once underway.
Risk implications	This fund is discretionary but failure to apply will result in UHI NWH missing out on additional funds to support essential or unplanned capital works.
Link with strategy	These works link directly to the draft Infrastructure Strategy and Delivery Plan.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	It has been assumed that these works will have no direct equality, diversity and inclusion impact other than by enabling the planned normal operation of the college.

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Island Community Impact	It has been assumed that these works will have no direct impact on Islands Communities other than by enabling the planned normal operation of campuses based in the Islands.
Paper status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open – the paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction. <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted – the paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential - the paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online. [Please note papers may still be subject to Freedom of Information requests, as specified in the next section].
Freedom of information (FOI)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Closed – disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research. <input type="checkbox"/> Closed – disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs. <input type="checkbox"/> Closed - Disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation. <input type="checkbox"/> Closed - Disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court. <input type="checkbox"/> Closed - Disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act. <input type="checkbox"/> Closed - Other, please specify.
Freedom of information (FOI) disclosure date	If closed/ withheld is selected above, enter the date when this will become 'open': Click or tap to enter a date.

F&GP Report

SFC Emergency Capital Funding Applications 2024-25



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The Funding Opportunity

UHI North, West and Hebrides were notified on 14th Nov 2024 of the SFC's [College Emergency Capital Maintenance Fund FY 2024-25](#).

The purpose of this fund is to support the highest priority capital/estates needs across all of Scotland's college estate. SFC have ringfenced £2.5M of the capital maintenance budget to support selected projects. This funding is accessible for all Scottish colleges and allocations shall be made on a case-by-case basis following assessment of applications. The criteria for accessing funds is outlined as:

"The £2.5m unallocated capital maintenance fund is available for a maximum of two or three emergency capital works/repairs that meet any of the following criteria:

- *an urgent estates health and safety/compliance issue or requirement*
- *extraordinary or exceptional circumstances such as a sudden failure which is not part of the planned maintenance regime and is outwith the control of a college*
- *unexpected or unplanned works needed due to a significant estates issue having a severe impact on the student experience or curriculum delivery.*

As capital maintenance funding is allocated on an FY basis, funding needs to be used, or legally committed, by 31 March 2025"

As a preliminary, Colleges were asked to contact SFC by emailing estates@sfc.ac.uk initially by the 6th of December. The email should briefly outline the nature of the issue, planned works and funding requirement. In the short time period available, UHI NWH Estates Team reviewed our project needs for those deemed most urgent and best fitted to the application criteria and selected the following three projects.

UHI NWH Project Applications.

The standardised application form associated with each of these projects is appended for review and approval to proceed.

Project 1. Biomass and Backup Oil Boiler System Breakdown – Fort William Campus.

At our Fort William campus the heating and hot water systems are supplied via a biomass plant with back-up oil boiler system. In Nov 2024, our biomass plant had to be taken offline due to a failure of internal components associated with the biomass fuel feed. Concurrently, our underground oil storage tank was deemed to be corroded and was not suitable to take a further refill. As a result the Fort William campus was without heating for approximately one month as the unplanned repair works were undertaken on the biomass plant and backup boiler system. During this time, the campus was supplied with space heating provided by electrical heaters placed in key locations. The repair works required internal repairs to the biomass fuel feed system along with associated joinery works. At the same time, a replacement above-ground oil tank was procured and plumbed in to supply the oil boiler backup heating system. To complete these works, the above ground tank requires to be appropriately fenced off to make permanent and the underground tank requires to be fully decommissioned.

This project is an example of an urgent estates health and safety issue that has required immediate remedial works. It represents a sudden failure of an essential system on one of a largest campuses.

The approximate full cost of the works is £44,000.00 excluding VAT.

Project 2. Replace Air Handling Units in ETEC Building Classrooms – Thurso Main Campus.

Our ETEC building in Thurso is where we deliver engineering programmes and modern apprenticeships in an up-to-date, practical, industrial facility. The centre is approximately 3,600 square metres of purpose-built engineering facilities, dedicated to delivering teaching and training in the engineering and renewable energy sector.

Unfortunately, the HVAC system supplying this building has underperformed for a number of years, struggling to maintain comfortable classroom temperatures, particularly in the winter months. To mitigate discomfort, the college has equipped one large classroom with a dedicated Air Handling Unit in around 2022 with plans to extend this provision to other classrooms when possible. In 2024, we have received a significant number of complaints from students and staff affected by the cold and so are now planning to provide an additional three classrooms with dedicated similar AHU systems. This would create a significant teaching space that could be maintained at a comfortable working temperature year-round, significantly improving the student experience and teaching environment for those associated with engineering training in this facility.

This project is an example of an extraordinary circumstance in which an underperforming essential heating system in one of our key assets is having an on-going detrimental effect on our current student body.

The approximate full cost of the works is £38,500.00 excluding VAT.

Project 3. Replacement of Damaged Top Floor Windows/Façade – Fort William Campus.

At our Fort William campus, the first floor windows along the long-facing aspect of the building have seen damage accumulating year-on-year. These windows have experienced failures to maintain protection since near inception and as they are approaching 30 years old the damage has continued to worsen. The full window façade is experiencing some degree of deterioration, with particularly bad areas in executive offices. In 2024-25 a full replacement was planned for windows along the loch-facing aspect of the building with a cost estimated at £80,000.00 excluding VAT. However, following a survey of the planned works the window system was found to be more complex than originally thought, created using a curtain wall window system that follows the curve of the building. Due to the additional complexity, the revised cost estimate for the works is approximately £225,000.00 excluding VAT. The affected rooms span the length of the first floor of the building including teaching and office spaces.

This project is an example of an unanticipated circumstance in which costs for planned remedial works are significantly higher than budgeted, whilst the impact of not completing the works continues to affect our resident staff and students.

In order to finance these works, the college is seeking additional emergency funding for the delta between budgeted and currently estimated, i.e., £145,000.00 excluding VAT.