

## **UHI NWH Finance and General**

### **Purposes Meeting**

*Wed 20 March 2024, 16:15 - 18:00*

### **Attendees**

#### **Board members**

Lydia Rohmer, Michael Foxley, Debbie Miller, Shona MacDougall, Christopher Alliston, Bond Derek, Derek Lewis, Alex MacDonald

Absent: Shannon Drew MacCallum

Notes – Flora Miller

### **ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM, WELCOME & APOLOGIES**

Chair confirmed quorum complete. Apologies from Shannon MacCallum

Chair confirmed that Michael Foxley is attending as an observer.

Chair got confirmation from members re late paper that all had read in advance.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Members must declare an interest, either financial or non-financial in any item on the Agenda and should do so at the start of the meeting or as early as possible during the meeting.

Members must not remain, nor participate in any way in a part of the meeting in which they have declared an interest.

Members must declare a connection which does not amount to an interest in any item on the Agenda where in the interests of transparency they consider that it is appropriate to do so.

### **None**

Minutes of meetings - 06-02-24

### **Agreed**

#### **5. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

#### **Withheld**

#### **6. Estates**

Debbie Murray, Vice Principal Operations apologised for the late paper. Debbie has now visited all 19 centres. The Estates consultant that had been budgeted for didn't go ahead due to funding. The recommendation was to appoint a person to undertake this project.

Head of Infrastructure has now been delegated to review the strategy and produce a delivery plan which will capture the data needed to move forward with decision making.

SFC work packages need to be developed and work package 2, in particular, is the one that needs prioritised. However, it's running 5-6 months behind due to absence and resourcing issues within the SFC. The timeline to complete work package 2 is now estimated to be April 2025.

Executive Leadership Team to agree criteria for decision making.

Principal and Chief Executive confirmed the status showed reality and that there was no capital funding available and no sight of coming in the future.

We need to identify any rationalisation opportunities and develop the criteria. The new curriculum plan, for NWH is now developed and will help us identify what physical space is needed.

Michael Foxley advised to look at headcount and level of activity and consider the growth and commercial activity that can be achieved due to previous visits where it was low. Ardnamurachan centre now has a manager in place and courses are becoming more active. We need to find a way of getting locals in our centres for courses instead of going to the central belt.

Principal and Chief Executive advised that usage generally had been disproportionately affected by covid and that the confidence is slowly returning.

We will identify demand before any future decision making takes place regarding the estate. Noting also that the government is also seeking data at present on asset disposals.

Chair of the board suggested we rethink our approach to property as owning and maintaining is costly, consider rentals.

Identify the spaces we need and when we need it and decide if we need to own it. We also need to be cautious about not becoming landlords in renting spaces out.

We need to be cautious if we are forced to transfer assets at no cost.

Financial Director advised that some properties appear to be in the wrong locations and not fit for purpose. Look at identifying buildings with less cost.

Committee member also advised we need to be mindful of net zero regulations as the expense will be considerable in order to get them to the required standard. See detail within appendix 2 of Report.

Stornoway Roof - No quote has been received yet.

Dornoch Works - Awaiting final survey and the work that has been completed to date is within the budget.

Principal and Chief Executive advised we require evidence/underpinning data to support future decision making regarding the estate.

A trust in Skye got local businesses together and looked at what the needs were for the Island and the community came together, this may be something we can consider with businesses and communities in the areas.

Committee member suggested Dornoch could be a commercially viable income generation and we need to identify what premises/facilities within the estates have forward facing

operations and identify what income generation could come from them, commonly known as hot spots.

Chair of the board summarised next steps:

Analysis of overall estates strategy, with a matrix containing categories and physical needs.

Decide principles of where we will have a physical presence.

Start a plan with what our needs are with the above.

Chair of committee requests that the suggestions are incorporated in the work plan.

Principal and Chief Executive advised the committee that 80% of our curriculum is placed based and the remaining 20% is online. Our learning and teaching strategy states we will support our students in centres, and we need to ensure both strategies support each other.

We have started to rent IT equipment as opposed to buying to help with costs. NWH have the highest percentage of online delivery within the UHI partners.

Chair of board would like the board to have a better understanding of the 80/20 split in curriculum delivery.

**A - High level Paper to be created for June board around 80/20 split in place based and online delivery.**

**A - P&CE to confirm a date on May 1 BoM meeting for a strategy day**