

**MINUTES OF THE COURT MEETING (UC)  
UNIVERSITY OF THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS  
HELD ON TUESDAY 22 MARCH 2011  
AT EXECUTIVE OFFICE, NESS WALK, INVERNESS  
AT 1100 HRS**

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<b>PRESENT:</b>	Professor Matthew MacIver (Chair) Professor Anton Edwards Penny Brodie William Bruce Wilma Campbell (by telephone) Anne Clark (by telephone) James Fraser Janet Hackel Ken Kennedy Dr. Alistair Mair Eileen Mackay John Eccles Professor Donald MacRae Dr Bruce Nelson Aideen O'Malley Thomas Prag Mo Shepherd Norman Sharp Dr.Fiona Skinner Jean Urquhart Jack Watson	Member (Independent) Member (UHI Foundation) Member (Academic Partner) Member (Academic Partner) Member (Academic Partner) Member (Independent) Member (Ex officio) Member (Non-teaching Staff) Member (Academic Partner) Member (Sponsor University) Member (Independent) Member (Academic Partner) Member (Independent-HIE) Member (Sponsor University) Member (Academic Partner) Member (UHI Foundation) Member (Academic Partner) Member (Independent) Member (Teaching Staff) Member (Independent) Member (Independent)
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Michael Gibson Professor Norman Gillies Dr Jeff Howarth Dr Jana Hutt Gary Coutts Mike Macdonald (LIS presentation only)	Fiona Larg Reverend Alex Murray Martin Wright Roger Sendall (minutes) Dr Crichton Lang
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Philip Mackenzie Iris Hawkins Joe Moore William Prosser Andrew Hughson	Hugh Morison Professor Kenneth Miller Nathan Shields David Green Andy Rogers

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ITEM	ACTION
1 <b>INTRODUCTION</b>  1.1 <b>Welcome</b>  It was noted that a quorum was present.  The Chair welcomed the UHI Rector Gary Coutts, Donald MacRae and Bruce Nelson to their first meeting.	

1.2 **Declaration of Interest:** None.

1.3 **Notification of other business:** None.

2 **MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

2.1 **Approval of Minutes.**

**The Board resolved to approve** the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

2.2 **Matters Arising/Action Points (UC11-005 and UC11-006):** Noted.

3 **Access to UHI Intranet - Presentation**

The Court received a presentation from the Head of IT Services relating to accessing data and papers for Court business via a secure web connection. It was noted that in future all Court meeting papers would be available in electronic format on the UHI website.

It was noted that an account had been established for each Court member and that the Committee Secretary would circulate members with their "login" credentials following the meeting.

Committee Secretary

4 **CHAIRMAN/PRINCIPAL'S COMMENTS**

4.1 **News and Events Round Up**

The Court received a verbal report from the Principal and Vice Chancellor and also noted the content of the paper UC11-007 summarising news and significant events since the previous meeting.

5 **MEMBERSHIP**

It was noted that the three year term held by William Bruce, Chair of North Highland College would terminate at the end of March 2011. Andrew Hughson, Chair of Shetland College was selected as the replacement voting member from the six academic partner institutions that were currently "in attendance".

Committee Secretary

6 **POST TITLE WORKING GROUP (PTWG)**

The Court noted the contents of the papers UC11-009(1), UC11-009(2), UC11-009(3) and UC11-009(4).

The Chair of PTWG reported that the group was seeking approval from the Court to establish an ad-hoc Academic Partner Chairs Committee chaired by the UHI Chairman or Vice Chairman who would meet approximately four weeks prior to each Court meeting to discuss relevant issues and to report to the Court in an effort to enhance communications and improve information flow between the academic partners and the governing body.

**The Court resolved to approve the recommendation from the PTWG and to establish the Academic Partner Chairs Committee as an ad hoc Committee for an**

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**initial period of two years and then to review its effectiveness.**

The Court also resolved to provide the PTWG with appropriate secretarial support for PTWG activities.

## 7 **ACADEMIC**

### 7.1 **Retention of Students - Update on Progress**

The Court noted the paper UC11-010 comprising a quarterly report of activities taking place to improve retention at UHI. It was noted that the report only applied to activities being coordinated from Executive Office.

The Court felt that the paper did not contain sufficient data or a measure to quantify the current retention rate. It was agreed that a fuller paper would be provided to the Court at the June meeting.

### 7.2 **Preparation for ELIR**

The Court noted the paper UC11-011 outlining arrangements that were currently being made for UHI's QAA Enhancement Led Institutional Review scheduled for Spring 2012.

## 8 **FINANCE AND PLANNING**

### 8.1 **Report from the Finance and General Purposes Committee (FGPC)**

The Court accepted a report from the Chair of FGPC and the Budget Committee.

The Court noted that management accounts for the seven months ended 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011 had been circulated to members of the FGPC by email. It was noted that these would be published on the secure area of the Court website to allow visibility for all members of Court. In future monthly management accounts would be made available in this way as a matter of routine.

The Court resolved to instruct FGPC to review the 2011/2012 budget and to provide the Court with a recommendation relating to its formal approval in due course.

It was noted that FGPC had discussed the importance of assessing and managing reputational risks for UHI. This issue had been discussed in the context of a number of Executive Office posts being placed at risk of redundancy and recognising that particular posts were high profile and regarded as particularly important by some stakeholders. It was noted that the Risk Review Group would focus attention on reputational risks at its next meeting.

### 8.2 **SDB Progress Report**

The Court noted the paper UC11-012 outlining the transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of the SDB project funding.

### 8.3 **SFC Main Grant Letter**

Heather  
Fotheringham

The Court noted the paper UC11-013 providing a summary of the contents of the grant letter issued by the Scottish Funding Council on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2011 detailing grants allocated to UHI for 2011/2012.

## 9. GOVERNANCE

### 9.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Court considered the paper UC11-014 setting out proposed KPIs to measure the overall progress of UHI towards achieving strategic objectives.

The Court felt that the annual metrics were insufficient to enable appropriate performance monitoring to occur. It was therefore recommended that performance against the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier of performance indicators should take place and be reported to Court on a more frequent basis.

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The Court resolved to approve the paper subject to this amendment. Noted.

### 9.2 Audit Committee Effectiveness

The Court considered the paper UC11-015 requesting the Court to give consideration to the question "Does the Audit Committee provide effective support to the Governing Body in fulfilling its responsibilities and adding value to the institution?"

It was noted that the Court received approved minutes from Audit Committee meetings and the Court was satisfied with the service provided by the Audit Committee.

It was agreed to invite the Chair of the Audit Committee to attend Court when the formal Audit Report was provided on an annual basis.

Secretary

### 9.3 Training for members of the Court – Court Effectiveness

The Court considered the paper UC11-016.

The Court agreed to hold a one day training session immediately before or after the June Court meeting. The main focus of the training would be on "governing in an economic downturn". Training would be provided by a tutor from the Leadership Foundation. Noted.

Committee  
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### 9.4 Celebration Committee

The Court received a verbal update report from the Director of Marketing and Communications relating to progress with organising events to celebrate the achievement of University Title. It was noted that the 25<sup>th</sup> August 2011 had been provisionally selected as the day of celebration and that good progress had been made to date.

### 9.5 Delegated Authorisation Schedule

Following due consideration **the Court resolved to approve** the delegated authorisation schedule UC11-017. Noted.

### 9.6 High Level Risk Register

The Court noted the content of the High Level Risk Register (UC11-017) prepared by the Risk Review Group (RRG). Noted.

## **9.7 SFC Circulars**

The Court considered the content of the SFC circulars and consultations summarised in the appendix to the Court papers. Noted.

## **9.8 Reports from Committees of the Board**

The Board considered the minutes of the following committee meetings.

- Finance and General Purposes meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2011
- Academic Council meeting 16<sup>th</sup> December 2010
- Audit Committee meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> November 2010

Noted.

## **10 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS:**

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2011

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2011

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2011

Wednesday and Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> January 2012 An Comann

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2012

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1.30 pm.