

**MINUTES OF THE COURT MEETING (UC) UNIVERSITY OF THE
HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS
HELD ON FRIDAY 22nd AUGUST 2014 AT 10:00 HRS
IN ROOM EO1, EXECUTIVE OFFICE, NESS WALK, INVERNESS**

PRESENT: Garry Coutts (Chair)
Professor Clive Mulholland (UHI Principal and Vice-chancellor)
Dr Michael Foxley – VC (Chair of UHI FE Regional Board)
Andy Rogers - VC
Professor Fiona McLean (Vice Chair)
Dr David Worthington - VC
Dr David Alston
Professor Kenneth Miller
Willie Printie
Gillian Berkeley - VC
Eileen Mackay - VC
Peter Campbell - VC

IN ATTENDANCE: Fiona Larg (Chief Operating Officer & Secretary(COOS))
Dr Crichton Lang (Deputy Principal)
Professor Ian Bryden (Vice Principal Research & Specialist)
Mike Devenney – VC (Vice Principal Further Education)
Martin Wright (Director Marketing Communications & Planning (DMCP))
Roger Sendall (Corporate Governance Manager)

APOLOGIES: Michael Gibson
Anton Edwards
Rachel Parker
Malcolm Burr
Vicki Nairn
James MacDonald
Iseabail Mactaggart

| ITEM | ACTION |
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| 1 INTRODUCTION | |
| 1.1 Welcome and Quorum. | |
| <p>It was noted that a quorum was present.</p> | |
| <p>Court noted the tragic loss of Professor Laurence Mee, Principal of the Scottish Association of Marine Science UHI following a severe stroke whilst on business in Inverness. Court recorded its sincere sympathy for his family and also noted the exceptional contribution made by Professor Mee to the development of the University and to research excellence internationally.</p> | |
| <p>Court congratulated Professor MacLean on her appointment Vice Chair of Court.</p> | |
| <p>Court noted that <i>ex officio</i> FE student representative Emma Lawrie had completed her studies and was therefore no longer eligible to serve as a member of Court. Court recorded its appreciation for her contributions. It was noted that efforts were currently being progressed to appoint a successor.</p> | |
| <p>The Chair reported that Martin Wright would be retiring at the end of September and that this would be his last meeting in attendance at Court. Court thanked Mr Wright for his dedication and significant contribution to the University over many years.</p> | |
| 1.2 Declarations of Interest: | |
| <p>None.</p> | |
| 1.3 Notification of any other Business. | |
| <p>None.</p> | |
| 2 MINUTES OF MEETINGS | |
| 2.1 Approval of Court Minutes | |
| <p>The Court resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th June 2014 (UC14-047).</p> | |
| 3 GOVERNANCE FINANCE AND PLANNING | |
| 3.1 Revised Strategic Plan 2015/20. | |
| <p>Court approved paper UC14-047 prepared jointly by the Principal and the DMCP setting out the proposed framework for developing an updated and refreshed strategic plan for the university for the period 2015-2020 including initial proposals relating to three strategic themes (Student Experience, Region and Communities and Focussed Research) and three enablers (People, Infrastructure and Financial Sustainability). It was noted that Court was broadly supportive of the direction of travel indicated and noted that the identified themes and enablers would be discussed and developed further in consultation with the partnership at the dedicated planning sessions scheduled for 26th and 27th August with a view to Court agreeing a final strategy document in December 2014 or January 2015.</p> | |

Exit

3.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Court received a presentation from the COOS outlining the many and varied duties and responsibilities of court members deriving from their position as directors of the University, a company limited by guarantee, and as charity trustees. Additional duties and responsibilities arising from the Post 16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 and various codes of practice were also highlighted. A copy of the presentation slides is appended to and forms a part of this minute. Court noted that further supporting documentation was available within the University's online reading rooms also that members were encouraged to contact the COOS for additional information and clarification at their convenience.

It was noted that members would value a single page document summarising their key responsibilities and UHI's varying relationships with Academic Partner Colleges depending on their status as Incorporated or Non Incorporated Colleges.

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IB.

COOS

3.3 Remuneration Committee

3.3.1 Terms of Reference

Court approved paper UC14-048(1) comprising an updated membership and terms of reference document for the Remuneration Committee. It was noted that the Nominations Committee was directed to recommend a member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to join the Remuneration Committee. This decision was consistent with best practice guidance contained within the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance.

COOS

3.3.2 Draft Remuneration Policy

Court approved the draft Remuneration Policy document contained within paper UC14-048(2) subject to the addition of new paragraphs to explain the current policy in relation to severance issues and appeals in relation to job evaluations. It was noted that the policy presented described the current position in relation to remuneration decisions and practice operated by the University, however, that a review would take place over the next few months with a view to developing the policy further in an effort to implement an appropriate policy that would enable the University to recruit and retain good staff.

COOS

It was agreed that in developing a revised policy that the Remuneration Committee would need to consult with University staff through the mechanism of the Information and Consultative Committee (ICC) and the Staff Committee.

3.4 Delegated Authorisation Schedule

Court approved the amended delegated authorisation schedule (UC14-049) subject to a number of minor amendments relating to descriptors in relation to New Curriculum Development (section 20).

COOS

3.5 Court and Senior Committee Dates

Court approved the schedule of meeting dates contained within paper UC14-050.

3.6 Development Sessions for Independent Members and Effectiveness Reviews

Court approved the recommendations contained within paper UC14-051 in relation to deferring the commissioning of an externally facilitated evaluation of Court and committee effectiveness for a minimum period of two years. It was noted that an internal evaluation process would be progressed in each of the next two years.

Court agreed to authorise the Chair to organise training and development sessions for members as he felt appropriate. It was noted that Court members preference would be for short half day sessions as opposed to a whole day events. The Chair indicated that he intended to progress sessions early in 2015.

3.7 Correspondence from outgoing Audit Chair

Court noted a letter from the previous Audit Committee Chair (UC14-052) making recommendations for the future operation and structure of the committee.

3.8 Membership of Academic Council

Court approved paper UC14-053 setting out the revised structure and composition of the Academic Council as required by the University's new Articles of Association.

3.9 Update on Shared Services

Court noted paper UC14-054 prepared by the COOS providing an update on substantial VAT and pension issues that had arisen in relation to transferring staff to the proposed Cost Sharing Group. It was noted that work was progressing to identify an appropriate solution and that further updates and information would be provided in due course.

4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

5 DATE OF NEXT COURT MEETING

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of Court was 9th October 2014.