

## University of the Highlands and Islands

### Committee Further Education Regional Board (FERB)

Date & Time Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 2pm

Location EO1 Ness Walk, Inverness

Purpose Scheduled meeting

Quorum Half plus one.

#### Present

Michael Foxley (Chair)	
Neil Stewart	Chair of Inverness College UHI
Jana Hutt	Chair of Moray College UHI (VC)
Andrew Campbell	Chair of Argyll College UHI
Grant Myles	Chair of Perth College UHI
John Hutcheson	Chair of West Highland College (VC)
Niall Smith	Chair of North Highland College
Peter Campbell	Chair of Shetland College UHI
David Sandison	Chair of NAFC (VC)
Wilf Weir	Independent Member – Director of Education (VC)
Gordon McGuinness	Independent Member - SDS
Calum MacPherson	Independent Member
Lisa Massie	Independent Member
Patrick O'Donnell	Staff Member
Luke Humberstone	HISA President
Lorna Stanger	FE Student Member
Aideen O'Malley	Representative SMO Board of Management
Mike Devenney	Associate Principal FE

#### In attendance

Lydia Rohmer Principal of West Highland College UHI  
 Bill Ross Principal of Orkney College UHI (VC)  
 Fraser Durie Principal of Argyll College UHI  
 Diane Rawlinson Principal of Inverness College UHI  
 Margaret Munckton Principal of Perth College UHI  
 Donald MacBeath Principal of North Highland College UHI  
 Iain MacMillan Principal of Lews Castle College UHI  
 Willie Shannon Director of NAFC (VC)  
 Fiona Larg UHI Chief Operating Officer and Secretary  
 Clive Mulholland Principal and Vice Chancellor  
 Crichton Lang Deputy Principal  
 Graeme Kirkpatrick, Director of HISA  
 Roger Sendall (*minutes*)

#### Apologies

Brian Chaplin

#### Agenda Item

#### 1 WELCOME

The Chairman opened the meeting and noted that a quorum was present.

**Declarations of interest:** None

**AOCB:** The Chair thanked the Vice Principal Further Education for organising a successful development session earlier in the day. It was noted that the AP Principals who had participated in the earlier session had been invited to stay on and observe the FERB meeting.

#### Action

**Rurality Funding** – The Chair reported that during the morning's development session members of FERB present had unanimously agreed to endorse further representations and lobbying of Scottish Government officials to increase payments for additional remoteness funding for the region. Currently approximately £4.6M was available, however, previously the region had attracted remoteness funding of £5.2M per annum. This approach was endorsed by the FERB.

## **2 MINUTES**

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015 (FERB15-044) were reviewed and approved.
- 2.2 The committee considered the associated matters arising paper. The following points were noted:
- 4.5 – FERB was pleased to note an excellent quality monitoring report in relation to the performance of Perth College UHI.
- 4.6 – Noted that an offer from Colleges Scotland to fund a study of how colleges make use of rurality funding was currently not being progressed.
- 2.3 The minutes of the FE Executive Board meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016 (FERB16-001) were noted.

## **3 CHAIRMANS REPORT**

The Chair highlighted the key issues which had been discussed during the morning's development session attended by members of FERB and the AP Principals. Most significant was the need for the members of FERB to collectively pursue and lobby for enhanced regional funding.

## **4 GOVERNANCE PLANNING & FUNDING ISSUES**

### **4.1 Shetland Tertiary Education, Research and Training Review**

The Chair of Shetland College UHI reported that in accordance with the above review that NAFC and Shetland College were progressing plans for greater integration of their governance arrangements and service delivery including appointment of a joint Principal. It was hoped that the process would be concluded before the end of February 2016.

### **4.2 Student Activity Levels 2015-16**

FERB considered paper FERB16-002 providing a report of student activity levels as recorded on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and was pleased to note that the overall regional target was likely to be achieved. However, it was noted that more effort was needed to achieve the ESIF targets in order to secure additional funding.

It was noted that members found the data table difficult to interpret because too much detail was included within the report. It was agreed that FEEB should work to enhance the quality of future reports by focussing on high level /key information.

APFE

### **4.3 Regional Outcome Agreement 2016-17**

FERB endorsed paper FERB16-003 providing a summary of progress in accordance with year three of the 2014/15 – 2016/17 Regional Outcome Agreement.

#### 4.4 **Scottish Funding Council Publications**

##### 4.4.1 **College Performance Indicators**

FERB noted paper FERB16-004 providing an analysis of data in relation to regional college performance. FERB was delighted to note that UHI colleges were performing well above the national average.

##### 4.4.2 **College Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey**

FERB noted paper FERB16-005 setting out progress towards implementing a national college survey that would likely become an FE equivalent of the HE National Student Survey and the go to measure of student satisfaction.

##### 4.4.3 **College Leaver Destinations 2013-14 and 2014-15**

FERB noted paper FERB16-006 setting out experimental statistics in relation to college leaver destinations. It was agreed to request SFC to provide a regional summary of results.

APFE

#### 4.5 **Developing the Young Workforce**

##### 4.5.1 **SFC Funding**

FERB agreed the proposed use and distribution of SFC funding as presented within paper FERB16-007. It was noted that the APFE would work closely with the student body to develop strategies further.

APFE

##### 4.5.2 **Highlands and Islands Work-based Learning Hub**

FERB considered paper FERB16-008 providing an update on the activities of the Highlands and Islands Work-based learning Hub.

#### 4.6 **Student Support Funding 2015/16**

FERB agreed the proposed distribution of additional student support funding as set out within paper FERB16-009. Concern was expressed that the total sums requested by individual UHI colleges were significantly greater than the actual allocations settled for or required and queried the methodology that had been used to calculate the regional need. Whilst it was noted that this activity was not included within the Post 16 Act and that colleges were required to present separate submission for student support funding FERB agreed that there would be a benefit in developing a regional approach to the activity.

FEED

#### 4.7 **College Financial Information & Monitoring**

##### 4.7.1 **Moray College UHI – Lessons Learned**

FERB received a verbal report from the Principal and Vice Chancellor in relation to the lessons learned from the handling of financial challenges recently experienced by Moray College UHI. It was noted that good communications and early information sharing were recognised as primary tools for mitigating the impacts of issues and for achieving a successful outcome. A paper setting out the key lessons learned would be presented to HEPPRC for discussion and copied to members of FERB following the meeting.

HGRM

#### 4.7.2 **North Highland College UHI**

The Principal of North Highland College UHI reported that the college was forecasting significant financial difficulties within the current financial year and for 2016/17. The BOM of NGC had initiated an early dialogue with the University and a number of work streams were currently being progressed to mitigate the problems some of which had been developed as a direct result of the lessons learned from the Moray College situation. The Chair of Court, Chair of FERB, Chair of NHC and the University FGPC Chair were all engaged in the activities. Further information would be provided to FERB members as appropriate in due course.

Chair

#### 4.7.3 **AP Financial Monitoring & FE Regional Update**

FERB noted papers FERB16-010 A-F comprising a set of financial data and information collated from financial returns submitted to the SFC and annual financial statements provided to assist the FERB to fulfil its statutory duty to monitor the financial performance of the assigned colleges. A number of members expressed concern that too much detail was provided within the papers creating a risk of FERB not being able to see the wood for the trees. It was suggested that more high level or exception reports should be developed so that FERB was able to focus attention on the key issues as opposed to monitoring routine data. It was agreed to ask the FDPG group to develop a series of high level reports for future FERB meetings in consultation with FEED.

#### 4.8 **National Bargaining**

FERB considered paper FERB16-011 providing an update on the current status of national bargaining negotiations within the college sector. It was agreed that there would be a benefit in FERB developing a regional position on the issues. Members noted that the paper invited comments on five key questions and the Chair invited members to submit their comments to him by email following the meeting.

Chair

#### 4.9 **Appointments to Assigned College Boards of Management**

FERB noted paper FERB16-012.

### 5 **RISK MANAGEMENT**

FERB noted paper FERB16-013 comprising the current FE Risk Register and updated Risk Policy and Risk Appetite statements agreed by Court in December 2016.

### 6 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Next meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016