

FE Regional Board (FERB)

12 September 2018, 14:00 to 16:00

EO1-EO2 Ness Walk (Dial in code: 79691)



Attendees

Board members

Clive Mulholland , Fiona Larg , Niall McArthur , David Patterson , Diane Rawlinson , Nicholas Oakley (Clerk) , Neil Stewart , Brian Crichton , Blair Sandison , Andrew Campbell , Angus MacLeod , Bruce Ritchie , Chris O'Neill , David Sandison , Alan Simpson , Michael Foxley (Chair) , Peter Campbell , Peter Graham , Seonag Campbell , Wilf Weir , Linda Kirkland , Bruce Robertson , Iain Minty , Graeme Kirkpatrick , Donald Macbeath , Iain Macmillan , Max Brown , John Hutchison , Blair Sandison , Crichton Lang

Meeting minutes

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

1.1. Welcome

Michael Foxley (Chair)

The Chair welcomed the members to the meeting. The Chair also welcomed Iain Minty, Alan Simpson, and Brian Crichton to their first FERB meeting.

 FERB AGENDA - September 2018.pdf

1.2. Apologies

Michael Foxley (Chair)

The Chair noted the apologies for the meeting:
Carrol Buxton; Callum Stephen; John Ross Scott; John Ferguson

1.3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1.4. Notification of Any Other Competent Business

There was no other competent business noted.

2. MINUTE OF MEETINGS

2.1. * Minute of the FERB meeting held on 25 May 2018

Members approved the minute of the previous meeting (FERB18-32) held on 25 May 2018, pending the following amendment:

Page 2, Item 3, second bullet point, remove 'majority' from the following sentence:

There is a clear need to review the methodology behind future funding distributions to ensure that the region maximises capture of SFC grant funding, that colleges receive funding for activity they deliver and that the **majority of** rurality funding is allocated to the most remote and rural partners."

 FERB 32 20180525 MayFERB Minute DRAFT.pdf

2.2. * Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous special meeting of the 25 May 2018; the Chair requested that the long-standing matters arising be included in the papers of the next meeting.

2.3. *Review of Delegated Decisions

There were no delegated decisions reported.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Michael Foxley (Chair)

The Chair gave a brief update on his activities, noting that much of these would be reported on in meeting agenda items. In particular, he reported that he had been in Shetland for graduations, and had had a series of meetings with Chairs, Shetland MSP and Chief Executive of the Council and there had been good progress made on the proposed NAFC/ Shetland merger.

4. GOVERNANCE, PLANNING & FUNDING ISSUES

4.1. Regional MIS / Data Use Proposal

4.1.1. MIS Systems Development

Members discussed paper FERB18-33 on the proposal for strategic development of MIS reporting and the introduction of predictive data analytics in decision-making.

Members heard that the student data reporting group and quality forum had identified frustration across the partnership that could be avoided if the development of a self-service system to filter information in student records system regardless of the end-users' database expertise.

The group have identified a front-end dashboard system and will repurpose the resource FERB has given to FE reports for a data analysis role that will enable them to use historical data to enhance understanding of current students, assist with tracking against metrics, and curriculum planning.

Members **agreed** their support for the development of a dashboard reporting system but that prior to any investment in the development of data analytics to support decision-making (which would re-position the role of the FE reporting officer to one of data analyst) that a cost benefit analysis would be undertaken.

 [4.1 FERB 33 Regional MIS Data Use Proposal.pdf](#)

Decision

Diane Rawlinson

4.2. * Governance Structures and the Role of the RSB

Members welcomed the report on the governance structure and role of the RSB, with a particular focus on the future of FERB.

Members heard that the paper will be presented to Academic Council, Partnership Council, and Court, to gather feedback. Input from FERB members and the Chairs of Colleges was of great importance; and it was noted in the ensuing discussion of the paper that Chairs feel underrepresented in HE decisions. The Chair then summarised the discussion, noting that incremental steps were needed; potential improvements had been identified in the paper; that the university was operationally increasingly cohesive; that this cohesion needed to be replicated through governance structures; that stakeholders (including externals) be included; a more strategic role for Chairs in university structure was required; a need for more input into budgets; a need to look at other parts of UHI governance, and that planning blight be avoided where possible.

Members heard that feedback will be sought from the other committees of Court, as well as the partnership assembly and partnership council, and that this consultation feedback will be consolidated with a view to create an options proposal.

 [4.2 FERB 34 Governance Structures and the Role of the RSB.pdf](#)

Discussion

Clive Mulholland/ Michael Foxley (Chair)

4.3. Student Activity 2017/18

Members were pleased to note that student activity targets had been achieved, with funding to be confirmed later this month following audit. Members agreed that meeting these targets posed a significant challenge, and partners are reporting that this will continue to be the case in future years.

Members heard that the "one plus" rule (restricting the number of credits that can be claimed for an individual student) being enforced by the SFC is a risk to the region and the colleges. [Regionally, 2.5% is the agreed limit, and the region is currently at 3.4%.] Clarification from SFC is still being sought, but if the one plus rule is enforced and recruitment continues to be an issue then there may be ongoing difficulties/ risks.

Members **agreed** that the 'one plus' risk to be discussed at Partnership Council in order to agree mitigation options.

Information

Diane Rawlinson

[4.3 FERB 35 Student Activity 2017-2018.pdf](#)

4.4. Revised FE Activity Funding 2018/19 (4 Appendices)

Members noted the Revised FE Activity funding. Members noted that SFC have agreed to restore 552 credits and related funding.

- [4.4 FERB 36 Revised FE activity & Funding 2018-19 \(1\).pdf](#)
- [4.4 FERB 36 Revised FE activity & Funding 2018-19 \(1\).pdf](#)
- [4.4 FERB 36 - Revised FE activity & Funding 2018-19 \(3\).pdf](#)
- [4.4 FERB 36 Revised FE activity & Funding 2018-19 \(4\).pdf](#)
- [4.4 FERB 36 Revised FE activity & Funding 2018-19 \(2\).pdf](#)

4.5. Indicative Allocation of Funding 2019/20 (2 Appendices)

Members discussed the indicative allocation of funding 2019/20. Members were asked to note that the funding was indicative and pending final SFC agreement.

Members heard that no agreement had been reached at Partnership Council on the decision for proposed funding distribution principles around rurality funding, with the options being:

1. Single year transition fund to further phase out rurality fund payments to Inverness and Perth
2. No transition funding (recognising the previous two years of transition funding).

Following discussion, and with no consensus on either option reached, FERB resolved to vote on these options.

Option 2 (no transition funding) was carried by 8 votes, with 2 votes for option 1 (single year transition fund) and 2 abstaining.

- [4.5a FERB 37 - Indicative Allocation of Funding 2019-20.pdf](#)
- [4.5b FERB 37 - Indicative Allocation of Funding 2019-20.pdf](#)
- [4.5c FERB 37 Indicative Allocation of Funding 2019-20.pdf](#)

4.6. National Bargaining Update

Members noted the update on national bargaining, and that the issue remains paramount to the financial sustainability of the organisation. Lobbying will continue, and efficiency savings are being sought, and Partnership Assembly and other committees will need to look at the financial impact with a view to informing future FERB discussions.

The Chair noted that the proposed new funding model needs to be discussed over the next two years including issues of demographics, inequalities, and rurality.

- [4.6 FERB 38 National Bargaining Update.pdf](#)

4.7. Lews Castle College Report

The Board received a verbal update on the LCC report, and heard that 5 recommendations have been considered by the LCC board on 11 September.

The LCC board have agreed to produce a report response to address the challenges and make proposals on how they will respond to this recommendation report, with a meeting scheduled for 18 October.

4.8. Shetland Integration Project Update

Members received a verbal report on the Shetland Integration Project, and heard that good progress has been made. Property and pensions were considerable impediments, but solutions or mitigations are in place/ proposed to these. Members heard that the planned date of October for approval was, however, unlikely; with December 2018 being a more realistic approval date.

4.9. Academic Partner Financial Monitoring and SFC Review of Financial Monitoring Returns

Members **noted** the paper.

- [4.9 FERB 39 - Academic Partner Financial Monitoring & SFC review of Financial Monitoring Returns.pdf](#)
- [4.9 FERB 39 - Academic Partner Financial Monitoring & SFC review of Financial Monitoring Returns.pdf](#)
- [4.9 FERB 39 - Academic Partner Financial Monitoring & SFC review of Financial Monitoring Returns.pdf](#)

4.10. Flexible Workforce Development Fund Update

Members **noted** the paper and the very good result.

- [4.10 FEERB 40 Flexible Workforce Development Fund Update.pdf](#)

Information

Niall McArthur

Decision

Niall McArthur/ Clive Mulholland

Discussion

Niall McArthur

Verbal

Iain Macmillan

Verbal

Peter Campbell

Information

Information

Diane Rawlinson

4.11. Single Policy Environment Update

Members **noted** the paper as well as the update provided earlier in the day, especially the opportunities for efficiency savings, more collaboration, and greater resilience.

 4.11 FERB 41 Single Policy Environment update.pdf

Information

Diane Rawlinson

4.12. Tertiary Curriculum Mapping Project Update

Members heard that work on the tertiary curriculum mapping project was ongoing, with the project progressing well, with significant progress expected before Christmas 2018.

 4.12 FERB 42 Tertiary Curriculum Mapping Project Update .pdf

Information

Lydia Rohmer/ Clive Mulholland

4.13. UHI Work Based Learning Hub Update

Members **noted** the paper.

 4.13 FERB 43 WBL Hub update.pdf

Information

Diane Rawlinson

4.14. Schools Liaison Group

Members **noted** the discussion, and that the Schools Liaison Group meeting note will be circulated after the meeting.

5. AUDIT, RISK MANAGEMENT & REPORTING

5.1. Risk Management - FE Risk Register and UHI HLRR

The standard risk registers were missing from the circulated boardbook. The Chair asked that these be discussed as the first item on the next meeting agenda.

Discussion

Michael Foxley (Chair)

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business and the Chair closed the meeting at 16:10.

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The date of the next meeting is 21 November 2018.