

Regional Strategy Committee (RSC)

Tue 04 May 2021, 11:00 - Tue 04 May 2021, 14:30

Webex Teams: 143378345@uhi.webex.com

Attendees

Board members

Garry Coutts (Chair), Andrew Campbell (Chair Argyll College UHI), Angus Campbell (External independent member), Blair Sandison (Chair North Highland College UHI), Brian Crichton (Chair Perth College UHI), Bruce Robertson (External independent member), David Sandison (Chair), Diana Murray (Chair SAMS UHI), Florence Jansen (HISA President), Michael Foxley (Vice Chair; FE Regional Lead), Rosemary McCormack (Staff Governor), Sarah Burton (Chair Inverness College UHI), Stuart Smith (Chair Highland Theological College UHI), Todd Walker (Principal and Vice Chancellor)

In attendance

John Kemp (Acting Chief Operating Officer), Lydia Rohmer (Vice Principal - Tertiary), Maggie Tierney (Vice Chair Argyll College UHI), Neil Simco (Vice Principal Research & Impact), John Maher (- in part), Lorna Walker (Director), Nicholas Oakley (Clerk), Gary Campbell (Vice Principal - Strategic Development), Niall McArthur (Director of Corporate Resources)

Meeting minutes

1. Welcome

 RSC Agenda - 4 May 2021 Agreed.pdf

1.1. *Welcome & apologies

The Chair opened the meeting and noted the apologies from Beverly Clubley.

1.2. *Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1.3. *Notification of Any Other Competent Business

The Chair reported that he had agreed with the Vice Chair, Michael Foxley, to hold a separate meeting on the FE regional lead and that meeting would involve a number of academic chairs.

1.4. *Starring

2. Minutes of Meetings

2.1. *Minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2021

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 February 2021 were **approved** as a true and accurate record.

 RSC20-21-045 Minutes_Regional Strategy Committee (RSC)_100221.pdf

2.2. *Matters Arising

The Committee **noted** the matters arising update.

 RSC20-21-046 Matters Arising.pdf

2.3. *Review of Delegated Decisions

There were no delegated decisions reported.

3. Governance and Funding

3.1. *AP Financial Information Update

The Committee discussed the AP financial information update. The Chair reported that future iterations will include the most current up-to-date information possible, as well as more narrative assurance to Committee then on to Court that Boards are appropriately sighted on mitigating actions.

Decision: The Committee **noted** the report.

 [RSC20-21-047 AP Finance report.pdf](#)

3.2. *Approach to Funding Allocations for 2021-22

J Kemp provided members with an update on the approach to funding allocations for 2021/22. The members discussed the three options for allocations as described in the paper.

Decision: The Committee **endorsed** setting the partners a target based on the discussions with the VPFE with a possible stretch element and retain the remaining credits centrally to be allocated for specific purposes or where partners believe they have more demand. If any portion of the centrally held credits were not used they could be more easily returned to SFC.

Action: J Kemp to report the Committee's endorsement of the approach to funding allocations to Partnership Council.

 [RSC20-21-048 RSC paper on approach to funding 250421.pdf](#)

3.3. *RAM - proposed changes for AY2021-22

J Kemp provided members with an update on the proposed RAM changes for 2021/22. The Committee **noted** the update and the work in progress by the executive.

The Committee members requested an update on the savings made to date at Executive Office. The Principal and Vice Chancellor, Prof Todd Walker, reported that £1m worth of savings had been achieved, mainly through vacancies not being filled, and that work on the Executive Office review was ongoing with the aim to deliver further efficiency savings.

Decision: The Committee **noted** the updates on RAM changes and EO savings.

 [RSC20-21-049 RAM May 21.pdf](#)

3.4. Performance Dashboard

J Kemp provided members with an update on the performance dashboard. One member raised a concern that teacher education was reported as being oversubscribed and sought clarification on the number of applicants being declined places.

Concern was expressed about reports that recent graduates from the program were struggling to gain first teaching positions.

Action: N Simco to meet with Bruce Robertson to discuss oversubscription in teacher education, jobs for graduates, and potential mitigating actions.

Decision: The Committee **noted** the performance dashboard report.

 [RSC20-21-050 Performance Dashboard.pdf](#)

4. Strategic Business

4.1. *Change Management Plan; update report

J Kemp provided members with an update on the change management plan, and that a new reporting format was anticipated for the Committee's next meeting, including more information on deliverables and clearer targets and deadlines.

Decision: The Committee **noted** the update.

 [RSC20-21-051 Change Management Plan update 4, May 21.pdf](#)

4.2. *Regional Economic Partnership

J Kemp provided members with an update on the regional economic partnership proposal. He reported that changes in senior leadership of key regional stakeholders, as well as the upcoming election, meant the environment was in a state of flux. The members noted that this presented an opportunity for the university partnership and highlighted the importance of an economic regional forum that the partnership could lead. The Committee also recognised the importance of a regional economic partnership to discuss key strategic matters, such as post-Brexit funding and blue and green economy developments.

Members heard that Perth College UHI has continued to forge local alliances within the Greater Tayside area, and that the college would continue to keep the greater interests of the university partnership in mind and keep the Committee informed of further developments. The Committee noted this approach and the disparate geographical environment Perth College UHI, and to a lesser extent Argyll College, were operating in which presented some challenge to the partnership.

Decision: The Committee **noted** the update and **requested** that the university executive continue to seek opportunities to inform and lead on the development of a regional economic partnership.

Action: G Campbell and Angus Campbell to meet to discuss further UHI-HIE collaboration opportunities.

 RSC20-21-052 REP paper.pdf

5. *General Business

5.1. *Update on key issues

J Kemp provided the members with an update on several key issues. The following matters were noted:

 RSC20-21-053 update report040421.pdf

5.1.1. SFC Review Update Plan for engagement for Phase 3

The Committee **noted** the update on the SFC phase 3 engagement without further discussion.

5.1.2. SRUC options appraisal

The members discussed the SRUC options appraisal, and highlighted some concerns arising from a recent meeting involving the appointed consultants. The Committee **noted** that an informal engagement session was planned with Court members and Academic Partner Chairs in May 2021 to further discuss and resolve these concerns.

5.1.3. Gaelic

The members discussed the update and in particular the mini-prospectus. The Committee **requested** that this mini-prospectus be appropriately promoted across the university partnership.

The Committee **noted** the update on Gaelic.

5.1.4. Colleges options appraisal

The Committee **noted** the update on the colleges options appraisal and looked forward to its imminent publication.

5.1.5. SFC Funding for 2021-21

The Committee **noted** the update on SFC funding for 2020-21 without further discussion.

5.1.6. Distant Island Allowance

The Committee **noted** the update on the distant islands allowance without further discussion.

5.2. *Cyber Incident update

[John Maher joined the meeting]

The Committee received a confidential update on the cyber incident which was the subject of an ongoing police investigation.

Decision: The Committee **noted** the update. The Committee also extended their appreciation and gratitude to all partnership staff for their hard work and cooperation on the matter and highlighted the effectiveness of the way the response had been managed.

[John Maher left the meeting]

5.3. REF 2021 update

The Committee **noted** the update on the REF2021 without further discussion.

 RSC20-21-054 REF 2021 Update.pdf

5.4. *Draft Strategic Plan Consultation Update

The Committee **noted** the update on the draft strategic plan consultation without further discussion.

6. Date of Next Meeting: 14 September 2021

7. Any Other Competent Business

There was no other business and the Chair closed the meeting at 12:15.

