

Transition Board – College Merger

WebEx

Wednesday 21 October 2020, 4.30pm

Present:

Board Members

Davie Sandison	Non-Executive Member <i>[Chair]</i>
Jane Lewis	Principal Designate
Glen Gilfillan	NAFC staff rep
Beth Mouat	NAFC staff rep
George Wallington	SIC SC staff rep
Cally Mair	HISA
Flo Jansen	HISA
Lauren Doughton	Non-Executive Member
Graeme Howell	Non-Executive Member
John Goodlad	Non-Executive Member

Apologies

Karen Hall
Andrew Anderson *[received after the meeting]*

Observers

Christine Ferguson	SIC Director of Corporate Services
Willie Shannon	Principal, NAFC Marine Centre UHI
Irene Hambleton	Chair, NAFC Marine Centre UHI
Peter Campbell	Chair, Shetland College UHI

In attendance

Brendan Hall Business Development and Projects Officer

Board Support

Jacqui Birnie	SIC <i>[Minutes]</i>
Fiona Larg	UHI
Sharon Drysdale	SFC

Minute Ref	Item
Welcome and Apologies	<p>Mr Sandison opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.</p> <p>Mr Sandison welcomed Irene Hambleton back to the Board as an Observer now that she is Chair of NAFC Marine Centre UHI. Mr Sandison also welcomed Brendan Hall to the meeting who had recently been appointed as Business Development and Projects Officer.</p> <p>Following delays which were experienced due to connectivity issues, Mr Sandison asked for it to be noted that Jean Urquhart had recently resigned from her position on the Board due to educational commitments. Mr Sandison thanked Ms Urquhart for her contributions on both the Shadow and Transition Board.</p>

Minute Ref	Item
Minute Shadow Board – 23 September 2020	The minute of the meeting held on 23 rd September 2020 were confirmed.
Matters arising	It was noted regarding the logo design brief which had been drafted that Prof. Lewis was scheduled to meet with David Nicol from Promote Shetland.
Terms of reference for committees and process for future appointments TB2020-17	<p>There had been a slight issue with the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Transition Board and these had been amended and circulated earlier. The updated TOR's were noted.</p> <p>In order to proceed with appointments board members would be invited to nominate themselves for the Chair positions on the Committees. Mr Goodlad enquired if it would also be possible to volunteer for committees of interest but which you may not wish to Chair. This was agreed. It was noted that the nominations committee would meet shortly and that they would also prioritise establishing a wider appointments panel in order to progress with recruitment of new directors.</p> <p>Decisions/Actions: It was agreed that Mr Sandison would seek nominations for expressions of interest from Directors for participation in or Chairing of Committees for consideration by the nominations committee.</p> <p>It was noted there was a typo within the Audit Committee TOR which would be corrected.</p>
Strategic outline case for Shetland Campus redevelopment TB2020-18	<p>Mr Sandison acknowledged the intense work that had been involved in preparing the strategic outline case.</p> <p>Prof. Lewis said that it was not clear at this stage which projects would be successful but there were clearly a number of potential projects which Shetland UHI could be at the heart of. It was noted that should the Shetland Campus redevelopment proceed there would be a need for an estates special committee.</p> <p>Mr Wallington enquired about the learning centre spaces in schools which were SIC owned buildings and whether they would fall outwith the scope of the project. Prof. Lewis explained they had been considered in the context of the infrastructure that would be required within. Following further discussion, Ms Ferguson confirmed that the Council would be developing a partnership agreement with Shetland UHI which would consider resources such as spaces in schools supporting access to tertiary learning opportunities.</p> <p>It was noted that the initial feedback was expected by early November and that if successful the full business case would have to be completed by March 2021, which would be an extremely demanding timescale.</p> <p>Mr Goodlad said he felt this was an excellent piece of work. He added that he was particularly delighted to see the Shell-volution project highlighted in the covering report, which he hoped would result in the Hatchery being utilised at the Scalloway campus.</p>

Minute Ref	Item
Company matters TB2020-20	Noted.
Update – Merger Working Group	<p>Dr Hall outlined practical arrangements that he had been looking into. That included banking arrangements as well as following up on the OSCR registration with Ms Larg.</p> <p>HR and finance workstreams have been identified as priority. To help inform the work that will be required, Dr Hall has been having a number of meetings, including with key individuals. He added that he hoped to hold workshops with board members as well as relevant committees to support effective planning.</p> <p>Dr Hall reflected that during the start of his role he had found the meetings he had held with staff across the sector to be extremely informative.</p> <p>Prof. Lewis said that Dr Hall was a welcome addition to the team.</p>
Update – SFC engagement and timeline	<p>Ms Drysdale said that the engagement sessions had been completed and the report would be shared with the Transition Board at the next scheduled meeting in November. Ms Drysdale summarised some of the main themes raised during discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial challenges, merger ‘blight’ as well as relationships and the need for clarity as merger progressed ○ Staff concerns about governance and uncertainty about what the organisation would look like in the future and where they would fit ○ Students felt informed about the merger but unclear about the legal status of the college ○ There were opportunities relating to the islands deal and making more of the strong links with industry. <p>Ms Drysdale then expanded on key points. As follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff – noted anxiety surrounding staffing structures as well as Train Shetland staff being uncertain about where they would be physically placed, as their current building would not transfer ○ MMBC - not clear enough on the benefits of merger for students ○ Students – they reflected that they felt ill-informed about incorporated versus non-incorporated. Students had also highlighted that they wished to see more investment in front facing student support services and in enhancing the student experience. <p>Ms Drysdale further reflected that there was a need to re-invigorate student engagement, but that they understood that it was challenging times due to Covid. Prof. Lewis said that she had already met with Ms Mair and they were discussing ways to improve that, which included making a short video. Mr Sandison added that he felt it was incredibly important to get the message across and ensure students were engaged.</p>

Minute Ref	Item
	<p>Mr Wallington enquired about the space utilisation survey and Ms Drysdale said that SFC had noted that was planned but that there was no point to that happening till the Colleges were operating at full capacity.</p> <p>Ms Drysdale then provided a brief update on when the current transformation funding bid would be considered. It was noted that the outcome would hopefully be known during the week commencing 4th November.</p> <p>Following an enquiry from Mr Sandison, Ms Drysdale confirmed that a vesting date in July was still planned. It was also noted there had been some confusion about reduced consultation timeframes. The Shetland based consultation had 12 weeks and the engagement time for SFC had been planned to be longer in order to account for travel times which had no longer been required.</p> <p>Ms Ferguson asked if it was possible for it to be made clear what the position regarding legal status for Shetland UHI would be, given the ongoing lobbying that continues. Ms Drysdale confirmed that the Deputy First Minister had stated the legal status was a decision for the Transition Board, which had already been made on the basis of sound information. She confirmed that it was not a matter for the Minister.</p> <p>Mr Sandison thanked Ms Drysdale for being extremely clear on that point. Mr Goodlad agreed and said there had been lengthy discussions on legal status and a very clear decision had been reached by consensus by the Transition Board.</p> <p>Ms Ferguson suggested there was a need to carefully plan communication on making sure this is clear as it may cause distress to some.</p> <p>It was noted that Prof. Lewis is preparing a paper for staff and students on the legal status with the assistance of staff representatives. Following further discussion and in light of the DFM's position, it was agreed that Prof. Lewis would meet Ms Larg, Ms Ferguson and Ms Drysdale and then prepare a communications paper on legal status for the board. Ms Jansen added that she wanted it noted that the mis-formation that students have regarding legal status comes from lecturers and that she would like clear and accessible communication on the legal status with how the decision was reached shared with students.</p> <p>Decisions/Actions: Prof. Lewis would meet Ms Larg, Ms Ferguson and Ms Drysdale and then prepare a communications paper on legal status for the board.</p>
<p>Any other Business</p>	<p>Mr Wallington enquired whether a trial meeting with MSTeams may be advisable following the technical difficulties experienced earlier in the meeting. This was agreed and Mr Wallington would organise it. If that worked well MSTeams would replace WebEx meetings.</p> <p>Decisions/Actions: Mr Wallington to organise test meeting with MSTeams.</p>

Minute Ref	Item
Next meeting	The date of the next meeting is 18 th November 2020. The meeting concluded at 6.40pm.

END

Minute Ref	Decision / Action	Update / Progress
Terms of reference for committees and process for future appointments TB2020-17	It was agreed that Mr Sandison would seek nominations for expressions of interest from Directors for participation in or Chairing of Committees for consideration by the nominations committee.	Complete and on the agenda
Update – SFC engagement and timeline	Prof. Lewis would meet Ms Larg, Ms Ferguson and Ms Drysdale and then prepare a communications paper on legal status for the board.	Complete and on the agenda
Any other Business	Mr Wallington to organise test meeting with MStEams.	Complete, this meeting planned with TEAMS