

Human Resources and Remuneration Committee

Meeting 2022-2023 3/4

Wed 15 March 2023, 16:30 - 18:30

Teams

Attendees

Chair

- David Sandison (Interim Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee, Absent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
- Graeme Howell (Vice Chair of the Board of Management, Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee, Senior Independent Member, Vice Chair of Search and Nominations Committee)

Prescribed Board Members

- Karen Hall (Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee)
- Lauren Doughton (Chair of Audit Committee)

Other Board Members

- Angela Sutherland (Non-Teaching Staff Director, Absent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 15)

Ex-Officio

- Jane Lewis (Principal - Shetland UHI, Absent 15)

Also In Attendance

- Laura Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary, Absent 15)
- Matt Sierocinski King (Board Secretary)

Apologies

- Rory Gillies (Independent Director)

Meeting minutes

1. Welcome, Apologies, and Announcements

Mr Howell (Vice-Chair of the Board of Management), welcomed everyone to the meeting. The committee agreed that the Vice-Chair of the Board of Management would serve as chair of the meeting in absence of Mr Sandison (Interim Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee), who was delayed by meetings at Shetland Islands Council.

2. Declarations of Interest

Ms Hall (Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee) declared a conflict of interest as she has members of her family who work for Shetland UHI.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meetings

Mr Howell (Stand-In Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee) led the committee through the process of checking the non-confidential minutes of the previous meeting regarding matters of accuracy. The Stand-In Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee led the committee through the process of checking the confidential minutes of the previous meeting regarding matters of accuracy.

Decision: The committee approved the non-confidential minutes as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

Decision: The committee approved the confidential minutes as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

4. Matters Arising

Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) updated the committee on the forthcoming to review senior management remuneration.

Action: Mr Howell (Stand-In Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee), Mr Sandison (Chair of the Board of Management) and the Board Secretary are to meet to discuss this matter further.

5. *Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were noted.

Updates

6. Uplift in Distant Islands Allowance

Professor Lewis (Principal) updated the Committee on this matter, that Distant Islands Allowance for Shetland Islands residents had increased from £2,397 to £2,541 per annum, effective as of October 2022, a 7.67% uplift. She detailed the budgeting impact of the uplift in Distant Islands Allowance, an estimated £17,000.

9. HR Support and Internal Audit

Professor Lewis (Principal) gave a verbal update, noting the departure of Mrs Fenton (former HR and OD Lead) as a staff member of Shetland UHI. The Principal informed the committee that Mrs Fenton is leading on two projects for Shetland UHI as an external advisor.

The Principal explained that she has tried to sought collaboration with other Academic Partners within the UHI Partnership for Human Resources support, sadly without success. The Principal proposed a 0.6FTE role, and asked for the committee's authorisation for recruitment of the role. The Committee discussed whether the role should be increased to 1.0FTE with additional responsibilities added to the role in order to fill the difference between 0.6FTE and 1.0FTE. The committee discussed the possibility of recruiting an external agency to fulfill the role.

The Principal informed the Committee that the first internal audit, which focused on staff recruitment, had been completed, with the report is expected to come to the next meeting of Audit Committee.

Decision: The committee authorised the recruitment of the 0.6FTE Human Resources role.

Action: The Senior Management Team are to undertake a recruitment for a new 0.6 FTE Human Resources role.

10. Sign up to National Terms and Conditions

Professor Lewis (Principal) updated the committee on the work undertaken regarding National Terms and Conditions. She reported to the committee that on the academic side, those that weren't already signed up to the National Recognition and Procedure Agreement are now signed up to National Recognition and Procedure Agreement (NRPA).

The Principal informed the Committee that Shetland UHI was undertaking a shadowing of the NRPA process for support staff, while the job evaluation process was ongoing nationally. She informed the committee about the internal job evaluation process currently being undertaken, and that Shetland UHI is not able to sign up to the NRPA for support staff as yet, as it started in 2018, before Shetland UHI became into being, as a single organisation.

11. Risk 4

Mr Howell (Stand-In Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee) announced to the committee that the risk is still classed as orange.

Professor Lewis (Principal) introduced the agenda item, and mentioned that she felt that, due to the size of Shetland UHI, it was unlikely that the RAG categorisation of Risk 4 would ever be anything other than orange. She spoke to the actions mitigations against the risk, with termination of and notice periods a piece of work to be undertaken to give longer notice periods. She also raised the topic as to the internal development of staff as a methodology to mitigate against the risk.

Mr Howell (Stand-In Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee) suggested that a deputy responsibility be set into job descriptions of staff to support continuity and holiday cover, to ensure that there was always a 'go-to' person for key activities undertaken by staff.

12. Living Wage Accreditation

Professor Lewis (Principal) updated the committee on obtaining Living Wage Accreditation for Shetland UHI. She confirmed that, while Shetland UHI is in compliance with the Living Wage, the paperwork to gain accreditation remained ongoing.

Action: The Senior Management Team shall update the committee on Living Wage Accreditation at the next meeting.

Matters for Decision

13. Grievance Policy and Procedure

Professor Lewis (Principal) introduced the agenda item, and explained the drafting and consultation process for the Grievance Policy and Procedure, along with its applicability to staff. She explained that the policy would be superseded by the nationally agreed policy when it is developed. She noted there will always prefer to handle such matters informally, ahead handling grievance matters formally.

Decision: The Committee approved the Grievance Policy and Procedure for use at Shetland UHI.

Action: The Senior Management Team shall implement the Grievance Policy and Procedure for use at Shetland UHI.

14. Whistleblowing Paper

Professor Lewis (Principal) introduced the Whistleblowing paper, and informed the committee on the drafting and consultation process for the paper. She noted that informal guidance will also be produced as a result of the paper and explained that it had been approved by LNCC. She informed the committee that it was a legal requirement for Shetland UHI to have such a policy.

Decision: The Committee approved the Whistleblowing Paper for use at Shetland UHI.

Action: The Senior Management Team shall implement the Whistleblowing Paper for use at Shetland UHI.

Internal Committee Matters

15. Committee Training and Development

This agenda item was taken as the 18th agenda item in the order of the meeting, with the agenda items of Chair and Vice-Chair, Any Other Business, and Date of the Next Meeting, taken ahead of this agenda item. As the matter pertained to Independent Directors, Ms Burden (Depute Principal Tertiary), Ms Sutherland (Non-Teaching Staff Director), and Professor Lewis (Principal), left the meeting for this agenda item.

Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) raised the matter of Committee Training and Development with Committee members, regarding their remuneration responsibilities. The Independent Directors discussed the matter.

Action: The Board Secretary shall circulate the link to CDN Remuneration Training and support virtually with any log-in challenges.

Action: Mr Sandison (Interim Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee), Mr Howell (Stand-In Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee), Ms Hall (Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee) and Dr Doughton (Chair of Audit Committee) shall meet for a group session at Mareel on 21st March at 17:30, to undertake Remuneration Training together.

Action: If any of the following Independent Directors: Interim Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee, and/or Stand-In Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee, and/or Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee, and/or Chair of Audit Committee, have not completed the CDN Remuneration Training Module prior to 27th March 2023, when the Board Secretary is on-island, the Board Secretary will offer further support to such members.

16. Chair and Vice-Chair

This agenda item was taken as the 15th agenda item in the order of the meeting.

This agenda item was carried over to the next meeting. Mx Sierocinski King (Board Secretary) reflected on the thoughts of Mr Howell (Stand-in Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee) regarding deputy responsibilities under Risk 4 in this meeting, and their applicability for Committees of the Board of Management.

Action: The Board Secretary shall add this agenda item to the agenda of the next meeting of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee.

Concluding Matters

17. Any Other Business

This agenda item was taken as the 16th agenda item in the order of the meeting.

Professor Lewis (Principal) updated the committee on industrial relations. The support staff Trade Union and the academic staff Trade Union submitted pay claims of around £5,000 per person, which that amounts to 12% rise. In line with SFC stipulations, a 2% rise was offered. The Principal will meet with the minister tomorrow with regards to the matter.

The Principal informed the Committee that both Unions are balloting over industrial action, with strike action, and action short of a strike, balloted for. She informed the committee that the ballot opens next week, with action short of a strike, expected to take place this academic year, and strike action thereafter, should the ballots reach the required thresholds.

The Principal informed the Committee that the Support staff Union have also asked for changes in conditions, including a 4-day week. Strike action was also expected in relation to this demand. The Principal pointed out that the bid from Trade Unions is for a two-year pay deal, which was welcomed as it allowed for a year's break for such negotiations. The Principal informed the Committee that at a recent meeting with other Principals across Scotland, that many Principals commented that their college would become insolvent if they offered any more than 2%, without Scottish Government intervention.

Members of the Committee queried with the Principal as to whether past discussions regarding pay and conditions had involved Unions and employers had involved approaching the government together. The Principal responded that separate approaches are being made.

The committee discussed the matter further.

18. Date of Next Meeting

This agenda item was taken as the 17th agenda item in the order of the meeting. The date of the next meeting is 24th May 2023.

Agenda Item	Action	Responsible	Progress
4	Meet to discuss Remuneration planning matter further.	Stand-In Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee, Chair of the Board of Management, Board Secretary	Complete

9	Undertake a recruitment for a new 0.6 FTE Human Resources role.	Senior Management Team	On Agenda
12	Update the committee on Living Wage Accreditation at the next meeting.	Senior Management Team	On Agenda
13	Implement the Grievance Policy and Procedure for use at Shetland UHI.	Senior Management Team	Complete
14	Implement the Whistleblowing Paper for use at Shetland UHI.	Senior Management Team	Complete
15	Circulate the link to CDN Remuneration Training and support virtually with any log-in challenges.	Board Secretary	Complete
15	Meet for a group session at Mareel on 21st March at 17:30, to undertake Remuneration Training together.	Interim Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee, Stand-In Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee, Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee, Chair of Audit Committee	On Agenda
15	If any of the Independent Directors those responsible for this action, have not completed the CDN Remuneration Training Module prior to 27th March 2023, when the Board Secretary is on-island, the Board Secretary will offer further support to such members.	Interim Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee, and/or Stand-In Chair of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee, and/or Chair of Learning, Teaching, and Research Committee, and/or Chair of Audit Committee Board Secretary	On Agenda
16	Add this agenda item to the agenda of the next meeting of Human Resources and Remuneration Committee.	Board Secretary	Complete