

UHI | ARGYLL

Final Version Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting

Held at 1.30pm on Friday 27 February 2026

Via MS Teams

Quorum: 3 members

Present: B Sizeland (BS), C Walsh (CW) Chair, I Jurgensen (IJ), J Dow (JD)

Apologies: M Waterhouse (MW)

In attendance: A Blakey (AB), A Close (AEC), J Wright (JW), Steve McNaught (SMN)

No	Item	Action
26.1.01	Welcome and apologies for absence CW welcomed everyone to the meeting as the new Audit Chair. Brief introductions followed to welcome JD as a new Board and Committee member. It was noted that MW will also join the Committee from the next cycle as a Co-opted member.	
26.1.02	Declarations of interest & to identify any items deemed confidential AEC and JW noted a potential conflict of interest for item 26.1.08 i) and agreed to leave the meeting for the discussion of this item. There were no items deemed confidential.	
26.1.03	Minutes of Joint Audit and F&GP Committee meeting held on 28 November 2025 The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Board Secretary to publish.	AB
26.1.04	Outstanding Actions - AEC to progress Charities Aid Foundation Bank proposal – an account has been opened. An update paper will go to the Board in March with proposed investments. - AEC to review RAG ratings on Risk Assurance Framework – the ratings have been reviewed.	
26.1.05	Risk Register AEC introduced the paper and noted that two new risks have been added. Job evaluation – a new risk has been included reflecting the tight timescales for the local job evaluation process. Mitigation is in place through the engagement of ECC, who are widely used across the sector.	

	Senior leadership succession – a new risk has been added to reflect anticipated changes to the senior leadership team at the end of the calendar year. The Committee also discussed the overarching risk of Transformation. It was agreed that the current risk score remains appropriate. The process is progressing more slowly than anticipated, with extended consultation contributing to the delay. The Committee was content to note the Risk Register as presented.	
26.1.06	i) Internal Audit Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan (approved in 2025) The paper was noted. ii) Draft Internal Audit plan for 2025/26 SMN provided an overview of the draft plan, noting that this is the second year of the three-year internal audit strategy. The Committee noted that the plan can be adjusted if priorities shift. AEC outlined the reasoning behind the audits scheduled. With strategic work underway, including the development of a new strategy and a curriculum review, it is an appropriate time to undertake a curriculum audit. Corporate governance was identified as a priority, reflecting recent Board changes, the external review, and the associated action plan. There was brief discussion whether a staff recruitment and retention audit should be undertaken. SMN advised that succession planning could be explored, but that it would be preferable to have the strategy and curriculum review completed first. The Committee agreed to approve the plan for 2025/26 and to revisit for 2026/27 when the next iteration of the plan is presented.	
26.1.07	Health and Safety Report – Quarter to 31 Jan 2026 The Committee noted that the Health & Safety and Property Officer left earlier this month. Clarity Safety Solutions have been re-engaged to provide two days of support per month for an initial six-month period, with availability for urgent issues if/when required. All core processes remain in place. One member of staff has expressed interest in undertaking H&S training, and this is being considered as a potential longer-term option. The Committee discussed an incident of a reasonably serious nature which occurred at MACC. Following investigation, additional safety measures have been introduced in all centres where this activity takes place.	
26.1.08	AOCB	

	i) Board Action Plan JW introduced the paper noting that the purpose of the discussion was to finalise the action plan arising from the UHI Argyll Governance Effectiveness Review (GER). The recent RSB review identified concerns regarding the Board's oversight of the executive team, and the Committee were asked whether they wished to address this within the action plan. It was recommended that the Committee discuss any concerns without AEC and JW present. <i>AEC & JW left the meeting.</i> SMN highlighted the small size of the executive team and confirmed that the Chair currently has a direct communication line with the Principal. In other colleges, Board members have direct communication with key members of the executive team, and this model could be considered to distribute responsibility more effectively. The Committee agreed with SMN's comments, emphasising that the issue relates to strengthening effective governance. SMN encouraged the Board to embrace the process, noting the value of broader succession planning, particularly given the Chair's interim status. The Committee discussed establishing a bilateral agreement between the Board and the executive team, with the Board identifying which members would act as leads – likely the Chairs of the sub-committees. Each lead would be paired with the relevant member of the executive team and have regular catch-ups scheduled. These discussions would focus on strategic matters, with operational updates where appropriate. CW noted that with changes in Board membership, some members may require additional training. The Committee agreed that this presents an opportunity to review the responsibilities of the SMT and strengthen the support offered by the Board. CW confirmed she would communicate with MT in the first instance to progress this new approach. ii) Update on Estates/H&S Strategy SFC are undertaking an infrastructure baseline strategy, and UHI Argyll will be required to submit information before the end of May. The Scottish Futures Trust were briefed on the challenges associated with our estates and acknowledged the position. They confirmed a concise two-page strategy from UHI Argyll would be sufficient. iii) UHI Transformation Estates Report The paper was noted.	CW
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26.1.09	Date of Next Meetings Board - Friday 13 March 2026 – CW gave her apologies Audit Committee – Friday 29 May 2026	
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Outstanding Actions – Audit

Item	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Outcome
26.1.03	Board Secretary to publish minutes	AB	May 26	Complete
26.1.08	Audit Chair to discuss Board's oversight of executive team with the Chair	CW	March 26	Complete