

# UHI | ARGYLL

## Final Version Minutes of the Board Meeting

Held at 10am on Friday 12 December 2025

Via MS Teams

**Quorum: 8 members (min. 6 Independent), and a majority Non-Executive**

**Present:** A Rodgers (AR), C Walsh (CW), C Ward (CWD), H Stevenson (HS), I Jurgensen (IJ), J Wright (JW), L Neilson (LN), M Coleman (MC), M Tierney (MT) Chair, P Wylie (PW)

**Apologies:** B Sizeland (BS), E Nowinski (EW)

**In Attendance:** A Blakey (AB), A Close (AEC)

No	Item	Action
25.4.01	<b>Welcome and apologies</b>  MT welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted as above. It was further noted that EW will be resigning from the Board due to time constraints, and that today was the last meeting for AR in his role as Teaching Staff Director.	
25.4.02	<b>Declarations of interest &amp; to identify any items deemed confidential</b>  There were no declarations of interest.  Items 25.4.07 and 25.4.31 were deemed confidential – see separate reserved minute.	
25.4.03	<b>Minutes of previous meetings:</b>  a. <b>Unapproved Circulated Minutes of Board Meeting – 3 October 2025</b>  b. <b>Unapproved Circulated RESERVED Minutes of Board Meeting – 3 October 2025</b>  Both sets of minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meetings. Board Secretary to publish item a.	AB
25.4.04	<b>Outstanding Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Add RAG rating to Board Dashboard (AEC) - in process</li><li>• Add social media guidance to Emergency Management and Business Continuity Plan (AEC/MM) - in process</li><li>• Arrange fraud prevention training for Board Members for early 2026 (AB) - to action in January</li></ul>	

# UHI | ARGYLL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite Marketing team to future Board meeting to discuss social media and traditional marketing spend (AB) - to action in January</li> <li>• Organise single-issue Board meeting on Transformation (AB) - in process</li> </ul>	
25.4.05	<p><b>Matters arising (<i>not covered elsewhere in agenda</i>)</b></p> <p>i. <b>Transformation FBC &amp; Extraordinary Board Meeting update</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked the Board Secretary for circulating the slides and notes from the UHI Briefing on 2<sup>nd</sup> December and expressed intentions for the Extraordinary Board meeting in January. Board Members were reminded that the FBC will be issued to Boards on 19<sup>th</sup> December.</p> <p>There was brief discussion on the format that the agreement will take, and the level of commitment expected. The Board felt strongly that there should be formal recognition for UHI Argyll’s unique position and geographical challenges. The Board also queried the scope for adjustment of the FBC between January and May, before the submission to government.</p>	
25.4.06	<p><b>Chairs Report: overview of activity and key issues</b></p> <p>MT provided a summary of recent actions undertaken as Interim Chair, following RA’s resignation.</p> <p><b>Recruitment</b></p> <p>A recruitment round led with HS has resulted in four new members, and one co-opted member joining.</p> <p><b>Membership &amp; Committee Assignments</b></p> <p>LTE Committee: Thanks were extended to MC for agreeing to Chair LTE for six months.</p> <p>Audit Committee: Thanks were extended to CW for agreeing to Chair Audit for six months.</p> <p>Chair and Vice Chair Roles: The positions of MT as Chair and HS as Vice Chair until the AGM in December 2026 were ratified.</p> <p>Thanks also IJ for moving to join the Audit and LTE Committees.</p> <p><b>External Effectiveness Review</b></p> <p>Discussion was deferred for later in the meeting. It was noted that JW and MT have drafted an action plan to address findings.</p> <p><b>Partnership Forum Meetings</b></p>	

# UHI | ARGYLL

	<p>Key themes included the progress of the FBC and the UHI RSB own effectiveness review. Findings of which will need to be incorporated into the Argyll action plan.</p> <p>It was noted that PricewaterhouseCoopers have been commissioned to review individual partner returns, for those who have requested additional liquidity support from the RSB. AEC highlighted that FD involvement has been limited re the FBC, information has been provided but not 'validated' by FDs.</p> <p><b>Board Communications</b></p> <p>MT and JW meet weekly and extended an open invitation for Board members to join these sessions.</p>	
25.4.07	<b>CONFIDENTIAL Item</b> – see separate reserved minute	
25.4.08	<p><b>Board Dashboard December 2025</b></p> <p>The paper was noted.</p>	
25.4.09	<p><b>Minutes of previous Joint Audit and Finance and General Purposes meeting held on 28 November 2025</b></p> <p>The minutes were noted.</p>	
25.4.10	<p><b>External Audit Final Management Report</b></p> <p>The paper was noted.</p>	
25.4.11	<p><b>Statutory Accounts for year ending 31 July 2025</b></p> <p>The Board approved the statutory accounts for the year ending 31 July 2025. The Board also approved the Letter of Representation.</p>	
25.4.12	<p><b>i) Internal Audit Report – Data Protection</b></p> <p>The report was noted.</p> <p><b>ii) Internal Audit Final Report</b></p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	
25.4.13	<p><b>Audit Chair's Report</b></p> <p>The report identified several strategic risks including the impact of UHI Transformation, need for physical presence, rising salary costs and governance.</p>	
25.4.14	<p><b>Management Accounts to 31 October 2025</b></p> <p>The accounts were noted. AEC spoke to the paper. February projections had indicated a £550k deficit, but the current position is more positive.</p>	

# UHI | ARGYLL

	<p>Income streams are performing ahead of budget in several areas, including grants, student fees and bank interest. Some additional costs have arisen but overall, the financial trajectory has improved.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance and repair issues, particularly to lifts and car chargers, continue to present cost pressures.</p>	
25.4.15	<p><b>Wbg Draft Board Effectiveness Review</b></p> <p>The review graded the assurance of overall governance as weak, primarily due to ongoing quoracy challenges and failure to conduct internal effectiveness reviews. JW and MT have developed an action plan to address the issues.</p> <p><b>a) Board Effectiveness Review Draft Action Plan</b></p> <p>The Board must take into account both the RSB action plan and the Wbg action plan. A final version is expected by March.</p> <p>Findings from the RSB review indicate that induction resources are currently insufficient and cannot be monitored. A clear framework for induction and training will be established for the next year.</p>	JW & MT
25.4.16	<p><b>Health and Safety Report – November 2025</b></p> <p>The paper was noted. AEC reported that Health and Safety and Property Officer has submitted their resignation this week, which will be a loss to the organisation.</p>	
25.4.17	<p><b>F&amp;GP &amp; Audit AOCB</b></p> <p><b>i) Proposal from Charities Aid Foundation Bank</b></p> <p>AEC responded to the Board’s previous questions, confirming that while currently limited to one user, solutions are available if required. AEC will bring a detailed proposal to the February meeting on allocation of funds.</p> <p><b>ii) Risk Assurance Framework</b></p> <p>Board feedback was that the framework is proving very helpful. AEC noted that it will be refined for future meetings. It was noted that the current level of assurance does not align with the RAG rating. AEC to update.</p> <p><b>iii) Risk assessment for Rothesay Centre</b></p> <p>The paper was noted.</p>	AEC  AEC
25.4.18	<p><b>Risk Register</b></p>	

# UHI | ARGYLL

	The Board were comfortable with the summary risk register, noting that Transformation remains red, yet the risk is on a downwards trajectory with the FBC progressing.	
25.4.19	<p><b>Draft Minutes of Learning, Teaching &amp; Engagement Committee held on 28 November 2025</b></p> <p>The minutes were noted.</p>	
25.4.20	<p><b>Progress towards targets – FE credits and HE FTEs</b></p> <p>The paper was noted.</p> <p><b>A) Early withdrawal to date – FT &amp; SFT FE 2025 – 26</b></p> <p>The paper was noted.</p>	
25.4.21	<p><b>Schools/College Partnership Agreement</b></p> <p>JW highlighted a long-standing lack of alignment of strategic priorities in schools provision, with delivery weighted towards school culture. The agreement has been put in place to drive schools provision more strategically.</p> <p>Head of Curriculum, Don Mitchell, has undertaken a schools review which will be presented to the Board in March. The data will explore current shortcomings and opportunities such as an improved funding model, strengthening progression routes for school pupils, and increased delivery in college. Board Secretary to invite DM to March Board.</p> <p>Positive progress has been made to build relationships with schools. It was noted that the recent Board recruitment has successfully recruited one of the council Education Leads to the LTE Committee.</p>	AB
25.4.22	<p><b>Schools National Results paper</b></p> <p>The paper was noted.</p>	
25.4.23	<p><b>Further &amp; Higher Education Full Time Recruitment Outcomes 2025/26</b></p> <p>The paper was noted.</p>	
25.4.24	<p><b>Student survey updates</b></p> <p>The Board commented on the strong response rates in comparison to the national average, due to teaching teams actively encouraging participation. It was further noted that FE students represent a more captive audience, which may account for higher response levels than HE.</p>	

# UHI | ARGYLL

25.4.25	<p><b>Student Advisor role review</b></p> <p>The role has been highly successful in supporting students, with a notable positive impact on retention rates. The role demonstrates one of the additional ways of going above and beyond in supporting learners in Argyll.</p>	
25.4.26	<p><b>FE KPIs by course duration, age, gender and key group characteristics 2024-25</b></p> <p>The paper was noted.</p>	
25.4.27	<p><b>Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Update</b> The paper was noted.</p>	
25.4.28	<p><b>HISA report</b></p> <p>The paper was noted.</p>	
25.4.29	<p><b>Draft Minutes of HR Committee held on 28 November 2025</b></p> <p>The minutes were noted.</p>	
25.4.30	<p><b>HR Report</b></p> <p>The report was noted.</p> <p>A three-year pay award for support staff has been agreed, providing stability and contributing to a more positive employee relations climate. The award will be processed before Christmas.</p> <p>Lecturing staff are approaching the end of their current three-year deal, with national negotiations scheduled to begin next year.</p>	
25.4.31	<p><b>CONFIDENTIAL Item – see separate reserved minute</b></p>	
25.4.32	<p><b>National Grievance Policy</b></p> <p>The policy was noted. Once approved at a national level, it will be formally adopted by the college.</p>	
25.4.33	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <p>It was noted that the new NRPA is expected to come to the next Committee meetings. An outstanding issue remains with the LRPA not yet in place. Once the NRPA is finalised, it is hoped that progress can be made on the local agreement.</p>	
25.4.34	<p><b>Date of next meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January Extraordinary Board Meeting: TBC</li> <li>• UHI Transformation Briefing: 13 January 2026</li> <li>• Committees: 27 February 2026</li> </ul>	

# UHI | ARGYLL

- Board: 13 March 2026

## Outstanding Actions

Item	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Outcome
25.4.03	Board Secretary to publish minutes	AB	Jan 26	Complete
25.4.15 a.	Finalise action plan from Wbg and UHI RSB effectiveness reviews	JW & MT	March 26	Ongoing
25.4.17 i.	Produce detailed Charities Aid Bank proposal for February Committees	AEC	Feb 26	Complete
25.4.17 ii.	Update the risk assurance framework to align the current levels of assurance with the RAG ratings	AEC	Feb 26	Complete
25.4.21	Board Secretary to invite DM to March Board meeting	AB	Jan 26	Complete