

## Council meeting minutes

The 128th meeting of the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council was held on Friday, 3 December 2021 at 11.00am, at Napier University

**Present:** Mike Cantlay (Chair)  
Karen Watt (Chief Executive)  
Lorna Jack (Deputy Chair)  
David Alexander  
Sheila Duncan  
Mhairi Harrington  
Professor Ewart Keep  
Dr Paul Little  
Professor Peter Mathieson  
Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam  
Caroline Stuart  
Professor John Wallace  
Professor Lesley Yellowlees

**Officers:** Martin Boyle  
Lynne Raeside (Secretary)  
Dr Stuart Fancey  
Chris Brown  
Lynne Raeside  
Claire McPherson  
Angela Seymour

**Apologies:** Dr Veena O'Halloran  
Andy Kerr

### 21/70 **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all present.

### 21/71 **Chair's business: Papers for discussion and declarations of interest**

The Chair reminded Board members of their responsibility to indicate if they have, or may be perceived to have, a conflict of interest under any item.

The following members declared an interest:

- Professor Ewart Keep in relation to his role as an Associate Fellow of the Scottish Centre for Employment Research, University of Strathclyde and a member of the Management Board of Glasgow City College.
- Mhairi Harrington, as Chair of the Adult Learning Strategic Forum Scotland.
- Dr Paul Little in relation to City of Glasgow College, Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, co-author of the Cumberland/Little Report, the Royal Society of Edinburgh and Vice-Chair of the college sector Employers' Association.
- Professor Peter Mathieson in relation to the University of Edinburgh and Newbattle Abbey College.
- Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam in relation to Glasgow School of Art and an Advisory Board of University of Edinburgh.
- Professor John Wallace in relation to University of St Andrews and the provision of occasional advice to the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.
- Professor Lesley Yellowlees in relation to Edinburgh Napier University and the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

**21/72**

**Royal Society of Edinburgh**

**(SFC/21/49)**

The Board received a paper seeking approval for an extension of one financial year (FY2022 – 23) to the current support given by SFC to the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE), subject to satisfactory agreement of a renewed funding agreement with RSE.

Due to the specific conflict of interest arising from their position as Fellows of the RSE, the following board members left the meeting temporarily: Professor Peter Mathieson, Professor Lesley Yellowlees, Professor John Wallace and Dr Paul Little.

The Board **noted**:

- A summary of some of RSE's key achievements over the last three and a half years

In its discussion, the Board:

- Understood the decision was contingent on agreement from Scottish Government.
- Sought clarity on the outcomes and impacts the funding delivers.
- Requested future requests for funding were brought to the Board earlier to avoid the decision being taken so close to the renewal date.

The Board **agreed**:

- To extend funding for the RSE of £2.76M for the Financial Year 2022-23, recognising that predicting future affordability is challenging at this point in time: and
- To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to finalise the details of the funding agreement with the RSE for the period concerned.

The four Board members returned to the meeting.

**21/73**

### **University Museums, Galleries and Collections grant (SFC/21/50)**

The Board received a paper updating them on the recent review of the University Museums, Galleries and Collections (MGC) grant, and seeking approval for the continuation of the grant for a further year to end January 2023 at an investment level of no more than £1.2M.

Due to the specific conflict of interest the following Board members left the meeting temporarily: Professor Peter Mathieson and Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam

The Board **noted**:

- A summary of the achievements of the University Museums and Galleries over the current funding period and the guidance our review of the grant has given for the future.

In discussion, the Board:

- Asked about the potential to extend the fund to include the College sector.
- Sought clarity on the outcome of not supporting this funding.
- Suggested subsequent requests for funding be sought earlier to give more time for deliberation.

The Board **agreed** to:

- Extend funding for the University Museums and Collections at the present level of £1.2M for a further year to end January 2023, recognising that predicting future affordability is challenging at this point in time: and
- Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to finalise the details of the funding agreement with the universities hosting these collections for the period concerned

The two Board members returned to the meeting.

**21/74 Next meeting:** 4 February 2022