

SHADOW BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Time: 4.30 – 6.30pm
Wednesday 25th September 2019

Venue: NAFC Marine Centre

1.	Welcome, Apologies and Introductions Note from meeting on 28/8/2019	Note from 28 th August
2.	Matters Arising Board training Name – use of the term Institute – S Drysdale	Verbal Verbal
3.	Main item: Financial forecast Shetland Institute UHI	PB2019-31
4.	Special resolution: Memorandum and Articles of Association	PB2019-32
5.	Papers to note: PB2019-29 Role and Status of the Shadow Board circulated PB2019-30 Register of Interests – two forms received to date Draft Ministerial Merger Business Case sections completed to date	Q & A

“Passion in delivering the vision”

At the last Shadow Board meeting we did not address the Futures Thinking exercise in terms of the new Institute. Instead, I asked Principals of a number of small colleges for their views on the key challenges for effective Boards during change and their take on the future.

These are their messages:

3 top tips for making challenging decisions

- “Clear Strategic Priorities to provide context for all decisions. Clarity of expectations from partners/stakeholders. Clear information on the options”
- “Remember the key strategic goal - align decisions with this. Ensure that all voices are heard, in a respectful and inclusive environment. Make decisions, but do not be afraid to reflect on them, review them, and to implement them allowing for them to develop or change as circumstances change”.

3 top tips for getting to know your college staff

- “Get to know your Principal and senior Team well. Give your Senior Team their place and allow them to be that conduit to staff in general - be aware of relevant staff arrangements - staff handbook will include relevant procedures - be aware of these and adhere to the rules of the organisation. Staff representatives on the Board need to be treated as full Board members and they are important in giving Board members a flavour of the staff perspective”
- “Do not presume an All Staff meeting is the best way to communicate. Make space to get to know each team, their culture, and their operation; even within an organisation there are differences. Make time to get to know the individuals, not just those with the loudest voice”

3 top tips for getting to know your students

- “Student representation on the Board is key to this. Give the student representatives their place - respect their role as Board members. Be aware of quality arrangements and other organisational arrangements in relation to students so that you understand the boundaries - respect the role of staff in providing the learning to students and maintaining the integrity of the academic arrangements.”
- “You might never know every individual student, but try to see them in their subjects. Ensure you know the student representatives or HISA representatives and meet them frequently. Make any meetings inclusive and encourage voices to be heard.”

3 top tips for developing a compelling vision

- “Keep it simple and to the point. Clear plan of how you intend to achieve the vision. Know where you're starting from - current capacity and capabilities”
- “Clear vision that represents the culture of Shetland and the role of the College in meeting the economic and social well-being of the islands. Governance is the steering of the vision, process and function to deliver it - the vision needs to be constantly steered and to account for change. Passion in delivering the vision”

3 top tips for keeping the vision in sight

- “keep it short and to the point. Include it in the headings of Agenda Paperwork - keep it visible. Use it as a strapline on all communications”
- “Review. Reflect. Revise”

Top tips for bringing staff through challenges and change

- “Clear vision communicated along with clear transition arrangements where relevant. Allow the Principal to be completely open with staff on all issues”
- “I have only one tip, remember that we all have different perspectives and treat each of the team with the respect and humanity they deserve in developing them and the team.”

Top tips for staff development when resources are tight

- “Use the skills and expertise available in-house. Use the wide range of skills available within the UHI partnership”
- “Look to partners and ask them to offer support in delivering with you.”

Top tips for engaging industry/employers

- “Give specific people a clear remit, and the time, to develop relationships different approaches might be required for different industries use the connections of local partners”
- “Find champions who you can rely upon to motivate others. Engage them in the vision and listen to them. Understand their needs and pressures in looking at curriculum and where possible meet them.”

Top tips for developing an innovation mindset in the college

- “employ innovative people give staff freedom to operate within broad parameters take a medium to long term view on the benefits to be accrued”
- “Encourage staff to create solutions. Support staff in innovation and reward them where possible Use catalysts from external sources where appropriate”

Top tips for sustaining a diverse curriculum in rural college

- “Focus on key curriculum areas and prioritise these areas. There is an expectation that you can be all things to all people - you can't - this needs to be understood, allow an innovative approach”

- “Still working on this one, but in future I believe shared provision across partners is a potential way forward. Creating flexibility in staffing where possible. Core curriculum that can be used across courses”

Top tips for attracting students to rural colleges

- “Focus at being the best in key areas of curriculum be clear about the career and progression opportunities for students in these areas work closely with key employers in developing their staff”
- “Relationships with schools. Relationships with parents. Building a student representation that champions the college from the student body”

Top tips for gaining community support

- “Be open and transparent. Tell them how good you are. Never talk you college down - even to friends and family - keep difficulties in-house”

Top strategies for improving FE credit income, HE income and Commercial income

- “develop more work based learning, use the different modes of delivery available”

Top strategies for efficient operations

- “Remember it's an Academic business and that you need to match academic capacity with business capacity - you need someone to run the business side as well as the academic side”

If they were to do one thing to lead their new institution positively, what would that be?

- “It's an academic business and needs to be run as one - minimise the public sector mindset and provide a well balanced team of Executives to deliver a clear business vision.”

Being optimistic but realistic, what would they see as a desirable outcome for their college over the next 5 years?

- “Having a sustainable budget, and creating a strong and vibrant curriculum that continues to meet the economic and social needs of the area.”

If things went wrong in the sector, what factors would they worry most about?

- “indecisive leadership”

What needs to change within tertiary institutions to achieve a desirable outcome?

- “we need to define who we are better - set a clear agenda and deliver on it”

Looking back, what would they identify as the significant events (good or bad) that led to the current situation of their institution?

- “financial austerity has focused our minds on core activities - the transition can be too hard however because having to change what you do when you are only funded for current student activity is very hard. There needs to be funding to invest in transition but we need to define what the return on the investment is”

Looking forward, what are the priority actions for their institution?

- “Ensuring we build a sustainable financial model and strong curriculum that will enable the college to fulfil its role”

If all constraints were removed and they could develop as they see fit, what would they do more of or do differently?

- “Invest more in modernising the curriculum and how we deliver learning. More research and scholarship from academic staff at all levels”
- “Increase higher education provision, reinforce FE and schools provision, even if this is for small number of students - as islands it will always be difficult to have large numbers.”