



ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL

Item: 3

Education, Communities and Housing Committee: 3 June 2026.

UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group – Terms of Reference.

**Joint Report by Chief Executive and Director of Education,
Communities and Housing.**

1. Overview

- 1.1. This report presents revised Terms of Reference for the UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group, for members' approval.
- 1.2. On 7 June 2023, the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee considered a suite of reports on the operation and outcome of a short-life working established to inform a business review of Orkney College (now UHI Orkney).
- 1.3. One outcome from that review was the establishment of a Stakeholder Group, to replace the formal College Management Council Sub-committee. This afforded the opportunity for open and frank discussions without being restricted by the governance processes and procedures of a formal sub-committee. The role of the governing body is now undertaken by the Education, Communities and Housing Committee, with appropriate input from the stakeholder group.
- 1.4. It was also agreed that the terms of reference and operation of the Stakeholder Group be reviewed, to include arrangements for the appointment of members and the term of office.
- 1.5. Attached as Appendix 1 to this report, are revised Terms of Reference, which have been considered and endorsed by the Stakeholder Group.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
 - i. Approve the revised Terms of Reference for the UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group, attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

3. Revised Terms of Reference

3.1. The revised Terms of Reference, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, are similar to previous iterations relating to the College Management Council Sub-committee.

3.2. The following points are highlighted:

Remit

3.3. Following a period of operation of the Stakeholder Group, the remit has been revised to reflect more accurately what the Group does.

3.4. The fourth bullet point, referring to performance, has been removed, as this is the responsibility of the Education, Communities and Housing Committee.

Membership

3.5. This section has been updated to include officer representation at meetings. No change is proposed to the core membership of the Stakeholder Group.

Quorum

3.6. Although it was queried whether a quorum was necessary, best practice would suggest that a minimum number should be present. Further, although the Stakeholder Group is not a decision-making body, it is preferable that a majority of members are present when developments, which will ultimately be considered by the Education, Communities and Housing Committee, are being discussed, to ensure a majority acceptance of any recommendations to be made.

Terms of Appointment

3.7. This section has been split into sections to differentiate the separate appointment processes.

3.8. It is proposed that the Business and Community/Third Sector representatives and the Staff Representatives should be appointed initially for a four-year period, and may be reappointed for a further four-year term, although the total period of appointment should not exceed eight years in total.

3.9. Proposed arrangements for the appointment of Business and Community/Third Sector representatives are also set out.

3.10. When a vacancy becomes available, consideration will be given to the existing membership and whether any “gaps” exist. The advertisement will then seek to appoint suitable candidates from any specific area, for example, marine industries.

- 3.11. There will also be the option to co-opt a member, but that would normally be for a very specific piece of work, rather than as a core member of the Stakeholder Group.

Chair and Vice Chair

- 3.12. As meetings are hybrid, it is proposed that the Chair of the meeting should be present in the room, rather than on screen. The rationale for this is to ensure that the Chair is provided with support from officers in the room.
- 3.13. For clarity, should the Chair and the Vice Chair be unavailable, the Stakeholder Group can appoint a Chair for an individual meeting. This would normally be one of the remaining Business and Community/Third Sector representatives or an Elected Member of the Council.

Confidentiality

- 3.14. Although members of the Stakeholder Group, other than Elected Members of the Council, are subject to the Model Code of Conduct for Members of Devolved Public Bodies, an additional section on confidentiality has been inserted, for the avoidance of doubt.

Review

- 3.15. As is standard practice with any document, a review section has been added.
- 3.16. In practice, the proposed Terms of Reference will be continually under review. Any major changes will be considered by the Stakeholder Group in the first instance, and then submitted to the Education, Communities and Housing Committee for consideration. The next review will be undertaken within three years.
- 3.17. Regardless of whether any change is proposed, the Terms of Reference will be submitted to the Education, Communities and Housing Committee at least once in the five-year term of any Council.

For Further Information please contact:

Hazel Flett, Service Manager (Governance), extension 2208, Email hazel.flett@orkney.gov.uk.

Implications of Report

- 1. Financial:** There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report, which relate to a review of the Terms of Reference of the Stakeholder Group.

2. **Legal:** There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report.
3. **Corporate Governance:** Terms of Reference, which are reviewed on a regular basis, ensure appropriate governance is in place.
4. **Human Resources:** Not applicable.
5. **Equalities:** Not applicable.
6. **Island Communities Impact:** Not applicable.
7. **Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - Growing our economy.
 - Strengthening our Communities.
 - Developing our Infrastructure.
 - Transforming our Council.
8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
 - Cost of Living.
 - Sustainable Development.
 - Local Equality.
 - Improving Population Health.
9. **Environmental and Climate Risk:** not applicable.
10. **Risk:** not applicable.
11. **Procurement:** not applicable.
12. **Health and Safety:** not applicable.
13. **Property and Assets:** not applicable.
14. **Information Technology:** not applicable.
15. **Cost of Living:** not applicable.

List of Background Papers

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee, 7 June 2023: Item 7, Orkney College – Review of Governance Arrangements.

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Revised Terms of Reference.

UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group

Terms of Reference

Contents

UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group	1
1. Role of UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group	3
2. Remit	3
3. Membership	3
4. Quorum	4
5. Terms of Appointment	4
5.1. Elected Members of Orkney Islands Council	4
5.2. Business and Community/Third Sector Representatives	4
5.3. Student Representatives	5
5.4. Staff Representatives	5
5.5. Resignations	5
6. Chair and Vice Chair	5
7. Chair and Vice Chair Responsibilities	5
8. Secretariat	6
9. Attendance	6
10. Meeting Procedures	6
11. Roles and Responsibilities of Members	6
12. Code of Conduct	7
13. Confidentiality	7
14. Review	7

1. Role of UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group

The UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group acts as a strong link in the communities that it serves, providing local [insight](#) and ensuring [information](#) passes between the college and local stakeholders.

Deleted: over

The Stakeholder Group assists in the development and review of policies, strategies, plans and projects.

2. Remit

The remit of the Stakeholder Group is to:

- Understand the impact of the college on the communities it serves.
- Advise on initiatives that might help the business and social needs [of the Orkney community](#).
- Feed into curriculum delivery that helps meet industry needs.
- ~~Maintain an overview of the performance of the college in support of quality improvement plans.~~
- Develop valuable contacts in the community, including employers.

Formatted: Strikethrough

3. Membership

Membership of the Stakeholder Group shall comprise the following:

- Five Elected Members of Orkney Islands Council's Education, [Communities](#) and Housing committee, including the Chair and Vice Chair.
- Four Business Community Representatives.
- Four Community/Third Sector Representatives.
- Two Student Representatives [from UHI Orkney](#).
- Two Staff Representatives [from UHI Orkney](#).
- Two representatives from UHI [Executive Office](#).

Deleted: Leisure

The Student Representatives should, as far as possible, represent both Further and Higher Education students.

The Staff Representatives should not be Trade Union representatives, as the Stakeholder Group does not consider operational matters, such as staffing and employment matters. The Staff Representatives should, as far as possible, represent Lecturing and Support staff.

The Stakeholder Group can co-opt additional members depending on the matters under discussion/development. This may include representatives from Orkney Islands Council services, as well as external agencies such as HIE.

[The following officers \(or deputies as appropriate\) will normally be expected to attend meetings to support the Stakeholder Group:](#)

- [UHI Orkney:](#)
 - [Principal](#).

- [Orkney Islands Council:](#)
 - [Director of Education, Communities and Housing.](#)
 - [Head of Education.](#)
 - [Service Manager \(Secondary and Tertiary Education\).](#)
 - [Representatives from Corporate Governance, Finance, Legal Services and Human Resources.](#)

4. **Quorum**

Although not a decision-making body, it is considered best practice that a minimum number of members should be in attendance prior to any business being considered.

Accordingly, the quorum for meetings of the Stakeholder Group shall be one quarter or 25% of the membership, but never fewer than 4. For the avoidance of doubt, two Elected Members of Orkney Islands Council should be in attendance, including either the Chair or Vice Chair of the Education, [Communities and Housing Committee](#).

Deleted: less

Deleted: Leisure

If a quorum of members of the Stakeholder Group is not present within 15 minutes of the published start time, the meeting will be adjourned to a date and time to be agreed with the Chair.

During a meeting, should the number of members of the Stakeholder Group in attendance fall below the number required for a quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned to a date and time to be agreed with the Chair.

5. **Terms of Appointment**

5.1. **Elected Members of Orkney Islands Council**

Elected Members of Orkney Islands Council will be appointed in accordance with Orkney Islands Council's appointments process, namely following the Local Government Election held in May every five years, reviewed after two years.

5.2. **Business and Community/Third Sector Representatives**

Business and Community/Third Sector representatives will be appointed, initially, for a period of four years, and can be re-appointed for a further period of four years, although the total period of appointment should not normally exceed eight years in total. Vacancies shall be filled by advertisement and approved by Orkney Islands Council.

When a vacancy becomes available, expressions of interest should be sought via advertisement, normally through Orkney Islands Council's and UHI Orkney's social media channels.

Following advertisement, should more expressions of interest be received than the number of vacancies, a panel, comprising the Chair and Vice Chair of the Stakeholder Group and either the Chair or Vice Chair of the Education, Communities and Housing Committee, will undertake a short-letting process. Successful candidates will then be invited to attend an informal interview, following which the panel will make a recommendation to Orkney Islands Council in respect of the vacancy or vacancies to be filled.

5.3. Student Representatives

Student representatives will be appointed, initially for a period of one year and can be re-appointed for a further period of one year. Student representatives shall be filled at the start of the academic year, in the same format as the election for the Highlands and Islands Student Association representative. One of the student representatives should be the Highlands and Islands Student Association (HISA) [UHI Orkney Depute](#). Should the HISA representative be a Further Education student, the other representative should, where possible, be a Higher Education student, or vice versa if the HISA representative is a Higher Education student. The minimum age of a student representative should be 16 years old.

Deleted: representative

5.4. Staff Representatives

Staff representatives will be appointed, initially for a period of [four](#) years and can be re-appointed for a further period of [four](#) years, [although the total period of appointment should not normally exceed eight years in total.](#)

Deleted: x

Deleted: (

Deleted:)

Deleted: xx

Deleted: (

Deleted:)

Deleted: College

5.5. Resignations

Resignation by a Member must be made in writing to the Chair of the Stakeholder Group, who should advise the [UHI Orkney](#) Principal and the Service Manager (Governance), Orkney Islands Council, so that arrangements can be made to fill the resultant vacancy.

6. Chair and Vice Chair

The Chair is appointed by the Stakeholder Group and can be chosen from the Elected Members of Orkney Islands Council, the Business Community Representatives and the Community/Third Sector Representatives.

The Stakeholder Group may choose to appoint a Vice Chair. In the event that the Chair is chosen from among the Business Community Representatives and the Community/Third Sector Representatives, the Chair or Vice Chair of the Education, [Communities](#) and Housing Committee will hold the position of Vice Chair.

Deleted: Leisure

[As meetings of the Stakeholder Group are hybrid, in that attendance in person and via Microsoft Teams is available, the Chair of the Meeting should normally be present in the room where the Meeting is taking place.](#)

7. Chair and Vice Chair Responsibilities

The role of the Chair is to:

- Lead the Stakeholder Group to achieve its objectives, maintain an overview of activity and champion and support partnership working.
- Ensure that the Stakeholder Group operates in line with these Terms of Reference.
- Ensure that decisions of the Stakeholder Group are in accordance with good governance principles.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair will assume the Chair's responsibilities.

[If, for any reason, neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair are able to attend a meeting, the Stakeholder Group shall appoint a Chair for that meeting only.](#)

8. Secretariat

The secretariat function to the Stakeholder Group will be provided by [UHI Orkney](#).

9. Attendance

Meetings will normally be held at UHI Orkney, with the option for blended and/or online meetings.

Members will endeavour to attend all Stakeholder Group meetings. However, if they are unable to attend, they will submit their apologies in advance to the Secretariat.

Other [UHI Orkney staff](#), Council Services and external organisations may attend through the Chair as required, whose professional advice and support is deemed necessary by the Stakeholder Group.

10. Meeting Procedures

The Stakeholder Group will meet, as a minimum, at quarterly intervals.

Agenda and papers for meetings shall be approved in advance by the Chair.

The Secretariat will make papers available at least 5 working days in advance of the meeting.

[The Secretariat will provide a summary of the meeting, normally within 14 days of the date of the meeting.](#)

11. Roles and Responsibilities of Members

Members shall take responsibility for building an inclusive and collaborative culture of partnership among the Stakeholder Group and with wider community and college interests.

Members shall strive to apply the following principles:

Commitment: to attend every meeting, where possible. To be prepared for meetings and to actively participate in discussion.

Respect for Others: to act with respect and equity and recognise and value differences in experience and attitude at all times, helping to establish trust across the Stakeholder Group and recognising that embracing diversity will lead to the outputs of the Group being the best they can be.

Discussion: to be strategically focused and contribute positively to discussions and to work with other Members to achieve consensus.

Representation: to raise areas of strategic concern and otherwise contribute their experience and expertise to discussions and decisions to achieve good, workable solutions.

Achieve outcomes: to ensure that the Stakeholder Group, in leading and driving change, remains action orientated and focused on outcomes, recognising the importance of measuring and evaluating the progress of impacts and being accountable.

12. Code of Conduct

Members of the Stakeholder Group, whether in meetings/briefings or working on behalf of the Group, will act in accordance with the [Model Code of Conduct for Members of Devolved Public Bodies](#), including abiding by the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

Deleted:
Deleted: [Model Code of Conduct for Members of Devolved Public Bodies \(standardscommissionscotland.org.uk\)](#)

Members will actively promote and support the above principles and be willing to challenge any behaviours not in accordance with them.

13. Confidentiality

[Members of the Stakeholder Group are expected to observe the highest standard of confidentiality in respect of any information obtained, and materials shared with them, in the course of serving on the Stakeholder Group.](#)

14. Review

[The operation of these Terms of Reference will be monitored regularly. Any required amendments brought about by practice, legislation or policy will be presented to the Stakeholder Group for consideration, prior to consideration by the Education, Communities and Housing Committee. In addition, these Terms of Reference will be reviewed as deemed necessary, and at least every five years.](#)

Deleted: 3

Deleted: reviewed within one year and every three years thereafter. ¶