

Item: 10

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 7 June 2023.

Orkney College Strategic Plan.

Report by Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the draft Orkney College Strategic Plan 2023 to 2028.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That, on 10 March 2022, the Council established a short life Member Officer Working Group, with a remit to inform a business review and strategic five-year plan for Orkney College.

2.2.

The draft Orkney College Strategic Plan 2023-2028, attached as Appendix 2 to this report, which contains five strategic priorities, namely:

- Blue Economy.
- Green Economy.
- Well-Being Economy.
- Creative, Cultural and Heritage.
- Local economic development and community engagement.

2.3.

That high level delivery plans in respect of the five strategic priorities detailed above, will be developed in collaboration with stakeholders and monitored by the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee.

It is recommended:

2.4.

That the Orkney College Strategic Plan 2023 to 2028, attached as Appendix 2 to this report, be approved.

3. Background

3.1.

On 10 March 2022, the Council resolved that a short life working group, to conclude by the end of 2022, with a remit to inform a draft detailed business review and business plan for Orkney College, be established. Full details are provided in Appendix 1 to this report.

3.2.

UHI's Deputy Principal Academic and Research was subsequently co-opted onto the group, and it was facilitated by an independent consultant.

3.3.

The working group met on six separate occasions across a period of five months and received presentations from College Curriculum Leaders outlining details of provision across the 12 Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels and Research and Commercial activity of the College.

3.4.

The working group was appraised of both the funding structure of the College and the governance arrangements with UHI as the Regional Strategic Body and the Council as employer.

3.5.

The working group discussed and agreed a set of operating principles which would enable the future strategic direction of the College to evolve and develop.

4. Orkney College Strategic Plan

4.1.

A draft Strategic Plan, presented to the final session of the working group for discussion, encapsulates five high level strategic priorities for the College to progress over the duration of the Strategic Plan, being:

- Blue Economy.
- Green Economy.
- Well-Being Economy.
- Creative, Cultural and Heritage.
- Local economic development and community engagement.

4.2.

The strategic priorities of the Orkney College Strategic Plan are also aligned and mapped against the Strategic Pillars and Aims of the UHI Strategic Plan, being:

- Tertiary Education.
- Research Impact.
- Enterprise.
- Engagement.

4.3.

The draft Strategic Plan also identifies a range of high-level areas of priorities derived from the strategic priorities which require further development and consideration. These will be incorporated within delivery plans to be developed in collaboration with the College Stakeholder Group (subject to that group being established), and presented to the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee in early 2024 for consideration. Thereafter, the delivery plans will be monitored by the Committee.

4.4.

The draft Strategic Plan 2023-2028, attached as Appendix 2 to this report, incorporates feedback from the working group as well as elected members, and is recommended for approval.

5. Equalities Impact

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 3 to this report.

6. Island Communities Impact

As the strategy being developed in terms of this report has been assessed as being unlikely to have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities) in Orkney, a full Island Communities Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.

7. Links to Council Plan

7.1.

The strategic priorities of the Orkney College Strategic Plan support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan strategic priority of Strengthening our Communities.

7.2.

The proposals in this report relate directly to Priority C3 Development of learning provision and pathways of the Council Delivery Plan.

8. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priority Cost of Living.

9. Financial Implications

Any financial implications of the delivery plans would be subject to separate approval.

10. Legal Aspects

There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

11. Contact Officers

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Peter Diamond, Head of Education, extension 2436, Email peter.diamond@orkney.gov.uk.

Jane Partridge, Service Manager (Secondary and Tertiary Education), extension 2419, Email jane.partridge@orkney.gov.uk.

Joanne Wallace, Interim Principal, Orkney College, telephone 01856 569000, Email joanne.wallace@uhi.ac.uk.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1: Previous Council Decisions.

Appendix 2: Orkney College UHI Priorities 2023 to 2028.

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment.

Orkney College Business Planning Review – Previous Council Decisions

1. Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 16 February 2022

The Committee noted:

1.1. That, on 20 January 2020, the College Management Council Sub-committee noted the proposal to undertake a strategic review of Orkney College.

1.2. That the strategic review of Orkney College, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, was commissioned in 2020, with the independent consultant, Andrew Thomson, presenting his findings to the College Management Council Sub-committee at an informal briefing on 27 September 2021.

1.3. That, in 2021, seven rural and island partner colleges of the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) commissioned an appraisal to explore opportunities for more strategic collaboration, with the consultants, Rockborn Management Consultants, presenting its findings, attached as Appendix 2 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, to the College Management Council Sub-committee at informal briefings on 7 June and 27 September 2021.

1.4. That, also of significance to the business planning of Orkney College, UHI had developed and would shortly be launching a refreshed branding and visual identity design as part of its Branding and Positioning Project.

1.5. That, on 7 December 2021, the Council resolved that the recommendations of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee relating to the UHI Branding and Positioning Project should be referred back to that Committee, to enable the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing to further explore the ramifications of the Project, with particular regard to comments made in the consultant's documentation, as presented, and to consider the viability of 'sub-branding'.

1.6. The proposal to establish a short life working group, that would conclude by the end of 2022, with a remit to consider the Strategic Review, the Options Appraisal and the UHI Branding and Positioning project, referred to at paragraphs 15.2, 15.3 and 15.4 above respectively, together with any other relevant pertaining issues, with a view to informing a draft detailed business review and business plan for Orkney College.

1.7. That, on 7 February 2022, the College Management Council Sub-committee considered the proposed membership of the short life working group and suggested that membership be expanded to include further representation, including stakeholder input, as appropriate.

The Committee **resolved to recommend:**

1.8. That a short life working group, to conclude by the end of 2022, with a remit to inform a draft detailed business review and business plan for Orkney College, be established.

1.9. That core membership of the short life working group should comprise the following:

- Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee.
- Vice Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee.
- Chair, College Management Council Sub-committee.
- Vice Chair, College Management Council Sub-committee.
- Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing/Head of Education.
- Service Manager (Secondary and Tertiary Education).
- Senior Human Resources Advisor.
- Representatives from Finance, Legal and Committee Services.
- Senior Management Team of Orkney College.
- 2 Community/Business Representatives, College Management Council Sub-committee.
- 1 HISA Representative, College Management Council Sub-committee.
- 1 Staff Representative, College Management Council Sub-committee.

1.10. That stakeholders, as detailed in Appendix 4 to this Minute, should be invited to participate in the work of the short life working group, as and when required.

1.11. That the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing should submit a report, to the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee in early 2023, advising of the outcome of the detailed business review for Orkney College and presenting a business plan.

UHI Mission	To have a transformational impact on the prospects of our region, its economy, its people and its communities
UHI Vision	To become connected, streamlined and sustainable
UHI Brand story	Where learning means more
UHI Core values	Collaboration Openness Respect Excellence
UHI Stakeholders	Staff Students Alumni Business Government Community Industry
UHI Cross-cutting themes	Equality and Inclusion Gaelic Language Climate Change

UHI STRATEGIC PILLARS & AIMS	ORKNEY COLLEGE UHI PRIORITIES 2023 -2028	Timescale: Short term (by 2025) Medium Term (by 2026) Long term (by 2028)	OIC COUNCIL PLAN 2023-2028 - STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & AIMS			
			Growing Our Economy: <i>We will reduce poverty and disadvantage and minimise the effects of the cost-of-living crisis.</i> <i>We will create favourable conditions for sustainable economic growth.</i> <i>We will work towards becoming net zero.</i>	Strengthening Our Communities: <i>We will support communities to develop local solutions and deliver what is important to them.</i> <i>We will establish the highest standards of public support and protection.</i> <i>We will widen access to opportunities for better learning, achievement and wellbeing.</i>	Developing Our Infrastructure: <i>We will invest in homes, supporting choice, inclusion and economic growth.</i> <i>We will remove barriers to digital connectivity and vital transport.</i> <i>We will invest in projects that further our economic ambitions.</i>	Transforming Our Council: <i>We will develop ways of working that put people at the heart of what we do.</i> <i>We will establish a culture that motivates staff to do the right things at the right time.</i> <i>We will develop business approaches that are fit for purpose and give people direct access to services wherever possible.</i>
Tertiary Education <i>We will deliver a high-quality connected curriculum built on personalising the learner journey with more content, to more people, through more channels.</i>	Develop capacity to play a key role in economic developments that may include:					
	<i>Blue economy - developments such as hydrogen and offshore.</i>		✓	✓	✓	
	<i>Green economy - development and research within climate change action in construction materials and methods; development of tertiary teaching and learning pathways under the Agronomy Institute.</i>		✓	✓		
	<i>Wellbeing economy - development and collaboration to help address skills gaps and recruitment challenges in health and social care.</i>		✓	✓		
	<i>Creative/Cultural/Heritage economy - to continue to develop the Institutes of Archaeology, Northern Studies and Agronomy to maintain their standing of excellence locally, nationally and internationally</i>		✓	✓		
	<i>Other local economic development : review training provision in local construction trades; development of engineering across curriculum areas (marine, electrical, agricultural); development and collaboration to address skills gaps and recruitment in hospitality and be a training provider of choice for large scale events e.g Island Games 2025</i>		✓	✓		
	Review and realign curriculum areas with informed annual departmental plans, which reflect UHI and Council strategic priorities.		✓	✓		
	Each curriculum area to review and articulate current tertiary pathways through the SCQF framework, for both planning and promotion purposes.		✓	✓		
	Secure additional funding to scope potential outreach learning opportunities in the local community, for those who are harder to reach and/or have complex learning needs to improve life prospects and wellbeing.		✓	✓		
	Improve performance management processes, by making full use of available data to inform all planning and financial viability.		✓	✓		
To work towards becoming a trauma-informed College providing an excellent level of support for vulnerable and care-experienced students.		✓	✓			

	Be a gateway to learning opportunities available locally from across UHI, to facilitate lifelong learning opportunities.		✓	✓		
	Continue to work with secondary and junior high schools to deliver programmes, awards and units, that extends learning pathways available to senior phase pupils in Orkney.			✓		
Research Impact <i>We will enhance our research impact, ensuring it is internationally ranked, industry linked and world leading.</i>	Continue to collaborate on the development of the Orkney Community Vertical Farm project, as part of the Islands Growth Deal.		✓	✓	✓	
	Build on the strong reputation and success of our three institutes, continuing to enhance their research impact, working towards 2027 REF submissions that will be internationally ranked, industry linked and world leading.		✓	✓		
	Assess the accommodation and land needs of the institutes, and develop viable cases for the development of environments that support their research and enables impact within each.		✓	✓	✓	
	Support and nurture new areas of research across curriculum areas.		✓	✓		
	Continue collaborations that contribute to the research impact of Orkney College UHI.		✓	✓		
Enterprise <i>We will embrace an entrepreneurial spirit based on strong economic and commercial growth, resulting in a socially responsible and well managed enterprise.</i>	Recruit, retain and invest in our high calibre staff, providing high quality employment opportunities locally.		✓	✓		✓
	Conduct a workforce review including a thorough review of job descriptions.					✓
	To undertake a review to inform final decision on signing up to NRPA.					✓
	In collaboration with the relevant Services in OIC, ensure the required repairs and renewals of the entire campus are suitably planned and resourced.					✓
	Informed by curriculum planning process, and in collaboration with the relevant Services in OIC, ensure the required developments of, and investment in, the campus and additional areas required by the College are suitably planned and resourced.				✓	✓
	Support partners and relevant OIC services to maximise housing capacity to accommodate students, supporting student recruitment activities across our tertiary provision.				✓	✓
	Partner with OIC's Learning & Development team to meet the professional development needs of staff across all Council services, either directly or by collaboration with external partners and agencies.				✓	✓
Ensure that Orkney College UHI has a secure and sustainable long term financial position that is less reliant on core SFC funding, ensuring as a minimum that a balanced budget position is sustained.					✓	
Engagement <i>We will be a connected organisation that pursues engagement with the people and the communities in which we work, always striving for mutual benefit.</i>	Assess the viability of establishing a presence in the development of the Orkney Research and Innovation Campus (ORIC).		✓	✓		
	Strengthen collaboration with the University of the Arctic and other Arctic Gateway partners for capacity building and other research opportunities.		✓	✓		
	Strengthen collaboration with partners (UHI and locally) to ensure there is little duplication or competition, and clear pathway.			✓		
	To strengthen and improve the positioning of the College in the communities that we serve, through a Communications Strategy.		✓	✓		
	To improve engagement of all students in the life of the College and University, working closely with the Highlands and Islands Student Association (HISA)			✓		



Equality Impact Assessment

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to improve the work of Orkney Islands Council by making sure it promotes equality and does not discriminate. This assessment records the likely impact of any changes to a function, policy or plan by anticipating the consequences, and making sure that any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and positive impacts are maximised.

1. Identification of Function, Policy or Plan	
Name of function / policy / plan to be assessed.	Orkney College Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028
Service / service area responsible.	Education Leisure and Housing
Name of person carrying out the assessment and contact details.	Jo Wallace joanne.wallace@uhi.ac.uk
Date of assessment.	19.5.23
Is the function / policy / plan new or existing? (Please indicate also if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly).	New

2. Initial Screening	
What are the intended outcomes of the function / policy / plan?	<p>The plan sets out the College's strategic priorities for the period 2023 to 2028</p> <p>The priorities does not represent everything that the College undertakes and are over and above the day to day activity of the service</p> <p>The intended outcomes are to align to those of the Council Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing our Economy • Strengthening our Communities • Developing our Infrastructure

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforming our Council <p>The intended outcomes are also to align to the strategic pillars of UHI's strategic plan of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tertiary Education • Research Impact • Enterprise • Engagement
Is the function / policy / plan strategically important?	Yes
State who is, or may be affected by this function / policy / plan, and how.	<p>College students both those who reside in Orkney and outside of Orkney including international students</p> <p>Stakeholders and local businesses</p> <p>Employees of Orkney Islands Council</p>
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this function / policy / plan?	The plan has been developed by a Member Office Working Group which comprised OIC Councillors, College Management committee members, College staff and senior Management of the College, council officers from ELH and other Council services
<p>Is there any existing data and / or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise.</p> <p>E.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic / consultants' reports, benchmarking (see equalities resources on OIC information portal).</p>	<p>There is a growing body of research on equalities issues on islands, much of which is concerned with socio-economic inequality, and unequal access to services, in addition to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>The Scottish Government's Islands Team commissioned a survey in 2020 from the James Hutton Institute to inform the implementation of the National Islands Plan. This survey covered all six local authorities with islands in Scotland and, in response to requests from the island Local Authorities, divides respondents into "mainland" and "isles" so for Orkney, they are reported as Orkney Mainland (including the linked south isles) and Orkney Outer Isles. Fieldwork took place in October 2020 and it is planned to repeat the survey every two years, providing a resource for longitudinal analysis. The first National Islands Plan Survey report was published in July 2021 and the base data can be interrogated in detail in a data explorer.</p> <p>The most reliable source for data relating to the Equality Act's protected characteristics is Scotland's Census. Census equality data from 2011 is now out of date and the new census data should be available for review from 2023 onwards. A key equality issue over the past two year has been the impact of Covid-19 and the Scottish</p>

	Government research on this is available here. Many inequalities have been deepened by the pandemic and these impacts remain ongoing.
Is there any existing evidence relating to socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in this policy area? Please summarise. E.g. For people living in poverty or for people of low income. See The Fairer Scotland Duty Guidance for Public Bodies for further information.	Orkney College's Strategic Planning Framework ensures that our priorities and activities align to achieve positive outcomes for the communities that it services and to the Council Plan 2023 -2028 The College Strategic Plan is a high-level and its strategic priorities aim to address persistent inequality of opportunity and socio-economic disadvantage.
Could the function / policy have a differential impact on any of the following equality areas?	Equality, fairness and inclusion are overarching principles for the delivery of the College's Strategic Plan and each of the five delivery plans which have been identified will have an individual Equality Impact Assessment as part of the usual governance process demonstrating due regard to the aims of the Equality Act (2010)
1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality.	No differential impact currently identified
2. Sex: a man or a woman.	No differential impact currently identified
3. Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.	No differential impact currently identified
4. Gender Reassignment: the process of transitioning from one gender to another.	No differential impact currently identified
5. Pregnancy and maternity.	No differential impact currently identified
6. Age: people of different ages.	Likely positive impact for all age groups. A significant area of focus in the plan is increasing opportunities for young people and for adult learners returning to education
7. Religion or beliefs or none (atheists).	No differential impact currently identified
8. Caring responsibilities.	Likely positive impact. Outcomes seek to improve experiences for people who have caring responsibilities.
9. Care experienced.	Likely positive impact. Outcomes seek to support improved experiences and outcomes for those who are care experienced

10. Marriage and Civil Partnerships.	No differential impact currently identified
11. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not).	Likely positive impact. The College's Strategic Plan has focus on flexible learning opportunities for those with disabilities. Outcomes also seek to promote the wellbeing of all students including improved mental health
12. Socio-economic disadvantage.	Likely positive impact. Many students have experienced hardship during the pandemic, which has exacerbated underlying long term disadvantage economic disadvantage for the first time. Outcomes address hardship with a key focus on the reduction of poverty and disadvantage through flexible learning opportunities.

3. Impact Assessment

Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	Yes
How could you minimise or remove any potential negative impacts?	The College's Strategic Plan intends to impact positively on the groups identified within the plan
Do you have enough information to make a judgement? If no, what information do you require?	Yes

4. Conclusions and Planned Action

Is further work required?	Yes
What action is to be taken?	Consultation on the draft Strategic Plan has been undertaken via a Members seminar. Implementation of the Plan will be five key Delivery Plans and other actions plans. Each delivery plan will develop relevant EqlAs for their related projects and plans to identify and mitigate any negative impacts and seek to improve equality outcomes.
Who will undertake it?	Implementation of the Delivery Plans will be undertaken by identified staff and stakeholders and the College Management Team
When will it be done?	Implementation will take place over the duration of the plan

How will it be monitored? (e.g. through service plans).

The plan will be monitored through Education Leisure and Housing Committee

Signature:



Date: 19/5/23

Name: JO WALLACE

(BLOCK CAPITALS).

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send a copy to HR and Performance. A Word version should also be emailed to HR and Performance at hrsupport@orkney.gov.uk