

**HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS ENTERPRISE**

**MINUTE OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT GROUP HELD ON MONDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2006**

**PRESENT:** Sandy Cumming (Chief Executive)  
Forbes Duthie (Director – Corporate Services)  
Douglas MacDiarmid (Director - Global Connections)  
Susan Myles (Director – Human Resources)  
Bill Sylvester (Director – Partnership Projects)  
John Watt (Director - Strengthening Communities)  
Jackie Wright (Director - Growing Businesses)  
Douglas Yule (Director – Area Operations)  
Alastair Nicolson (Strategy)  
Diane Duncan (Developing Skills)  
Donnie MacAulay (Western Isles Enterprise – Item 1 only)  
Neil MacKinnon (Western Isles Enterprise – Item 1 only)  
Andrew Ross (Secretary)  
Alison MacNeill (Executive Office)

**1** Item removed for reasons of commercial interest

**2** **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(1) DISTANCE LAB (HIEM 2005/00044)

In considering this case, it was noted that a presentation on the proposed project had been given to the HIE Board at its meeting in December 2005. The project involved the establishment of a research institute to investigate the opportunities for the use of digital media and Information & Communications Technology to overcome the effects of distance. The Board had been supportive of the concept and had encouraged staff to move towards finalising a proposal for the February meeting. Staff from HIE Moray and from within the HIE core had now taken the project forward and had commissioned a Gateway Review which had highlighted a number of issues which were now being addressed.

It was agreed that a full appraisal paper should be submitted to the Board at its meeting on 21 February 2006 with a recommendation for approval, subject to formal sign-off by the HIE Chief Executive when the various outstanding points from the Gateway Review were finalised. The proposal to the Board would outline a request for expenditure of up to £3.01m over a six-year period.

Andrew Ross  
13 February 2006  
HIE 2004/02228