



University Executive Board

Minutes

7 January 2025

Present: Professor Jane Norman (Vice-Chancellor and Chair), Professor Sube Banerjee (FPVC MHS), Sally Blackamore (Finance Director), Helen Dunn (Interim Director of Human Resources), Professor Jeremy Gregory (FPVC Arts and Interim FPVC Social Sciences), Professor Sam Kingman (Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Professor Katherine Linehan (PVC ESE), Professor Tom Rodden (PVC RKE), Professor Chris Tuck (Interim FPVC Engineering), Professor Zoe Wilson (FPVC Science)

In Attendance: Rowena Hall (Secretary), Rav Kalsi (Principal Executive Officer), Jason Carter (Director of Governance and Assurance), Louella Houldcroft (Director of Communications and Advocacy), Jason Phoenix (Programme Director) for minute 25.05, Jenny Vempati (Director of Internal Audit) for minutes 25.05 and 25.06, Peter Buckley (Associate Director of Pay and Reward) for minutes 25.07, Gary Moss (Director of Estates and Facilities) for minute 25.08, Laura Armitage (Director of Estates Master Planning) for minute 25.08, Fran Keel (HR Policy Manager) for minute 25.11

25.01 Welcome, Quoracy and Declarations of Interest

- .1 The Vice-Chancellor welcomed members to the first meeting of the newly constituted executive board.
- .2 The Secretary confirmed that the meeting was quorate.
- .3 There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

25.02 Minutes of Meetings on 21 November, 3 December and 18 December and Action Log

- .1 The minutes of the meetings as set out in paper UEB/25/05 were CONFIRMED as a true and accurate record.
- .2 The following actions were discussed:
 - .1 Action 24.150.11: It was confirmed that the Chief Digital Officer would act as business owner for the Unicore system. The action should be closed.
 - .2 Action 24.151.6:
 - .1 Work to reopen F-Floor continues, with further work ongoing to ensure an effective support model was in place to maintain the equipment and environment. An incident had taken place over the Christmas period. It would be determined whether a report was required to the Home Office.
 - .2 An update should be provided to Senior Leaders/ Heads of School so that they were well placed to provide reassurance to researchers. It would be important to ensure that staff understood the University's commitment to the research area.
 - .4 The in-house capability to deliver the support model would need to be considered alongside the approach adopted by other institutions. The University would need to determine a position on the core facilities that it would provide.
 - .5 The PVC RKE confirmed that a full report on the Bio-Support Unit would be delivered to UEB with the next four months.



- .3 Action 24.167.5: A submission topic had been determined for the Queen's Anniversary Prize. The action should be closed.

- .3 The remainder of the Action Log was NOTED.

25.03 Chair's Business

- .1 Congratulations were offered to both Professor Norman on her appointment as President and Vice-Chancellor of the University and to Professor Rodden on his award of a CBE in the New Year's Honours.
- .2 UEB members had RECEIVED a copy the Vice-Chancellor's presentation delivered as part of the Vice-Chancellor recruitment process. A discussion on the University's priorities would take place at the forthcoming Away Day.

25.04 Roundtable

- .1 The Director of Governance and Assurance provided an update on a recent and significant data breach. The Data Protection Officer was working across the University to understand the cause of the breach.
- .2 It was NOTED that due to the nature of the breach, affected employees had been offered Experian fraud prevention services and that a report had been made to the Information Commissioner's Office.
- .3 There was some discussion about how to ensure the continued importance of equality, diversity and inclusion to the University in light of the changes to the composition of the Executive Board.
- .4 UEB considered the opportunities to develop relationships with other universities across the region in the area of medicine and health sciences.

25.05 Audit Recommendations Tracking

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/25/02 which set out the monthly report on overdue management actions arising from internal audit reports.
- .2 It was NOTED that there were 37 overdue actions at the date of writing of the paper with a further 10 more now due. 12 Priority 1 actions were currently overdue.
- .3 The importance of the timeliness of the management response was highlighted as in some cases the delayed delivery of the response had eroded the currency of the audit findings.
- .5 UEB was reminded of the importance of agreeing realistic target dates for the completion of actions as the date could not be extended. Even if the forecasted completion date for the action was extended it would not alter the overdue nature of the action.
- .6 UEB members were asked to review their overdue actions and include a narrative setting out clear reasons for delay and a realistic timescale and plan for delivery.
- .7 There was consensus that successful management of audit actions lay in senior leadership engaging effectively in the development of the action plan and management response.

ACTION

- .8 Action owners to review their overdue actions and provide the required narrative to support the submission of an update paper to Audit and Risk Committee

OWNER

UEB members

DUE

10 January



25.06 Six Month Audit Internal Plan

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/25/11 from the Director of Internal Audit which set out the latest version of the rolling six-month internal audit plan and included both audits linked to strategic risks and to core controls.
- .2 A placeholder for independent assurance of Future Nottingham audit was NOTED. The first identified priority was an audit of HR readiness. The Terms of Reference were under development with the assurance partner and would be shared with key colleagues. The Vice-Chancellor directed that the draft of Terms of Reference should be shared more widely with colleagues to ensure that the scope and direction of the audit was correct and understood.
- .3 There was some discussion on compliance with the University's travel and expenses policy. Firstly, whether there were routes to avoiding the rules as set out in the Key Travel system. Secondly, it was not clear that the hierarchy of travel and expenses policy was understood. Where an external funder provided for a more generous approach, the University's policy should be followed. Where an external funder provided for a more restrictive approach, the approach of the external funder should be complied with.
- .4 The Director of Internal would determine whether student number planning would come within the scope of the planned financial sustainability audit or alternatively whether a separate audit should be proposed.
- .5 UEB RECOMMENDED the internal audit plan to Audit and Risk Committee for discussion and approval.

25.07 Our Pay and Reward Strategy

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/25/07 which set out a draft Pay and Reward Strategy to cover a three-year period from 2025-28.
- .2 UEB NOTED that the Pay and Reward Strategy would be submitted to Council for consideration and approval in March 2025 and further consultation was required with trades union through the Pay and Reward Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee sub-committee to agree the priorities of the schedule of work outlined within the delivery plan.
- .3 It was suggested that the vision statement be amended to reference performance or contribution to the University.
- .4 The challenges of a pay scale approach based on automatic progression were discussed. It was NOTED that UCEA planned to review pay scales and the spinal points.
- .5 UEB was supportive of the draft Pay and Reward Strategy and AGREED that:
 - .1 It should be RECOMMENDED to COUNCIL for APPROVAL
 - .2 The implementation of the Pay and Reward Strategy should be overseen by the People and Culture Committee with regular reporting delivered to UEB.
 - .3 Consultation as required should commence with trades union through the Pay and Reward Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee sub-committee.

25.08 Towards and Estate Development Master Plan

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/25/01 which set out a proposed approach to creating a long-term estate development master plan for the University as part of its Reshaping the Estate Programme.
- .2 It was NOTED that the Reshaping the Estate Programme would include:



- .1 A 20% target to shrink non-residential estate in three years delivering a £15m per annum operating cost reduction.
- .2 The provision of high quality spaces and a more flexible and smart estate which would support new ways of working to deliver teaching and research.
- .3 An estate-wide condition survey and a space utilisation survey.
- .3 The design and delivery of a 20-year Estate Development Master Plan would take 18 months and be delivered in three phases: Discovery, Planning and Delivery.
- .4 In response to a question about whether the Estate Development Master Plan should be delivered more quickly than the proposed 18 months, the Director of Estates and Facilities confirmed that the development of the plan would not preclude decisions being made about certain aspects of the estate including Castle Meadow Campus, Kings Meadow Campus and a Medical School Building.
- .5 It was NOTED that staff had not been informed about the proposed approach to assessing occupancy of university spaces. The Director of Estate and Facilities was asked to liaise with the Data Protection Officer to ensure that the approach was compliant and to establish the communication approach with staff.
- .5 UEB AGREED the proposed approach to deliver a 20-year Estate Development Master Plan.

25.09 Latest Revised Forecast 1

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/25/09 which set out a high-level view of the latest revised position. As a consequence of the Unicore implementation, it had not been possible to complete the usual month-end processes.
- .2 The Budget forecasted a deficit of £27.4m. The current forecast was £18.8m subject to the release of a £14m of contingency. The following points were NOTED:
 - .1 Students numbers were broadly in line with the Budget.
 - .2 The National Insurance increase and NHS consultants pay award were both included.
 - .3 The implementation of Unicore had resulted in reduced spend year-to-date. It was not anticipated that the full amount of underspend would be recovered before the end of the financial year.
- .3 UEB AGREED to RECOMMEND APPROVAL of the Latest Revised Forecast to Finance Committee.

25.10 Capturing Vacancy Savings in Year

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/25/10 which set out a proposal for capturing vacancy savings in year. The vacancy control mechanism had been in place since September.
- .2 UEB AGREED the proposal and confirmed that the decision should be communicated carefully to Senior Leaders.

ACTION

- .3 To communicate the decision that vacancy savings to date should be banked and pay budgets reduced accordingly

OWNER

Finance Director,
Director of
Communications
and Advocacy

DUE

14 February

25.11 Staff Personal Relationships with Students



- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/25/05 which presented various options for the University's policy on staff and student relationships in response to the Office for Students' new condition E6 concerning harassment and sexual misconduct. The condition would be effective from August 2025.
- .2 Members considered the options presented in detail, the complexity associated with staff student relationships and the current policy.
- .3 UEB AGREED that there should be a ban on intimate personal relationships between relevant staff members and students and strong discouragement of personal relationships between other staff and students.
- .4 The revised policy would require a clear and robust definition of 'relevant staff members'.