



University Executive Board

Minutes

5 February 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: Sarah Troy-Brown (Secretary), Rav Kalsi (Principal Executive Officer), Jason Carter (Director of Governance and Assurance), Louella Houldcroft (Director of Communications and Advocacy), Helen McNamara (Interim Deputy Director of HR), Moira Petrie (Director of Projects and Change) for minutes 25.17 and 25.18, Paul Channon (Deputy Director of Finance) for minute 25.18, Janet Atkinson (Head of Strategic Projects) for minute 25.18, Chris Garrod (Faculty Operations Director MHS) for minute 25.19, Gary Moss (Director of Estates and Facilities) for minute 25.19, Claire Stewart (Dean and Head of the School of Medicine) for minute 25.19, Debra Fearnshaw (Programme Manager) for minute 25.20, David FitzPatrick (Interim Provost for UNM) for minute 25.24, Jenny Vempati (Director of Internal Audit) for minute 25.26

25.14 Welcome, Quoracy and Declarations of Interest

Secretary confirmed that the meeting was quorate. There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

25.15 Minutes of Meeting held on 7 January 2025 and Action Log

- .1 The minutes of the meetings as set out in paper UEB/25/24 were CONFIRMED as a true and accurate record.
- .2 The following actions were discussed:
 - .1 Action 24.179.8 from 18 December: the Director of Human Resources CONFIRMED that the best timing of an additional University holiday would be the Christmas and New Year closure period. UEB AGREED that Friday 2 January 2026 would be used as the additional University holiday. The Director of HR and the Director of Communication and Advocacy would progress the communication of this decision. The action was now complete.
 - .2 Action 24.151.6:
 - .1 Challenges with progressing the reopening of the BSU facility continued, and were a result of Estates non-delivery of agreed actions;
 - .2 Members NOTED concerns from researchers with regard to potential damage to their individual research reputations as well as to the University's reputation;
 - .3 Concern was NOTED about the in-house management of this estates project.
- .3 The remainder of the Action Log was NOTED.

ACTION

OWNER

DUE



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| .4 | The Vice-Chancellor would contact the Director of Estates and Facilities in connection with the BSU works. | Vice-Chancellor | 28 February 2025 |
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25.16 Chair's Business

- .1 UEB members had RECEIVED an update from the Vice-Chancellor ahead of the meeting.
- .2 The following matters were NOTED:
 - .1 The Vice-Chancellor and FPVC MHS had met with partners from Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust to continue the collaborative relationship;
 - .2 Future Nottingham communications would need to be progressed in relation to the HR business case in order to ensure appropriate messaging following protected conversations which had commenced. These communications would be discussed at the Future Nottingham Strategy Board and an Interim UEB meeting scheduled for 19 February.
 - .3 It was CONFIRMED that work was underway to collate data to support the HR business case which would include publicly available information on the level of deficit at other institutions in the sector.

25.17 Strategic Investment Portfolio Update

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/25/23 which provided an update to the current composition of the University's Strategic Investment Portfolio, information on expected changes by the end of the financial year and updates on specific projects and programmes.
- .2 The following was NOTED:
 - .1 The Student Engagement and Attendance project was continuing at risk, pending confirmation of its ability to deliver its full benefits plan;
 - .2 The continuation of the National Rehabilitation Centre (NRC) project was under review, pending the outcome of partnership negotiations;
 - .3 The changes to project sponsorship.
- .3 The HR Transformation Programme (HRTTP) was DISCUSSED, and it was proposed that this programme be moved into business as usual. The HRTTP had been configured to deliver both the new HR operating model and the HR strategic delivery plan.
- .4 It was REPORTED that any changes to the HR operating model or movement of resources that may be needed to respond to changes in business needs were required to be submitted as a change request to a change board due to the HRTTP having been set up as a programme. This approach was hindering the HR management ability to respond to changing needs in an agile manner and had not added value.
- .5 UEB AGREED that the HRTTP be moved into business as usual in a controlled yet streamlined way.

25.18 University Improvement Pipeline (Strategic Pipeline) and Funding

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/25/19 and tabled slides which clarified proposed levels of capital and revenue strategic investment and aligned understanding ahead of forthcoming medium term financial plan (MTFP) related decisions. It set out the existing strategic pipeline demand, provided a comparison with the expected cash position, and identified the resultant gap.
- .2 UEB NOTED that the University had low levels of debt and did not retain large volumes of cash. When compared with a peer group of 20 similar institutions, the University ranked sixth for its net cash/net debt position.



- .3 There was a £50m shortfall of funding against the MTFP 2025/26 to 2029/30. This figure included £40m for the Medical School Building and it was proposed that this programme be rephased.
- .4 It was recognised a culture shift in relation to pipeline demand was required. UEB requested that there be a pause on new business cases and that projects not on the prioritised list should not be progressed unless they were part of business as usual and that other activity had been deprioritised to accommodate them.
- .5 UEB NOTED there were insufficient funds for all existing pipeline strategic investments and AGREED to spend only up to £79.8m in 2025/26 (the £119.8m approved strategic investments in MTFP 2024 less the £40m earmarked for Medical School Building).
- .6 UEB AGREED that a prioritisation exercise would be held and chaired by the Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor in February with a paper confirming the outcome of this meeting being submitted to the March UEB meeting. UEB NOTED the criteria to be used for the prioritisation exercise.

ACTION

- .7 Communications would be drafted to confirm the pause on new business cases.

OWNER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Director of Communications and Advocacy

DUE

28 February 2025

25.19 Undergraduate Medicine Review Project (Business case)

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and CONSIDERED paper UEB/25/14 which set out the business case for the undergraduate (UG) Medicine Review Project at a cost of £15.8m.
- .2 UEB NOTED that this business case included capital expenditure of £13.2 million and revenue expenditure of £2.6 million to fit-out C floor of the Pharmacy and Psychology Building into state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces. The new curriculum aimed to address declining student satisfaction, was aligned with national licensing requirements, and aimed to improve operational efficiency by consolidating programmes. The project was expected to enhance the student experience, drive educational innovation, and improve graduate outcomes, aiming to position the University as a leader in medical education.
- .3 It was suggested that modelling and sensitivity analysis of student numbers for each year be included in the business case.
- .4 It was CONFIRMED that the teaching space on C floor of the Pharmacy and Psychology Building would be University teaching space and not exclusively for the use of the School of Medicine.
- .5 UEB RECOMMENDED APPROVAL to Finance Committee of the Undergraduate Medicine Review Project business case subject to the outcome of the prioritisation exercise.

25.20 Zero Carbon Translation Centre Business case

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and CONSIDERED paper UEB/25/21 which set out the business case for the Zero Carbon Translation Centre (ZCTC) at a cost of £14m over two years.
- .2 This business case requested that the original business cases for the Zero Carbon Cluster (ZCC) and the Nottingham Drives Specialist Services (NDSS), and the related funds for these cases, be transferred to the new ZCTC. It NOTED the extension of revenue funding for core roles and capability to 2028/29.
- .3 UEB DISCUSSED the organisational change required to bring together the ZCC and NDSS teams and establish ZCTC as a TRAC facility.
- .4 UEB RECOMMENDED APPROVAL to Finance Committee of ZCTC at a cost of £14m over two years, subject to the outcome of the prioritisation exercise.

25.21 Digital Accessibility Recommendation



- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/25/15 which recommended the continuation of investment in digital accessibility skills and focussed improvement due to its positive impact on student and staff experience and compliance with relevant requirements within the Equality Act.
- .2 It was CONFIRMED that there was a need to ensure digital accessibility was embedded and inclusive by design. Whilst there was no legal obligation for the University to be compliant with Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations or the Equality Act in this area, this requirement may change in the future.
- .3 UEB acknowledged the importance and continuation of a University-wide strategic approach to digital accessibility and NOTED that a business case would be submitted to Planning and Resource Committee for maintaining digital accessibility capability beyond July 2025.

25.22 Financial Performance to December 2024

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and DISCUSSED paper UEB/25/27 which set out the first post UniCore go live financial reporting for the year to December 2024. The net operating cash position is broadly in line with our planned budget: current projection is that this year's deficit will be no worse than the £27.4m deficit budgeted.
- .2 The year to date position was favourable to that expected in the budget, as spend has been limited due to the new system implementation. It was expected that there would be an acceleration of spend as familiarity with the system improved. The latest year-end forecast was a deficit of £18.8m which was subject to the release of £14m contingency.
- .3 It was CONFIRMED that current vacant posts would not contribute to the 20% savings plans across the University as vacancy savings had already been banked.

25.23 2025/26 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and CONSIDERED paper UEB/25/26 from the Director of Finance which presented a proposed timeline, identified risks to date, and initial assumptions.
- .2 It was NOTED that the MTFP was the University's business plan. Work was ongoing to ensure it aligned with Future Nottingham activity.
- .3 Members NOTED the emerging risks, and that clear action was required to mitigate them. Members also NOTED a commitment to Council that a surplus of £11m would be delivered in 2025/26.
- .4 Members provided the following comments:
 - .1 It was proposed that the 3.5% budgetary inflation uplift should be removed from the MTFP and inflation should be absorbed and managed within set budgets. Further discussion would be required on this matter;
- .5 UEB APPROVED the MTFP timeline.

25.24 International Campus Governance Reports:

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and NOTED the UNNC Report (paper UEB/25/16) and the UNM Provost presented the UNM Report (paper UEB/25/25).
- .2 The Provost for UNM REPORTED that revised tuition fees had been submitted to the Ministry of Higher Education in Malaysia. Once approved, these fees would be in place from September 2025. It was NOTED fees had not increased for three years, and the maximum fee had not increased in the previous seven years.



- .3 The UNM budget was under development. It was suggested that following completion it would be submitted to Finance Committee for information, though it was NOTED there was no legal requirement to do so.

25.25 Pay Gap Data 2024

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and NOTED the gender, ethnicity and disability pay gap data and summary for the reporting date of 31 March 2024 set out in paper UEB/25/22.
- .2 Members NOTED that the pay gap had been slow to decrease and would welcome greater step change. The pay strategy was being developed to address this matter.

25.26 Audit Recommendations Tracking

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and NOTED paper UEB/25/17 which set out an update on audit recommendations tracking.
- .2 Members NOTED the number of overdue items from these management action plans was higher than expected, although there had been a slight decrease in December and January. There were now 33 overdue actions of which there were 10 overdue Priority 1 (highest risk) actions.
- .3 Members were reminded of the commitment to Audit and Risk Committee that overdue actions would be significantly reduced by May 2025.

ACTION	OWNER	DUE
.4 Future reports would include whether reset dates for audit actions were being met.	Director of Internal Audit	28 February 2025

25.27 Roundtable

- .1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor provided an update following recent discussions on the accountability framework. It had been discussed that there was a perception that there was a hierarchy between Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors. Therefore, there would be a move away from the title Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors to Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Faculties.
- .2 Following the recent UEB away day, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor would chair a meeting of the Financial Task and Finish Group to discuss medium and long term financial planning. Recommendations from this meeting would be submitted to the March meeting of UEB.
- .3 The Director of Governance and Assurance reported that a further discussion on the accountability framework would be required at a future meeting.
- .4 The PVC RKE provided an update on Research Excellence Framework (REF) activities and REPORTED that the Deputy PVC RKE had been appointed the academic lead for REF.
- .5 The PVC for MHS REPORTED that the Human Tissue Authority had visited the University and had verbally indicated a positive outcome.