



University Executive Board

Minutes of the meeting of 7 June 2021

Attending	Professor Shearer West (Vice-Chancellor), Professor John Atherton (FPVC Medicine and Health Sciences), Dr Paul Greatrix (Registrar), Professor Jeremy Gregory (FPVC Arts), David Hill (CDO), Jaspal Kaur (Director of Human Resources), Professor Sam Kingman (FPVC Engineering), Professor Todd Landman (FPVC Social Sciences), Professor Andrew Long (DVC), Professor Nick Miles (Provost UNNC), Professor Robert Mokaya (PVC GE), Margaret Monckton (CFO), Professor Sarah Sharples (PVC EDI and People), Sarah Speight (PVC ESE), Professor Zoe Wilson (FPVC Science)
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Attending	Rowena Hall (Secretary), Professor Sarah Metcalfe (Incoming Interim Provost UNM), Dr Mark Rawlinson (Associate Professor, CLAS), Professor John Gathergood (APVC RKE), Helen Lawrenson (Deputy Director of Finance) for minute 21.76, Sally Blackamore (Financial Controller) for minute 21.76, Laura Clayton (Director of Planning, Performance and Strategic Change) for minute 21.77, Neil Davidson (Head of Student Statutory Returns and Analytics) for minute 21.77, Anne Partington (Head of Strategic Support) for minutes 21.77, 21.80 and 21.81, Duncan Young (Director of Service Design, DTS) for minute 21.78
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Apologies	Professor Dame Jessica Corner (PVC RKE)
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21.73 Welcome, Apologies, Quoracy and Declarations of Interest

- .1 The Chair welcomed Professor Sarah Metcalfe, APVC for Research and Knowledge Exchange, Dr Mark Rawlinson, Associate Professor, CLAS and Professor John Gathergood, APVC RKE, to the meeting as observers.
- .2 The Secretary confirmed that the meeting was quorate.
- .3 There were no declarations of interest.

21.74 Minutes of the 21 April and 30 April Meetings and Action Log

- .1 The minutes of the meetings held on 21 April and 30 April 2021 and were AGREED as an accurate record. The minutes for the meeting held on 4 May 2021 would be submitted to the next meeting.
- .2 The Action Tracker was NOTED including red and completed actions

21.75 Chair's Business

1. The Vice-Chancellor had circulated a report to UEB prior to the meeting.
- .2 UEB discussed the external context of the free speech debate, the media response to the launch of the 'Report and Support' platform and the likely approach of the Office for Students which had already been confirmed to include the appointment of a free speech champion.



- .3 UEB considered the priorities for the coming academic year including the development of the new research strategy, overseas campus planning, bringing the strands of the digital strategy together and the University’s response to changing government policy. There would also be impact resulting from the ongoing challenges of USS.

21.76 Budget 2021/22

- .1 UEB RECEIVED the paper (UEB/21/78) from Chief Financial Officer.
- .2 UEB NOTED that the proposed budget for 2021/22 was aligned to the first year of the Medium Term Financial Plan. It would deliver a surplus of £21.9m which was a return to pre-COVID levels and would maximise the level of investment available at £81.5m (combined capital and revenue spend).
- .3 In order to stay financially sustainable over the MTFP period, the COVID related budget adjustment delivered in 2020/2021 would need to be maintained. The budget would flex with student numbers and included a £10m cost increase in employer pension contributions to account for possible increases arising from the USS consultation and CPAS valuation. Adherence to the budget would ensure borrowing covenants were not breached.
- .4 The Budget included unallocated funding to support COVID recovery activity which was modelled on the amount spent during 2020/21.
- .5 It was NOTED that the University would continue to engage with staff on finance issues. Roadshows were due to resume and would include the key messages on the MTFP and Budget.
- .6 UEB AGREED to RECOMMEND the 2021/22 budget to Finance Committee for approval.

	ACTION	OWNER	DUE
.7	To submit the 2021/22 budget to Finance Committee for approval	Chief Financial Officer	9 June 2021

21.77 University Performance Framework

- .1 UEB RECEIVED the paper (UEB/21/76) from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor which provided an update on the development of the University Performance Framework.
- .2 UEB were reminded that the proposed University level KPIs in the framework were based on the principles agreed by Council in November 2019. The KPIs had been agreed with the relevant portfolio leads. KPIs related to the People SDP would be completed by the autumn term as would target setting at tri-campus, UNUK, SDP, Faculty and Professional Service Department level. Targets would only be cascaded where required.
- .3 It was AGREED that the detailed wording of some of the proposed KPIs would be discussed outside the meeting, in particular those for research and EDI.
- .4 UEB NOTED that for certain KPIs, wider sets of indicators might be required at Faculty level and in this regard further work would be undertaken with FPVCs. It was expected that relevant committees would monitor a wider group of indicators than the headline University KPIs. An example was environmental sustainability, with a headline University KPI on carbon emissions and the Environmental Sustainability Committee monitoring a wider suite of indicators.



- .5 Work was underway to develop the form of reporting against the KPIs and it was NOTED that commentary and insight would be required in addition to numerical and RAG ratings. Consideration is also needed as to how to report on the delivery of SDPs.
- .6 There was consensus that the monitoring of investment performance needed to be improved. The Performance Framework contributed that improvement, but further work would be undertaken led by the Director of Planning, Performance and Strategic Change.
- .7 UEB APPROVED the proposed approach to managing University performance against the University Strategy and the proposed KPIs, subject to further refinement following comments received during the meeting and those to be provided outside the meeting.

	ACTION	OWNER	DUE
.8	To follow up in the detailed wording of the Research and EDI KPIs.	DVC, Director of Planning, Performance and Strategic Change, PVC RKE, PVC EDI and People	9 June 2021

21.78 Foundational IT Services Digital Partner

- .1 UEB RECEIVED the paper (UEB/21/73) from the Chief Digital Officer which provided an executive summary of an Outline Business Case for the appointment of an IT services business partner. The proposal was a move away from a major outsourcing of foundational IT services.
- .2 The key drivers to the change in approach were to avoid large procurement and upfront transition costs, a rethink of what was needed from the external market, closer alignment to the changing role of DTS in the University, a better cultural fit to the University, and the attractiveness of a 'digital partnership' to the market.
- .3 The key features of the digital partner approach were highlighted and included an initial discovery phase, initial delivery phase followed by ongoing commissioning of solutions and services and the creation of an 'Intelligent Client Function' capability to manage the Digital Partner.
- .4 The points that distinguished the revised approach from the original were outlined and included reduced procurement costs, lower contract value, no exclusivity or commitment to spend with the Digital Partner outside of the phase one services and no large-scale transfer of staff at the beginning of the contact.
- .5 UEB NOTED that the pace of change under the revised approach would be slower and would first focus on immediate operational risks. The discovery phase would inform the stream of projects. The phase one services within the initial procurement were the Managed Network Service, Managed Print Service and the Integration Product Team.
- .6 The Chief Digital Officer confirmed that following the procurement, staff and students should see infrastructure improvement by the middle to end of 2022.
- .7 UEB NOTED the Digital Strategy Committee's approval to run the procurement for the Digital Partner and approval of £1.4m to fund the first three years of the Intelligent Client Function



- .8 UEB AGREED that the Outline Business Case executive summary should be presented at the next meeting of Council and further AGREED the proposed governance approval route which provided for the Full Business Case to be considered by Planning and Resources Committee and recommended for approval by Finance Committee and Council without returning to UEB.

21.79 Draft Statement on Free Speech and Academic Freedom

- .1 UEB RECEIVED the paper (UEB/21/77) which set out a revised draft statement on free speech and academic freedom following the conclusion of a University-wide consultation of staff and students and an open meeting. The draft statement would be considered by Senate the next day.
- .2 The Registrar reminded UEB members that the statement and the process that sat below it would need to be revised, and amended as appropriate, following the publication of the new legal framework. In the meantime, work would continue over the summer to review the existing and underlying decision-making processes to ensure that they supported the statement and were in place for the start of session.

	ACTION	OWNER	DUE
.3	To review the existing and underlying decision-making processes to ensure that they supported the free speech statement and were in place for the start of session.	Registrar	31 August 2021

21.80 People Strategic Delivery Plan

- .1 UEB RECEIVED the paper (UEB/21/74) from the PVC EDI and People and the Director of Human Resources.
- .2 UEB provided the following feedback on the draft People Strategic Delivery Plan:
 - .1 Consistency was required throughout the Plan as in some places there were references to health, safety and wellbeing and in others to health and wellbeing.
 - .2 A further check of the wording of priority 3 (e) was recommended to ensure that it appropriately represented the University's ambition for engagement with its community.
 - .3 Further consideration of the wording of priority 5 (c) was required as its shift in focus to partnerships with the alumni community was marked compared with the other paragraphs of the fifth priority.
- .3 Consideration was given to the combination of measures which might potentially form the criteria-based assessment used to measure performance. The following observations were made:
 - .1 A headline KPI should be included in the University Performance Framework and consideration would be needed to determine the appropriate measure. The People and Human Resources Committee would monitor the wider set of KPIs including the headline measure.
 - .2 A health check measurement based on staff turnover would be challenging as a certain level of turnover was required.



- .3 Any measure monitoring the number of active capability cases would need very careful oversight as it was not clear whether a successful measure would be the increase or decrease in the number of active cases.
- .4 The wording of the pulse survey questions on workload required thorough consideration due to the many complexities associated with workload issues.
- .4 Subject to changes arising from the feedback provided and the further development of the criteria based assessment, the People Strategic Delivery Plan was APPROVED.

21.81 Workload Review Task and Finish Group

- .1 UEB RECEIVED the paper (UEB/21/75) from the PVC EDI and People which summarised the findings and recommendations of the Workload Review Group which had been established to understand the root causes and impact of workload issues.
- .2 UEB NOTED the findings of the Review which concluded that there was a significant challenge to address as a result of a number of factors including inefficient ways of working and outdated processes. There was an extensive volume of work associated with some roles and whilst there had been an increase in response to the pandemic, many issues arose prior to March 2020.
- .3 The recommendations contained in the paper were NOTED. The recommendations were grouped into four categories: implementation of the recommendations, the consideration of workload culture across the University and within strategic planning, managing workload within teams, and systems and processes.
- .4 It was suggested that the reference to the Academic Workload Model should be consistent with the range set out in its supporting document: 80-120%. It would be important to ensure that the recommendations were very clear that the range was a guide and not an absolute rule.
- .5 Subject to changes arising from the feedback provided, the recommendations were APPROVED.

	ACTION	OWNER	DUE
.6	To provide regular updates to UEB on the progress of the implementation of the recommendations	Chair of the Workload Review Implementation Group	Every six months

21.82 Roundtable Discussion

- .1 The University had been successful in its Race Equality Charter submission and had been award bronze status. Thanks were expressed to the team for all the preparatory work and the drafting of the submission.
- .2 The challenges of the government’s red- rated country lists to successful international student recruitment for the 21/22 session was highlighted.
- .3 The Interim Provost UNM reported that the national lockdown in Malaysia which was due to end of 14 June, had been extended for a further two weeks. 300 students and 120 staff remained on the Campus which was closed. The Malaysian government had confirmed that a



delay to its SPM examinations which would impact on the University's recruit of foundation students.

- .4 Following the significant consultation as part of the review of the technical and APM staff structure in the School of Medicine, the final structure had been published.
- .5 The University's response to the USS consultation had been submitted and supported the UUK proposals. A Russell Group statement of support for the UUK proposals had been published.