



## University Executive Board

### Minutes of the meeting of 4 April 2022

#### Attending

Professor Shearer West (Vice-Chancellor), Professor John Atherton (FPVC Medicine and Health Sciences), Professor Dame Jessica Corner (PVC RKE), 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 Katherine Linehan (PVC EDI and People), Professor Sarah Metcalfe (Interim Provost UNM), Professor Nick Miles (Provost UNNC), Professor Robert Mokaya (PVC GE), Margaret Monckton (CFO), Sarah Speight (PVC ESE), Professor Zoe Wilson (FPVC Science)

#### Attending

Professor Duncan Angwin (Dean of Nottingham University Business School, for minute 22.40), Sally Blackamore (Financial Controller, for minute 22.37), Jason Carter (Director of Governance and Assurance, for minute 22.39), Laura Clayton (Director of PPSC, for minute 22.38), Neil Davidson (Associate Director Statutory Returns and Analytics, for minute 22.38), Dr Hany Elsheikha (Vice-Chancellor's Mentee), Professor Rachel Fyson (Head of School of Sociology and Social Policy), Professor Paul Grainge (Academic Director, for minute 22.41), Susannah Goh (Programme Director, for minute 22.41) Dr Gulshan Khan (Vice-Chancellor's Mentee), Helen Lawrenson (Deputy Director of Finance, for minute 22.37), David Ouchterlonie (Associate Director Global Engagement Strategy Support, for minute 22.43), Sarah Troy-Brown (Senior Governance Manager, minutes)

#### Apologies

Rowena Hall (Secretary), Professor Andrew Long (DVC)

#### 22.34 Welcome, Apologies, Quoracy and Declarations of Interest

- .1 The Chair welcomed Dr Hany Elsheikha (Vice-Chancellor's Mentee), Professor Rachel Fyson (Head of School of Sociology and Social Policy) and Dr Gulshan Khan (Vice-Chancellor's Mentee) to the meeting as observers.
- .2 The Senior Governance Manager confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

#### 22.35 Minutes of the 8 March 2022 Meeting and Action Log

- .1 The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2022 were confirmed as a true record.
- .2 The Action Tracker and the following updates on overdue actions were NOTED:
  - .1 The Director of Internal Audit had confirmed minute 21.139.6 remained ongoing and had requested the target date be revised to May 2022 as it was a six month programme of work;
  - .2 Minute 21.143.5 was reported as ongoing and a paper on the status of the implementation of priority actions that had arisen from internal audits would be circulated to UEB;
  - .3 Minutes 22.12.7, 22.18.4, and 22.20.6 remained ongoing and an update would be provided to the following meeting.



### 22.36 Chair's Business

- .1 The Vice-Chancellor had circulated a report to UEB prior to the meeting.
- .2 UEB CONSIDERED the issue of staff morale within the University and the broader sector, and the impact of the current geopolitical and economic challenges that had followed the pandemic. The positive contribution of staff and students had been celebrated at the recent Vice-Chancellor's Medals ceremony. UEB recognised that there was a need to celebrate the success of staff and students more regularly now that we were able to have face-to-face events.
- .3 Staff recruitment issues were DISCUSSED and it was NOTED that these issues were being seen across all areas in the University and across the University sector as well as other sectors. Work was being undertaken to explore recruitment data to understand why these issues in recruitment had occurred and how they could be addressed.

### 22.37 2022/23 Medium Term Financial Plan Update

- .1 UEB RECEIVED a paper (UEB/22/50) from the Deputy Director of Finance and the Financial Controller. The paper set out the initial draft of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) following the completion of detailed scenario modelling.
- .2 It was REPORTED that the MTFP was expected to deliver a deficit in 2022/23 and further work would be undertaken to ensure the delivery of the additional £2m required for a surplus in 2022/23. In order to deliver the MTFP, a permanent operating cost target had been included and this target would need to be met through a reduction in the level of strategic revenue funding and operating costs.
- .3 UEB DISCUSSED the following:
  - .1 Strategic investment and whether some projects could be paused or rephased. It would be important to view strategic investment from the perspective of whether the activity would enable the University to achieve its KPI targets and deliver its strategy;
  - .2 It was NOTED that the capping of the undergraduate fees would place further pressures on future operational costs;
  - .3 The delivery of some efficiencies through stopping some operational activity would need to be undertaken. This approach would also need to address workload issues;
  - .4 Inflation was a key challenge in the MTFP and the general rise in utility prices had led to a variance of £25-28m on the previous year. Energy saving activity was required across all areas; however this would be a challenge given not all areas of the estate were energy efficient, due to the age of the infrastructure;
  - .5 A key concern was related to international student recruitment targets which would need to be fully delivered in future, as these targets had not been met previously;
  - .6 Risks related to Research Excellence Framework (REF) funding and the assumption that REF funding would remain at the same level were NOTED.
- .4 Next steps would include input being sought from Planning and Resources Committee on reprioritisation of the strategic investment pipeline.
- .5 UEB APPROVED the key inputs in the MTFP and AGREED that there would need to be cost saving targets set, with lessons learned from a previous exercise undertaken during the pandemic. Cost saving would need to be targeted to activity which was no longer required. It was NOTED that ideas for the rephasing of some items of strategic investment had already commenced.



### 22.38 Update on University Performance Framework

- .1 UEB RECEIVED a paper (UEB/22/47) from the Director of Planning, Performance and Strategic Change (PPSC) and the Associate Director for Statutory Returns and Analytics. The paper set out a proposed approach for the management of University performance against the University strategy, and the proposed key performance indicators and targets.
- .2 UEB provided the following feedback:
  - .1 It was suggested that research income related targets might be better reported in the autumn or quarterly rather than June which was before year-end;
  - .2 Clarity was sought on the publication of KPIs and targets to staff to aid transparency. It was CONFIRMED that data would be available to staff via Tableau. Further work would be undertaken with External Relations on engagement with staff;
  - .3 Further consideration would be given to how areas that had met or exceeded their targets could be recognised and rewarded.
- .3 UEB APPROVED the proposed approach for the management of University performance against the University strategy and the proposed key performance indicators and targets.

### 22.39 Health and Safety Update

- .1 UEB RECEIVED a paper (UEB/22/44) from the FPVC Engineering as Chair of the Health and Safety Committee, and the Director of Governance and Assurance. The paper provided an update on key health and safety progress and an overview of the interim health and safety plan.
- .2 UEB NOTED the following:
  - .1 A formal risk assessment of health and safety would be undertaken in order to ensure all risks had been identified and that appropriate mitigations were in place;
  - .2 A review of health and safety training provision would be conducted and a systematic programme of training would be developed;
  - .3 The health and safety incident management process would be reviewed to ensure appropriate rigour was in place and that root causes of incidents were identified;
  - .4 Better contractor management would be established in order to ensure contractors worked in alignment with the necessary health and safety standards;
  - .5 Work would commence to move the Health and Safety Team towards a business partnering model in order to ensure a direct interface for all departments in the University with the team;
  - .6 Confidence in the new Health and Safety IT system, Compass, and the supplier had been eroded following a substantial number of defects and system performance issues. A go/no go decision would be taken later in the week.
- .3 UEB ENDORSED the remediation plan and the request to ensure appropriate resources be made available from UEB members' respective areas to support the completion of the formal risk assessments and hazard mapping.

### 22.40 Business School Quality and Growth



- .1 UEB RECEIVED and DISCUSSED a paper (UEB/22/45) from the Dean of Nottingham University Business School (NUBS) that set out a quality enhancement growth strategy for NUBS.
- .2 UEB DISCUSSED the following:
  - .1 Whether space for NUBS would be an issue should plans for space on the Castle Meadow Campus change. It was NOTED that there would be space constraints on Jubilee Campus with an increase in staff;
  - .2 Equality, diversity and inclusion matters would need to be addressed in the strategy, particularly with regard to student and staff experience, and the civic agenda;
  - .3 Staff would need to be recruited before students in order to deliver executive education due to the specific skill set required;
  - .4 That further work would need to be undertaken to ensure the NUBS strategy had a tri-campus focus. Better collaboration between the campuses would be required in this area;
  - .5 New areas that would be explored in order to attract grant funding included artificial intelligence and robotics, and fintech. Previous examples had included Covid-related research that had attracted funding;
  - .6 Whether there were areas of activity that could be stopped. However, it was recognised that there were core areas all business schools needed to deliver alongside more specialist areas;
  - .7 The plan for talent attraction and that this would not just aim to recruit research stars but which would focus on aspiring researchers, and those who could provide research leadership and share best practice in terms of grant awards within the School;
  - .8 Development of specialist areas that would support the School in achieving Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation which would lead to NUBS becoming a triple accredited business school.
- .3 UEB NOTED that the NUBS Quality Investment business case was due to be submitted to Finance Committee in June 2022.

#### **22.41 Digital Nottingham Summary Update**

- .1 UEB RECEIVED a paper (UEB/22/46) from the Academic Director and Programme Director which set out a summary report in Digital Nottingham and included clarification of the vision, progress across the pillars, and evolutions of governance and project milestones.
- .2 UEB DISCUSSED the following:
  - .1 Work was being undertaken to engage with external partners and internal stakeholders in order to ensure they understood Digital Nottingham and its focus. Particular attention was needed to local government stakeholders and the LEP;
  - .2 Clarity on external funding that would assist with investment. Work was being undertaken in partnership with University of Nottingham Online to secure funding for education and skills. Funding would be being sought through the Shared Prosperity Fund, as well as through investment from companies and public service organisations that were seeking to fill skills gaps. It was recognised that there were risks around the Shared Prosperity Fund, given the current uncertainty about how this fund would operate;
  - .3 Engagement with the University's digital partner would be welcomed in order to progress areas such as digital twinning.



	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>DUE</b>
.3	The Academic Director would engage with the digital partner to progress areas such as digital twinning.	CDO Academic Director	May 2022

**22.42 Staff Engagement Update**

- .1 UEB RECEIVED a paper (UEB/22/51) from the Director of HR which set out an update on staff engagement.
- .2 UEB DISCUSSED the following:
  - .1 The options for a future survey were either to remain with Gallup for a further cycle, or to move to a new supplier and undertake a competitive procurement process. Following discussion with colleagues at UNUK, UNNC and UNM, the preferred option was to move to a new supplier;
  - .2 Gallup had limited benchmarks in higher education in the UK, and it was recognised that some of the questions were still not fully understood by many colleagues;
  - .3 The use of pulse surveys would be welcomed.
  - .4 It was recognised that the reasons for making the change would need to be communicated clearly.
- .3 UEB APPROVED the recommended option to undertake a procurement exercise and move to a new supplier that would enable both local benchmarks within country and the opportunity to design questions based on values across UNUK, UNNC, and UNM.

**22.43 Ukraine Scholarships**

- .1 UEB RECEIVED a paper (UEB/22/52) from the PVC GE and Associate Director of Global Engagement Strategy Support which set out a proposal to establish the University of Nottingham Scholars at Risk Programme.
- .2 UEB NOTED the following:
  - .1 Different scenarios for routes into the University had been considered and these routes included those where individual staff were approached by people seeking employment;
  - .2 Industrial action pay savings had been put towards this fund. Further finances would come from the scholarships budget. Government schemes for funding such programmes were also being explored;
  - .3 Work was ongoing with External Relations on communications of the scheme.
- .3 UEB APPROVED the proposal for the University of Nottingham Scholars at Risk Programme.

**22.44 Roundtable Discussion**

- .1 The Provost UNM REPORTED that meetings were taking place with other UK university branch campuses to discuss plans for more collective liaison with the Malaysian government.
- .2 The Nottingham City Covid Memorial event had taken place the previous weekend and had been attended by the PVC EDI and People.
- .3 The Research Culture survey was due to launch the following day and UEB was asked to encourage their teams to complete it.



- .4 The University would have a small presence on the education stand at the Nottinghamshire County Show.