

# MINUTES

## SUSTAINABILITY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE, SR-11

**Date:** Tues 17 March 2020

**Time:** 1300

**Location:** Boardroom, University House, Leek Road Campus

*Notes:*

1. This Agenda is divided into three headings: Estates; Financials; and Human Resources / Employment. Each of these headings has a section 2 (For Discussion and/or Approval) and a section 3 (For Information).
2. Items marked with an asterisk (starred items) are for information only or regarded as noncontentious. Starred items will not be discussed and will be assumed to have been noted or approved unless a request to unstar a named item is received from a Board member in advance, or at the commencement, of the meeting.
3. Items classified as Confidential, and their subsequent minutes, will be redacted before publication of the agenda and minutes on the University's public website.

<b>Members</b>		
Professor Liz Barnes	Vice Chancellor	P
John Henderson (Deputy Chair)	External Member	T
Mike Herbert	External Member	T
Colin Hughes	External Member	T
Scott William-Smith	Vice President, Students' Union	P
Hannah Gibbard	Professional Support Staff Representative	P
Jonathan Vardon (Chair)	External Member	P
<b>In attendance</b>		
Ian Blachford	Chief Operating Officer and Clerk to the Board of Governors	IA
Professor Ieuan Ellis	Pro Vice Chancellor – Place & Engagement	T
Sally McGill	Chief Financial Officer	IA
Professor Martin Jones	Deputy Vice Chancellor	IA
Andrew Proctor	Pro Vice Chancellor – Digital	IA
Lauren Rooke	Assistant Clerk to the Board of Governors (minutes)	IA

*P = Present; T = via telephone; A = Apologies; IA = In Attendance*

<b>1 MEETING MANAGEMENT</b>	
253	No <b>Apologies for Absence</b> were received.
254	There were no new <b>Declarations of Interest</b> .
255	<b>The Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee</b> , 5 Nov 2019 SR/11/01 were signed as a true and accurate record.
256	<b>Matters arising:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Minute 184 (arising from minute 160 and minute 2488, BofG) – Lichfield Coach Park, Squires View and Cotes Heath</b> – it was noted that these items were included elsewhere on the agenda (Estates Projects Update).</li> <li>• <b>Minute 234</b> - the Terms of Reference for the Committee had been approved at the November 2019 Board of Governors meeting.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Minute 235</b> – the Catalyst building contract award paper had been approved by the Board of Governors, following the last meeting of the Sustainability and Resources Committee.</li> <li>• <b>Minute 236</b> – the Estates Update paper had been referred to the November 2019 Board of Governors meeting for noting.</li> <li>• <b>Minute 237</b> – the closure report on the Digital Institute London would appear later on the committee agenda and the update from the last committee had been referred to the November 2019 Board of Governors meeting for noting.</li> <li>• <b>Minute 241</b> – the Financial Statements and OfS Accountability Return had been approved at the November 2019 Board of Governors meeting. Pensions had not been discussed at the BofG Strategic Event due to preparatory work still being undertaken, however an update on the LGPS Triennial Valuation appeared on this committee agenda.</li> <li>• <b>Minute 242</b> – the Student Union accounts had been referred to the November 2019 Board of Governors meeting for noting.</li> <li>• <b>Minute 243</b> – the Management Accounts to Sept 2019 (month 2) had been referred to the November 2019 Board of Governors meeting for noting.</li> <li>• <b>Minute 242</b> – the financial impact of the termination and managed teach out of collaborative academic partnerships had been referred to the November 2019 Board of Governors meeting for noting.</li> </ul>
257	<p>The committee received a verbal <b>COVID-19 Update (non-agenda item)</b> from the Chief Operating Officer, who summarised the current position and the planned schedule following the most recent change in government advice. The Vice Chancellor gave more detail, including on areas such as the move to online learning, the closing of some buildings on campus, ensuring key services remained open for students, instigating work from home protocols and the postponement of events.</p> <p>Members commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion took place around the practical implementations of the proposed measures, good practice with regard to communications and likely next steps, with Ian Blachford noting that Executive would continue to meet formally at least weekly (with Extended SLT also meeting once a week). Ian further noted that an update would be received at the April Board of Governors meeting.</li> <li>• Jonathan Vardon asked about the frequency of communications to students and staff. Ian Blachford clarified that the last communication had been sent out the day prior (16 March) and that a further update would be sent out shortly regarding the planned change of operations with effect from 23 March.</li> </ul>
258	<p>The committee received and noted the <b>*Schedule of Business for the Academic Year 2019/20*</b> SR/11/02.</p>
<b>ESTATES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (E)</b>	
<b>E2 FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL (marked below accordingly)</b>	
259	<p>The committee received and discussed a <b>Catalyst Building – Project Update</b> SR/11/03, introduced by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, who noted the following main points:</p> <div style="background-color: black; height: 400px; width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: black; height: 100%; width: 100%; display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="background-color: black; width: 20px; height: 100%;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div> </div> </div>

[Redacted]

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The committee agreed to refer the Catalyst Update to the Board of Governors for noting.

260

The committee received and discussed the **Estates Projects Update**, introduced by the Pro Vice Chancellor - Digital SR/11/04, who noted the following main points:

- The paper gave a brief update on progress on the three projects agreed at the Board of Governors' meeting on 25 June 2019, namely a new nursery on the Stoke Campus, additional teaching space at Blackheath Lane, Stafford, and the recladding of Blackstone Building and improvement works to Cadman roof, as well as updates on the Squires View site and Cotes Heath.
- **New nursery and forest school:** The project was progressing well with all surveys complete. The scheme had reached RIBA design stage 2 and had been submitted for planning approval early March. The design solution made extensive use of sustainable materials and through the use of photovoltaics would be carbon neutral. Subject to Board of Governors' approval, completion was expected for Autumn 2021.
- **Additional Teaching Space at Blackheath Lane, Stafford:** This project was also progressing well and was on programme and budget with all surveys complete. The scheme had reached RIBA design stage 2 and had been submitted for planning approval in mid-February.
- Part of the proposed scheme included acquisition of a strip of adjacent land to improve car-parking and flow of traffic in and out of the campus. Inglewood Investments, who owned the land, had agreed to sell the land for £150k and contracts were currently being drawn up by respective legal representatives for exchange following receipt of planning approval. Subject to Board of Governors' approval, completion was expected for the new academic year in 2021.
- **Blackstone recladding and Cadman roof improvement works:** Asbestos and structural surveys had been carried out and preliminary design work commenced. However, discussions with the local authority planning department had proved to be challenging, with restrictions being imposed - consequently, it had been decided to challenge the conservation officer's position and progress the design based on the original scheme aspiration. As a result of these issues the project was currently approximately 3 months behind programme.

[Redacted]

	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
261	<p>The committee received and discussed the <b>Digital Institute London – Implementation Report SR/11/05</b>, introduced by the Chief Operating Officer. The following main points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report set out the journey of establishing Staffordshire University: London and how the project had been conducted, giving an extensive update on each individual workstream, including identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the work undertaken, the success in delivering defined benefits and lessons learnt.</li> <li>• It also contained detail on student numbers, financial impact and planned further development.</li> </ul> <p>Members commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colin Hughes commended the detail of the report and underlined the need to continue to keep a careful watch on recruitment at DIL.</li> <li>• Jonathan Vardon agreed that the implementation of DIL had been well carried out and that there were many successes to be noted, as well as lessons learnt.</li> <li>• Members discussed the likely shutting down of at least part of the DIL space as a precautionary measure against the spread of COVID-19.</li> </ul> <p>The committee agreed to refer the DIL Implementation Report to the Board of Governors for noting, via email.</p>
262	<p>The committee received and discussed the <b>Sustainability Strategy SR/11/06</b>, introduced by the Chief Financial Officer, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report set out the background to and the context for the proposed strategy, as well as giving an overview of the specific environmental challenges for the University and the wider region.</li> <li>• The report also set out detail on progress to date and gave an outline of the draft strategy, including sections on overall principles, challenges, the proposed responses, potential governance models and communication plans.</li> </ul> <p>Members commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colin Hughes commended the aims of the draft strategy and proposed that the Board of Governors as whole consider the proposal, to determine whether a broader and more ambitious approach was warranted.</li> <li>• Jonathan Vardon echoed this, highlighting that the report referenced the fact that both the City and District Councils had declared a state of climate emergency.</li> <li>• With reference to the proposed sustainability KPIs, Sally McGill noted that the cross-institution Sustainability Group had pinpointed the carbon footprint target as being the most salient. Kevin Gould had also proposed a KPI around academic influence – this would need further consideration.</li> <li>• It was proposed that the sustainability strategy be considered also at the strategic event in the Summer.</li> </ul> <p>The committee agreed to refer the Sustainability Strategy to the Board of Governors for approval.</p>
<b>E3 FOR INFORMATION</b>	
263	<p>The committee received and noted the <b>*Compliance/Maintenance Update*</b> SR/11/07, which outlined the University’s position in meeting the legislative requirements of statutory compliance throughout its estate, for information.</p>
264	<p>The committee received and noted the <b>*Student Journey: Residences Internal Audit Report (2018-19 plan)*</b> SR/11/08, referred from Audit and Risk Committee.</p>
265	<p>The <b>*UUK/Guild HE Code of Practice for the Management of Student Housing – Compliance Review (2019-20 plan)*</b> SR/11/09, referred from Audit and Risk Committee.</p>
<b>FINANCIALS (F)</b>	

**F2 FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL (marked below accordingly)**

266

The committee received and discussed the **Student Numbers & Projected Financial Impact: In-Year Update** SR/11/10, introduced by the Chief Financial Officer, who noted the following:

[Redacted content]

[Redacted content]

[Redacted content]

The committee agreed to refer the report to the Board of Governors for noting.

267

The committee received and discussed a report on **Pensions: LGPS Triennial Valuation** SR/11/11, introduced by the Chief Financial Officer. The following main points were noted:

[Redacted content]

[Redacted text block]

268

The committee received and discussed a **Staffordshire University Pension Scheme Update SR/11/12**, presented by the Chief Operating Officer, who noted the following main points:

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[Redacted text block]

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	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
269	<p>The committee received and discussed the <b>Review of Travel and Expenses Policy</b> SR/11/13, referred from Remuneration Committee, introduced by the Chief Financial Officer. The proposed amends to the policy were summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• References to the new Oracle Fusion system had replaced references to i-buy and i-expenses.</li> <li>• Updates to processes around group and international travel.</li> <li>• Additional references to the importance of sustainable travel.</li> <li>• Modifications to make policies more inclusive, specifically recognising accessibility issues.</li> <li>• Clarity around subsistence arrangements around multi-site working.</li> <li>• Clarity around travel arrangements for the Governors, the Vice Chancellor and the Executive.</li> <li>• The policy had been subject to an all staff consultation and consultation with the Trades Unions and an Equality Impact Assessment has also been conducted. Changes were made to the policy as a result of each of these exercises.</li> </ul> <p>Members commented as follows:</p> <p>NONE</p> <p>The committee approved the revised Travel and Expenses Policy for onward approval for the Board of Governors.</p>
270	<p>The committee received and discussed a report from the Chief Financial Officer into <b>Value for Money</b> SR/11/14, noting the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paper dealt with the specific issue of providing finance-related information to prospective and current students. As part of the University's on-going registration with the Office for Students (OfS) – which started in 2018 - there was a requirement for providers to comply with provisions under the heading 'Value for Money'. The OfS subsequently published a 'Value for Money Strategy 2019 to 2021' which set out how providers should demonstrate compliance.</li> <li>• Under two specific headings (Consumer information and fees and funding transparency) the document set out the OfS' expectations in relation to providing financial information.</li> <li>• The University already published information on its website (shown in Appendix B) which set out sources of income and types of expenditure of the University. This page had been commended by UUK in a report on the provision of information to students but was relatively basic.</li> <li>• The Chief Financial Officer would work with the Dean of Student Services to: conduct a review of additional costs and develop proposals accordingly; to expand the information on sources of income and types of expenditure to highlight the facilities and services provided for students within their tuition fees; and to revise the section on the cost of studying on a residential basis to ensure relevant to all students.</li> </ul> <p>Members commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scott William-Smith noted the importance of distinguishing between necessary and optional expenditure when setting these costs out for prospective students.</li> </ul>
<b>F3 FOR INFORMATION</b>	
271	<p>The committee received for information the <b>*Half-Year Management Accounts to 31 Jan 2020*</b> SR/11/15.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University was expecting to achieve a £6.7m operating surplus for 2019/20, £0.8m ahead of budget.</li> <li>• Shortfalls in full time tuition fees, apprenticeship income and research income had been mitigated by the release of the tuition fee central contingency of £2.5m whilst the forecasted increase in partnership income, part-time tuition fees and other income result in an overall improvement against budget of c£0.2m.</li> <li>• Overspends in staffing related to increased activity on projects as well as some budgeted vacancy savings unlikely to be met, whilst the Strategic Investment Fund approved posts also contributed to the overspend. Non-pay overspend related to increased project activity as well as a £0.4m Brexit provision.</li> <li>• Net cash for the University was forecast to be c£62.2m by the year end against a budgeted cash position of £58.1m, driven by an underspend in budgeted capital expenditure, higher operating surplus and working capital movements.</li> <li>• Risks and Opportunities were provided on page 8 of the report for information.</li> </ul>
272	<p>The committee received for information the <b>*Treasury Management Report (Nov 2019 – Feb 2020)*</b> SR/11/16, providing a summary of the University's investment management performance.</p>
273	<p>The committee received and noted the <b>Schools and Colleges Liaison Internal Audit Report (2019-20 plan)</b> SR/11/17, referred from Audit and Risk Committee, introduced by the Pro Vice Chancellor – Place &amp; Engagement.</p>

**HUMAN RESOURCES/EMPLOYMENT (H)****H2 FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL (marked below accordingly)**

274	<p>The committee received and discussed the <b>Employee Engagement Survey – Update</b> SR/11/18, presented by the Chief Operating Officer. The following main points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report built on the presentation received by governors at the Strategic Weekend, giving a summary of the actions put in place following the weekend and giving an update on the two agreed priorities: Connected Culture Change Programme and the Wellbeing Strategy.</li> <li>• The report also updated the committee on actions in place at school and service levels, including the “Let’s Talk...” sessions currently underway.</li> </ul> <p>Members commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hannah Gibbard noted the difficulty of ensuring a broad representation of staff from across the University at face-to-face events such as VC Breakfasts, with Liz Barnes underlining that despite this, discussion at the most recent events had been robust and constructive.</li> <li>• Jonathan Vardon highlighted the importance of reacting quickly to employee feedback and ensuring that staff were assured that management were listening to concerns. Liz Barnes confirmed that several “quick wins” had been implemented almost immediately following the engagement survey, including around workload planning, the timing of meetings, transformation days etc.</li> </ul>
275	<p>The committee received and discussed the <b>Connected Culture – Cultural Change Project</b> SR/11/19 presented by the Chief Operating Officer. The following main points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture (how people think, feel and behave – their ingrained practices and attitudes) permeated throughout every part of the University and could either support or destroy the most critical strategic plans, journeys and change initiatives.</li> <li>• It was anticipated that many of the themes arising from the Employee Engagement Survey around leadership would be positively impacted by the cultural change programme that was underway with Elementa.</li> <li>• The University had for the last few months been engaged in the mapping and organisation of this change programme, which would last approximately 18 months. This paper shared with governors the background to the programme and how it would be rolled out, and signposted regular updates to the Sustainability and Resources Committee.</li> </ul> <p>Members commented as follows:</p> <p>NONE</p>
276	<p>The committee considered the <b>*Human Resources &amp; Organisational Development Annual Report 2018-19*</b> SR/11/20, introduced by the Chief Operating Officer. The following main points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The attached report highlighted the main developments for the last academic year, 2018-2019. In addition, it summarised the headline areas of development for the current academic year 2019-2020.</li> <li>• The report this year included a detailed breakdown of the workforce, which was missing from previous reports.</li> <li>• This report was stronger on the areas of scale and impact than previous years, however, it was recognised that this was still underdeveloped.</li> <li>• Finally, early-stage work was being undertaken in developing a ‘people strategy’ which will help inform the development of the 2030 strategy.</li> </ul>
277	<p>The committee considered the <b>*Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2018-19*</b> SR/11/21, introduced by the Chief Operating Officer. The following main points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report highlighted the main developments for the last academic year, 2018-2019 and signposted to the headline areas of development for current academic year 2019-2020.</li> <li>• It reflected the first full academic year in post of the current Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and demonstrated the significant progress made in ‘foundation building’.</li> <li>• Greater emphasis was now required on the measurability of impact post intervention, which was now a greater focus in this academic year, through this year’s developments and would be reflected more in the next Annual Report.</li> </ul>
<b>H3 FOR INFORMATION</b>	
278	<p>The committee received for information a paper on <b>Casualisation of the Workforce</b> SR/11/22 from the Chief Operating Officer, who noted that the report gave an overview of the external context, the University’s requirements and the developments planned for this aspect of our workforce.</p>
279	<p>The committee received and noted the <b>*Review of Organisational Structures and Staff Capability*</b> SR/11/23.</p>



280	The committee received and noted the update on <b>*Cost of Living Pay Award*</b> SR/11/24.
<b>4 ADDITIONAL MATTERS</b>	
281	<p><b>How have we made a positive impact on our students today?</b></p> <p>It was agreed that focus on new building work as part of the campus masterplan; the sustainability strategy; and value for money were highly significant for students.</p>
282	There were no <b>additional matters</b> .
283	<p><b>Items to be referred to Audit and Risk Committee:</b></p> <p><b>NONE</b></p>
284	<p><b>Items to be referred to Board of Governors:</b></p> <p><b>For approval</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Minute 262 – Sustainability Strategy</li> <li>ii. Minute 267 – LGPS Triennial Valuation</li> <li>iii. Minute 268 - Staffordshire University Pension Scheme Update</li> <li>iv. Minute 269 – Review of Travel and Expenses Policy</li> </ul> <p><b>For noting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v. Minute 259 – Catalyst Update</li> <li>vi. Minute 261 – DIL Implementation Report (<i>via email to Board members</i>)</li> <li>vii. Minute 266 – Student Numbers and Projected Financial Impact: In-Year Update</li> </ul>
285	<b>Next meeting:</b> Tues 19 May 2020 (Boardroom, University House)