

MINUTES

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE, SR-17

Date: Tues 8 March 2022

Time: 1300

Location: CA105/6, the Catalyst, Leek Rd

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 (highlighted here in blue), will be redacted before publication of the agenda and minutes on the University's public website.

| Members | | |
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| Professor Martin Jones | Vice Chancellor | P |
| Peter Baines | External Member | P |
| Tony Evans | External Member | Ab |
| Hannah Gibbard | Professional Support Staff Governor | P |
| Mike Herbert | Co-opted Committee Member | P |
| Colin Hughes | External Member | P (T) |
| Ian Jenkinson | Co-opted Committee Member | P |
| Jonathan Vardon (Chair) | External Member | P |
| Anthony Wallace | Student Governor | P (T) |
| In attendance | | |
| Ian Blachford | Chief Operating Officer and Clerk to the Board of Governors | IA (T) |
| Professor Kevin Hetherington | Deputy Vice Chancellor | IA |
| Sally McGill | Chief Financial Officer & Deputy Chief Executive | IA |
| Lauren Rooke | Assistant Clerk to the Board of Governors (<i>minutes</i>) | IA |

P = Present (via Teams); A = Apologies; Ab = Absent; L = Late; IA = In Attendance (via Teams)

| 1 MEETING MANAGEMENT | |
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| 429 | There were no apologies for absence . Tony Evans was absent. |
| 430 | There were no new declarations of interest . |
| 431 | The Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee , 02 Nov 2021 SR/17/01, were confirmed as a true and accurate record. |
| 432 | Matters arising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minute 398 - Membership – Peter Baines and Ian Jenkinson were welcomed to their first meeting of the Committee, along with Professor Kevin Hetherington, the new Deputy Vice Chancellor. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minute 421 - Cultural Change Programme – it was noted that this continued to be implemented at a local level, and that an update would be provided at the next meeting. |
| 433 | The *Overview of annual business 2021-22* SR/17/02 was noted. |
| 434 | <p>The Committee received the Update on the Strategic Plan SR/17/03, presented by the Vice Chancellor. The following main points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the announcement of the appointment of the new Vice Chancellor and discussions at the Governors' Strategic Event in August 2021, work had commenced on the development and content of the University's new Strategic Plan. It had been agreed that this would reflect a significant continuity with the previous Plan and be built around the ambitions and priorities of the new Vice Chancellor with clear and relevant KPIs identified. • This report described the interlinkages between the development of the new Strategic Plan and the supporting Five Year Business Plans for the 3 Schools and 2 Institutes. The current draft Business Plan template was attached as Appendix One. Templates for the crosscutting Enabling Strands were being developed in parallel with the Five-Year Business Plans. • Staff engagement was key and engagement sessions had been held during February. Feedback from these sessions would be shared at the Board of Governors meeting on 6 April 2022. • The priorities shared by the Vice Chancellor in his New Year message to staff provided the core of the new Strategic Plan, which would be framed by the Vision and Mission presented by the Vice Chancellor at interview, i.e., to be consistently the best modern university in the UK. • The visual representation would be updated to reflect the new Strategic Plan - the current working draft of the visualisation was included and was based on a "flywheel" concept. • A similar report had been shared with the Strategy and Performance Committee in February 2022. Final approval would be requested at Board of Governors on 6 April 2022. <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Jenkinson raised a point about readability/accessibility of the visual and it was confirmed that this would be considered before a final version was agreed. • Peter Baines queried the next steps around the resources required to enable to continued implementation of the plan, once launched, and it was confirmed that the significant work was underway on this as part of the enabling strands and five-year business planning. • Ian Jenkinson asked about differentiation between the former triangle and the new Strategic Plan and Martin Jones highlighted that not only were the supporting elements of this plan more visible than in the previous one, but that this plan took a more holistic approach, focusing more on a wider narrative and interlinkage between the various elements. The staff engagement sessions held over the past couple of weeks had helped translate this for the University community, and the response had been extremely positive. It was clear that basic direction of the Strategic Plan was wholly accepted by staff, and it was expected that the proposed culmination statement (which would come to Board of Governors on 6 April) would help clarify issues around implementation. • Hannah Gibbard asked about timeframes and staff engagement and Martin Jones confirmed that work continued in its development until 6th April 2022. • Jonathan Vardon commended the paper and the communication and engagement happening with staff. • Hannah Gibbard highlighted that the changes to the values within the plan were subtle but significant and had been well-received by staff. • Colin Hughes echoed this, noting that the momentum being established was brisk and would need to be maintained. <p>The Committee agreed to refer the Update on the Strategic Plan to the Board of Governors for information.</p> |
| ESTATES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (E) | |
| E2 FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL (marked below accordingly) | |
| 435 | <p>The Committee considered the Estates overview, incl student village update SR/17/04, presented by the Chief Financial Officer & Deputy Chief Executive, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report updated the progress of the following projects, broadly summarised as follows: Health Innovation Centre, Blackheath Lane, Stafford <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practical completion took place at the end of January following several delays due to covid, self-isolation and supply issues (original completion date was mid -October). ○ One outstanding element of the project was the new exit s278 works, delayed by the Council over a dispute on land ownership. Legal was progressing resolution although the impact was minimal with existing ingress /egress routes being used. ○ No impact on teaching, which started in February, and formal opening was scheduled for 25th March 2022. |

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| | <p>New Nursery and Forest School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building watertight in September 2021 with advanced work on internal finishes, 2nd and 3rd M & E Fixes complete. ○ Project delayed mid-November due to outbreak of Covid across all trades. Supply issues encountered with deliveries from Europe in particular specialist equipment such as ground source cooling chambers. ○ Practical completion date delayed to early March 2022 (original completion date late November 2021). ○ The Nursery team had continued using the existing facilities in Winton Square and were currently preparing for recruitment to expand staffing to allow the expected additional admissions to be accepted. <p>Blackstone Recladding and Cadman roof improvement works</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The project had been paused and re-evaluated following the approval of the new strategic approach in the Estates Masterplan. ○ A proposal for a reduced scheme had been developed, seeking to address current poor working conditions and creating new office accommodation in the former Cadman Library (see elsewhere on agenda). <p>Student Village</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Following formal approval by the Board of Governors on Friday 5 March 2021, a design team and advisors had been appointed, and an internal development board established, with extensive consultation with stakeholders taking place. ○ The next decision point would likely be the 29 June 2022 Board meeting, when formal approval would be sought to proceed to external procurement in late Summer 2022. The decision to seek approval would be dependent upon all the underlying requirements for a successful project being in place (outlined in the report). <p>London Digital Institute Expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The project was largely finished and operational now with teaching being delivered. The building works were complete, and the project handed over, although there remained a small number of outstanding items to be resolved - these were being progressed. <p>Squires View</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Despite continued chasing and interventions at Chief Executive level and no apparent issues, our legal team still struggled to get the Council to fully engage in the completion of the transaction. <p>Disposal of Ex-Sports Field off Newcastle Road, Cotes Heath, Eccleshall, Stafford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A paper covering this proposal in more detail was included on today's agenda for the Committee's consideration and approval. <p>Sale of land at Lichfield College for coach park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The sale of the car park to Lichfield District Council had been held up due to an outstanding legal charge South Staffs College had on the title deeds. South Staffs College had subsequently resolved the issue in July thus allowing the sale to progress. However, the previous decision to start planning for the withdrawal from the Lichfield site had been paused pending a review, given its strategic location for north Birmingham. <p>Estates Masterplan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Following agreement by Board of Governors in June 2021 that the future Estates Masterplan should focus all new learning and teaching developments on the Leek Road side of the campus, it had been agreed at the November 2021 Sustainability and Resources Committee that the first enabling project would be the development of a (potentially multi-storey) car park. A wider discussion paper on car parking and the business case for the car park appeared elsewhere on the agenda for discussion. ○ A further update on priorities and sequencing within the Masterplan, as an enabler to the new University Strategy (which is currently under development) would be presented as part of the development of the Strategy. The next update would focus specifically on enabling the Academic Strategy, including responding to proposed developments in the teaching and learning portfolio, the development of research centres and the creation of the enterprise ecosystem. <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mike Herbert queried the issue of planning permission at Blackheath Lane and Sally McGill proposed that a summary note be circulated to the Committee. ● Mike Herbert noted his concerns about the marketability of the scheme being developed. Sally McGill reminded the Committee that a market testing report had been produced on this but acknowledged the unavoidable risk, however low level, when applying for planning permission. |
| 436 | <p>The Committee received for approval the Estates masterplan – business case: car park at Squires View SR/17/05, presented by the Chief Financial Officer & Deputy Chief Executive, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This paper set out the Business Case for the development of a new car park on Squires View as part of the Estates Masterplan. Two options had been considered in detail and were set out in the attached Business Case. ● Option one was the construction of a multi-storey car park with several permutations on size depending on whether to increase, decrease or keep the same the number of available parking spaces. ● Option two, the recommended option, was to create a cheaper and smaller surface car park on Squires View but designed to take the addition of a multi-storey car park at a later date. This option would keep the overall number |

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| | <p>of spaces as approximately the same as existing. This option allowed more capital to be focused on building projects in the short term that would support academic delivery and student recruitment. It would still allow the removal of car parking from the central part of the campus, thus creating a green heart but would retain the flexibility in design to allow for the addition of a multi-storey car park at a later date. It would also allow future demand for parking to be re-assessed in the future in the light of changes in government policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both options presented a further opportunity for the University to make a positive impact on its carbon footprint. In determining the size of the proposed car park, consideration had been given to the University's future car parking strategy, weighing up the balance between the University's sustainability strategy and the need to avoid a negative impact on student experience and recruitment. • Once approval was given to proceed, following design and procurement a contract award report would be brought back to Governors for final approval prior to commencement of works. <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sally McGill highlighted that option one had originally been estimated at around £9m but costing was currently coming back closer to £12m. • Ian Jenkinson noted his concerns around the loss of any car parking spaces and Sally McGill clarified that the preferred option (two) would not lead to a reduction in spaces. Nevertheless, a shift in demand patterns meant that the mature commuter market was falling away locally, and was due to fall further – option two would allow some flexibility to monitor the demographic shift and respond appropriately. • Jonathan Vardon noted that societal pressures on reducing transport levels and costs were seemingly increasing all the time but that this should be balanced with the practical needs of our demographic (and likely future demographic). • Anthony Wallace asked about the reappropriation of excess funds, if the cheaper option two proceeded, and Sally McGill clarified that these funds would be directed towards our academic estate, to the benefit of students. <p>The Committee approved the proposal for option two in the Business case: car parking at Squire's View (surface car park).</p> |
| 437 | <p>The Committee received for approval the Estates masterplan – business case: refurbishment of former Cadman Library space for office accommodation SR/17/06, presented by the Chief Financial Officer & Deputy Chief Executive, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This paper set out the Business Case for the creation of new modern office accommodation in the former library space in the Cadman building (replacing the previous proposed scheme to refurbish Blackstone) and provided an alternative and cheaper solution by refurbishing the vacant former library space in the Cadman building. • In the longer term the Estates Masterplan did include for potential provision of new office accommodation on Leek Road, but it was recognised that priority would be given to projects that supported student recruitment and therefore any new office build was likely to be potentially 10 years away. • With more staff spending a proportion of their time working remotely (as per the University's Blended Working Framework) both demand and type of office space in the future would change, with a shift to more flexible office provision. • The project would allow floors 1 to 3 of Blackstone to be vacated and subsequently mothballed or alternatively used for storage space. The ground floor of Blackstone would continue to house the Creative Library until an alternative location was identified. (Library Services have expressed a desire to move to a more central and accessible location). • The closure of the majority of Blackstone would save approximately in £45k pa in energy costs as well as reducing our carbon footprint by approximately 75 tonnes pa. In addition, if used as a store this could realise further savings against costs currently being paid for storage. • The project itself entailed refurbishing the internal spaces and providing modern office furniture, improving power, lighting and ventilation and upgrading the digital infrastructure to allow for staff usage. It also included the elements of roof repair for Cadman and Blackstone that were in the previous scheme although the Blackstone repair would now be the minimal needed to ensure the building remained weather tight. • Procurement was proposed to start in late March and subject to UEB/Governors' approval in June, work would commence in the summer with a completion date late 2022. • The estimated cost of the project was £2.976m (including the roof repairs). The last iteration of the Blackstone refurbishment project had had an estimated total cost of £9.1m, of which the internal office refurbishment element was £3.442m. <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Herbert asked for clarification on the location of the entrance shown in the plans and this was provided. |

- Jonathan Vardon asked about the maintenance costs and Sally McGill confirmed that these had been factored in to our long-term maintenance plan.

The Committee approved the proposal for the **Refurbishment of former Cadman Library space for office accommodation.**

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| 441 | <p>The Committee received for approval the Accommodation strategy SR/17/10, presented by the Chief Financial Officer & Deputy Chief Executive, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The paper set out the proposed approach to residential accommodation at each of the University's key locations: Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford and HereEast, London. • Whilst a significant proportion of the University's student community would be considered 'commuting students', around 45% of the University's students (not including those studying through Collaborative Academic Partners) lived on or near the campuses, within student communities, and not in a family group – the strategy was concerned with this latter group. • The report summarised the student accommodation context on the University's Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford and London campuses and highlighted that its vision was to create inclusive and vibrant student residential communities which would support recruitment and retention, especially of Level 4 Home students and International students. • The report set out the University's objectives in terms of accommodation, as well as the proposed enablers and KPIs on which the strategy's success would be measured. <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Baines asked for clarification on whether proceeding with a public-private funding partnership was being proposed for approval and Sally McGill clarified that the current Accommodation Strategy only proposed the vision for accommodation, potentially via public-private partnership, on the Leek Road campus, and that the specific decision around the partnership itself would come to 29 June 2022 Board of Governors. • Kevin Hetherington asked about interlinkage with the international strategy and Sally McGill noted that whilst this could be included via the Equality Impact Assessment that would form part of the detailed proposal that came to Board, she would welcome Kevin's input on this. • Anthony Wallace asked about accommodation for international students with families coming to study at Staffordshire, and about the role of the Union's GreenPad service within the strategy. Sally McGill noted that she would discuss both points with the Chief Executive of the Students' Union when they met next week. • Ian Jenkinson asked about the void rate and Sally McGill clarified that this had been unusually high for nearly two years due to the pandemic, which had discouraged 2021 starters from applying for accommodation across the sector. Martin Jones added that the University accepted that its current issues with quality were impacting on the void rate. • Jonathan Vardon suggested a potential working session around accommodation and associated strategies such as car parking at an appropriate point. <p>The Committee approved the Accommodation strategy and agreed to refer this to the Board of Governors for information.</p> |
| 442 | <p>The Committee received the Sustainability update SR/17/11, presented by the Chief Financial Officer & Deputy Chief Executive, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This paper provided an update on the progress made since the last report to Committee in March 2021, specifically focused on progress against the key metrics within scopes 1 and 2 (as set out in Appendix A), the proposed refresh of the strategy, and the external environment (the Department for Education's (DfE's) Draft Sustainability Climate Change Strategy, published in November 2021 would set the Department's strategy through to 2030). <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Vardon asked about cross-University engagement with the overall sustainability agenda and Sally McGill noted that although the past two years had led to a slight unavoidable shift in focus, the overall agenda was very much accepted by the University community. Effectively embedding this continued to be the challenge. • Jonathan Vardon highlighted the importance of effective and appropriate communication to all stakeholders to help engage and motivate, using concrete examples of what could be achieved and monitored in the short-term. Sally McGill agreed that this approach would be helpful, and Martin Jones highlighted that the close working relationship with the Students' Union would be key to this. |
| E3 FOR INFORMATION | |
| 443 | The Committee received for information the *Statutory compliance update* SR/17/12. |
| 444 | The Committee received for information the *Estates: asbestos survey of campus* SR/17/13. |
| 445 | <p>The Committee received for information two *Internal audit reports* (<i>referred from Audit and Risk Committee 25 October 2021</i>):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> *Estates compliance: gas and legionella internal audit report* SR/17/14a *UUK/Guild HE Code of Practice for the Management of Student Housing – Compliance Review* SR/17/14b |
| FINANCIALS (F) | |
| F2 FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL (marked below accordingly) | |
| 446 | <p>The Committee received for discussion a paper on Financial scenario-planning SR/17/15, presented by the Chief Financial Officer & Deputy Chief Executive, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The paper was a first draft of the Finance Strategy, part of the enabling strand 'Finance and the Business Model' for the new University Strategy, which would support the development of Staffordshire University through to 2030. • The paper's objectives were to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set out a financial vision for the University ○ Identify the key enablers for that vision ○ Identify key dependencies with other aspects of the University's Strategy ○ Set the finance strategy in the context of current potential financial scenarios ○ Identify the actions required to respond to those scenarios and to achieve the vision • The University's vision was to be financially sustainable, defined as being able to generate sufficient cash to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Invest to realise the University's strategy as set out in the new Strategic Plan 2030 |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete the 2030 masterplan (physical and digital infrastructure) including being a Carbon Net Zero organisation (scopes 1 and 2) by 2030 ○ Deal with the long-term liabilities arising from the LGPS pension scheme ○ Service and repay the existing bank loans and satisfy the bank covenants ○ Satisfy any external regulatory requirements (e.g., OfS liquidity test) <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Jones contextualised the paper by giving a verbal update on Michele Donelan’s recent post-Augar Review speech, noting that three OfS consultations were currently in train. • Jonathan Vardon commended the paper and noted that there would be times when the University would need to “course-correct”, regardless of scenario. Colin Hughes echoed this, underlining the importance of remaining flexible in a turbulent landscape. • Peter Baines proposed the addition of detail on the growing difference between income and costs, and Colin Hughes noted his belief that the University should retain a surplus of 5%. • Ian Jenkinson asked about the reduction in mature learners, noting that most engineering institutions were increasingly requiring their members to gain additional qualifications. Martin Jones confirmed that the mature undergraduate market was diminishing slightly, but the postgraduate/CPD mature market would see growth. (Sally McGill highlighted the funding issue, given that postgraduate loans amounted to 50% of course costs, and noted that the room for expansion was therefore limited.) <p>The Committee approved the Financial strategy set out in the scenario-planning paper.</p> |
| 447 | <p>The Committee received for approval the paper on Bad debt write-offs SR/17/16, introduced by the Chief Financial Officer & Deputy Chief Executive, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The paper sought to obtain authorisation to write off debtor balances. These balances had previously been passed to our debt collection agent STA, who had attempted to collect the debt but had advised this was not economical to pursue. The total was £466,831.81 (including a total of £2,785.63 of debts under £100 shown in Appendix A and B) and a breakdown of the value of debt was given in the report. • In accordance with the current Financial Regulations, the Chief Financial Officer was able to approve write offs under £5k. Debts between £5k and £20k could be approved by the Vice Chancellor and anything over this needed Board of Governors approval. Full details of the proposed write offs was given in Appendix A. <p>There were no comments from Members or attendees.</p> <p>The Committee approved the Bad debt write-offs and agreed to refer this to the Board of Governors for formal approval.</p> |
| F3 FOR INFORMATION | |
| 448 | <p>The Committee received for information the *Half-year management accounts to 31 Jan 2022* SR/17/17, introduced by the Chief Financial Officer & Deputy Chief Executive.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to refer the *Half-year management accounts to 31 Jan 2021* to the Board of Governors for information.</p> |
| 449 | <p>The Committee received for information the *Treasury management report* SR/17/18, introduced by the Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Chief Executive.</p> |
| HUMAN RESOURCES/EMPLOYMENT (H) | |
| H2 FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL (marked below accordingly) | |
| 450 | <p>The Committee received for discussion the HR and organisational development annual report 2020-21 SR/17/19, presented by the Chief Operating Officer, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report highlighted the main developments for the last academic year, 2020-2021 and signposted the headline areas of development for the current academic year 2021-2022. It noted that the University had delivered the core commitments made during that academic year, despite the significant disruption and additional workloads caused by the pandemic. • The report also included a detailed breakdown of the workforce, as per previous years, which was the focus of an annual presentation to the Creating Connections Group, explaining the changes in our workforce profile and sector comparisons where appropriate. It also outlined our ambition to rebalance our staff profile away from professional support staff roles, through greater use of automation, and greater investment in roles contributing to academic |

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| | <p>delivery. This macro level analysis was then translated to each of the Schools and Services, working with their HR Business Partners, to inform their workforce discussions.</p> <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Jenkinson asked for clarification on staff to student ratios and Sally McGill clarified that overall student numbers had been bolstered significantly in recent years by apprenticeships. Undergraduate student numbers were flat (and the University would face a challenge in 2022-23 if this did not increase). • Peter Baines asked about the local labour market and staff retention. Ian Blachford noted that we had struggled to fill some senior management roles, particularly within Professional Support – there had been a reduction in numbers and, in some cases, in the quality of applications. The biggest challenge was for senior leadership team roles, especially given current expectations around working from home. The University had not seen marked issues in staff turnover nor in poaching from other institutions or sector (e.g., healthcare). • Regarding the Cost of Living pay award, it was noted that a UCEA consultation was currently in place but that the sector was becoming more fragmented in terms of affordability. UCU was currently striking in some institutions and there was a backdrop of disquiet. <p>The Committee agreed to refer the HR and organisational development annual report 2020-21 to the Board of Governors for information.</p> |
| 451 | <p>The Committee received for discussion the Equality & diversity annual report 2020-21 SR/17/20, presented by the Chief Operating Officer, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report, which highlighted 2020-21 developments and summarised projected areas of focus for the next year, had developed in format from previous reports and was now professionally produced, helping highlight the importance of the inclusion agenda to the University. • The report had also developed in terms of content, which now reflected not only the foundation-building and governance of the previous reports, but also included the work the University was undertaking towards the Race Equality Charter Mark (RECM) action plan for both the staff and student experience. <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Vardon commended the report, which brought into focus an extremely important area of the organisation. <p>The Committee agreed to refer the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion annual report 2019-20 to the Board of Governors for information.</p> |
| 452 | <p>The Committee received for discussion the Pensions update SR/17/21, presented by the Chief Operating Officer, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following changes made in recent years, from August 2021 all new members of staff had been employed by the University's subsidiary and eligible to join SUPS, the University's defined contribution pension scheme (replacing the previous arrangement of being employed directly by the University and eligibility to join the TPS or the LGPS). • The University and UCU were currently at an impasse regarding the reforms (as anticipated during their implementation) and UCU had therefore moved to ballot members on industrial action, with the ballot ending on 11 March 2022. (A copy of the ballot paper is attached at Appendix A.) • UCU was balloting on both full industrial action and action short of a strike (partial performance). The University had a well-established policy in place on not accepting full strike action nor partial performance and as such pay would be withheld from staff in this eventuality. • Of note was the ballot paper and what staff are being asked to ballot upon. The ballot proposition was not about pension reform and indeed did not mention pensions at all. Instead, it referred to concerns regarding the lack of cohesion and fragmentation of the academic workforce as a result of two employers, the University and the subsidiary. (The reason for this was a legal technicality, explained further at the meeting.) • Ordinarily, the University would not respond to a ballot paper being circulated. However, given the content it was felt important to educate the staff being balloted with a clear understanding on what they were being balloted upon, so that staff did not complete the ballot on pensions issues (Appendix B). It had also been made clear to UCU that the University expected them to advise members accordingly on the matter on which they are voting. • UCU requested a meeting with the University but were unable to attend at the times proposed by the University. At a local level the UCU branch have been asked what remedy they are seeking to resolve the need for industrial action, but this remains unclear. <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colin Hughes noted his satisfaction that other HEIs were seriously considering the same steps that we had taken around pensions. Anthony Wallace highlighted that that the Students Union had been approached by UCU on this and the SU would be remaining impartial, to avoid impacting further on students' learning following a difficult two years. <p>The Committee agreed to refer the Pensions update to Board of Governors for information.</p> |
| H3 FOR INFORMATION | |
| 453 | The *Review of organisational structures and staff capability* SR/17/22 was received for information. |
| 454 | The *Cost of Living pay award* SR/17/23 was received for information. |
| 4 ADDITIONAL MATTERS | |
| 455 | <p>How have we made a positive impact on our students today?</p> <p>It was agreed that engaging with broader community on strategy and vision, and on sustainability strategy, was crucial to the successful implementation of these. Anthony Wallace highlighted that it was encouraging that students' input remained part of the strategic conversation.</p> |
| 456 | There were no additional matters . |
| 457 | <p>Items to be referred to Audit and Risk Committee:</p> <p>NONE</p> |
| 458 | <p>Items to be referred to Board of Governors:</p> <p>Approval</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Minute 434 – Update on the Strategic Plan Minute 436 – Estates masterplan – business case: car park at Squires View Minute 437 - Estates masterplan – business case: refurbishment of former Cadman Library space for office accommodation Minute 440 – Cotes Heath – Disposal of Land Minute 447 – Bad Debt Write-Offs <p>Information</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Minute 441 – Accommodation Strategy Minute 448 - Management accounts to 31 Jan 2022 *Minute 450 – Human Resources and Organisational Development Annual Report 2020-21* *Minute 451 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2020-21* Minute 452 – Pensions update |
| 459 | Next meeting: Tuesday 14 Jun 2022 (The Catalyst) |