

APPROVED

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 17 NOVEMBER
2025 IN THE CAYLEY ROOM (ROOM 152-153), REGENT STREET AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

PRESENT:	T James (Chair) J Ball ¹ A Bertone	Professor P Bonfield T Toumazis ^{Error! Bookmark not defined.} (Deputy Chair)
IN ATTENDANCE:	M Chan (Secretary) K Fitzpatrick K Kinsella E McMillan (Clerk to the Court)	C Molloy N Nelson (Minute 25.20) S Shabbir (Observer) D Stubbs
APOLOGIES:	N Gururani	I Wilmot

25.15 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 25.15.1 Members noted the apologies recorded above.
- 25.15.2 Members did not declare any conflicts of interest for the business on the agenda.
- 25.15.3 The Chair noted that a fuller discussion on the Researcher Development Concordat annual report 2024-25 and action plan (Minute 25.24) would take place at the meeting on 12 February 2026.

25.16 STRATEGIC UPDATE – PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- 25.16.1 Ken Kinsella - Director of Estates Planning and Services (EPS) - presented the update on progress in delivering the Estates Strategy and major capital projects (Document RES 251117A).
- 25.16.2 The Director (EPS) provided an update on the sale of International House and confirmed the scope of the enhanced due diligence checks. Members discussed the sale and noted that:
- (a) A final report recommending sale to [redacted], with details on all due diligence checks addressing reputational and legal considerations, will be presented to the University Executive Board (UEB) on 25 November 2025 and then provided to the Chair, Resources Committee and the Chair of the Court of Governors.
 - (b) The Director (EPS) acknowledged there is a small risk that the buyer may reduce their offer; however, based on the current progress and legal instructions, there is clear intent to proceed at the agreed price.
- 25.16.3 The Chair thanked the Director (EPS) for the Estates Strategy update and raised concern about sufficient funding for capital projects, noting that current spending of [redacted] leaves only around 3% contingency against the approved estates capital budget.
- 25.16.4 A member highlighted the need to reference Zone29 observations against original project sign-off costs to maintain perspective and account for unforeseen issues. The Director (EPS) confirmed that planning for a lessons learnt exercise and the post-occupancy evaluation report is underway.
- 25.16.5 The Vice-Chancellor highlighted a small risk for the Immersive Experience Lab project if funding from the Office for Students (OfS) is not spent within the specified time period. The Director (EPS) assured readiness to spend within the agreed limits, with the Estates and Finance teams managing risk mitigation.

¹ Attended via Teams.

25.17 STRATEGIC UPDATE – DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

- 25.17.1 Kim Fitzpatrick – the newly appointed Director of Information Systems and Support (ISS) – introduced herself and assured the Committee her responsibility for digital delivery at the University, leveraging her digital consultancy background. The Chair welcomed the Director (ISS) on behalf of the committee.
- 25.17.2 The Director (ISS) presented an update on progress in delivering the Digital Strategy (Document RES 251117A1).
- 25.17.3 The Chair thanked the Director (ISS) for the update and emphasised the need for a more strategic overview in future reports, noting that the current operational focus lacks broader context. The Director (ISS) agreed with the Chair's view.
- 25.17.3.1 **ACTION Director (ISS)** to enhance strategic oversight in future digital strategic update reports.

25.18 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2025

- 25.18.1 David Stubbs - Director of Finance and Commercial Services (FCS) - presented the management accounts report for September 2025 (Document RES 251117B), noting that tuition fees for 2025-26 are not yet included and that the report shows a deficit of [redacted], slightly better than the forecasted deficit of [redacted].
- 25.18.2 In response to a query about student number assumptions in the budget, the Director (FCS) confirmed this will be addressed through consideration of the five-year budget forecast later on the agenda and noted that in October the University received tuition fee income of approximately [redacted].

25.19 FIVE-YEAR FORECAST INCLUDING THE OFS WORKBOOK AND COMMENTARY

- 25.19.1 The Director (FCS) presented the five-year financial forecast for 2025 to 2030 (Document RES 251117Ci), which will inform the OfS workbook return and accompanying financial commentary (Document RES 251117Cii) due in January 2026.
- 25.19.2 Members held a detailed discussion concerning the robustness of the assumptions and methodology.
- 25.19.3 Members raised concerns about the effectiveness of the forecasting model in light of current sector pressures and the risks highlighted in recent OfS and HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency) reports.
- 25.19.4 Members provided constructive challenge, and the Executive Team responded comprehensively to each point raised, offering clear clarification and additional assurance where needed.
- 25.19.5 The Vice-Chancellor commended the global recruitment and admissions team for achieving improved outcomes this year despite a challenging external environment.
- 25.19.6 The Chair noted that the external auditors had issued a clean, unqualified audit opinion. Members also welcomed the positive feedback from the recent OfS engagement, during which the University's responses were considered thorough, and the OfS expressed confidence in the institution's systems and controls.
- 25.19.6.1 **ACTION Vice-Chancellor** to invite the Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance/Deputy Chair of the University Planning Committee to brief governors who requested more information about the student number projection model and planning process.
- 25.19.7 **AGREED** Following discussion, members recommend the five-year forecast workbook and commentary to the Court of Governors for approval to submit to the OfS.
- 25.19.8 **AGREED** Members identified the following conditions to ensure continued assurance regarding the resilience and realism of the University's financial planning:

- Further examination of the assumptions and modelling underpinning the forecast.
- A more detailed breakdown of the factors driving the financial trajectory.
- Regular updates against key trends, including early-warning indicators.
- Enhanced reporting on mitigations should sector-wide risks materialise.

25.20 SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLBEING ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

25.20.1 Niamh Nelson - Head of Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHW) - presented the annual SHW report 2024-25 (Document RES 2411173Di and Dii), highlighting the priorities, challenges and performance on the key focus areas such as sickness absence, mental-health related sickness, performance development review and internal audit outcomes.

25.20.2 The Committee welcomed the progress made in strengthening training delivery, fire safety, CDM (Construction, Design and Management) processes and the wider visibility of SHW activities across the University, as detailed in the SHW annual report 2024-25.

25.20.3 The Committee noted two areas where further work would support stronger assurance:

- **Incident and Near-Miss Reporting:** Reporting levels have improved in places but remain uneven across Schools and Professional Service departments. Greater consistency will help provide a clearer picture of operational safety.
- **Internal Audit Follow-Through:** Recent internal audits resulted in limited assurance. The Committee acknowledged the improvement work already underway and encouraged continued focus on embedding local processes such as record-keeping, risk assessments and monitoring.

25.20.3.1 **ACTION** Head of SHW to (a) implement a more consistent reporting approach across Schools and Professional Service departments; (b) present a consolidated action plan addressing internal audit recommendations at the next meeting; and (c) provide an update on mandatory SHW training compliance.

25.20.4 The Committee expressed support for the SHW team and reaffirmed its commitment to the ongoing development of a positive, proactive safety culture. The Head of SHW also welcomed the internal auditor's recognition that the University has established a positive culture around SHW.

25.20.5 In response to a query on the University Mental Health Charter Award, the Head of SHW confirmed that a decision on the readiness for submission will be made by December 2025, with consultation underway with students and the Students' Union.

25.20.6 The Chair thanked the Head of SHW for joining the discussion.

25.21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

25.21.1 **AGREED** Members confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2025 (Document RES 251117E) as an accurate record of the meeting.

25.21.2 Members noted the summary of progress against actions and matters arising from previous meetings (Document RES 251117F).

25.22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

25.22.1 Members did not raise any other items of business.

25.23 MEETING EVALUATION

25.23.1 A member commended the Committee for its respectful handling of the earlier budget forecast debates. The Chair and the Vice-Chancellor welcomed members' questions and challenges and emphasised that clarity improved through discussions.

25.24 RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT CONCORDAT ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25 AND ACTION PLAN

25.24.1 Members noted the Researcher Development Concordat annual report 2024-25 and action plan (Document RES 251117G). As noted earlier in the meeting, a fuller discussion will be held at the meeting on 12 February 2026.

25.24.1.1 **ACTION Committee Secretary** to include the Researcher Development Concordat annual report 2024-25 and action plan in the agenda of the February 2026 meeting.

25.25 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

*Thursday 15 January 2026 at 4:00pm***

Thursday 12 February 2026 at 4:00pm

Thursday 23 April 2026 at 4:00pm

Thursday 18 June 2026 at 4:00pm

Members may participate in meetings via Microsoft Teams or onsite.

** Provisional – only goes ahead if required to consider urgent major project proposals.