



The Council, 8 July 2019

Report of the Estates Committee

Date: 16 May 2019

Chair: Mr Adrian Belton

Secretary: Ms Kay Green

1 **Science Estates Development Framework (SEDF)**

The Committee was informed that HLM Property Management Services had prepared a framework document in order to address issues with the Science estate. An explanation was given to how this fitted with the Estates Strategy and delivery of the capital plan. An outline of current Faculty priorities was provided which included the major projects either on site or in planning, in order to set the scene for potential investment.

The Committee was informed of the current challenges facing the Science estate:

- Psychology in temporary accommodation off-site – detrimental to the student experience
- Animal Research facilities requiring essential investment to meet Home Office requirements
- Chemistry West subsidence issues
- Chemistry North major infrastructure investment required
- Silo Teaching exacerbating inefficient timetabling practices in poor facilities – 12% utilisation in Chemistry teaching laboratories
- Unattractive estate – falling behind our competitors
- Legacy estate hampering research
- Overall, an inefficient and costly estate to manage

The vision for the Faculty was to stop the decline in student numbers whilst improving the student tariff.

The Committee noted that in order to maintain the Science estate for the next period, ensure compliance was met and deal with known building defects, it was anticipated that the unavoidable costs would be significant. This however would not address the modernisation of the estate which was now proving detrimental to modern research and teaching practices and to the recruitment of staff and students.

The SEDF proposed that a new Teaching Laboratory building be developed utilising the flexible S-Lab arrangement on the site adjacent (west) to the University Tram stop. This would provide multi-disciplinary teaching laboratory facilities allowing for better more effective utilisation. The Committee wished to understand the impact of the proposed building on adjacent occupants of the proposed site and hoped that the development would maximise the opportunity that the site afforded.

This development would free space up around the Science estate which would provide the flexibility for consolidation of activities ultimately allowing the Faculty to reduce their overall footprint. It was recognised that providing a modern teaching environment was crucial for attracting students to Sheffield. This would require wholesale change on how science is delivered which was recognised as an exciting opportunity for the Faculty. It was noted that other institutions had already developed such facilities and seen their intake increase accordingly.

Overall the implementation of the SEDF would save c. 15,000sqm of legacy estate, whilst adding c.7,000sqm of new teaching and associated facilities. The impact on Science would be a leaner more efficient and modern estate suitable for research and delivering modern science activities.

The Committee considered the SEDF to be an excellent piece of work in terms of the analysis done and suggested that the proposed strategy provided the latitude to make the necessary improvements to the Science estates in order to reverse the overall decline and improve its standing. The Committee commended the analysis undertaken within EFM and the Faculty.

2 Estates Strategy Refresh

The Committee was reminded of the ambitions previously set out in the Estates Strategy 2016-2021 and a reprise was given on what had been achieved so far over that period. It was reported that the experiences and knowledge gained from the development of the Diamond would be reviewed and used for any future Science developments, particularly the proposed teaching laboratory building.

It was recommended that the quality of the estate and public realm through the past two estates strategies and their positive effect for health and well-being be a priority for all future strategies.

The Committee considered that progress to the condition of the built environment made through the Estates Strategy had been transformational for the University and should be commended. Whilst it was recognised that the capital plan was a little behind due to the necessary capital pause, it was hoped that impetus would be re-gained in the near future.

The Committee noted the substantial progress made and the strong coherence in the SEDF and looked forward to seeing it progress through the Governance process.

3 Capital Programme Update

The Committee received presentations on large developments currently on site. A separate Capital report is included in the papers for July Council.

4 Summary

Council are asked to note the content of this report.