



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Office
Of The
President &
Vice-Chancellor.

UEB/2018/0901/01

Minutes University Executive Board

- Date:** 19 December 2017
- Present:** Professor G Valentine (GV) (in the Chair),
Professor Sir Keith Burnett (KB); Professor J Derrick (JD),
Mrs H J Dingle (HJD), Mr A Dodman (AD),
Professor Dawn Hadley (DH), Professor M J Hounslow (MJH),
Professor W Morgan (WM), Professor D Petley (DNP),
Professor Dame Pamela J Shaw (PJS), Professor C Watkins (CW)
- In attendance:** Ms G Tait (GT) (item 4); Ms T Wray (TW) (items 4 and 5);
Mr R Sykes (RS) and Ms R Birch (RHB) (item 6)
- Apologies:** Dr T Strike (TS)
- Secretary:** Mr D T Swinn (DTS)

1. Minutes of UEB held on 12 December 2017 (UEB/2017/1219/01)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 December were approved as an accurate record, subject to one amendment to item 10(e).

Matters Arising:

- TW was liaising with the Director of Strategic Projects and Policy to include AMRC in work on visual branding.
- DP had given a presentation to Senate on 13 December about preparations for REF2021.

2. Notes of UEB away day held on 5 December 2017 (UEB/2017/1219/02)

This item was deferred until January 2018 when the notes would be presented alongside an action plan to inform future UEB discussions.

3. Report of the Efficient Estate project (UEB/2017/1219/03)

- 3.1 UEB received the report of the discovery and design phase of the project, noting the findings and considering a series of recommendations to be implemented during a second phase of the project. It was noted that space costs as a proportion of attributable income were variable across the faculties. Analysis had also shown that the University's costs were higher than might be expected compared to the sector and that estates utilisation was inefficient.
- 3.2 Particular attention was drawn to recommendations relating to a lack of awareness amongst heads of academic and professional services departments about efficiency of

estates use and associated costs; the potential need for additional resources to facilitate an increased faculty role in estates planning; establishing a task and finish group to consider more efficient use of teaching laboratories; reflecting on PGR student needs; and investigating more use of interactive and collaborative office space.

- 3.3 UEB welcomed the report and recognised the importance of faculties and the University taking ownership of estates and space issues to support departmental planning, in conjunction with EFM. It was necessary that the cost of space was also taken into account by professional services, in the context of supporting the efficient and sustainable delivery of strategic objectives. On behalf of UEB, GV thanked all of those who had been involved in the work, notably Richard Jones and Claire Green for the efforts in preparing the report.

3.4 **Actions:**

- (a) The report would be considered in a broader context at the UEB Away Day on 30 January, with colleagues from EFM and Corporate Communications in attendance;
- (b) Discussion at the Away Day would include action to be taken and the means by which to do so, considering existing groups and related initiatives;
- (c) An action plan would be developed for departments and faculties, using case studies and examples, with supporting staff communications.

4. Proposals from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

(UEB/2017/1219/04)

(Gill Tait and Tracy Wray in attendance for this item)

- 4.1 UEB considered a series of 12 complementary proposals set out in the related paper sought to create a common operating framework for ED&I across the University; create more consistency in approaches to ED&I activity; offer clarity with regards to accountability and responsibilities; and accelerate progress by eliminating duplication of effort and enabling sharing of good practice. These proposals built on changes made to the constitution of the ED&I Committee in 2016 and the identification of key institutional challenges in this area. They also took into account increased emphasis on institutional performance in respect of equality, diversity and social mobility, and related developments elsewhere in the sector.
- 4.2 It was noted that equality and diversity would be key features of an evidence-based evaluation of research environment in REF 2021. The University had 26 departments holding an Athena Swan charter but there were different drivers across STEM and non-STEM disciplines. Although the administrative process required for Athena Swan applications was burdensome, UEB recognised the value of the process in facilitating reflection on ED&I matters and developing action plans to overcome challenges and deliver objectives.
- 4.3 Clarification was provided that the proposed allowances of staff-time and buy-outs could be met through workload allocation models with the exception of the Chairs of Faculty ED&I Committees, which would be a Faculty cost.
- 4.4 Subject to the points below, UEB endorsed the proposals.
- Actions:**
- (a) Proposal (b) would be amended to refer to 'significant' reviews or decisions requiring an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure proportionality;
 - (b) All departments would be encouraged to undertake an initial review and reflection, and the Faculties of Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences would

consider further whether to seek formal Athena Swan recognition;

- (c) FDRIs would be asked to reflect on the implications of requirements about research environment in REF 2021;
- (d) Work to improve the staff datasets (including professional staff) available to departments and faculties would continue, with additional thought given to capacity issues if all departments required data;
- (e) Mandatory staff training would be introduced and, in due course, appropriate staff could receive supplementary additional training;
- (d) ED&IC would report to Council on these proposals and the outcomes of the UEB discussion.

5. Sustainability proposals

(UEB/2017/1219/05)

(Tracy Wray in attendance for this item)

- 5.1 UEB received and endorsed proposals for a future strategic approach to sustainability, as well as supporting operational and governance arrangements. These proposals were informed by the work of the Sustainability Task and Finish Group, which included representation from faculties, professional services and the Students' Union, and would facilitate greater coherence and awareness-raising of a range of activity with a clear link to UEB, a senior academic champion and operational leads.

5.2 Actions:

- (a) An operational group would be established, including colleagues from Procurement;
- (b) The launch of the Sustainability Strategy would incorporate the use of case studies and highlight the current public value web pages;

6. Closed Minute and Paper

7. Round Table

- (a) Planning Round Meetings: MJH reported that he had held constructive and positive meetings with all Engineering departments.
- (b) Social Sciences: CW reported the achievements of Professor Jackie Harrison (Journalism), who had been appointed as a UNESCO Chair, and Professor Alasdair Rae (Urban Studies and Planning) who had been awarded the Royal Statistical Society's 'Statistic of the Year'.
- (c) Medicine, Dentistry and Health: PJS reported that the Department of Infection, Immunity and Cardiovascular Disease had been awarded two British Heart Foundation Intermediate Fellowships, worth £1.2m in total. This represented a success for the Faculty's Being the Best We Can campaign to identify and support more junior academics to realise their potential.