

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

22 September 2025 in room 209, Sutherland Building, City Campus West.

CONFIRMED SUMMARY MINUTES

Contact Georgina Bailes georgina.bailes@northumbria.ac.uk, Secretary to the Board of Governors, with any queries about these Summary Minutes.

Present: H Fairfoul (Chair), Dr B Bartoli, Dr R Blackman-Woods, Prof A Long, M Larsen, Prof J McLaughlin
 Observers: A Fellows, M Udeze
 Secretary: G Bailes, B Lenney (Assistant Secretary)
 In attendance: H Bower [to FR25/02], J Coffey [FR25/03], Dr S Corbett, Prof T Lawson, L Mayfield, Prof G Wynn [FR25/10]

MAIN ITEMS DISCUSSED/DECIDED ON AT THE MEETING

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| 1 | <p><u>Chair's Opening</u>
 The Chair welcomed Mary Udeze to her first meeting of the Committee and noted that it was James McLaughlin's last meeting of the Committee, thanking him for his contribution.</p> <p><u>Vice-Chancellor's Horizon Scanning [Oral Report]</u>
 The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive provided an update on national, regional and local sector and policy developments and their implications for Northumbria. The Vice-Chancellor and the Chair of the Board of Governors would be attending the party conferences over the forthcoming weeks. Kent and Greenwich universities were merging to create a 'super university' and while the OfS welcomed the move and suggested more universities may explore similar options as they face economic challenges, it was not something that Northumbria University was considering. Work to progress the University's plans for income growth and cost management were on-going with sessions for all staff on University Financial Literacy planned as part of the People Engagement Plan and new grants awarded showed a positive trajectory of research growth. Trade Unions were balloting members on the 2025/26 national pay negotiations outcome, UCU were conducting an aggregate ballot whilst UNISON were disaggregated, though the University had implemented the pay award of 1.4% put to the Unions following UCEA advice. The Vice-chancellor had been appointed to the UCEA board for a term of four years from 1 October 2025. Linda Lightly (Fashion Technician) was shortlisted for Outstanding Technician of the Year from the Times Higher Education Awards, Dr Elizabeth Griffiths (Law School) had received a National Teaching Fellowship from Advance HE, and seven researchers from various disciplines across the University had been selected for the REF2029 panel. The Committee noted the update and noted that the Kent and Greenwich model was the first of its kind in recent years, the situation would be monitored by the University over time and observations would be shared with the Committee.</p> |
| 2 | <p><u>Financial Planning and Improvement</u>
 <u>Student Recruitment 2025/26</u> [FR25/01 & Presentation]
 The Committee noted an update on Student Recruitment for 2025/26.</p> <p><u>Tuition Fees, Scholarships, Bursaries and Discounts 2026/27</u> [FR25/02]
 The Committee noted and approved the Tuition Fees, Scholarships, Bursaries and Discounts 2026/27 proposal, noting that the University paid for syndicated market research to inform fee positioning and offers to incentivise potential students to choose Northumbria.</p> <p><u>Estates Delivery Plan</u> [FR25/03]
 The Committee noted the Estates Delivery Plan, noting that maintaining an appropriate level of student support and experience was considered a priority and all work would be planned around key academic points to minimise disruption to students, and endorsed the Estates Delivery Plan for consideration by Board of Governors on 13 October.</p> |

	<p><u>Impact of Cost Savings and Efficiencies</u> [FR25/04] The Committee noted an update on the impact of recent cost savings and efficiencies.</p> <p><u>Finance Monthly Report: P12 2024/25 (including Annual Approvals Summary)</u> [FR25/05] The Committee noted the financial performance for Period 12 (July) which was favourable to budget.</p> <p><u>Financial Regulations Levels and Limits – Proposed Changes</u> [FR25/06] The Committee considered the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations levels and limits prior to submission to Finance and Resources Committee on 22 September 2025. The changes reflected a desire to increase the level of trust across the organisation in decision-making, updated in line with inflation, and built on process improvements realised through NUPF. The Committee noted the report and approved the proposed changes, requesting a 2025/26 year-end report on the changes and the realisation of the expected benefits.</p>
3	<p><u>Policy/Regulation/Projects</u> <u>Treasury Management Annual Report</u> [FR25/07] The Committee considered the Treasury Management Report for 2024/25. There had been no counterparty limit breaches in 2024/25 compared to four in the previous year, improved cash flow forecasting had enabled greater use of longer-term deposit accounts, the bank covenant was achieved with reasonable financial headroom and work was ongoing to assess debt capacity for future capital investment. The Committee approved the Treasury Management report and commended the work of all staff involved.</p> <p><u>Contracts Summary</u> [FR25/08] Prof James McLaughlin declared an interest as the Academic Lead for NESST. The Committee noted the future contracts for approval or endorsement, endorsed the extension to the i2i Soccer Academy contract for submission to Board of Governors on 13 October 2025, approved the entering into the contracts with Lockheed Martin (US) for a Master Research Agreement and for the Building Operations Agreement in relation to NESST.</p> <p><u>Transfer of Norman Managed Services into Northumbria University Digital Services Ltd</u> [FR25/09] The Committee noted that the governance of NUSDL replicated that of the University's existing subsidiaries, with four directors, secretariat provided by the Governance Team and the inclusion of HR and Finance representatives on the Board of Directors and approved the transfer of Norman Managed Services into Northumbria University Digital Services Ltd.</p> <p><u>Apprenticeship Subcontracting Rationale</u> [FR25/10] The Committee considered the Apprenticeship Subcontracting Rationale and Policy. Governance sign-off was a requirement of DfE rules on subcontracted provision and not securing governance sign-off would result in the University being non-compliant with DfE rules. The subcontracting rationale would be published by 31st October 2025 in line with the Apprenticeship Funding Rules. The Committee approved the Apprenticeships Subcontracting Rationale and Policy.</p> <p><u>Draft Annual Report of Finance and Resources Committee</u> [FR25/11] The Committee noted its draft annual report, suggested some minor amendments, and noted that a final version of the report would be presented to the Committee for approval on 11 November 2025, prior to submission to Board of Governors on 27 November 2025.</p> <p><u>Students' Union Financial Performance P12 2024/25*</u> [FR25/12] The Committee noted the financial performance of the Students' Union for Period 12 (July).</p>

Beth Lenney
Assistant Secretary to Finance and Resources Committee
September 2025