

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

24 March 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 R Blackman-Woods, M Larsen, Prof A Long, A Sinha
Observer: A Fellows
Apologies: Dr B Bartoli, Prof J McLaughlin
Secretary: G Bailes, B Lenney (Assistant Secretary)
In attendance: J Coffey [FR24/52], G Gosling-Bell [to Student Recruitment], Prof T Lawson, L Mayfield, D Monnery [from Student Recruitment]

MAIN ITEMS DISCUSSED/DECIDED ON AT THE MEETING	
1	<p><u>Vice-Chancellor's Horizon Scanning [Oral Report]</u></p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive provided an update on national, regional and local sector and policy developments and their implications for Northumbria. Recent headlines reflected the financial strain on universities, with many announcing job cuts and cost-saving measures, Northumbria remained in a strong financial position but would continue to plan prudently to ensure long-term stability. UUK had set up a Transformation & Efficiency Taskforce to investigate how universities could partner, collaborate and deliver transformation and cost savings through new models and ways of working, and the Vice-Chancellor would be attending a roundtable on structured approaches to cost reduction and efficiency and financial improvement, and on how to drive the best value from estates and infrastructure. The Vice-Chancellor had recently met with Helen Hayes (MP and Chair of the Education Select Committee), who would be chairing an upcoming deep dive into the financial sustainability of the sector, focusing on the financial challenges including those faced by students, the government and employers. The OfS had requested an interim financial return by 10 April, this was a new requirement following a report published in November on the financial sustainability of HE providers in England, under the F3 conditions. Work continued on the areas required to support the launch of the new Academic Structures including data and systems changes, and estates considerations. The Committee noted the update, noting that the Chair of the Board would be attending an upcoming OfS roadshow on University Governance, and requested that the OfS interim financial return be shared with the Committee, along with a summary of the key metrics, when available.</p>
2	<p><u>Core Financial Performance and Planning</u></p> <p><u>Student Recruitment 2025/26</u> [Presentation] The Committee noted an update on Student Recruitment for 2025/26.</p> <p><u>Finance Monthly Report: P7 2024/25</u> [FR24/50] The Committee noted the financial performance for Period 7 (February) which was favourable to budget.</p> <p><u>Students' Union Financial Performance P7 2024/25*</u> [FR24/51] The Committee noted the financial performance of the Students' Union for Period 7 (February).</p>
3	<p><u>Capital/Estates/Contracts</u></p> <p><u>Estates Delivery Plan</u> [FR24/52] The Committee considered an update on the Estates Delivery Plan: Campus for the Future which focussed on the physical estate and not the detail of the interior layout or occupancy. The plan considered feedback obtained through engagement during the Master Planning exercise, as well as</p>

more recent discussions with members of University Executive, and addressed the needs of the University's Strategy. Following further consultation, the plan in principle would be considered again by the Committee at its meeting on 12 June, prior to submission to Board on 30 June. Specific items requiring consideration, endorsement or approval would be brought to the Committee as appropriate. **The Committee noted the plan, noting that the Students' Union would be included in conversations regarding planned works to its building and external areas to ensure minimal impact on the ability of the Students' Union to deliver their services and facilities to students, membership of the Estates Advisory group was being reviewed to ensure appropriate representation, and consideration would be given to the ongoing maintenance of an attractive campus and the impact on the student experience for those on campus during the proposed period of works.**

Contracts Summary [FR24/42]

The Committee approved the contracts with Aptus Construction Limited for the Design and Build Contract for the Durant Hall development and noted the tender notification and future potential contracts for approval or endorsement in relation to CHASE.

Beth Lenney, Assistant Secretary to Finance and Resources Committee
April 2025