

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

28 January 2020 - Meeting Room 209, Sutherland Building, City Campus

CONFIRMED SUMMARY MINUTES

Contact Susan O'Donnell, susan.odonnell@northumbria.ac.uk, Secretary to the Board of Governors, with any queries about these Summary Minutes.

Present: A Alden (Chair), C Apsey, G Atkinson, S Haagensen, E Kabengele, C Sayers, Professor A Wathey (Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive), S Yellowley.
 Apologies: Professor P Francis, C Shaw, H Thorne
 Secretary: SF O'Donnell, R Elliott (Assistant Secretary)
 In attendance: A Dunlop, Professor S Kyffin (SPC19/11), Professor G McHale (SPC19/15), D Monnery, S Newitt, L Winskell (SPC19/13).

MAIN ITEMS DISCUSSED/DECIDED ON AT THE MEETING

Introduction

The Chair welcomed Sophie Haagensen and Simon Yellowley, newly-appointed Independent Governors, to the Committee and expressed thanks to Tom Harrison for his many years of service to the Committee.

1. Strategic Discussion Items

University Strategy 2018-23 update: Knowledge Exchange (KE) Priorities and proposed KPI Target Trajectory Changes [SPC19/11]

The Committee considered the proposed prioritisation of Knowledge Exchange (KE) Business Outcomes and reprofiled targets for KPI8, which includes KE income. Focus would be on health technology and wellbeing and business leadership, with income targets reduced for 2020/21 and 2021/22. The overall income ambition for 2023 would not change. **The Committee endorsed the re-profiled trajectory targets and the approach overall, and requested a report to the Board of Governors on 29 June 2020 on projected income from KE contracts, based on contracts won by Q4.**

2. Performance Monitoring

University Strategy 2018-23: Performance Report [SPC19/12]

The Committee considered an update on implementing the University Strategy 2018-23. Six KPIs were currently rated as green, three were amber, one red and one (Graduate Employability) unrated because the relevant data was not yet available. At the end of quarter 1 2019/20, 32 of the 53 Business Outcomes (BOs) were defined as 'on-track', 11 had "some issues" that were being managed and 10 were 'off-track' - updated delivery plans for all BOs would be reported to the 31 March meeting of Committee; the Committee reviewed the current status of key Red and Amber BOs. **The Committee noted the update and requested a specific discussion at its 31 March meeting on the strategic approach to broader Transnational Education and partnership development, including the lessons learned from Project Sand. Evidenced improvements in KPI5 were required and it was noted that this performance relating to student experience and teaching quality was a central focus for the 09 March Board Awayday.**

Student Experience and Learning Outcomes – January 2020 [SPC19/13 and presentation]

The Committee considered the annual qualitative report from the Students' Union (SU), which noted that the SU "retains a high degree of confidence in the University's academic standards", although variable feedback had been received in some areas (attainment gaps, foundation years, Advanced Practice students, access to module evaluation data and areas of persistent low student satisfaction).

	<p>Areas of best practice included library and learning resources, investment in campus space, investment in counselling and mental health provision, breadth and coverage of representation and institutional support and signposting to the independent advice service of the Union. The SU was working with the University to maximise the response rate to the current National Student Survey. Continuation and attainment rates had improved compared to 2017/18. A formal response from the University to the SU Report would be presented to Education Committee, Academic Board and Board of Governors in due course. The Committee noted the report, that increased numbers of international students meant that student experience and practicalities such as accommodation would require enhanced focus. Foundation pathways would be reviewed in the context of the overall value of the foundation year for widening participation. Positive improvements in continuation figures were welcomed and a report on the attainment gap data for Business and Law was requested.</p> <p><u>Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2020/21 – 2024/25 update</u> <i>including Access Agreement 2018/19 monitoring return</i> [SPC19/14] The Committee noted that Northumbria’s APP had been approved by OfS on 20 December 2019 following lengthy negotiation of targets. In common with many other HEIs, OfS had imposed enhanced monitoring, in Northumbria’s case around performance gaps in Success and Progression, which would require submission of a progress report in January 2021. The Committee noted the report and that the monitoring return for 2018/19 would be circulated to the Committee before submission on 28 February 2020.</p> <p><u>REF 2021 Preparations – Update</u> [SPC19/15 and presentation] The Committee considered an update on preparations for Northumbria’s REF2021 submission. Work was continuing to maximise the number of staff eligible for submission. Feedback from externally-supported Critical Challenge Meetings was positive about the number of staff and the quality of outputs and concerns about the quality of some of the initial drafts of Impact Case Studies were being addressed through Faculty Reviews. The Committee noted the report, commended the analysis presented and the progress made on staffing numbers. It received assurance that no further resources were required and supported plans to improve the quality of impact case studies.</p> <p><u>Student Recruitment Update January 2020</u> [SPC19/16 and presentation] The Committee considered the latest recruitment position for 2019/20 Semester 2 entry and the application position for 2020/21. Forecast recruitment for Semester 2 included a significant increase in International enrolments against target, with an associated income uplift for 2019/20 and 2020/21. Continuing students were also projected to be ahead of budgeted levels. UCAS applications for 2020/21 were slightly ahead of the equivalent point last year and had recovered compared to the competitor group identified by UCAS. International recruitment for 2020/21 showed applications currently moderately higher than this point last year. Projected recruitment at London and Amsterdam was also ahead of target, but there were some concerns about Pathway recruitment that were being monitored. The Committee noted the latest position and acknowledged the need to focus on conversion activities.</p>
3	<p><u>Constitutional/Other Business</u></p> <p>Matters Arising The Committee noted that its Terms of Reference had been amended to clarify the powers of co-opted Board Committee members.</p> <p>Strategic Risk Dashboard [SPC19/10] The Committee considered the Strategic Risk Register Dashboard.</p>

Richard Elliott
Assistant Secretary to Strategic Performance Committee
February 2020