



Estates Committee

Wednesday 15 March 2023

Minute – Website Version

Note: This is an edited version of the full Estates Committee minutes. The majority of papers for Estates Committee are closed but where possible minute text has been provided. This may not be the full minute for each item.

Present: Frank Armstrong, Convener and Co-opted Member of Court
David Argyle, Vice Principal and Head of College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal and University Secretary
Chris Cox, Vice-Principal Philanthropy and Advancement and Executive Director Development and Alumni
Sue Currie, External Member
Iain Gordon, Vice-Principal and Head of College of Science & Engineering
Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability
Kim Graham, Provost and Deputy Convener
Lee Hamill, Director of Finance
Liz Lovejoy, College Registrar, College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students
Gary Jebb, Director of Place
Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services
Gavin McLachlan, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University
Theresa Merrick, Director of Communications and Marketing
Mark Parsons, EPCC Director and Dean of Research Computing
Niamh Roberts, EUSA President
Alistair Smith, Co-opted Member of Court
Rona Smith, Director of Strategic Planning & Insight
Carina Svensen, Director of Accommodation, Catering and Events
Richard Terry, External Member of the Committee
Damien Toner, Director of Estates

In Attendance: Helen Tweedie, Estates Committee Secretary
Tommy Angus, Interim Director of Estates Operations
Grant Ferguson, Director of Estates Net Zero and Carbon Leadership
Anne-Marie Coriat, College Registrar, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Lucy Evans, Deputy Secretary Students
Terry Fox, Director of Specialist Services, Finance
Jane Johnston, Director of Estate Development
Peter Mathieson, The Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Zoe Stephens, Director of Estates Business Services
Anthony Weir, Director of Information Technology Infrastructure
Hannah King, Policy and Governance Manager

Apologies: Sarah Prescott, Vice Principal, Head of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Jo Craiglee, Head of Knowledge Management and IS Planning
Anne Payne, College Registrar, College of Science and Engineering
Liz Reilly, Director of Philanthropy and Donor Relations

1. Welcome & Introduction

The Convener welcomed everyone to the meeting, specifically Damien Toner, who started as Director of Estates in January 2023.

The Convener thanked everyone for their work in preparing the papers that were being presented today.

2. Minute

It was highlighted that there were some differences between the draft minutes circulated in the meeting pack and the Estates Committee report that was presented to the last meeting of Policy and Resources Committee. This was in relation to minute item 9 'Advanced Computer Facility Exascale Update' and minute item 10 'Data Centre Capacity'. The text in the two documents would usually align.

Therefore, the minutes from the meeting on 14 December 2022 were approved as a correct record, subject to updating the minute text to align with the Estates Committee Report presented to the last Policy and Resources Committee.

Action: Governance and Committee Officer

3. Matters Arising

The Convener advised that since the last meeting of Estates Committee, University Court on 27 February 2023, had approved funding to progress the Engineering Hub project to completion.

It was also advised that Policy and Resources Committee on 6 February 2023, had noted the approval by Estates Committee, of capital investment to create additional capacity in the Mary Somerville Data Centre (MSDC), facilitating the move of current University digital research equipment from the ACF in advance of a potential installation of the Exascale service.

The Interim Director of Estates Operations presented a verbal update on the Pollock Halls District Heating Pipework Replacement project. It was noted that the trial work which was expected to take place in March 2023, would now be mobilised by May 2023. This delay was due to negotiations within the commercial agreement, and another update would be provided at the next Estates Committee meeting on 17 May 2023.

4. Key Decision Forward Plan

A forward plan was presented, detailing the reports that were expected to be presented to Estates Committee in the coming year and the decisions that would be required by Estates Committee.

Estates Committee noted the Key Decisions Forward Plan as detailed in the appendix to the report. It was highlighted that for clarity, the appendix would now include a note for each item, stating whether or not any funding was included in the Capital Plan.

5. Estates Annual Capital Plan 2022 to 2027

An update of the Capital Plan for the six year period 2022 to 2027 was presented. It set out the movements in the Capital Plan compared with the Capital Plan presented at Estates Committee in December 2022, the forecast for 2022-23 and the requests for funding sought at this Estates Committee. The paper also noted the financial impact of construction inflation on the plan.

6. Information Services Group Capital Envelope 2022-2028

An update on the Information Services Group (ISG) 5-year capital envelope, 2022-28 was presented. The Capital Plan presentation had been amended to more closely align with the format of the (physical) Estates Capital Plan.

Estates Committee noted the updated forecast for years 2022/23 to 2027/28.

7. Finance Papers

7.1 Director of Finance Update

An update was provided on the latest iteration of the University's five-year financial scenario modelling.

Estates Committee noted the latest update.

7.2 Benefits Assurance Update

The Director of Finance provided a verbal update on the Benefits Assurance report that would be a future routine item at Estates Committee.

It was noted that work was complete on the financial aspect but was still being progressed on where each project was positioned against the Estates Strategy and the wider University Strategy.

An update report was expected at the next meeting of Estates Committee in May 2023.

Action: Director of Finance

8. Residential Strategy 2023 - 2030

A revised Residential Strategy 2023 – 2030 was presented to Estates Committee. The overarching aim of the Strategy was to dovetail a number of strategic plans providing an integrated approach to the provision of Residential Accommodation, specifically those focussing on size and shape, carbon zero pathways, transport, equality, inclusion, financial support. The Strategy had been supported by University Executive on 21 February 2023.

Estates Committee agreed to recommend the Residential Strategy 2023 – 2030 to Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently University Court for approval. The Key Strategic Actions and Delivery Plan as contained within the Strategy document were noted. The commitment to the University Strategic Objectives, specifically around Student Experience, Inclusion and Diversity, Transport and Climate Action were also noted.

Action: Director of Accommodation, Catering and Events

9. Integrated Transport Plan 2023 - 2030

The University of Edinburgh Integrated Travel Transport Plan (ITP) 2023 – 2030 was presented. The Plan set targets and actions for the various methods of travel to and between the University's campuses.

The University had first taken a strategic overview of the transport requirements via a plan in 2017 and set targets and actions to support both the growth of the University, the Estate Strategy and the Residential Strategy. This plan updates on the position post pandemic and Brexit and informs of the current position, new targets and new work that will be undertaken to better inform the plan going forward. The Plan had been considered and approved by University Executive on 21 February 2023.

It was highlighted that transport provision was an important consideration in the selection of residential accommodation locations. In addition, connectivity between campuses was significant and short-term solutions needed to be considered where appropriate.

Estates Committee approved the Integrated Transport Plan 2023-2030 and noted that the plan would be updated annually as new data on staff and student transport need/demand emerged.

It was noted that the Plan would be submitted to Policy and Resources Committee on 27 March 2023 and University Court on 17 April 2023 for information.

Action: Director of Estates

10. Edinburgh College of Art - Full Business Case

A paper was presented, reporting on the progress of the Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) project and requesting approval of the Full Business Case as well as funding, to progress the project to completion.

Estates Committee noted that proposed funding was currently included in the prioritised Capital Plan for this project. It was also noted that funding had previously been approved to cover design team fees and surveys.

It was noted that the implementation and delivery of the ECA Masterplan would allow the Reid School of Music to relocate from Alison House to the Lauriston Campus, thus space would be released within the Central Area for repurposing.

Estates Committee approved the Full Business Case and agreed to recommend that Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently University Court approve capital funding to progress the project from RIBA Stage 3 through to construction and building occupation.

Action: College Registrar, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and Director of Estates Development

11. Teviot Row House - Full Business Case

Details were provided of progress of the Teviot Row House project. Approval was sought for the Full Business Case and funding to progress the project to completion.

Estates Committee noted that proposed funding was currently included in the prioritised Capital Plan, approved by University Court in February 2022, for the modernisation, including compliance, elements of the project.

Estates Committee noted that because the building required to be closed for the duration of the works, the University needed to capitalise on that opportunity to make enhancements, which would benefit the student experience within the building. Estates Committee further noted that as a result of these enhancements, the total project cost was greater than the cost recorded in the Capital Plan.

Estates Committee noted that the capital funding request was in addition to funding previously approved for design team fees and surveys.

Estates Committee approved the Full Business Case, and agreed to recommend to Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently University Court approval of capital funding, to progress the Teviot Row House project from RIBA Stage 3 through construction to completion and occupation.

Action: Deputy Secretary, Students and Director of Estates

12. Small Works Programme and Statutory Compliance Budget Allocation

The proposed programme of Small Works and Statutory Compliance budget allocation for 2023-2024 was presented.

The programme was reduced during the Covid-19 pandemic period to essential and compliance works only, all as part of a necessary pause period in the capital plan. The approval of a new Capital Plan by University Court in February 2021, had allowed Small Works to return to delivering both non-discretionary and discretionary improvements. The Capital Plan contained an annual discretionary allowance of for the Small Works Programme and a non-discretionary sum for Statutory Compliance works.

Estates Committee agreed to recommend to Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently University Court, the approval of the Small Works Programme and Statutory Compliance Capital allocation included within the Capital Plan and the means of apportioning funds.

Action: Director of Estates

13. Estates Capital Projects Update

An overview was provided of the Estates major projects above £1m, which were currently committed, and in the construction stage on site or which had been completed since the last meeting.

Estates Committee noted:

- the overview of the projects contained in the paper and in the Appendix to the paper;
- the particular update in relation to the Usher project.
- the market commentary in the paper in relation to inflation and the potential impact on the Capital Plan.

The regular specific update in relation to the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) was noted. It was highlighted that the west side of the EFI building was expected to be complete and in operation, in time to support the EFI teaching programmes for academic year 2023/24.

It was further noted that an updated EFI Full Business Case should be presented to a future meeting of Estates Committee.

Action: Director of Estates Development and Governance and Committee Officer

14. Climate Change - Estate Net Zero Pathway Update

An update was provided on the current activity that underpins the Estates contribution to the University's Net Zero target.

Estates Committee noted the recent work to forecast future energy budget expenditure as part of the annual University Planning Round, and noted the business continuity planning, underway in case of National Grid Power Outages. The update was noted, on activity related to the delivery of the Estate's contribution to the Net Zero by 2040 target.

It was highlighted that the University's Climate Strategy was under review and an updated version would be brought to Estates Committee later in 2023.

Action: Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

15. Estates Committee Exception Group, Estates Committee Electronic Correspondence and Estates Tender Review Panel Approvals

Details were provided of decision taken by Estates Committee Exception Group (ECEG) since the last Estates Committee on 14 December 2022 and a decision taken by Estates Committee, by electronic correspondence. The paper also presented a list of contract awards (greater than £250,000) over the period 1 December 2022 to 28 February 2023 that had been approved via the Estates Tender Review Panel (ETRP).

Estates Committee noted the following decision that had been taken by Estates Committee by electronic correspondence:

Exascale Project and Data Centre Capacity

Estates Committee formally approved the capital investment to create additional capacity in the Mary Somerville Data Centre (MSDC), facilitating the move of current University digital research equipment from the Advanced Computing Facility in advance of a potential installation of the Exascale service.

Estates Committee noted the following decision taken by ECEG:

Land at Glenturret - Forest and Peat Site Acquisition

- ECEG approved the submission of a University offer to purchase hill land extending to 450ha, subject to a breeding bird survey.

Estates Committee further noted the contract awards approved by Estates Tender Review Panel over the period 1 December 2022 to 28 February 2023 as was outlined in the Appendix of the report.

16. Knowledge Strategy Committee Report

The interim Convener of the Knowledge Strategy Committee presented the key points from the meetings which had taken place on 30 November – 6 December 2022 (by correspondence) and 30 January 2023.

Estates Committee noted the key points from the meetings.

17. Development and Alumni Capital Project Update

Progress was summarised with fundraising approaches for current priority capital projects. It reported back on progress against stretching multi-year targets for gift income towards the University's capital plans, that were discussed and noted at the December 2016 Estates Committee.

Estates Committee noted the update.

18. Strategic Acquisitions, Disposals and Leases

An update was provided on strategic acquisitions, disposals and leases.

Estates Committee noted the following updates on Strategic Acquisitions and Disposals:

- **Land at Glenturret near Crieff – Carbon Sequestration** – Estates Committee noted that the Estates Committee Exception Group approved the submission of an offer to purchase land extending to 450 hectares at Glenturret near Crieff. The land was being acquired for tree planting as part of the carbon sequestration project and the offer submitted was subject to a breeding bird survey on the land.
- **Land to develop Midlothian Centre of Excellence School:** Estates Committee noted that further to a review of proposals in December 2022, Midlothian Council had updated the plan for the Centre of Excellence and First Opinion Vet Practice, identifying an enhanced curtilage for the First Opinion Practice.

Estates Committee noted that since the last meeting on 14 December 2022, 2 new leases and 5 new licences were approved under sub-delegation arrangements. These were presented to Estates Committee as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the paper.

Estates Committee noted that Agreement to Lease discussions with HUB residential, the owners of the Baltic Street development, were paused.

It was further noted that approval was being sought to enter into single year nomination lease agreements for beds at Beaverbank and New Park. This was discussed in more detail under item 20 of the agenda – “Accommodation Nomination Requirements 2023-24”.

19. Estates Data (Short Life) Working Group - Terms of Reference

Estates Committee noted a paper which presented Terms of Reference for an Estates Data (Short Life) Working Group. The Group would address emerging issues enabling the Estates Department to capture data, in order to efficiently space plan across the University campus, thus supporting the initiative of New Ways of Working.

20. Accommodation Nominations Requirements 2023/24

A paper was presented by Accommodation, Catering and Events (ACE), requesting approval to purchase additional bed stock from the private Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) market in order to support the delivery of the Residential Strategy 2023-2030. The request related to academic year 2023/24, commencing on 9 September 2023.

Estates Committee approved:

- entering into a nomination lease agreement with Homes for Students at Beverbank, and
- entering into a nomination lease agreement with Downing Student at New Park.

It was noted that, if approved, the commitments would be made by the University's solicitors, Shepherd and Wedderburn, in an exchange of formal letters ('missives') with the landlords solicitors.

It was agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Property and Residential Services at ACE, to conclude the negotiations for the agreements, as well as instruct the University appointed solicitors, Shepherd and Wedderburn, to enter into the missives once the terms have been agreed.

Action: Director of Accommodation, Catering and Events and Director of Property and Residential Services, ACE.

21. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 17 May 2023.