



Estates Committee

Wednesday 9 December 2020

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:** Jonathan Seckl, Senior Vice-Principal
Frank Armstrong, Co-opted Member of Court
Catherine Elliott, College Registrar, College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine
Lee Hamill, Director of Finance
Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal (Students)
Gary Jebb, Director of Place
Gavin McLachlan, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University
Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services
Ellen MacRae, EUSA President
Bruce Nelson, College Registrar, Science & Engineering
Theresa Merrick, Director of Communications and Marketing
Clare Reid, Co-opted Member of Court
Sarah Smith, Vice-Principal Strategic Change and Governance and University Secretary
Carina Svensen, Director of Accommodation, Catering and Events (ACE)
Richard Terry, External Member of the Committee
- In Attendance:** Angela Lewthwaite, Committee and Administration Officer (Secretary)
Karen Adamson, Head of Estates Finance
Tommy Angus, Interim Director of Estates Operations
Kyle Clark-Hay, Head of Estates Business Services
Terry Fox, Director of Specialist Services
Jane Johnston, Director of Estate Development
Hannah King, Policy and Governance Manager
Peter Mathieson, The Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Lesley Penny, Director of Bioresearch and Veterinary Services
Liz Reilly, Director of Philanthropy and Donor Relations, Development & Alumni
Zoe Stephens, Head of Organisational Development and Change
Amanda Scully, Vice-President Community, Students' Association
- Apologies:** Grant Ferguson, Interim Director of Estates
Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning Governance and Strategic Planning.

1. Minute

The minute of the meeting held on 15 September 2020 was approved.

2. Matters Arising

The Committee noted that Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning had left the University to take up the role of University Secretary at Aberdeen University and thanked her for her service to the University and her support to Estates Committee.

The Committee thanked Angela Lewthwaite, Secretary to the Committee who was leaving the University at the end of January 2021. Thanks were extended for her work to the Committee over the last 12 years.

The Committee noted that the University Court on 30 November 2020 had approved funding to complete the 4D Cellular Medicine at the Institute of Genetics and Molecular Medicine. The University capital commitment matched the MRC funding for this project.

3. Estates Response to Covid-19 - December 2020 Update

The Committee noted the update on the actions that the Estates Department had taken in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Estates staff were thanked for the huge amount of work carried out.

4. Estates Annual Capital Plan 2020-21 to 2029-30

The Estates Capital Plan 2020-21 to 2029-30 was presented. The financial outlook remained challenging. The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the current unpredictability of the University's forecast income were detailed.

The deferral of 13 projects over 24 months would release funding from the Estates Capital Plan for the period of 2019-20 – 2022-23. As affordability of the Estates Capital Plan became clearer, a re-imagining of the Capital Plan was essential, which would support new ways of operation for the University while continuing to deliver the 2030 strategy.

The Committee noted the University's forward planning forecast expenditure over the ten-year period 2020-21 to 2029-30, this included projects envisaged prior to the Covid-19 emergency and not currently approved.

It was noted that the Estates Capital Plan in its current form was not affordable and that to facilitate the re-imagining of the plan and its projects an alternative presentation of the plan had been shown. Unless further revenue savings were achieved there would be limited scope to deliver a re-imagined Capital Plan.

Estates Committee noted the project expenditure for 2020-21 and the funding requests at this meeting.

The Committee further noted the update to the European Investment Bank (EIB) projects.

5. Heat Decarbonisation Strategy

In 2016 the University had agreed a Climate Strategy with two key components: a commitment to net zero by 2040 (the 'zero by 2040' goal) and a commitment to a 'whole institution approach' whereby all parts of the University would take action including teaching, research, investment and operations.

The 'net zero' goal meant that the University aimed to eliminate the use of fossil fuels where possible by 2040, and offset the rest with credible carbon sequestration. The scope of the 'net zero' target includes: gas and other fuels used for heating, lab and process gas, catering gas, gas for onsite power generation, transport, business travel and aviation.

The outline strategy to decarbonise the University's heat supply was presented. The context, challenges, risks, proposed strategic solutions and next steps were also detailed. A level of expenditure would be required to address the challenge of reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

The Committee approved the overall outline strategy to reduce reliance on fossil fuels for heat by enabling alternative new technologies alongside a programme of targeted energy efficiency measures.

The Committee further noted that requests for resources would return to Estates Committee to progress the Energy Masterplan and incorporate prioritised investments into future capital planning.

Action: Interim Director of Estates and Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

6. Extension to the Anne Rowling Regenerative Neurology Clinic

The Full Business Case for the proposed extension to the Anne Rowling Regenerative Neurology Clinic was presented.

The Committee approved the Full Business Case, approved the remaining project cost and approved progressing the project through to completion. It was noted that the funding was in addition to the previously approved funding to complete the design to the end of RIBA Stage 3.

It was further noted that the project would be fully funded by the donation received from the Rowling Foundation.

Action: College Registrar, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

7. Biological Research Facility Essential Compliance Works

A case for undertaking essential compliance works at a Biological Research Facility was detailed. This request was originally part of a larger Bioresearch and Veterinary Services' Estates project which had been presented pre-Covid-19 in March 2020. On 30 November 2020, University Court noted that funding requests would be presented to Estates Committee for essential compliance works for a number of projects.

The Committee:

- approved funding from University Resources for essential compliance works at a Biological Research Facilities for works to be undertaken in 2021.
- noted that this funding was in addition to the previously approved funding from University Resources for design team fees and surveys in September 2017.
- noted that approval was required to enable an instruction to be issued under the existing contract no later than 8 January 2021.

Action: Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services

8. Western General Hospital Biological Research Facility Essential Maintenance

The background and justification for a request for funding to ensure the Western General Hospital Biological Research Facilities remained functional and compliant for at least 24 months and until a longer-term solution was agreed was presented.

The Committee approved the request for funding from University Corporate Resources, to progress the project to completion.

It was noted that this funding request was over and above the previously approved funding from University Resources approved in March 2019.

Action: Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services

9. Waddington Building Plant Growth Rooms

The Business Case to form five plant growth rooms to support the School of Biological Sciences was considered.

The Committee approved the Business Case and funding from University resources to fit out five plant growth rooms in a shell area within the recently completed Waddington extension. A supporting document prepared by the School of Biological Sciences was noted.

Action: College Registrar, College of Science and Engineering

10. Update on Proposed Replacement Facilities Management System for UoE

The Committee noted an update on the development of an Outline Business Case (OBC) for the proposed improvements to Facilities Management at the University, and the potential replacement of the Computer Aided Facilities Management (CAFM) system to support the improvements.

11. Capital Projects Update

An overview was provided of the projects above £1m which were currently on site including an update of the impact of Covid-19 on delivery of the Capital Programme.

Following Scottish Government advice, all construction companies employed by the University were operating in accordance with Phase 4 of the Construction Industry's Restart plan. This allowed works to progress with physical distancing measures in place or with PPE where physical distancing measures could not be maintained.

The Committee noted:

- the update in relation to the impact of Covid-19 on the construction activity;
- the overview of the projects contained in the paper and in the attached Appendix 1;
- the specific update in relation to the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) and a forecasted shortfall in funding and the incorporation of this forecast in the emerging needs list in the Capital Plan paper;
- the update in relation to the Estates Committee Sub-Group (ECSG) approval to submit an "Offer to Settle" for an arbitration; and
- the market commentary within this paper, which could have an impact on the Capital Plan pipeline and on site or recently completed works.

12. Estates Committee Sub-Group and Estates Tender Review Panel Approvals

The Committee noted the following approval provided by the Estates Committee Sub-Group:

Arbitration

- approved the submission of an offer in relation to an arbitration. Following ECSG's approval, it was confirmed that an offer was submitted.

The Committee further noted the contract awards greater than £250k over the period 1 September 2020 to 30 November 2020 which were approved by Estates Tender Review Panel.

13. Development & Alumni Capital Project Update

In the first quarter of Financial Year 20/21, a sum of philanthropic income had been received. Though Development & Alumni has not yet received any funding to capital projects in Financial Year 20/21, there were pledged income to capital projects due in 20/21. Development & Alumni continued to progress its business plan to double gift income over a five-year period. The Committee noted the update.

14. Strategic Acquisitions, Disposals and Leases

The Committee noted the proposal to extend the term of two leases of office space in *Building Nine BioQuarter* currently occupied by the Farr (Usher) Institute and the Administrative and Data Research Centre (ADRC) and agreed to sub-delegate authority to the Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services to approve the final lease arrangements for the space currently occupied by the Farr Institute.

Action: Interim Director of Estates and Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services

The Committee noted leases that had been approved in accordance with sub-delegated authority arrangements.

The Committee noted the updates on Strategic Acquisitions and Disposals.

15. Estates Committee - Revised Terms of Reference

The Committee recommended approval of the revised Estates Committee Terms of Reference to Policy and Resources Committee.

Action: Committee Secretary

16. Biotechnology and Biomedical Sciences Research Council Business Case - Research Sample Archive Facility

The Committee approved funding, from previously secured Biotechnology and Biomedical Sciences Research Council funding, to undertake a feasibility study and the initial briefing and develop the design to the conclusion of RIBA Stage 2 (Concept Design) for the Research Sample Archive Facility. The project will be fully funded by Biotechnology and Biomedical Sciences Research Council.

Action: College Registrar, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

17. Michael Swann Building - Autoclave Facility

The Committee approved funding from University resources to provide an autoclave facility to maintain operational resilience for the School of Biological Sciences in the Michael Swann Building.

Action: College Registrar, College of Science and Engineering

18. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 17 March 2021: 9:30 - 12:30

The Committee agreed that a forward plan of expected key decisions would be presented to the next Estates Committee.