



Estates Committee

Thursday 14 December 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, Co-opted Member of Court (Convener)
David Argyle, Vice Principal and Head of College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal and University Secretary
Iain Gordon, Vice-Principal and Head of College of Science & Engineering
Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability
Kim Graham, Provost (Deputy Convener)
Lee Hamill, Director of Finance
Gary Jebb, Director of Place
Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services
Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University
Theresa Merrick, Director of Communications and Marketing
Mark Parsons, EPCC Director and Dean of Research Computing
Sarah Prescott, Vice Principal, Head of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
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:** Tommy Angus, Director of Estates Operations
Stephen Barnes, College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, Head of Operations and Planning
Neil Cartlidge, Senior Internal Auditor
Anne-Marie Coriat, College Registrar, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Terry Fox, Director of Specialist Services, Finance
Grant Ferguson, Director of Estates Net Zero and Carbon Leadership
Hannah King, Policy and Governance Manager
Jane Johnston, Director of Estate Development
Peter Mathieson, The Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Kym McCaul, Estates Governance and Committee Officer
Alma Riessler, EUSA Vice President
Zoe Stephens, Director of Estates Business Services
Tony Weir, Director of Information Technology Infrastructure
Helen Wood, Head of University Space
- Apologies:** Sharan Atwal, EUSA President

Chris Cox, Vice-Principal Philanthropy and Advancement and Executive Director of Development and Alumni
Jo Craiglee, Head of Knowledge Management and IS Planning
Sue Currie, External Member
Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students
Jennifer Milne, Deputy CIO
Anne Payne, College Registrar, College of Science and Engineering

1. Welcome & Introduction

The Convener welcomed Stephen Barnes, Head of Operations and Planning, College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, Kym McCaul, Estates Governance and Committee Officer and Neil Cartlidge, Senior Internal Auditor, to their first meeting of Estates Committee.

Apologies were noted by Estates Committee.

2. Previous Minutes for Approval

2.1 Minute - Estates Committee - 6 September 2023

Estates Committee approved the minute from 6 September 2023.

2.2 Minute - Estates Committee - 9 November 2023

Estates Committee approved the minute from 9 November 2023.

3. Matters Arising

The Convener advised that since the last meeting of Estates Committee on 6 September 2023 University Court considered the following items:

University Court – 9 October 2023

New Darwin Estates Project

- Approved an amendment to the budget allocated in the prioritised Capital Plan for the project for an increase.
- Approved funding for fees in order to develop the design to RIBA Stage 3 (Developed Design) in support of preparation of a Full Business Case;

University Court – 4 December 2023

Edinburgh Futures Institute

- Allocated additional funding in the Capital Plan, approved funding to complete the project in line with the forecast realistic case and delegated authority to Estates Committee to approve any additional funding up to the worst-case forecast.

If additional funding was required beyond the sum approved by Court a request would be made to Estates Committee in due course. Estates Committee noted the update and agreed that negotiations should continue as detailed.

Internal Audit Review of Estates Committee

The Convener advised of the current Internal Audit of Estates Committee and had held an interim review meeting with Internal Audit where it was highlighted that tracking of Committee actions could be strengthened. Estates Committee agreed that the Secretary should implement an appropriate action tracking and follow up procedure.

Action: Committee Secretary

4. Key Decision Forward Plan

A forward plan was presented listing 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. It was highlighted that the business at this meeting of Estates Committee had reduced from what had been anticipated at the last meeting. A number of reports were now due to be considered at Estates Committee meetings in March or May 2024 instead.

It was agreed for an Estates Committee workshop to be arranged on University Digital Strategy and Outcome of Digital Prioritisation Plan.

Estates Committee noted the Key Decisions Forward Plan as detailed in the appendix.

Action: Committee Secretary

5. Estates Annual Capital Plan 2023 to 2029

An update of the Capital Plan for the six-year period 2023 to 2029 was presented. It set out the movements in the Capital Plan compared with the Capital Plan presented at Estates Committee in September 2023, the forecast for 2023-24 and the requests for funding sought at this Estates Committee. The paper also noted the financial impact of construction inflation on the plan.

Estates Committee noted the University's forward planning forecast expenditure over the six-year period 2023 to 2029. This was based on the Capital Plan which had been approved to July 2027 in February 2022 and the subsequent approved revisions to the plan, the most recent of which facilitated delivery of the Tynecastle Student Accommodation.

Estates Committee noted the forecast expenditure for 2023-24. This expenditure forecast included funding related to Capital Equipment and the Digital Estate as well as Estates related expenditure.

Estates Committee noted the update to the European Investment Bank (EIB) projects and the funding requests for Estates Projects of which part was University funded and part was externally funded.

Estates Committee noted the funding requests at this Estates Committee were affordable, the movements from September – December 2023 summarised and the full reconciliation shown in Appendix 2 to the report.

Estates Committee noted the journey for net carbon zero would be further considered during the next Capital Plan as a strategic need.

6. Information Services Group Capital Envelope 2023 - 2029

An update was provided on the Information Services Group (ISG) 5-year capital envelope, 2023-29.

Estates Committee noted the capital plan included expenditure on the Internet of Things (IoT) Sensor Network, which was substantively funded by the City Region Deal Data Driven Innovation (DDI) funding. It was highlighted that the IoT project was the largest in Europe and was one of the City Deal projects that was having the largest impact giving digital skills to the next generation.

Estates Committee noted the current forecast of total capital expenditure for 2023/24 after a bias adjustment has been overlaid, notwithstanding DDI funding. After DDI funding the net expenditure was expected to be less than the notional funding envelope for the year.

Estates Committee noted the expenditure on the Data Resilience project had been updated to reflect the additional budget approved at the Estates Committee meeting in September 2023 to procure the full resilience solution for the enterprise systems the University operates.

Estates Committee noted the update on the capital expenditure projected for 2023/24 and forecast to 2028/29.

7. Director of Finance Update

An update was presented on the latest iteration of the Universities five-year financial scenario modelling.

Estates Committee noted University Court, Policy & Resources Committee (PRC) and Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) members received an interim financial update in October 2023 relating to the University Group's forecast financial position through to 2027-28.

Estates Committee noted the update.

8. Small Works Programme and Statutory Compliance Budget Allocation

An update was provided on the progress with the Small Works Programme and Statutory Compliance Budget Allocation over the previous two financial years. The initial proposal for funding for the 2024/25 programme was detailed. It asked for the support from Estates Committee to request approval from Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently University Court for funding to proceed.

Estates Committee noted that the allocation was unlikely to meet the current demand for small projects and essential works, therefore further work was underway to establish the required additional funding required going forward and the outcome of this exercise would be presented to the Estates Committee in March 2024.

During discussion at Estates Committee the following points were raised:

- Investment in Small Works projects was not at the level required, for example, the funding level for the Teaching Accommodation Programme had not increased for 10 years;
- It was prudent to invest in Small Works projects so that they did not become larger issues in years to come;
- The wording in the section on responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals should be reviewed and strengthened as projects should not give just a potential contribution;
- Within the usual budget for the Small Works Programme, projects were included which would benefit student experience;
- If additional funding was allocated to the overall Small Works budget an allocation would be included within the student experience category which would increase its visibility;
- Fabric repairs to the Accommodation, Catering and Events buildings were included in the programme however there was a separate funding stream for Critical Maintenance in the remainder of the Estate; and
- Committee in due course would like some comfort on the ability of the Estates Department to deliver what increasingly looked like an enhanced portfolio of small works investment.

Estates Committee noted the overview of the allocation of funds across the Small Works and Statutory Compliance programme.

Estates Committee recommended to Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently University Court for approval of the Small Works and Statutory Compliance Programme 2024/25 allocation included within the current capital plan.

Action: Director of Estates

9. Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) Update

An update was provided on the status of investigations into Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and the associated programme of works that may be required to ensure the safety of impacted spaces. Details were provided on maintaining business continuity in the short to medium term.

An overview was given of the request for funding to progress with design works, options appraisals, some shorter-term remedial repairs, immediate decant requirements together with a large-scale initial urgent repair project at Appleton Tower to enable teaching to return ideally by September 2024.

During discussion at Estates Committee the following points were raised:

- An exercise had been undertaken in 2018 to review the full estate;
- RAAC is assessed on a panel-by-panel basis and an assessment of panels in the same building could offer different results;
- The University must be clear in its response and there would be a different solution for each building affected; and
- There was a huge impact on users of some affected buildings and the ability to respond quickly was crucial.

Estates Committee noted:

- The update in relation to RAAC in University properties;
- That on 4 December 2023, University Court agreed to delegate authority to Estates Committee to approve initial funding for works required to respond to RAAC up to £7.5m;
- The indicative overall scale of funding required to remediate the impacted buildings, and deal with decant solutions, in the medium term;
- That discussions were ongoing with the University insurers;
- A comprehensive report would come to Estates Committee and that there would be a further request for funding in March 2024; and
- That the University was ahead of other organisations in identifying RAAC in buildings.

The Convener requested that an update be provided to Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently University Court.

Estates Committee approved:

- Funding for fees and works to remediate Appleton Tower Lecture Theatre 4 and 5; and
- Funding to cover costs incurred to date, together with options appraisals and remedial solutions to the affected buildings across the Estate.

Action: Director of Place and Director of Estates

10. Refurbishment of 40 George Square and Enabling Decant Works

A request for funding for fees associated with the 40 George Square Tower refurbishment and the Enabling Decant Works project was presented.

During discussion at Estates Committee the following points were raised:

- The University should be ambitious in plans for the building, maximising the views and a clear bold design would be beneficial;
- That the refurbishment presented an opportunity to change the narrative;
- The project positively reflects the University's climate ambitions, the section detailing this in the report was thorough and an exemplar of how this information should be presented;
- The student study hub should remain open for as long as possible;

- An exercise would be carried out to understand study space capacity and requirements across all campuses; and
- It was positive that key academic needs were being discussed across the wider University.

Estates Committee approved:

- Funding to progress the enabling decant refurbishment works to RIBA Design Stage 3 (Developed Design); and
- Funding to cover the design fees, specialist consultants and surveys to identify the scope of refurbishment works and improvements proposed to the fabric of the Tower.

Action: Director of Estates

11. Advanced Computer Facility Exascale Update

An update was provided on the progress to date of the Advanced Computing Facility (ACF) Exascale Project, following formal UK Government confirmation of the ACF as the hosting site for Exascale.

The paper requested funding for fees to accelerate and complete the revised design work for RIBA Stage 4 and to engage in a Pre-construction Services Agreement, to meet the current anticipated UKRI funding approval timescale.

Estates Committee noted the full funding would be provided to the University as a single grant from the Government.

Estates Committee noted the risk of inputting University funding prior to confirmation from the Government of the expected grant.

Estates Committee noted the progress to date and the anticipated timelines for Government funding approval.

Estates Committee approved funding from University Corporate Resources (Strategic Priorities Budget) to complete the design to the end of RIBA stage 4 and engage a main contractor under a Pre-Construction Services Agreement, until such time as UKRI (UK Research and Innovation) Outline Business Case for Exascale funding is approved.

Action: Director of EPCC

12. Usher Institute - Reallocation of City Deal Funding

A proposal was presented to reallocate a sum of unspent City Deal funding from the Edinburgh BioQuarter Enabling Infrastructure project to the Usher Institute project budget.

Estates Committee recommended to Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently to University Court the proposal to reallocate a sum of unspent City Deal funding from the Edinburgh BioQuarter Enabling Infrastructure project to the Usher Institute project budget in order to support additional infrastructure costs incurred as a result of utility works and connection charges.

Action: Director of Estates

13. Climate Strategy & Net Zero Pathway

13.1 Climate Strategy Update - Progress and Plans

Estates Committee noted the update on the current climate science, progress on climate action across the University since 2021 and plans for the revised climate strategy.

13.2 Climate Change - Estate Net Zero Pathway Update

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

During discussion at Estates Committee the following points were raised:

- There was an emerging risk as the UK was behind other countries on carbon footprint;
- The University had dropped in the QS World University Rankings for sustainability;
- A new Climate Strategy was being developed and would be introduced in 2024; and
- The University was a part of the city level network with other organisations which compared what actions were being undertaking to meet the target of net zero.

Estates Committee noted the update on activity related to the delivery of the Estate's contribution to the Net Zero by 2040 target.

13.3 Proposed Multiyear Energy Efficiency Programme

A recommendation to establish a multiyear energy efficiency programme was presented. It would build on the success and learnings from the previous Sustainable Campus Fund (SCF) which was established in 2016.

Estates Committee noted the funding objectives and critical success factors, the proposed project evaluation criteria and the proposed governance structure.

Estates Committee noted that progress would be reported quarterly at the Net Zero Heat & Energy Programme Board and annually to Estates Committee.

Estates Committee approved the establishment of a Multiyear Energy Efficiency Programme and recommended to Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently University Court approval of a sum of funding, from the Net Zero funding within the current Capital Plan, to establish a multiyear project pipeline.

Action: Director of Estates Net Zero & Carbon Leadership

14. Discovery Research Platform: Purchase of Thermo Fisher Glacios 2 cryo-electron microscope with Selectris and Falcon 4i detector

Approval was sought for the purchase of a Thermo Fisher Glacios 2 cryo-electron microscope with Selectris and Falcon 4i detector.

Estates Committee noted the purchase would be partially externally funded from the Wellcome Discovery Research Platform, an award from the Darwin Trust and an external charitable Trust. A contribution from the College of Science and Engineering's capital equipment budget would also be included.

Estates Committee noted the purchase of the microscope was time constrained and if ordered before end of 2023 it would arrive in approximately September 2024.

Estates Committee noted the concerns regarding RAAC panels which are located in the building where the microscope would be placed. It was further noted that consideration should be given to a back-up location for the microscope should the Dan Rutherford building be unsuitable upon delivery of the microscope.

Estates Committee approved the purchase of the Thermo Fisher Glacios 2 cryo-electron microscope with Selectris and Falcon 4i detector in capital expenditure for the Wellcome Discovery Research Platform (School of Biological Sciences) and associated services.

Action: Vice-Principal and Head of College of Science and Engineering and Director of Estates

15. IT Hosting Requirements Appraisal

A request for funding for Design Team fees associated with the IT hosting requirements project was presented. It also described the activity underway to understand the University's current and future requirements for hosting IT equipment, through the Estates & Information Services Group (ISG) IT Hosting Short Life Working Group.

During discussion at Estates Committee the following points were raised:

- Consideration of the long-term strategy should also include buildings that are not owned by the University
- The Mary Somerville Data Centre should be finished on time;
- A clearer picture of what is stored on site versus what is held elsewhere would be beneficial;

- Future reports to Estates Committee should provide further detail of what was driving the requirement and the timescales;
- Plans should consider the immediate requirements as well as ensuring that plans were future proofed; and
- Consideration was required regarding the carbon footprint of data centres.

Estates Committee agreed that the Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University would contact Sue Currie, External Member to the Committee, regarding the strategic options for data storage.

Estates Committee noted the constraints to university research from the lack of data centre capacity and the potential to improve efficiency and quality of current provision.

Estates Committee noted the ongoing work of the IT Hosting Short Life Working Group in capturing University requirements and to determine the appropriate action to address these issues.

Estates Committee approved the allocation of funding to engage a suitable Design Team, to complete an options appraisal feasibility study.

Action: Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University and Director of Estates

16. Institute of Regeneration and Repair (IRR) Capital Project - Lessons Learned and Actions

An update was provided on the actions taken as a result of the Internal Audit report on the Institute of Regeneration & Repair (IRR) Capital project.

Estates Committee noted the response to the findings and recommendations as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

17. Estates Capital Projects Update

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

Estates Committee noted that discussion on the final settlement for the Edinburgh Futures Institute project was ongoing. Once this had been agreed the University would not be able to make any further changes to the scope of the project without the potential for additional charges.

Estates Committee noted there was delay to the anticipated handover of the Institute for Genetics and Cancer (IGC) building however there would be no impact on the building occupation date and no financial implications therefore at this stage it was of no concern.

Estates Committee noted:

- The overview of the projects contained in the paper and in the attached Appendix 1 to the report;
- The regular specific update in relation to the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI);
- The particular update in relation to the Usher project; and
- The market commentary within this paper in relation to inflation and the potential impact on the Capital Plan.

18. Estates Committee Exception Group and Estates Tender Review Panel Approvals

Details were presented of the decisions taken by Estates Committee Exception Group (ECEG) since the last Estates Committee on 6 September 2023. The paper also presented a list of contract awards (greater than £250,000) over the period 26 August 2023 to 30 November 2023 that have been approved via the Estates Tender Review Panel (ETRP).

Estates Committee noted the following decisions taken by ECEG:

Digital Estate Project - Contract Award

- Estates Committee Exception Group noted that the capital to fund this solution had previously been approved by Estates Committee.
- Estates Committee Exception Group approved the award of the contract to CDW.

Teviot Row House - Main Contractor Construction Services

- Estates Committee Exception Group noted that the Teviot Row House Compliance Works Project Board had provided approval to proceed with the contract award on 13 October 2023; that the Estates Tender Review Panel had provided approval to proceed with the contract award on 23 October 2023; and that the tender expiry date from the contractor was 7 January 2024.
- Estates Committee Exception Group approved the award of the contract to Graham Construction Ltd for the construction services for the Teviot Row House Project.

Strategic Acquisition of 3 Marchhall Crescent

- Estates Committee Exception Group approved funding to submit an unconditional offer for the acquisition of 3 Marchhall Crescent and funding for professional fees associated with the acquisition and any immediate works required to secure the building.

Estates Committee noted that an offer was submitted by the closing date of 15 November 2023 however on this occasion the offer was not successful.

Estates Committee further noted the contract awards approved by Estates Tender Review Panel over the period 26 August 2023 to 30 November 2023 as outlined in

Appendix 1 of the report.

19. Knowledge Strategy Committee Report

The key points from the Knowledge Strategy Committee meeting on 24 October 2023 were presented.

Estates Committee noted the key points from the meeting.

20. Development and Alumni Capital Project Update

A summary was provided of the progress with fundraising approaches for current priority capital projects. The 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.

21. Strategic Acquisitions, Disposals, Leases and Estate Management

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

Estates Committee approved the surrender of 30 Ha or thereby of land from the Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) lease at House O Muir/Glencorse, for the purpose of creating additional woodland and riparian zone management as part of the University of Edinburgh Carbon Sequestration Project.

Action: Director of Estates

Estates Committee noted the updates on Strategic Acquisitions and Disposals.

Estates Committee noted that since September 2023 Estates Committee, 1 lease renewal, 1 desk licence, 1 new office lease, 1 grazing licence and 1 site compound licence of University property had been approved under sub-delegation arrangements which were presented to Estates Committee for noting as detailed in Appendix 1.

Estates Committee further noted the Estate Management issues as detailed in paragraphs 17 to 22 of the report.

22. Developing a new Capital Plan Working Group – Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Developing a New Capital Plan Working Group were presented for approval.

During discussion at Estates Committee the following items were highlighted:

- The Provost job title was incorrect;

- Agreed that a representative from Communications and Marketing was to be added; and
- Agreed to add research and innovation to the remit of the group.

Estates Committee approved the Developing a New Capital Plan Working Group Terms of Reference as detailed in the appendix to the report subject to the above minor changes.

Action: Director of Estates

23. Student Experience, Learning and Teaching Strategic Space Type Advisory Group (SSTAG) - Terms of Reference

A paper was presented on the Terms of Reference for the Student Experience, Learning and Teaching Strategic Space Type Advisory Group (SSTAG).

Estates Committee noted the group remit covered all types of student spaces including study and social spaces.

Estates Committee noted the Terms of Reference as detailed in the appendix to the report.

24. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of Estates Committee was noted as Wednesday 13 March 2024.