THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Estates Committee Seminar
University Digital Strategy and Digital Estate

Monday 29 April 2024

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
	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
	Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students
	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
	Carina Svensen, Director of Accommodation, Catering and Events
	Richard Terry, External Member of the Committee
	Damien Toner, Director of Estates
In Attendance:	Kym McCaul, Estates Governance and Committee Officer
	Stephen Barnes, College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, Head of Operations and Planning
	Jo Craiglee, Head of Knowledge Management and IS Planning
	Terry Fox, Director of Specialist Services, Finance
	Jennifer Milne, Deputy CIO
	Anne Payne, College Registrar, College of Science and Engineering
	Stephen Roy, Digital Transformation Programme Manager
	Tony Weir, Director of Information Technology Infrastructure
	Hannah King, Policy and Governance Manager
	Catherine Eastwood, Deputy Head of School (Operations)
Apologies:	David Argyle, Vice Principal and Head of College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
	Sharan Atwal, EUSA President
	Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal and University Secretary
	Chris Cox, Vice-Principal Philanthropy and Advancement and Executive Director of Development and Alumni
	Lee Hamill, Director of Finance
	Rona Smith, Director of Strategic Planning & Insight

Tommy Angus, Director of Estates Operations
Anne-Marie Coriat, College Registrar, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Grant Ferguson, Director of Estates Net Zero and Carbon Leadership
Jane Johnston, Director of Estate Development
Peter Mathieson, The Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Alma Riessler, EUSA Vice President
Zoe Stephens, Director of Estates Business Services

1.   Welcome and Introduction

The Convener advised that an Estates Committee Seminar had been arranged to consider the University Digital Strategy and Digital Estate. This was to allow sufficient time for a full update and discussion on the item.

A suite of documents had been circulated to the Committee and a comprehensive consultation exercise undertaken. The Seminar would provide an opportunity for questions and comments which could then be incorporated into the documentation as the Strategy progressed to other University Committees.

2.   University Digital Strategy and Digital Estate

The report submitted to the Committee Seminar set out:
- A high-level outline of the University Digital Strategy and Digital Estate and the actions required by Committee members;
- An overview of the University Digital Strategy; and
- Plans for the Digital Estate, including major Digital Estate projects, a Heatmap of major digital estate risks and a proposed digital Estates roadmap. The digital estate is a key enabler of the University Digital Strategy.

A number of background papers were also available including:
- A communications approach;
- The Digital Strategy Implementation Overview;
- A guide to implementation; and
- The full Digital Strategy

In addition, the Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University provided a presentation to the Seminar.

The Committee Seminar had a thorough discussion on the presentation and the accompanying documentation. Key points raised included:
- A comprehensive review of the Digital Estate had been undertaken;
- There had been a high level of ownership and involvement from the Provost, Colleges and Professional Service Groups during the consultation process;
- The Strategy and Plan provided an opportunity to ensure that decisions related to the Digital Estate were informed and that forward plans were in place;
- Members were supportive of the presentation specifically the Infographic overview of the Strategy and the heatmap;
- The vision statement did not include enough detail regarding keeping information safe and secure and consideration could be given to adding this;

- Consideration of the cultural change and behavioural aspects related to the Strategy including people skills and the appetite for change;
- That projects within the Strategy may provide savings and how would this be expressed and captured;
- The consequences of implementation of the Strategy including the possibility of a requirement for additional data centres, alignment to existing University Strategy and the potential requirement for additional Strategies e.g. a University Artificial Intelligence Strategy and an overall University Data Strategy; and
- The impact of the Strategy and consequences of next steps should be highlighted.

The Committee Seminar noted:
- That the Colleges were supportive of the Digital Strategy
- There were 4 main themes; Behavioural and User Experience, Owner of Strategy, Investment Efficiency and what other investments have to align to the Strategy
- Discussions on how to resource the Digital Strategy across the University to include executive sponsors, hold appropriate training and general business as usual requirements were being held.

It was highlighted that the Digital Estates heatmap and Strategy covered 77 largest and most material Digital Estates platforms, out of a total of over 1100 Digital Projects and queried the level of resource required for smaller projects that were not covered by the strategy.   It was agreed that the Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University would estimate the size and cost of the remaining smaller projects.

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

It was agreed that comments from members should be incorporated into the Strategy before it progressed to Knowledge Strategy Committee, Policy and Resources Committee and University Court. The Seminar was supportive of the Strategy and commended the work that had been undertaken. It was agreed to recommend the draft roadmap, of the Digital Estate, for onward approval to Policy and Resources Committee and University Court.

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