MINUTES

STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Date:	Tues 26 February 2019	Time:	1530 (refreshments from 1500)
Location:	Boardroom, University House, Leek Road Campus		

Notes:

1. *Items marked with an asterisk (starred items) were for information only or regarded as noncontentious. Starred items will not be discussed and will be assumed to have been noted or approved unless a request to unstar a named item is received from a Board member in advance, or at the commencement, of the meeting.*
2. *Items classified as Confidential, and their subsequent minutes (highlighted here in blue), will be redacted before publication of the agenda and minutes on the University's public website.*

Members		
Professor Liz Barnes	Vice Chancellor	P
Richard Cotterell	External Member	A
Tash Crump	Student Representative (President, Students' Union)	P
David Gage	External Member	T
Glenn Earlam (in the Chair)	External Member	P
Doug Rouxel	Academic Staff Representative	P
In attendance		
Ian Blachford	Chief Operating Officer and Clerk to the Board of Governors	A
Dr Simone Clarke	Director of Strategic Planning	IA
Professor Ieuan Ellis	Pro Vice Chancellor – Partnerships	IA
Professor Martin Jones	Deputy Vice Chancellor	IA
Sue Reece	Pro Vice Chancellor – Student Experience	IA
Lauren Rooke	Assistant Clerk to the Board of Governors (minutes)	IA
Pascale Vermassen	Acting Director of Finance	IA

P = Present; T = via telephone; A = Apologies; IA = In Attendance

1 MEETING MANAGEMENT	
67	**Apologies for Absence** were received from Ian Blachford.
68	There were no new **Declarations of Interest.**
69	The **Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee,** 23 October 2018 SP/05/01, were signed as a true and accurate record.
70	**Matters arising:** • **Minute 55 – Distance-Learning Provision** – it was noted that this had been discussed further by Executive and that a paper would come to the June meeting of the committee. • **Minute 57 – OfS Registration Decision** – it was noted that the action plan was sent to OfS on 28 January 2019 in response to the registration decision letter. (Also see agenda item 2.3.) • **Minute 58 – Committee Terms of Reference** – it was noted that the Director of Strategic Planning was now in

	attendance at Strategy and Performance Committee meetings.
	• **Minute 54 (Matters Arising) – International Strategy** – it was noted that this paper would be received at the next meeting, owing to the resignation of the Director of International Recruitment and the completion of work to reposition the University's approach.

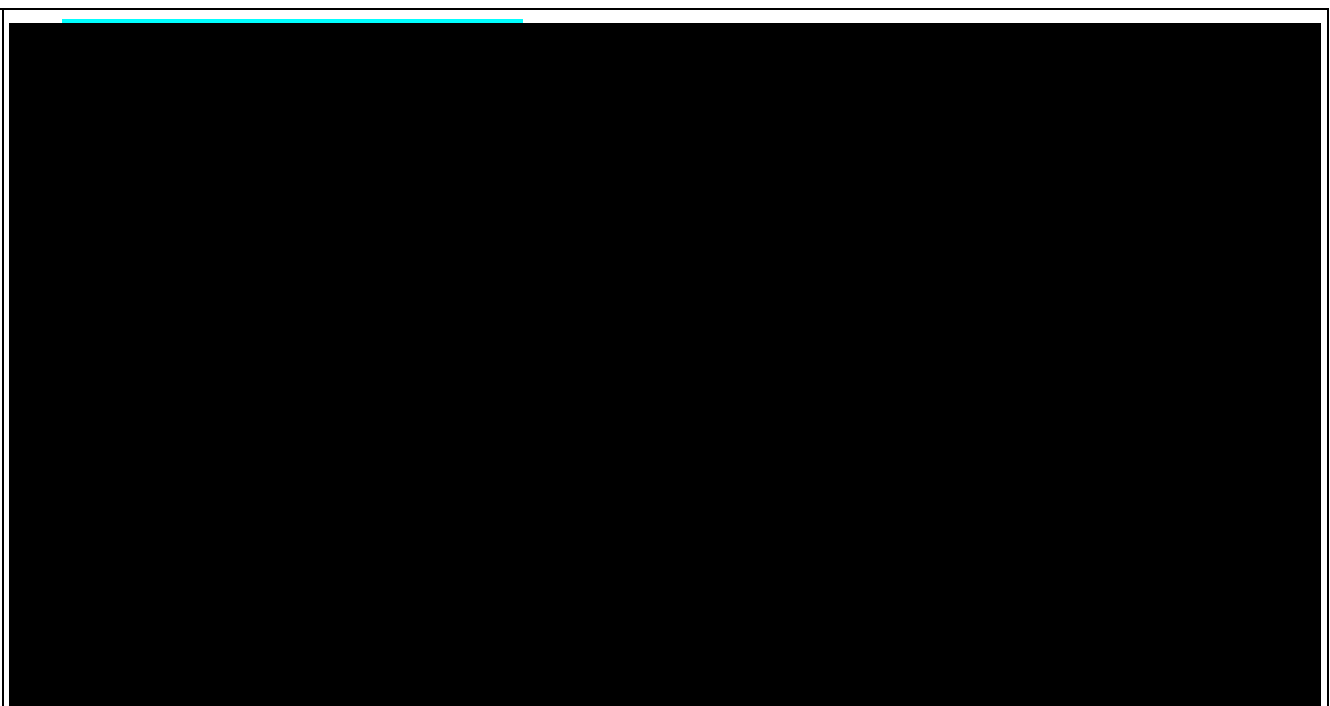## 2 FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL (marked below accordingly)

| 71 | The committee discussed an update paper on **Strategy to 2030** SP/05/02, presented by the Vice Chancellor. The following principle points were noted:

• The Board of Governors and Academic Board had met in August 2018 to begin discussions about: the higher education landscape, the current position and positioning of the University, and the potential impact of the fourth industrial revolution on the future shape of Universities.
• The committee received at the last meeting a paper setting out the proposed approach to the 2030 strategy. This had since been reviewed by Academic Board and further enhanced to cover a broader range of University activities. (Appendix A)
• The Senior Leadership Team had met in December 2018 and identified a set of priorities to respond to the emerging challenges within the sector and reflected on the implications for the 2030 strategy. A set of high-level thoughts had been captured and were to be considered both within the business planning processes and in the ongoing development of the 2030 strategy. (Appendix B)
• At the Governors' Strategic Weekend, a set of key considerations for the 2030 strategy were identified, including: business transformation needs, curriculum design, the role of AI, the future workforce and skill-set and some early activities required to prepare us for the future. (Appendix C)
• A draft academic strategy had been prepared to provide a framework for curriculum development and pedagogy as the University progressed towards its 2030 strategy. This was to be shared more broadly with staff representatives and shaped through Academic Strategy Committee before approval through Academic Board and the Governing Body. (Appendix D)
• The University was currently recruiting to a new post, Director of Transformation, who working with the Director of Digital Services and the Director of Strategic Planning would lead on the implementation of agreed priorities.
• The paper and its appendices were not to be considered as an attempt to write the 2030 strategy; it was rather a bringing together of themes in order to identify a direction of travel.

Members commented as follows:

• Simone Clarke underlined that the approach in the Academic Strategy was not a new idea for HEIs, but that very few universities had successfully achieved the correct balance between teaching and research, hence its importance. Figure 1 highlighted qualities and skills that all graduates should be able to demonstrate, but the route might be different for each student. The draft strategy would help embed these skills for students and ensure that they were able to articulate their development, and what they could contribute.
• David Gage asked about potential deeper focus on part-time and lifelong learning; and international recruitment. Liz Barnes confirmed that a full report on international recruitment and strategy would come to the next meeting of the committee. Liz Barnes further noted that international strategy (and globalisation) were definite current areas of focus and that on 27 Feb 2019, Academic Board would receive a report from the Students' Union that highlighted globalisation as a priority for students. Tash Crump noted that one of the challenges around this for the Students' Union was in ensuring that the appropriate terminology was used for students, and that the concept of "global citizenship" was really understood.
• Glenn Earlam asked for further clarification on the concept of globalisation and its application for the University, noting that such terms could take on different nuance within different sectors and industries. Liz Barnes highlighted that the University was working to ensure that graduates were prepared for a globalised future, with an understanding of differing economic and cultural landscapes. One of the ways that this could be achieved was by working to "decolonise" the curriculum, providing multi-cultural content that promoted greater social and historical awareness, and challenged assumptions.
• Sue Reece highlighted that much of recent work undertaken around the BAME student experience underlined the need for these changes to content and delivery, noting that the Connected Curriculum currently being developed would likely mean a far more interdisciplinary approach to a course of study, whereby a qualification retained a "course DNA" of core subject learning but allowed for a more flexible approach to both content and learning and teaching. Marketing of such courses would be crucial, to allow potential students to see past a course name to the opportunities and flexibility beyond.
• As an example, Liz Barnes highlighted that a law degree was likely to look very different in ten years' time (noting that the majority of law graduates did not in fact enter the profession). Artificial intelligence had already impacted on the profession and would continue to do so. There would always be a core of learning for each subject, but students would need the flexibility to apply this differently, for example via an apprenticeship model, or with more of a focus on a complementary discipline.
• David Gage enquired about logistics as a subject area, and potential subsequent business opportunities. Liz Barnes confirmed that the Business School had recently looked into this again (and that she had met with DPD) and |

confirmed that this was a complex area with difficulties attracting students. Logistics as a subject area was usually more successful when it focused on supply chain management and data analysis, and the latter was a definite area of focus for the University, particularly given the difficulty for many companies of recruiting big data analysts. Tash Crump agreed that effective data analysis was becoming a prerequisite for more and more roles, a development of which students were not always aware.

- Glenn Earlam noted that there was still a significant market that, regardless of changes to the landscape, would always choose their course based on what subject they enjoyed or excelled at. Liz Barnes agreed that it was important to remain agile in this regard, so that the University could best respond to the needs of the market.
- Glenn Earlam asked for clarification on timelines in terms of moving towards a fully-connected digital strategy. Liz Barnes confirmed that mapping out these timelines and working towards a plan on workforce-readiness was effectively the next step in the process.
- Doug Rouxel raised concerns about the issue of digital literacy within the University's culture. Liz Barnes highlighted the recent Digifest event, which had seen good levels of engagement. It was now important to maintain this upskilling within staff development, and it was recognised that this would be a significant journey.
- Liz Barnes proposed that a plan be presented regarding the roll-out of out different approaches for delivery and common subject themes that might become a part of most students' curricula.

The committee endorsed the direction of travel of the Strategy to 2030 report and referred it to the Board of Governors for noting.

| 72 | The committee discussed a **KPI Report (DISCUSSION)** SP/05/03, introduced by the Vice Chancellor. The following main points were noted: |

- This was the first report of its type prepared for Strategy and Performance Committee, which documented current performance in relation to the Key Performance Indicators to be achieved during the life-cycle of the current Strategic Plan, which would end in 2021.
- Progress was currently good in relation to the principal KPIs. A RAG (Red/Amber/Green) rating had been assigned to each to indicate progress to date, as follows:
  - o Red – target has not yet been achieved
  - o Amber – target may be achieved soon
  - o Green – target has already been achieved
- Background commentary was shaded in grey for information only.
- The paper complemented other papers on the agenda for Strategy and Performance Committee, in particular item 2.8, the progress report evaluating the delivery of the Strategic Plan (Connected Communities).

Members commented as follows:

- Glenn Earlam commended the clarity of the report, and the progress shown, and asked about the timeline for re-evaluation/resetting of the targets. Liz Barnes clarified that some measures had been adjusted where they had been met earlier than expected (as agreed by the Board of Governors in November 2018). A new strategy with new KPIs would be launched in 2021.
- Simone Clarke proposed adding an annexe clarifying timescales and how often Governors could expect to be updated on each element.
- Glenn Earlam asked for clarification on the performance-monitoring measures underpinning the overall KPIs. Liz Barnes highlighted that the current strategy had been based on building a firm foundation in terms of areas such as reputation (mainly via league table progress), financial sustainability and TEF. (It was noted that only one of the KPI supporting strategies - relating to 100% of staff with HEA fellowship – did not currently feature in a league table.) Year-on-year plans, looking at achievements and trajectory, were shown within the financial plan, and the assurance coming to the committee was underpinned by extensive management monitoring and analysis. A highly dynamic environment meant that it was difficult to specify overall lower-level KPI targets, which easily became arbitrary, but all schools looked regularly at their measures internally, as well as via the QBR process and school health checks, updating their (highly specific) five-year business plans each year. Citing the example of the KPI supporting strategy of "50% of academic staff with doctoral qualification", Liz Barnes summarised the current measures underway on achieving this.
- It was agreed that it would be helpful to have a briefing on action taken on a particular red-rated area, and that this would be incorporated into the accompanying committee report on the delivery of the strategic plan.

| 73 | The committee discussed two **Student Recruitment Reports (DISCUSSION); 2017-18 End of Cycle Report** SP/05/04 and **2018-19 In-Year Report** SP/05/05. |

Members commented as follows:

74	The committee discussed a **Student Retention Report (DISCUSSION)** SP/05/06. The following main points were noted:
	- In order to achieve completion rates of 85%, in line with the University's "timely completion" KPI, an average retention rate across all three levels of study (for three-year first degrees) of 95% each year would need to be achieved, i.e. an average withdrawal rate of no higher than 5% per annum. - During Semester one 2018/19, the University performed better than the threshold of 5% withdrawals in nine departments across the six schools for full-time undergraduate degree programmes (delivered at the University or with UK partners). - Seven departments reduced withdrawal rates year-on year when comparing performance in semester one 2018/19 to the same period in 2017/18. - At the end of semester one, the retention rate was 95.66% (withdrawal rate of 4.36%). The challenge now was to continue to improve this performance profile throughout the remainder of the academic year. - The attached paper detailed the key actions being taken to promote student retention generally (including the issue of dormancy, which had now been addressed) and more targeted action within specific schools or to support vulnerable student groups. - A further short update report was scheduled to be provided at the June 2019 committee meeting. Members commented as follows: - Glenn Earlam commended the report and the progress made to date. - Sue Reece highlighted the need to really understand our students' needs with regard to retention, which was a very complex issue. - In the process of introducing a course health check which would also aid in this area. - Doug Rouxel noted that within his subject area, little had been said about improving retention, but it was acknowledged that the subject area itself was green. This was essentially the job of the Asst Deans. - Glenn Earlam asked whether revenue lost as a result of attrition was discussed with Assistant Deans and Senior Management Teams. Liz Barnes clarified that staff had not always previously fully understood that funding was being lost when students were allowed to remain dormant, but a cultural change was taking place and this was now a key continued focus. Tash Crump noted that in meetings of the School of LSE retention group, for example, retention losses were always equated to a specific revenue number. It was agreed that the Student Retention Report would be referred to the Board of Governors for noting.
75	The committee discussed a report on **Apprenticeships Performance and Monitoring (DISCUSSION)** SP/05/07, introduced by the Pro Vice Chancellor – Student Experience. The following main points were noted: - In April 2018, the OfS confirmed that level 4 and 5 apprenticeships would be subject to Ofsted inspection. The inspection arrangements would be monitored using the Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook, which made an overall judgment of provision based on the combined assessment of four key areas. The areas were: - Effectiveness of Leadership and Management - Quality of Teaching and Learning and Assessment

	o Personal Development, Welfare and Behaviour
	o Outcomes for Learners
	• In response to the above, this paper provided an overview of the data from the Apprenticeship Dashboard that had been developed to enable the Senior Leadership Team and Governors to monitor performance and challenge weaknesses.
76	The committee received an update on **REF 2021 (DISCUSSION)** SP/05/, noting the following main points: • The report included two elements provided to update Governors on the University's preparations for REF2021: Revised Unit of Assessment Structure (UoA) and a timeline for REF2021 preparations. • A full internal audit report on REF 2021 Preparedness would be considered by Audit and Risk Committee on 12 March 2019. Members commented as follows: • Doug Rouxel noted that the paper effectively functioned as a plan for league table improvement, as discussed during the earlier agenda item on the KPI report. • Simone Clarke highlighted that just less than 20% of the overall mark in the Complete University Guide was allocated to research, and that a poor result in REF could impact significantly on this. • Liz Barnes underlined that measures put in place now would be unlikely to significantly impact on the upcoming REF but would see results in REF 2028. • Ieuan Ellis underlined the importance of growing research in a particular area concurrently with subject (teaching) growth. Within areas such as Games, these attempts were hampered by a lack of experienced research staff, given the relative newness of the subject. Some Russell Group universities were buying in whole groups of researchers and staff, but this represented a very significant investment and the University was not currently in a position to do this. (The University's commitment to recruiting Associate Deans – Research, would help mitigate this, as would growing research pockets internally, but it was recognised that there was significant work to do on this.)
77	The committee received a presentation on **Enterprise Spaces (DISCUSSION)** SP/05/09, introduced by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, noting the following main points:
78	The committee received a report entitled **Evaluating the Delivery of the University's Strategic Plan – Connecting Communities (DISCUSSION)** SP/05/1-, introduced by the Pro Vice Chancellor – Partnerships & Region. The following main points were noted: • In November 2018, the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of this Committee, had accepted a proposal for the introduction of two new complementary reports intended to provide insights and assurance on the progress that was being made in the delivery of the current Strategic Plan and the achievement of the Key Performance Indicators. • At each meeting of the committee a report was to be provided on one of the three strategic pillars in the Strategic Plan. This report, which focused on the Connected Communities pillar, was intended to be read alongside the KPI report. • The report aimed to bring together key actions being taken to deliver the Strategic Pillar, drawing together some information that board members may have received previously in more detail and/or in different contexts. The information provided was deliberately high-level, highlighting flagship projects and initiatives, the majority of which had regional and/or national significance. Outcomes (other than delivery of the University KPIs covered in the accompanying report), where known, were provided, as well as risks and risk management work, related to individual initiatives or the delivery of the overarching strategic pillar. Members commented as follows: • David Gage commended the report. • Martin Jones noted that one of the challenges in this area was developing a metric that effectively measured social impact. Ieuan Ellis confirmed that the University's launch of a Civic Agreement (as recommended by the Civic

	Universities Commission Report) would complement this, as would current work underway on KEF metrics and the recent appointment of Jeremy Nicholls as a Visiting Professor for Social Value.
3 FOR INFORMATION	
79	The committee received a **MAT Report** SP/05/11 from the Deputy Vice Chancellor for information.
80	The committee received the **OfS Registration Action Plan Update** SP/05/12 from the Pro Vice Chancellor – Student Experience, for information.
81	The committee received the **TEF Submission** SP/05/13 for information.
82	The committee received the **Ofsted Self-Assessment Return** SP/05/14 for information.
4 ADDITIONAL MATTERS	
83	Any additional matters: • Sue Reece tabled the University's draft response to the TEF Consultation being led by Dame Shirley Pearce, outlining the current position, and asking the committee to consider the draft response. The committee received the tabled draft response for consideration.

84	**Items to be referred to Board of Governors:**
	
	For noting
	
	  a) **Minute 71** – Strategy to 2030
	  b) **Minute 73** – Student Retention Report
	  c) **Minute 74** – Student Recruitment End-of-Cycle 2017-18 Report (Executive Summary)

85	**Next meeting:** Tuesday 11 June 2019 (Boardroom, University House)