University of BRISTOL

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

FRIDAY 28 MARCH 2025
VIRIDOR THEATRE, SS GREAT BRITAIN, GREAT WESTERN DOCKYARD, GAS FERRY ROAD, BRISTOL, BS1 6TY
09.00 – 15.30

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Mr M Allan, Mr S Boyd, Ms G Bowen, Mr J Boyer (Chair), Professor A Carr, Ms J Cecil, Ms L Collins, Mr L Coppi, Professor I Craddock, Professor N Edwards, Ms J Huggins, Mr N Joicey, Mr N Keveth, Ms L Lambert, Ms X Levantis, Mr F Quek, Mr S Robertson, Professor J Squires (Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost), Professor E Welch (Vice-Chancellor), Professor Dame M Welham.

In attendance: Mr Michele Acuto (Pro Vice Chancellor, Global Engagement) – Item 7, Mr Michael Flay (Interim Deputy University Secretary and Head of Governance), Mr Steve Hall (Acting Exec Dir. Education & Student Experience) – Items 10 and 11, Professor Tansy Jessop (Pro Vice Chancellor, Education and Students) – Item 9, Mr Stuart Johnson (Director of Careers) – Item 9, Ms Carol Murray (Deloitte) – Item 6, Lucinda Parr (Chief Operating Officer, Registrar and University Secretary), Mr Matt Paterson (Deloitte) – Item 6, Professor Edward Peck (Incoming Chair of the Office for Students) – Item 10, Mrs Lucy Penrose (Deputy Head of Governance and minutes), Mrs Hannah Quinn (Chief of Staff), Miss Clare Smith (Interim General Counsel) – Items 7 and 12, Mr Peter Vermeulen (Chief Financial Officer), Mr Keith Woolley (Chief Digital Information Officer) – Item 6

Apologies: Ms O Adesanya

1. WELCOMES, APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
1.1 The Chair welcomed members to today's meeting, and apologies were noted from the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee (O Adesanya).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
2.1 There were none.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
3.1 **APPROVED**: the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees on 31 January 2025 as a true and accurate record (*on file*).

4. ACTIONS & MATTERS ARISING
4.1 RECEIVED and **NOTED:** the Board action register *(on file).*

5. CHAIR'S REPORT (ref **BT/24-25/34**) (*on file*)).
5.1 RECEIVED and **NOTED**: the Chair's Report including the Board forward plan for the remainder of academic year 2024/25.

5.2 **NOTED**: actions now completed in respect of a specific governance review report.

6. MODERN NETWORK UPDATE (ref **BT/24-25/35**) (*on file*)).
6.1. RECEIVED and **DISCUSSED**: an update on the Modern Network including clarity on the proposed action being taken to progress the programme back to 'Green.'

6.2 The Chief Digital Information Officer (CDIO) provided a detailed update in respect of the paper that had been provided, and the Board **NOTED** the intended direction and actions.

6.3 The University's Assurance Partner, Deloitte, provided their own perspective and the following was highlighted to the Board:

6.3.1 Deloitte had been appointed to oversee programme governance, planning, and risk management, providing ongoing assurance through monthly progress reports. These reports highlighted key risks, challenges, and the overall status of the programme as it progressed.

6.3.2 Systemic challenges persisted throughout the programme, particularly with leadership initially being provided by an external company, which had proved to be ineffective. As a result, the University's CDIO had now taken over programme management to bring stronger direction and oversight.

6.3.3 Financial management and controls remained a concern, with ongoing challenges in ensuring transparency and accountability. A deep dive conducted two years ago helped establish greater financial clarity, but continued monitoring was necessary.

6.3.4 Tracking programme benefits and ensuring measurable outcomes was identified as a critical priority. Clear mechanisms for monitoring progress and benefits realisation needed to be in place to assess the programme's success over time.

6.3.5 Deloitte confirmed that the high-level plan presented was appropriate and the new methodology was appropriate, however more detail was needed on how this would be implemented including the new structure. The leadership transition was expected to provide the necessary momentum to drive progress.

6.3.6 June 2026 was noted as the likely soonest date for the full completion of the programme. Deloitte noted that further evidence was needed to check the feasibility of the underlying assumptions and that ongoing rollout should continue to be monitored closely to check whether this timetable was reasonable. Deloitte noted that meaningful benefits could still be realised before full completion.

6.3.7 University-wide support would continue to be essential for the programme's success, as removing barriers and addressing challenges efficiently required collaboration across various departments and stakeholders. Deloitte raised that collaboration between estates, academics/faculties and IT was particularly crucial for programme success.

6.3.8 The high intensity demands on programme leadership were recognised as a sustainability risk. The CDIO had dedicated significant effort over recent months, and Deloitte raised some concerns about the long-term viability of maintaining such a level of commitment. This issue was flagged to the Board for consideration.

6.4 The Board thanked the CDIO and Deloitte for providing such a thorough and systematic understanding of the root causes of the issues.

6.5 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

6.5.1 Whether the June 2026 completion date remained feasible, with a recommendation from the CDIO that perhaps the earliest revised estimate would more likely be February 2027, though the full plan was still being finalised. The estimated budget impact was £1.29 million, but this was also not yet confirmed. The original timeline assumed key deliverables would already be in progress, but delays had necessitated an adjustment. The Chair noted that February 2027 might still be optimistic, and it was **AGREED** that the CDIO would provide a revised completion date with greater certainty before presenting it to the Board again.

6.5.2   The fact that Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) had received and discussed the Modern Network Phase 1 report prepared by RSM and that the Phase 2 report was scheduled to be discussed at its meeting in June. It was also **AGREED** that copies of the most recent monthly reports prepared by Deloitte would also be shared with the ARC.

6.5.3   The long-term viability of the CDIO maintain such a significant level of commitment to Modern Network given his broader portfolio of work. The CIO reassured the Board that by June 2025, the programme status should return to Amber, supported by a reporting pack that would enable the CDIO to transition into the role of SRO, reporting to the Board rather than acting as both programme manager and director, emphasised a concern that it was not tenable for the SRO to continue both this role and the BAU role in the long term. An exit plan was therefore needed and necessary controls must be firmly established before full handover could take place.

6.5.4   The Board stressed the importance of strong programme management and questioned how assurance could be provided that the new approach would be effective and sustainable. The Board emphasised the need to reset the business case, reassess costs, and proactively track benefits realisation. The Board emphasised the need for rigor in verifying the benefits case, especially where external stakeholders were involved. The Board **NOTED** that financial resetting and benefit tracking would be monitored through Audit and Risk Committee and Finance and Investment Committee and reported to the Board.

6.5.5   In response to a question about lessons learned, Deloitte explained that the approach to assurance had shifted and that they had now implemented an integrated assurance approach, which was more costly to the University but involved greater involvement in weekly meetings and regular interactions. This had allowed for ongoing course corrections and more visible progress. Deloitte emphasised that the intensity of assurance, especially around the contract and programme re-plan, had been crucial and suggested this should continue until the end of June in line with the 'route to Amber' plan, which the Board agreed. They would monitor the baseline plan closely, reviewing it weekly and monthly to track progress and address challenges early. Deloitte were asked to confirm that they were able to provide continuity of the assurance team going forward. Deloitte confirmed that there were no plans in place to change the core team. The Chair of the Board also highlighted that he had spoken to the chair of the ARC who wanted an update from Deloitte on the assurance over the MN programme. Deloitte confirmed that they were in contact with the ARC Chair and were planning to provide an update.

6.5.6   With regards to TQ CM1, the Board asked for reassurance that the programme would work from day one and emphasised the need for better initiation checks before delivery. There was also a discussion about how best to transition from the existing procurement to future needs. The CDIO responded that the procurement process, including partnerships with leading suppliers and network companies, had been carefully audited, ensuring the right products were acquired, and that ARC had scrutinised the RSM phase 1 report which had looked at procurement specifically and which had resulted in a significant proportion of 'green' ratings in respect of overall assurance. The Board was further assured that the TQ programme was currently ahead of schedule, with access to buildings being obtained as they became available, and with contractors set to begin work in June. The CDIO was closely overseeing the process, applying proven project management approaches to ensure successful delivery.

6.5.7   The importance of applying these learnings in both Campus and IT project management and also feeding these back into the broader Strategic Programmes and Projects Division.

6.6   The Chair expressed concerns about resourcing and emphasised the Board's close monitoring of the issue. The Board acknowledged the University's ability to learn and

adapt, appreciating the agility demonstrated in moving forward in a constructive manner. The Chair confirmed the full support of the Board.

7. **EXECUTIVE REPORT** (ref **BT/24-25/36**) (*on file*)).

7.1. RECEIVED and **DISCUSSED**: the report of the Executive.

7.2 In the presence of the University's interim General Counsel, the Board **DISCUSSED** in detail the OfS Regulatory Case in respect of a fine imposed on the University of Sussex with respect to the E1 (upholding the public interest governance principles) and E2 (governance, specifically the scheme of delegation) ongoing conditions of registration. The Board **NOTED:**

    a) that there was an ongoing programme of work underway at the University with respect to Freedom of Speech matters. Some updated procedures and the Freedom of Speech Code of Practice had already been approved by the Board of Trustees this year, and more would be presented to them in this period (as noted in the Board Forward Plan 2024/25).

    b) the existing framework in respect of Free Speech which were currently in place, and that EDI Governance was also being reviewed (and which had already been discussed in its first iteration by the University Executive Board), would also be discussed at a Board meeting imminently.

    c) the importance of good governance processes.

7.3 The Board **NOTED**:

    a) an update from the interim General Counsel, were with reference to two legal cases.

    b) a new Project which was commercial in confidence.

Academic Portfolio Review, and PSTP

7.4 In respect of the Academic Portfolio Review and the PSTP, it was **NOTED** that there was a whole suite of targeted activity which had already been planned since these programmes had been established 18 months to 2 years ago. The Board then heard an example from one of the academic trustees' School about how they were reviewing their processes and structures to more efficiently and effectively deliver the University's 2030 strategy. The Executive emphasised that each School had the same target but that their position relative to that target was different, and the actions that they would be taking would also be different and appropriate to their differing setup. Heads of School had provided feedback to the Executive that the review had provided them with some useful levers for analysing their programme portfolio, sharing data with colleagues, and providing a stronger understanding of student satisfaction levels. It was noted that the approach that was being taken was one of a distributed shared approach to how the University was going to effect the change that was required.

7.5 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

7.5.1 The impact on staff, students and wider stakeholders of a possible dispute resolution process triggered by the Unions.

7.5.2 Not losing sight of the importance of REF and TEF and the importance of the Integrated Planning Process (IPP) in respect of providing a balanced scorecard for Schools and Faculties. The IPP allowed for consideration of what would be the acceptable level of resource required in order to generate an operating surplus whilst still allowing them to deliver on the University Strategy.

7.5.3 Making use of the Modern Network benefits case which would be about improving productivity, and also the fact that PSTP would be looking at automation and how to apply AI. It was agreed that one was not dependent on the other.

7.5.4 The headline message to staff and students which was that the University was stable and confident about its future but that we needed to act now in order to protect the future of a

great university, to support fantastic education and research in a volatile world where we could no longer rely on the income generation of the previous ten years.

7.5.5 A professional services staff trustee emphasised to the Board that there was a sense of relief coming from Professional Services staff that the University was now moving into an 'act now' phase. There had been a significant amount of anxiety in not knowing, and where the Executive had started to empower senior and middle managers and leaders, these staff members were beginning to feel more empowered, leading to some real ingenuity in the approaches that they were taking. The Board also noted that the involvement of a wide range of colleagues in this process, had been received very positively by many Professional Services staff.

7.5.6 The fact that the University's Remuneration Committee had recently agreed to pause increment pay for senior staff, including the Executive.

7.5.7 The importance of continuing to work closely with the Unions, meeting with them regularly, and remaining committed to the three-year improvement plan on pay which had been previously agreed by the Board of Trustees.

7.5.8 The importance of continuing to work closely with WECA and Bristol City Council.

Project Mango
7.6 The benefits, risks and opportunities of the project were discussed by the Board. The following was highlighted during the discussions:

7.6.1 The alignment with the University's international strategy and the broader impact of the Project with respect to collaboration with industry, philanthropic funding, research partnerships and student recruitment.

7.6.2 The importance of future-proofing the University and the positioning of the project more broadly in respect of ensuring the long-term viability of the institution.

7.6.3 The essential due diligence that was required, including a withdrawal plan and clear return on investment, and the importance of sharing that with the Board of Trustees in May.

7.7 **NOTED**: that a more detailed set of paperwork would be discussed at the Board meeting on 23rd May 2025.

8. FINANCE REPORT (ref **BT/24-25/37**) (*on file*)).
8.1 RECEIVED and **DISCUSSED**: a summary by way of a PowerPoint presentation (*on file*) from the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the most important financial matters as of March 2025 and an update on latest admissions projections, delivered by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost.

Admissions
8.2 The following was **DISCUSSED** in relation to admissions projections:

8.2.1 Concerns were raised about PGT numbers, emphasising the importance of effective marketing to convert interest into offers. In response, targeted marketing campaigns were noted to be underway, with weekly meetings ensuring a proactive recruitment approach and swift offer processing. Additionally, collaboration with a third party had enhanced individual engagement, leading to more strategic and personalised outreach across the University.

8.2.2 The dip in PGT numbers was a sector wide issue and a long-term trend, which was why undertaking a programme portfolio review was especially important. This was mostly an

issue with China, but there were country specific and subject related issues that were noticeable.

8.2.3 Forward planning must account for long-term trends, recognising that whilst the University could optimise internal strategies, external market forces remained beyond its control. Market insight was crucial for aligning programmes with demand, balancing the introduction of new offerings with the discontinuation of others. However, broader global trends in PGT remained a factor. Despite market uncertainties, the University would want to maintain its growth ambitions, with the CFO outlining the associated risks in the long-term financial plans later on in this item.

8.2.4 The reliability of deposits as an indicator of student arrivals had decreased. To ensure accurate forecasting, modifiers were being applied based on previous performance and other influencing factors rather than relying solely on deposits. Ongoing efforts focused on evaluating deadlines and potential flexibilities to improve prediction accuracy and assurance.

Financial matters
8.3 The CFO highlighted the following to the Board of Trustees as part of his report in respect of liquidity:

8.3.1 The University's updated, but still draft, financial plans highlighted a significant risk to liquidity in summer 2026, which meant that it was now essential to lift liquidity. Several matters had contributed to this:

   a)   Slower Research Council payments
   b)   Removal of endowment funds
   c)   More detailed forecasts (month by month cash forecast for the next five years)
   d)   Increase in employer NI leading to financial shortalls.

8.3.2 **REDACTED** [*Section 43 – trade secrets and prejudicial to commercial interests*]

8.3.3 **REDACTED** [*Section 43 – trade secrets and prejudicial to commercial interests*]

8.3.4 **REDACTED** [*Section 43 – trade secrets and prejudicial to commercial interests*]

8.3.5 **REDACTED** [*Section 43 – trade secrets and prejudicial to commercial interests*]

8.4 **NOTED**: that as soon as the Executive and the Board were to become aware that the University might break the 30 days liquidity threshold i.e. on a rolling basis, then a Reportable Event would need to be made to the Office for Students, even if that risk wasn't actually realised. It was noted what the above rule meant was that at any given time, the University must have enough liquid assets to cover at least 30 days of operational expenditure, continuously assessed rather than at just one fixed point in time. The Executive assured the Board that nothing was notifiable at this time and that a breach was unlikely. This would of course be kept under constant review.

8.5 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

8.5.1 The fact that this was about increasing financial flexibility in order to deal with the greater volatility in cash flows. The University's net debt would not change as a result of this.

8.5.2 It was noted that even without using an RCF, the University would still meet the regulatory requirement of maintaining at least 30 days of liquidity. However, other planned mitigation actions must be successfully implemented; otherwise, there was a real risk of breaching the requirement in the future.

8.5.3   Whether there was a process that the OfS followed around the use of RCFs and also in respect of undrawn facilities and how to best align with this, if such a process existed.

8.6   The Board was supportive of the approach that had been outlined to them by the Chief Financial Officer.

8.7   **NOTED**: that the budget would be scrutinised by Finance and Investment Committee on 2nd May and recommended to the Board for approval at its meeting on 23rd May 2025.

Interim Financial Return to the OfS
8.8   **NOTED**: that on 6th March 2025, the Office for Students had sent a request to all Universities to submit an "interim financial return". A copy of the request and our proposed response was included in today's meeting paperwork. The return sought to ascertain whether there were any material changes in liquidity since the January 2025 return. The submission had a tight turnaround date, and for that reason did not require Board sign-off, however, it was felt important to share a copy of the interim financial return with the Board of Trustees for transparency and assurance purposes. It was noted that none of information provided to the OfS would cause them any concern. The University had ensured that it paid particular attention to striking the right balance between being reassuring, reflecting its determination and the quality of its plans, whilst also acknowledging the higher levels of uncertainty that it currently faced. The Board endorsed this approach and agreed that it was essential to be transparent about the challenges that the University was currently navigating.

Barclays bank mandate changes
8.9   **NOTED**: that recent discussions with Barclays had provided the University with the opportunity to revise its banking mandate with them. This modification would solely affect the delegation authority within the mandate. Presently, the University's Executive Delegation Framework assigned the operational management of banking and cash matters to the Chief Financial Officer. However, Barclays, as the University's primary clearing bank, mandated that any changes to the mandate and other account-related matters must receive approval from the Vice-Chancellor. This requirement could be burdensome, as it may not always be feasible to obtain the necessary signatures promptly, leading to potential delays in the process.

8.10   The Board **NOTED** a proposed solution developed in collaboration with Barclays, which aimed to amend the requirements by including additional members of the Executive on the list of authorised signatories for approving specific requests that had been pre-approved by Barclays. To ensure consistency with other banks, it would always be necessary to obtain two senior signatures from the designated list for any request. To accept delegated instructions, Barclays required the approval of the University's governing body for the following delegation:

8.11   With respect to Barclays, the Board **APPROVED** the following delegated authority:

         Any **two** of the specified post holders are authorised to act on behalf of the University to:

a. Add or remove any authorised signatories.
b. Change the signing rules applying to authorised signatories.
c. Sign the global banking authority/mandate.
d. Sign documents in relation to electronic banking channels and to delegate to individuals the power to decide matters dealt with for electronic banking channels and to allow those individuals to sub-delegate the power to other individuals to make payments and give other instructions in respect of those electronic banking channels.
e. Sign documentation in relation to BACS Direct Debit Origination including but not limited to BACS Direct Debit Indemnities.

         This delegated authority applies to all approved bank accounts and services.

The bank will be notified in writing of authority over accounts vested in individuals and promptly notified if this authority is revoked.

The specified post holders are as follows:

Vice-Chancellor and President (Evelyn Welch)
Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost (Judith Squires)
Chief Financial Officer (Peter Vermeulen)
Chief Operating Officer, Registrar & University Secretary (Lucinda Parr)
Group Finance Director (Shirlene Adam)
Strategic Finance Director (Aubrey Slade)

9. BRISTOL SKILLS PROFILE AND EMPLOYABILITY WORK

9.1 RECEIVED and **DISCUSSED**: a PowerPoint presentation (*on file*) from the Director of Careers on the Bristol Skills Profile and Employability Work.

9.2 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

9.2.1 The platform was not unique; it was initially developed by Sheffield and the University of East England. The University had since surpassed these institutions, adding its own skills list alongside the platform's original features. The University was ahead of other Russell Group universities, as the co-chair of a group of institutions using the platform.

9.2.2 The platform was valuable not only for students but for a wider audience, offering broad benefits. In particular it provided a flexible framework that could apply across various disciplines and career paths.

9.2.3 The platform could be useful in personal tutoring, helping individuals to think beyond their discipline. It had also been designed to capture assessments and enable continuous skill development over time.

9.2.4 There was potential to extend its use into the workplace, allowing individuals to continue developing their skills even after graduation.

9.2.5 Consideration should be given to extending access to the tool for up to three years after graduation.

9.2.6 There was interest in evaluating how the tool could be used differently during and after university, and how that progression could be tracked.

9.2.7 The PowerBI dashboard allowed for tracking skill development over time, with options to export data (e.g., CVs). However, evaluating long-term use after graduation would be more complex.

9.2.8 Alumni had expressed interest, but further plans beyond that had not yet been developed.

9.2.9 The platform incorporated broad, adaptable language to stay relevant to the fast-moving regional employment environment, focusing on both human and technical skills, not just technical abilities.

9.2.10 The platform aligned well with the university's strategy, supporting work on research, teaching, and impact, while contributing to the brand strategy and delivering a consistent narrative about the institution's goals.

10. STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SPOTLIGHT

10.1 RECEIVED and **DISCUSSED**: a PowerPoint presentation (*on file*) from Prof Edward Peck, national lead for Student mental health and wellbeing.

10.2 The presentation included some helpful considerations for the Board of Trustees and the Executive, and these were **NOTED** to be as follows:

10.2.1 Consider the efficacy of existing governance arrangements for student mental health.

10.2.2 Review existing staff training processes against the Competency Framework.

10.2.3 Consider the role that data does (or could) play in supporting student mental health, and whether systems were sufficiently mature or sophisticated to make use of this data.

10.2.4 Review whether the concept of compassionate communications was being picked up locally.

10.2.5 Review the findings of the National Suicide Review against our own practice.

10.2.6 Review institutional practices against the Restricting Access to Means guidance.

10.2.7 Consider and review existing partnership arrangements with local NHS services.

10.2.8 Prepare to follow up on this guidance with local NHS leaders.

10.3 There were other key headlines arising from the presentation:

10.3.1 The inclusion of student mental health information in the TEF.

10.3.2 Wellbeing analytics were a useful tool, particularly in relation to spotting students at risk. These could be used alongside engagement scores/data. Other Universities were using the curriculum to connect with students by, for example, making more aspects of their programmes credit bearing. Alongside this, were staff in each School/Department who were experts and were monitoring the data in order to flag upwards for intervention purposes.

10.3.3 Upon arrival, staggering communications to students, not overwhelming them. And focussing on compassionate communication.

10.3.4 Student mental health was a customer service activity rather than an academic activity and the culture needed to change.

10.3.6 Not enough research had been undertaken on international students at the current time.

10.3.6 Consideration should be given as to whether there were ways to build into the university's internal processes, interactions with students that could come through at Board level that the Board could then have insight into, in order to provide a better environment for students and also to provide greater assurance at a national level. For example, student Engagement data and how it varies over time, might be helpful for the Board of Trustees to receive information on.

10.3.7 Several universities had undertaken a mapping exercise about how students feel at certain points in the student journey, and it was suggested that this exercise could be helpful for the University to undertake and to share the results with the Board.

10.3.8 It could be useful to share a university student mental health plan with the Board when available.

10.4 It was **NOTED** that non-engagement with this agenda risked challenges by students, families, media, entrants and current and future governments, and that Universities needed to think systematically about implementing these - and other initiatives - as they redesigned student support services.

10.4 **NOTED**: that AdvanceHE was developing the Student Needs Framework – a tool to enable universities to map, evaluate, and reconfigure their student support. Likewise, the CUC was also developing a Mental Health Governance Framework.

10.5 **AGREED**: that further discussion on this matter would be had at Board level at the appropriate juncture.

11. ANNUAL REPORT ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING 2023/24 (ref **BT/24-25/38**) (*on file*)).

11.1 RECEIVED and **APPROVED**: the Annual Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Report, which detailed the achievements and challenges during 2023/24 and priorities for 2024/25.

11.2 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

11.2.1 The next iteration of this Annual Report would be based on the new CUC Guidance due to be published imminently.

11.2.2 The fact that considerable progress had been made since the last report.

11.2.3 The initial proposal of a partial ban of relationships between staff and students which was currently out for consultation and what other universities were doing in this space.

11.2.4 The importance of using data to measure the impact of social spaces and the design of student accommodation, specifically how these factors contributed to positive student wellbeing. The Executive confirmed that work was underway with Campus to ensure that spaces were designed to enable meaningful interactions, which was especially crucial in residences. However, this was more challenging to achieve in urban environments. Additionally, the University was currently examining the transition process for students, both from school to university and between academic years. It was **NOTED** that the Residential Strategy would be presented to Infrastructure Planning Committee at its meeting on 17th April.

11.2.5 Making sure that the University harnessed some of the internal research capability in respect of data analytics.

11.2.6 The recent guidance that had been published around Reasonable Adjustments policy and changes that had been made to disclosure off the back of the recent EHRC briefing note. It was noted that there was now a route for Schools to inform Student Disability Services of the arrangements that they were putting in place locally so that these could be captured centrally.

11.2.7 It was **NOTED** that the University was already very committed to dealing with sexual misconduct before the OfS regulation was introduced. The University had created a dedicated team focussed not only on supporting students in the event of these types of issues occurring, but also focussing on the the cultural shift and how to get a clear understanding amongst students of what was acceptable behaviour and what was not, what were the cultural expectations that the University had in this respect, and clear routes to reporting. The Board emphasised that this represented a real opportunity to try and be leading edge in this space.

11.3 **APPROVED**: the Annual Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Report 2023/24.

12. UNIVERSITY SECRETARY'S REPORT (ref **BT/24-25/39**) (*on file*)).

12.1 RECEIVED and **APPROVED**: the Student Complaints Annual Report.

12.2   **NOTED**: that the Academic Appeals Annual Report was due to be discussed at the July meeting of the Board of Trustees.

12.3   RECEIVED and **APPROVED**: the revisions to the Freedom of Speech Complaints Procedure, which represented an update on the procedure that had previously been approved by the Board in 2022.

12.4   **NOTED**: that a flowchart for the complaints process would be shared with the Board alongside these minutes, for information.

13.   REPORT OF THE FINANCE & INVESTMENT COMMITTEE (ref **BT/24-25/40**)(*on file*)).
13.1   RECEIVED and **APPROVED**: on the recommendation of the Committee, the revised University Endowment Investment Policy.

14.   ANNUAL STATEMENT ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY (ref **BT/24-25/41**) (*on file*)).
14.1   RECEIVED and **APPROVED**: the Annual Statement on Research Integrity.

15.   REPORT OF THE AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE (ref **BT/24-25/42**) (*on file*)).
15.1   RECEIVED and **NOTED**: the discussions which were had at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 3 March 2025.

16.   REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE (ref **BT/24-25/43**) (*on file*)).
16.1   RECEIVED and **APPROVED**: that Sarah Gilbert be reappointed for a second term as a member of Nominations Committee from 13 April 2025 to 31 August 2027.

17.   ANY OTHER BUSINESS
17.1   There was none.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 23 MAY 2025