University of Plymouth

Higher Education Corporation

Board of Governors

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Governors on Wednesday 19th March 2026 (Part B).

Present

Professor Simon Gaskell (Chair)
Dindu Okechukwu
Kerry Baldwin
Peter Coulson
Adrian Dawson
Amanda Fisher
Anna Cohn Orchard
Professor James Daybell
Vanessa French
Shane Amaratunga
Philip Nicol-Gent
Professor Richard Davies
Derek Pretty
Professor Richard Preziosi
Daniel Howlett
Josh Frost
Christine Allison
Michael Nithavrianakis

In attendance:

Professor Dafydd Moore (Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor) (SDVC)
Gavin Douglas (University Registrar and Secretary) (URS)
Louise Parr-Morley (Interim Chief Financial Officer) (ICFO)
Jackie Hunt (Board Governance Manager) (Clerk)

Item		Action
25/05/1	**Membership**	
1.1	**Apologies for Absence** **Noted:** • None	
1.2	**Notification of Items of any other Business** **Noted:** • None	
1.3	**Declarations of Interest** **Noted:** • None	
1.4	**Confidentiality Status of Agenda Items** **Noted:** • All items on the agenda are treated as confidential on the grounds of commercial confidentiality. • Further indication of the status of each item is noted on the accompanying paper.	
25/05/02	**Strategic Refresh (2030) and Strategic Performance Indicators:** John Curnow (DVC ESE), Rachael Nightingale (HRD), Kevin Jones (DVC R&I) and Paula Webster (DoSP) attended under timed business. **Noted:**	

	• This strategy has been developed rapidly within a volatile national and sector wide context, and the Board should review it with that in mind. It is essential that the approach remains flexible and able to adapt to the evolving higher education environment. • The Board may choose to approve the strategy, decline approval, or acknowledge that it is fundamentally directionally appropriate while requiring further development and refinement. **Discussed:** • The VC noted that while the refresh has been undertaken rapidly, it has nonetheless been comprehensive, however, there has not yet been sufficient opportunity to fully explore with the Board the next steps of the strategy across all areas. Several principles require further development, and Schools will need to articulate and assess the full implications of the vision for their respective areas. • The away day has been invaluable, providing the Board with significant insight, context, and understanding of key nuances and interdependencies. However, it remains unclear whether the session has been sufficient to give the Board a comprehensive understanding of what it is being asked to endorse. While the overall direction is clear, further work is required on the next level of detail and external factors, and greater precision may be necessary to inform full assurance. • It would be difficult to develop smart objectives from the strategy, some of the objectives appear more thematic in nature. • The strategy refresh has exceeded being a "refresh" due to the rapidly changing landscape, this has instead become a fundamental change. • The tone of the strategy and its aspirational nature are welcomed by the Board and the mission statement, strands and cross cutting themes are well developed but more detail and balance is required. • The lack of potential growth in real income in the sector by conventional means and whether the University could consider using its physical space differently and more extensively. • Simplicity at the top level of the strategy is important, the detail comes later. • The required timing of decisions by the Board, are there deadlines by which time decisions need to be made without affecting the next stages of the plan and the annual plan? An updated Strategic plan with additional detail to be brought to the May Board may be the answer. • The external messaging must be very clear. • There is general satisfaction with direction of travel but although it is not for the Board to scrutinise every detail, more understanding of the next levels of the strategy is required before a final approval can be made. • This is not a complete strategy yet; there needs to be further understanding for example on what the approach to the pinnacles of research would be and how they would be determined. • The strategy is due to be discussed at the senior leadership day on 24th March and a comprehensive statement on the position of the Board would be helpful before this meeting. **Decision:** • The Board is strongly supportive of the overarching principles and is enthusiastic regarding the direction of travel of the new Strategy. Board	

	members recognise the complexity of the sector-wide and national factors that necessitate the strategy remaining flexible at this time and expect that elements will continue to evolve over the coming period. The Board is keen to remain closely engaged and continue its review of the strategy by receiving an updated strategy with additional detail at the May Board Meeting. • The Board's endorsement of the overarching principles and enthusiastic support for the high-level objectives should enable the Executive to proceed with detailed planning for the coming academic year. **Action:** • To bring an updated Strategy with additional detail to the May Board Meeting	VC
25/05/03	**Date of Next Meeting** **Thursday 14th May 2026**	

Matters Arising from the Meeting of 19th March 2026

Minute	Action	By	Deadline
25/05/2	**Strategic Refresh (2030) and Strategic Performance Indicators**: To bring an updated Strategy with additional detail to the May Board Meeting	VC	May Board

Declarations of Interest:

NAME	ORGANISATION	ROLE	INTEREST DISCLOSED	INTEREST CEASED	ORGANISATION DEALS WITH THE UNIVERSITY	FINANCIAL/NON-FINANCIAL (i.e. is this a paid role)
Professor Simon Gaskell	CVCP Properties PLC (Company number **0 3029225)** Simpson, Thacher and Bartlett LLP Hawkins\Brown Architects Governing Body of Drapers' Academy (Harold Hill, Essex) Halpin Partnership	Chair of the Board of Directors Daughter as partner Son as partner Member Occasional Informal Advisor	2020 2018 2018 2023 2019		No No No Recently considered, not selected – did not play a role in this decision	Non-financial Not to SJG Not to SJG Member Non-financial
Christine Allison	South West Investment Group South West Business Council Additive Earth	Director/Chair Director NED	2023 2023 2023		No Yes Yes – joint research projects	neither Non-Financial Non-Financial
Kerry Baldwin	Competitiveness Advisory Board British Private Equity and Venture Capital Association Past Chair Groups British Patient Capital – NX Member of Investment Committee – Life science, Future Fund: Breakthrough and Direct investments	Member Member Member	2024 2023 2023	2024	No No No Possibly if an applicant, but not so far	Non-Financial Non-Financial Financial

	Royal Academy of Engineering Schott Scale Up Steering IQ Capital Partners and Associated Funds and Companies Neurovalens, Risilience, BMLL Technologies, Oxford Space Systems, NuQuantum, CybSafe, MOD, Defence Industrial Joint Council Member MOD Chair, Defence Investors Advisory Committee Aviva	Director Portfolio Director Member 2024	2023 2023 2025		Possibly if an applicant from Plymouth University, but not so far Possibly indirectly when speaking about Plymouth Growth Deals, but I operate within Nolan Prinicipl es No	Non Financial Financial Financial Non-Financial Financial
Peter Coulson	Abbott Risk Consulting Ltd	Executive	2024			Financial
Daniel Howlett	Falcon Group BGF (UK) Limited University of Birmingham Dubai Advisory Board United Bank Limited Boparan Private Office Panmure Liberum LTD United Bank Group	Non-executive Director Consultant Advisor Member Independent non-executive director Director Vice Chair Non-executive Director	2023 2023 2023 2024 2024 2024 2023	Not declared 08/25 Not decalred 08/25	No No No No No No No	Financial Financial Financial Financial Financial Financial Financial

Derek Pretty	None					
Richard Davies	Plymouth Freeport Keycities.uk Leonardo Plymouth City Council Plymouth City Council	Board Member Board member Son's employer Wife's employer Chair of the innovation taskforce	May 25 May 25 May 25 May 25 Aug 2025			Not for RD Financial
Adrian Dawson	Plymouth Science Park	Board Member				
James Daybell	Histories of the Unexpected Ltd Nottingham Trent University University Lancaster Exeter School REF 2029 Panel Member UoA 28 President Elect of the Historical Association	Director REF Advisor REF Reviewer Wife's employer Panellist President	 June 2024 June 2024 August 2024 August 2025 May 2026		no No No No	Financial Non-financial Non-financial Non-financial Non-financial
Dindu Okechukwu	University of Plymouth Students' Union	President			Yes	Financial
Richard Preziosi	Wild Planet Trust	Trustee	2024		Yes – joint MSc	Non-financial
Joshua Frost	University of Plymouth Students' Union	Trustee	July 2025		Yes	Financial
Anna Cohn Orchard	Exeter UNESCO City of Literature	Executive director	July 2025		No	Non-financial
Shane Amaratunga	BMT Group Limited and Affiliated companies	Member of ExCo Director (residents property	August 2025 August 2025		Yes No	Financial Financial

	Blenheim (Bovey) Management Company Limited	management company)				
Vanessa French	The Royal Parks The Royal Parks trading company (registered name TBC) Abel & Imray	Employee/Executive committee member Director Employee ('of counsel')	September 2025 September 2025 September 2025			Financial Financial Financial (spouse intereste d party)
Michael Nithavrianakis	Stride Strategy Ltd Enigma Ventures RE LLP King's Trust International TCF (The Citizens Foundation) UK	Director Director Board Member Consultant	19/2/2026	No No No No	Personal/Spou se Personal Personal Personal	Yes Yes No No
Louise Parr-Morley	Royal College of Nursing LHPM Trading Ltd (dormant)	Audit Committee member Director	March 2026 March 2026		Student Members – not directly	Non-Financial Financial