



## STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE (SPC)

The 8th meeting of the Strategy & Performance Committee  
Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025 14.30 – 16:45

### MINUTES

**Attendees:** Mark Devlin (Chair), Sherene Jose, Sasha Roseneil, Gerhard Wolf, Richard Zaltzman.

**In attendance:** Jim Andrews, Ashtar Antoine, Lisa Glandfield, Matt Hiely-Rayner, Jacinda Humphry, Michael Luck, Rosemary Martin, David Ruebain, Colin Shipp.

#### PART I – PROCEDURAL MATTERS

##### 1 Welcome and apologies for absence.

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members of SPC to the meeting and Ashtar Antoine, who had been invited to attend as representative of the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) for 2025/26.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from REDACTED: GDPR AND DATA PROTECTION

##### 2 Declarations of interest

- 2.1 None reported.

##### 3 Minutes

#### Resolved:

- 3.1 The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2025 as an accurate record of the meeting.

##### 4 Matters arising

- 4.1 The Committee **NOTED** that most actions from the previous meeting had been actioned and closed. There are just two open matters with respect to Regulation 9 and pay gap modelling, with plans to complete both.

##### 5 Chair's Action

- 5.1 It was **NOTED** that the Chair had taken no action on behalf of the Committee since the last meeting.

##### 6 Terms of Reference (TOR) & Workplan Review

- 6.1 The Committee reviewed its TOR, and questions were raised with respect to quoracy. SPC clarified it would be quorate when at least three members are present, of whom a majority

are independent members, which included the Chair, and noted the TOR would be amended to make this clearer.

- 6.2 The Committee further discussed section 5 of the TOR, 'to act as a sounding board for the Executive to present early thinking in relation to a strategy or potential major initiative, to aid the Executive in refining options for further consideration'. Committee members discussed the function of SPC specifically in relation to any future staff cost reductions, considering its oversight of the People risk and how SPC's role fits alongside the responsibilities of FRC, ARC and Council to ensure coherent assurance routes for major initiatives. SPC agreed that any concerns with major initiatives affecting staff, should be discussed as per section 3 of its Terms of Reference and standing agenda item of the People risk within the Institutional Risk Register (IRR) and to remove section 5, noting its previous relevance to the development of the Strategy, which was no longer required now Sussex 2035 had reached implementation.

**Resolved:**

- 6.3 SPC **APPROVED** its Terms of Reference and **NOTED** the workplan for 2025/26 subject to removal of section 5 and clarification that for a meeting to be quorate it would require 3 members, with a majority of 2 independent members including the Chair.

PART 2 – STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE

**7 Sussex 2035**

- 7.1 The Committee received an update from the Vice-Chancellor and President on Sussex 2035.
- 7.1.1 The Vice-Chancellor and President shared a presentation with SPC summarising progress thus far with Sussex 2035.
- 7.1.2 It was reported that following approval at Council in July 2025, Sussex 2035 was formally launched in September together with new branding and website. Since then, the Sussex School for Progressive Futures has been established with Professor Buzz (Elizabeth) Harrison as Dean, the appointment of three thematic theme leads, Professor Peter Newell (Environmental Sustainability); Professor Kristi Langhoff (Human Flourishing); and Professor Alice Eldridge (Digital and Data Futures) and the appointment of the first Professor-of-Practice, Caroline Lucas (Environmental sustainability) had been made.
- 7.1.3 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE
- 7.1.4 It was reported that Sussex 2035 Success Indicators and external indicators had been socialised across the University. The first strategic plan 'Recovery and Rebuilding' has been launched with success indicators, targets, actions and feedback loop for colleagues. Next steps included bringing everything together within the annual business planning process and budget review, with a focus on efficiency and effectiveness and at an appropriate point, the first Sussex 2035 University Assembly will be held, with a likely theme of Environmental Sustainability.
- 7.1.5 SPC discussed new process and governance frameworks that would be required to implement the first Strategic Plan REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE. SPC was reassured that governance requirements had not increased but had simply evolved

in line with the Strategy moving from development to implementation phase. It was also reported that an effectiveness taskforce has been established in Professional Services, a small agile group which was looking at process change to enhance effectiveness and promote innovative practice to change and REDACTED:  
COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

7.2 SPC received a report which provided the baseline data relating to the Success Indicators for Sussex 2035, where these have been defined, against which the success of the Sussex 2035 strategy could be measured and reported, and an annual reporting schedule was proposed.

7.2.1 It was reported that two measures have yet to be defined, relating to the Sussex School for Progressive Futures and Environmental Sustainability, workstreams which are just starting.

7.2.2 It was proposed that an annual report is provided to Senate, SPC and Council, providing an update that will include the latest results, a qualitative assessment of progress and traffic light ratings expressing the extent to which the University has been attaining its goals. The annual report would also cover external success indicators.

7.2.3 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE for Sussex 2035, appreciating current focus required on the first 3-year Strategic Plan. SPC clarified that the first annual report to Council would be received in Autumn 2026.

7.2.4 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

7.2.5 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

#### **Resolved**

7.2.6 SPC **APPROVED** the Sussex 2035 Success Indicators reporting schedule, withstanding the discussion to provide a supportive narrative for major initiatives.

7.3 SPC received a report which provided an update on the Recovery and Rebuilding Strategic Plan, baseline data and proposed targets for measuring progress against the Success Indicators, and proposed reporting schedule.

7.3.1 It was reported that the first 3-year Strategic Plan would focus on four priorities, student number recovery; income growth; reputation building and efficiency and effectiveness. SPC noted the principles used to determine the targets, following best practice where established, which had been set with reference to sector conditions and performance of peer institutions, resulting in targets that are achievable but challenging. REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

7.3.2 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

7.3.3 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

7.3.4 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

7.3.5 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

#### **Action:**

- 7.3.6 Provide a verbal update to Interim SPC on 16<sup>th</sup> January on proposed interim targets with rationale, in advance of Spring SPC & Council Meeting. **[Owner: Vice-Chancellor and President and Director of Strategic Planning and Performance].**

**Resolved:**

- 7.3.7 SPC **APPROVED** the proposed reporting schedule for the Recovery and Rebuilding Strategic Plan, withstanding the above action to provide interim targets.

**8 People & Culture**

- 8.1 The annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Report was presented to the Committee for approval and recommendation to Council. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Culture, Equality and Inclusion reported that this included all Inclusive Sussex activities which are being undertaken this year, to support annual business plan ambitions for 2025/26.
- 8.2 It was reported that Pay Gaps were the primary Success Indicator for People and Culture within the new Strategy and SPC was asked to note that pay gaps generally arise because of underlying representation and distribution of staff, so all have ongoing initiatives such as recruitment policy, pay frameworks, flexible working policy and positive action.
- 8.3 SPC was asked to note two distinct initiatives for 2025/26 namely 'Black at Sussex' and the 'Open Listening Programme', to assist colleagues in endeavouring to disagree well with each other, including in relation to opposing views on sex and gender. It was also noted that Sussex has six staff networks, which exist to support staff , but also ensure the EDI work of university was being impact assessed.
- 8.4 In addition, it was reported that work has also been completed to support the University's compliance with the Office for Students' E6 condition of registration, including new training and revisions to policies, including a new Personal Relationships Policy. The Committee also noted the work being completed to secure and promote freedom of speech and academic freedom, which continues with a focus on ensuring comprehensive implementation of legislative provisions in the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023, which came into force on 1 August 2025, including consideration of Office for Students Regulatory Advice 24 published on 19th June.
- 8.5 The Committee acknowledged the amount of work that had gone into activities reflected in the annual report, specifically noted progress on structural change and applauded the forward focused plan. SPC discussed understanding barriers to progression REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

**Action:**

- 8.6 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

**Resolved:**

- 8.7 SPC **APPROVED** the Annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report for recommendation to Council, REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

PART 3 – RISK

**9 People & Reputational Risks**

- 9.1 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE
- 9.2 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE
- 9.3 The Vice-Chancellor and President assured SPC of how mindful UEB is of staff morale and the efforts being made to balance regular, honest and transparent communication about the challenging financial environment and need to reduce costs whilst implementing the Recovery and Rebuilding plan and driving improved performance. It was reported that through regular meetings with union colleagues, which provide updated on student numbers and financial situation, positive relationships are being maintained, REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE
- 9.4 REDACTED: COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

#### PART 4 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

##### **11 Any other business**

- 11.1 The Committee discussed the next Interim SPC, diarised for 16 January 2026 and agreed that it would like to receive a work in progress report on the population of targets/expectations for 2025/26 and 2026/27 columns within the reporting schedule for the Recovery and Rebuilding reporting schedule.

##### **Meeting Close**