

Terms of Reference of the Estates Committee

Purpose

1. The purpose of the Estates Committee is to direct the planning and oversee the development, construction, and performance management of the University's operational estate.

Objectives

2. The objectives of the Committee are:
 - (a) to ensure, through strategic direction, guidance, and constructive challenge, that the University's operational estate
 - (i) delivers the places and services to support the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest levels of excellence, now and for the future;
 - (ii) meets the University's property-related strategic priorities, including the fulfilment of its academic strategy and the delivery of its sustainability targets; and
 - (iii) provides compliant working environments and value for money and achieves efficient utilisation and operation of its built assets with regard to appropriate benchmarks.
 - (b) to direct the overall scopes, and any intersections of, the operational and non-operational estates, in collaboration with the Property Board and subject to the Board's objectives.

Delegated authority

3. The Estates Committee is a joint committee of the Council and the General Board. In the pursuit of its purpose and objectives, the Estates Committee shall exercise the authority of the Council to manage the University's operational estate;¹ and of the General Board to ensure that adequate buildings and other built infrastructure for teaching and research are available.²
4. The Committee's authority shall be subject to the Statutes and Ordinances and to any sites and buildings regulations approved by the Council, the Finance Committee, and the General Board from time to time.³

Strategic planning

Capex

5. The Committee recommends to the Council and the General Board, at least once every five years, a ten-year strategic estates plan that fulfils the Committee's objectives as set out in paragraph 2 above,⁴ together with a ten-year prioritised capital business plan for the operational estate endorsed by the Planning and Resources Committee (PRC).
6. In developing its strategic plan, the Committee will consult with other bodies with remits relevant to the operational estate.⁵

¹ See Statute A IV 1(a) ([Statutes and Ordinances, p. 6](#)).

² See Statute A V 1(c)(ii) ([Statutes and Ordinances, p. 7](#)).

³ Reproduced in Chapter XIII of Ordinances ([Statutes and Ordinances, p. 1074](#)).

⁴ Strategic planning and its implementation will integrate earlier strategic programmes and their implementation, including Re-Shaping Our Estate and the Decarbonisation programme.

⁵ Currently including, but not limited to, the Programme Board for Educational Space and the West North West Cambridge Academic Board.

Opex (non-payroll)

7. The Committee recommends to the PRC, annually, a five-year rolling business plan for non-payroll operational expenditure⁶ on the operational estate, together with a detailed one-year business plan setting out the annual budget.

Other

8. The Committee recommends commissioning briefs for University housing to the PRC, as needed, on the advice of the University Housing Commissioning Body.⁷
9. The Committee supervises the management of risks relating to the operational estate, including as required from time to time by the Council or the General Board.
10. The Committee approves procedures in relation to the University's responses to planning proposals by external parties (such as local authorities).

Development, construction, and performance management

Capex

11. In fulfilment of the strategic plan and prioritised capital business plan for the operational estate, and on the advice of its Investment Advisory Sub-committee, the Committee recommends:
 - (a) to the relevant approving bodies,⁸ the acquisition or disposal or substantial alteration of property holdings that form part of the operational estate;
 - (b) to the PRC, business cases for all major⁹ property development projects within the operational estate and for all contributions to joint ventures with external parties; and
 - (c) to the PRC, any material changes to approved business cases.
12. Through its Technical Sub-committee, the Committee supervises the delivery, by the Estates Division, of any transactions, projects, and programmes on the operational estate approved by the PRC, in accordance with their approved business cases.

Opex (non-payroll)

13. Through its Technical Sub-committee, the Committee supervises the delivery on time and budget, by the Estates Division, of the five-year and one-year business plans for non-payroll operational expenditure on the operational estate.

Other

14. Through its Technical Sub-committee, the Committee provides assurance of the statutory compliance of the operational estate.
15. Through its Space Management Sub-committee, the Committee supervises space management and utilisation on the operational estate.
16. Through its Housing Sub-committee, the Committee supervises tenant services and housing operations provided by the Estates Division for University housing on the non-operational estate.¹⁰

⁶ That is, maintenance costs and non-payroll estates services, currently provided from various administered funds and similar sources.

⁷ This term is dependent on separate approval of the University Housing Commissioning Body, its terms of reference, and its reporting line.

⁸ Approving bodies as set out in *Statutes and Ordinances* and summarised in Schedule 4 of the Sites and Buildings Regulations, reproduced in Chapter XIII of Ordinances ([Statutes and Ordinances, p. 1081](#)).

⁹ That is, all those not covered by the financial delegations for minor works set out in paragraph 12.

¹⁰ This term is dependent on separate approval of the Housing Sub-committee, its terms of reference, and its reporting line. The Property Board remains responsible for all other aspects of University housing, including: the development or acquisition of housing in response to commissioning briefs; and the financial performance of housing, including setting of rent levels, the budget for housing services and operations, and financial KPIs.

Membership, meetings, and reporting

17. The membership of the Committee comprises ten members appointed for up to two consecutive terms of four years:
- (a) the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Strategy and Planning, as Chair;
 - (b) an external member with relevant expertise, appointed by the Council, as Deputy Chair, who shall also be Chair of the Estates Committee's Technical Sub-committee;
 - (c) two Heads of School, appointed by the General Board, one of whom shall be Head of the School of Arts and Humanities or Humanities and Social Sciences;
 - (d) a member of the Regent House, appointed by the General Board;
 - (e) two members of the Regent House, appointed by the Council, one of whom shall also be a member of the Council;
 - (f) an external member with relevant expertise, appointed by the Council, who shall also be Chair of the Investment Advisory Sub-committee;
 - (g) the Chair of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy Committee;
 - (h) the Chair of the Property Board.

For members appointed *ex officio* in classes (a), (c), (g), and (h), or as a member of the Council in class (e), if they cease to occupy that role, their Estates Committee membership shall also cease.

18. The Chair of the West North West Cambridge Academic Board and the Chair of the Programme Board for Education Space shall be invited to attend meetings. The Committee may invite other persons to attend for the whole of meetings of the Committee or for particular items of business.
19. No business may be transacted unless a quorum of at least five members is in attendance, including either the Chair or the Deputy Chair and at least one member from either class (c) or (e).
20. In any vote, each member in attendance at the meeting shall have a single vote and voting shall be decided by a simple majority of the members in attendance. If two sides receive an equal number of votes, the Chair may make a second, casting vote.
21. The Committee approves the establishment and terms of reference of any sub-committees necessary to the performance of its duties and approves appointments to those sub-committees.
22. The Committee may approve business between meetings by circulation, except that no business shall be approved by circulation if any member requests that it be discussed at a meeting.
23. Conflicts of interest in relation to the business of the Estates Committee shall be handled in line with the University's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).
24. The Committee shall report to the Council and the General Board by such means as the Council and General Board shall determine.
25. The Committee shall review its performance and terms of reference every three years, or sooner if needed. The Committee shall refer any changes to its terms of reference to the General Board and the Council for approval and subsequent publication by Notice.