MINUTES

Board/Committee	:	Governing Authority
Meeting	:	Meeting M25-6
Venue	:	Boardroom, GLISB
Date	:	27 May 2025
Attendance	:	Ronan Cahill; Donal Donovan; Catherine Duffy; Síofra Foley; Kevin Fleming (MST); Ann Marie Kennedy; Lucy Edith Kiiza; Shane Kilcommins; Brigid Laffan(Chair); Ann Ledwith; Edmond Magner; Aibhlín McCrann (MST); Anne O'Connor (MST); Sinéad O'Flanagan (MST); Mark Southern; Bob Strunz
Apologies	:	June Arnold
In Attendance	:	Grainne Frain; Siobhán Scanlon; John Field; John Kelly; Pat O'Neill; Orlagh O'Regan.

1. GENERAL

1.1 Additions to Agenda

1.1.1 AGREED At the Chancellor's request, two additional items, flagged in advance were added to the agenda of the Governing Authority. These were addressed at the outset of the meeting. In respect to the first item an update was anticipated as it has been sought at the last meeting of the Governing Authority on 27 May 2025 and was on the agenda (see Item 17 below).

1.2 Welcome

1.2.1 NOTED The Chancellor welcomed Ms Orlagh O'Regan, the incoming Deputy President of Student Life, who was in attendance at the meeting and will be taking up her new role shortly. The Chancellor wished her well and expressed that she looks forward to working with Ms O'Regan as a new member of the Governing Authority in the year ahead.

1.2.2 NOTED At the same time, the Chancellor bid farewell to Mr Ronan Cahill, current President of Student Life who was attending his final meeting. The Chancellor acknowledged Ronan's exceptional leadership over the past two years and, on behalf of the Governing Authority, expressed sincere gratitude for his many contributions to the student life at UL and his dedicated service as a member of the Governing Authority. All members extended best wishes to Ronan for continued success in his future career.

1.3 Acknowledgement and thanks

1.3.1 NOTED The Chancellor noted that Mr Kevin Fleming, Deputy Chair chaired the previous meeting of the Governing Authority and thanked him for doing so.

1.4 Condolences

1.4.1 AGREED That the condolences of the Governing Authority be conveyed to the family of Professor Sarah Mitchell, a cherished staff member in the Department of Maths and Statistics since 2008, who sadly passed away last week. Professor Mitchell provided exemplary leadership as Head of Department during the challenging period of the pandemic, and will be deeply missed by her students, colleagues and many friends across the University.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

2.1 NOTED The Corporate Secretary requested members to declare if they had a conflict of interest arising in relation to any matters on the agenda. [redacted] Both individuals will step out of the meeting for the respective items. [redacted]

3. ATTENDANCE OF BYRNE WALLACE SHIELDS AND SENIOR COUNSEL

3.1 NOTED The Chancellor briefed members on this very significant employment matter before the Governing Authority. Mr Bobby O'Connor, Director, Human Resources and Ms Caroline Keane, University Solicitor, joined the meeting in person.

3.2 [redacted]

3.3 [redacted]

3.4 NOTED Several members acknowledged the personal courage consistently demonstrated by the Acting President over an extended time, which is a reflection of his integrity and his character. The Chancellor then moved to address the issue substantively and Professor Kilcommins left the meeting.

3.5 [redacted]

3.6 [redacted]

3.7 [redacted]

3.8 [redacted]

3.9 [redacted]

3.10 [redacted]

[redacted]

3.11 [redacted]

3.12 [redacted]

3.13 [redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
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- [redacted]
- [redacted]

- [redacted]

3.14 [redacted]

3.15 [redacted]

- [redacted]
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- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

3.16 [redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

3.17 [redacted]

- [redacted]

3.18 [redacted]

3.19 [redacted]

3.20 [redacted]

4. REASSIGNMENT OF CHIEF FINANCIAL & PERFORMANCE OFFICER AND CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER

4.1 NOTED Memo from Director, HR entitled “Reassignment of CCO and CFPO”, dated 27 May 2025. The CFPO left the meeting for this item. The D,HR briefed members on the University’s Reassignment Policy & Procedure.

4.2 Chief Financial & Performance Officer (CFPO)

4.2.1 [redacted]

[redacted]

4.3 Chief Commercial Officer (CCO)

4.3.1 [redacted] On 3 July 2024, Mr Robert Reidy, Director of Buildings and Estates, was temporarily reassigned to the CCO role under the UL Reassignment Policy. As the 12-month reassignment limit is approaching and the substantive post holder remains on leave, Human Resources is seeking an exception to extend the temporary reassignment until alternative arrangements are made.

4.4 NOTED The proposal was presented to the Executive Committee at its meeting on 14 May 2025. The Executive Committee unanimously supported the extension of both temporary reassignments and commended the strong and effective performance of both individuals in their respective roles over the past year. The Governing Authority is now asked to approve the extensions of the temporary reassignments to the positions of CFPO and CCO. The D,HR indicated that the extended timeframe is not expected to exceed one year, and any future proposals will be brought back to the Governing Authority for consideration.

4.5 AGREED To approve the proposed extensions to the temporary reassignments for the positions of Chief Financial and Performance Officer (CFPO) and Chief Commercial Officer (CCO), until such time as alternative arrangements are made.

4.6 NOTED The Director, Human Resources left the meeting.

5. CONCEPT PAPER

5.1 NOTED Document entitled “Medical School relocation to Honan’s Quay” from Deirdre McGrath, John Field and Robert Reidy, dated 4 April 2025 and memorandum from the Acting President and Executive Committee entitled “Concept Paper”, dated 22 May 2025.

5.2 NOTED The Acting President briefed members on the Concept Paper, which aims to initiate early engagement with the Governing Authority on a proposal to establish a School of Medicine in Limerick City, centred on the redevelopment of the Honan’s Quay site. He emphasised the initiative’s potential to significantly advance the University’s desire for a meaningful presence in the city, contribute to urban regeneration, and attract potential State investment through the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF). Subject to endorsement by both the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and Limerick City and County Council, a project team will be established to prepare a business case in line with applicable guidelines. Approval is sought to proceed with further engagement with these stakeholders, which will inform the development of a preliminary business case to be submitted to the Governing Authority for consideration and decision.

5.3 NOTED The CFPO provided a briefing indicating that the estimated construction cost for the proposed schedule of accommodation is [redacted] These are preliminary figures, with more detailed costings to be developed during the specification phase. URDF funding is available for up to [redacted] An alternative option involving an on-campus extension would result in a similar financial outlay for the University but would not offer the added benefit of freeing up the existing building for other academic uses, such as Nursing and other Allied Health professions. Funding is available via URDF to support the development of detailed design plans. A full financial analysis will be conducted as the design progresses and if confirmation of URDF support is secured. Consultants were engaged to appraise options and to prepare a Preliminary Business Case (PBC) which is on hold with the HEA instruction to pause capital projects. The partially complete PBC, aligned with the URDF application, includes teaching space, accommodation, and a 2,000-person performance space. However, this space was not part of the original URDF and is not aligned with UL's strategic priorities. The draft PBC does not yet identify specific academic activities to be relocated to the city campus. [redacted] It was noted that the project is contingent on securing URDF funding; without it, the project will simply not proceed. [redacted].

5.4 NOTED Detailed discussion on the concept including the following:

- This is a very positive and ambitious concept, and while there is support for seeing it move forward the Governing Authority must be absolutely satisfied that it progresses strictly in line with legislation, regulations and policy. It is positive that this is coming to the Governing Authority at a very early stage and it is understood that no financial commitments are being given;
- [redacted]
- Members would like to see rationale for delivering programs of study off campus and the effect on the student experience, particularly as medical students typically are strong academic achievers. Concerns were raised about the potential impact on student engagement, the financial viability of off-campus developments without URDF funding, and the need for rigorous project evaluation;
- A broader strategic question was posed regarding UL's long-term commitment - whether to remain campus-focused or to establish a meaningful city presence, which, if pursued, must be substantial and not merely symbolic. At all times the student experience must be to the fore. Also, clinical element of offering services to the City should be considered;
- The proposal was acknowledged as being full of potential, particularly in terms of partnership opportunities. Members emphasised that securing appropriate funding will be critical to its success. It was also noted that the option of expanding the Medical School on campus must be progressed in tandem with this concept as the delivery of a new building in one or other location is critical to establishing undergraduate medicine;

- Additionally, the importance of maintaining a strong focus on research output by the School of Medicine, regardless of its physical location, is essential to the University's mission and reputation. This point is particularly relevant in light of the upcoming undergraduate programme planned for 2026. The School has been requested to provide a paper outlining how it will contribute to the University's research agenda, as members were clear that this opportunity must not be lost;
- The best use of public funds must be a central consideration in progressing this proposal. Clear and proactive communication with stakeholders will also be essential, particularly in light of past impairment issues;
- The University will not realise its full potential by maintaining the status quo. External stakeholders and committee members bring valuable expertise and insight, which should be actively leveraged;
- If funding becomes available, establishing a strategic student presence in the city centre will be a key component of the business case. It is hoped that this presence would not only enhance the student experience but also strengthen connections with local hospitals and healthcare infrastructure, further supporting the University's academic and clinical objectives;
- The PBC will outline all potential options under consideration. These options will be carefully examined and refined through the relevant committees, ensuring that the full breadth of internal and external expertise is harnessed to inform decision-making and strategic direction;
- The importance of including student housing in any options under consideration was emphasised;
- Any business case developed must be of the highest standard, thoroughly exploring all relevant dimensions, financial, academic, reputational, and societal. The process must be fully transparent, ensuring that no decisions are made that would limit future options or preclude open engagement. If a decision is taken to proceed with development specifically on the Honan's Quay site, this must be clearly stated and communicated transparently to Limerick City and County Council. It was further noted that the University has a responsibility to contribute meaningfully to the city centre, and this should be a guiding principle in ongoing discussions;
- The likely costs of progressing a preliminary business case should be notified to the Governing Authority.

5.5 AGREED That the University will engage with Limerick City and County Council, the HEA, and other key stakeholders to determine the feasibility of securing funding for the relocation of the School of Medicine to the Honan's Quay site.

6. GOVERNING AUTHORITY / EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – DISCUSSION ON EFFECTIVENESS

6.1 AGREED This item will be deferred to the June meeting.

7. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

7.1 AGREED Minutes of M25-4 of 1 April 2025 with amendment proposed by Professor Ann Ledwith and M25-5 of 29 April 2025 with one addition proposed by Dr Donal Donovan.

7.2 NOTED Suggested that members may wish to discuss the Deloitte recommendations in greater detail at a future meeting, particularly in relation to the recommendation concerning committee competencies, with a focus on the inclusion of accountants.

8. GOVERNING AUTHORITY ACTION ITEMS

8.1 NOTED Document entitled "Sixth Governing Authority Action Items to 27 May 2025 Meeting", previously circulated.

9. ACTING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

9.1 NOTED Document entitled "Acting President's Report to Governing Authority, 27 May 2025, previously circulated. A briefing by the Acting President included the following:

- **S64 and Renewal Plan –** The Renewal Plan has been approved by the HEA and a Renewal Hub for information sharing and updates is accessible to all staff. The recruitment process for the Renewal Programme Management Office (RPMO) has been completed. The first draft progress report has been circulated to Governing Authority and a meeting with the HEA is scheduled to discuss this on 4 June 2025;
- **Culture Workshop** – A framework is currently under development and included members of staff who were interested in the Culture and Engagement Working Group. A Word Café on the culture framework was held last week with Forviz Mazars providing an update and a robust workshop facilitated by Dr Chris McInerney, Director of Transferable Skills. Next steps will include drop-in clinics for all staff;
- Awards including the President's Staff Excellence Awards and Research Excellence and Impact Awards and recent success at the Education Awards;
- Appointment of Professor Sarah Hudson as Director of the Bernal Institute;
- **Provost & Deputy President Report** - International Global Accessibility Awareness Day; Quality Reviews for Student Life and PSU; Library shortlisted for Sconul Design Award; Bolton Library project; President's Access Scholars Awards; Retirement of Sr Sarah O'Rourke; CECD win Gradireland Strategic Innovation Award; Erasmus+ Staff Mobility Week; CRM System Project; Springboard initiatives; Student Engagement Education Awards; Preparation for new AY25/26 with Leaving Cert results released on 22 August 2025; Seanad Register with 2,988 UL graduates now included on the new register;
- **Vice President Research & Innovation** – Research Performance Dashboard; Funding awards; Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships with UL having double the success rate of the call in Ireland and the EU; 2025 AIAA-ASC James H. Starnes, Jr. Award to Professor Weaver, the first recipient outside the USA; Associate Professor Ann-Marie Creaven won a YERUN Open Science Award; Research Week 2025; Awards for Spin-out companies; Research Commercialisation Roadshow; UL Invention Awards; CoARA Acton Plan; PGR Funding: and Research Ireland Centres Call;
- Faculty of Education and Health Science and Faculty of Science and Engineering Updates;
- The Strategic CRM Steering Committee approved the Business Case and agreed to recommend it to the Digital Governance Steering Committee (DGSC), a sub-committee of the UL Executive Committee. Subject to DGSC approval to proceed with the contract, the matter will be referred to the UL Executive Committee for final decision, anticipated at its meeting on 11 June 2025.

9.2 NOTED Discussion highlighted the importance of encouraging academic staff to attend the drop-in clinics to ensure diverse participation and avoid the same individuals being involved repeatedly. It was suggested that existing structures such as faculty boards are used to process issues. Emphasis was placed on the need to actively live the framework, reinforcing the message that cultural change is a shared responsibility. The importance of fostering a target culture and behaviours, maintaining awareness of the cultural lens in all activities, and the critical role of training was emphasised. Efforts to co-create a culture roadmap with indicative behaviours and integrate it into the strategic plan were noted. It was acknowledged that cultural change is incremental, requiring time, testing, monitoring, and a mechanism for measurement.

10. STUDENT RECORD SYSTEM

10.1 NOTED Document from the Interim PDP entitled "Governing Authority Update – 16 May 2025 – Progress since last update", previously circulated.

10.2 NOTED The Interim PDP briefed members that the scoping phase of the ATOM project began on 1 February 2025, with a cross-functional team meeting weekly and supported by Clarion Consulting. Progress has been made across key objectives, including benchmarking visits with Irish universities (TCD, DCU, UCD), with further visits scheduled. A summary of findings is being prepared, and international benchmarking will begin in June 2025. Initial focus groups with faculties and course leaders have identified common themes, with broader stakeholder engagement planned from June to September. The project team's availability has been extended to December, and internal recruitment for a full-time Academic Lead has been approved. An outline project plan for June–December is under review, a stakeholder register has been developed, and work has begun on defining the scope and roadmap for ATOM.

10.3 NOTED Discussion including the following:

- Several members expressed concern about delays in the project timeline and emphasised it must be treated as a top priority. If necessary, staff should be seconded to ensure progress, as the University cannot afford further delays;
- The Interim PDP informed members that a project manager is now in place and stressed that defining the project scope accurately is a critical first step and priority;
- The Acting President reported a productive discussion at Academic Council regarding the awards issue. Key stakeholders, including DFHERIS, HEA, and QQI, are being kept informed. An internal audit report will be presented to the Audit & Risk Committee and subsequently to the Governing Authority in June 2025;
- It was noted the risk rating for the student records system has been raised to 12.
- One member voiced frustration, noting that previous assurances had been given that the student records system was on track, and that the need to reform the academic model was obvious and should have been addressed earlier;
- The Chancellor acknowledged the concern but noted also the importance of strengthening and stabilising the system. She affirmed that members will expect to have further input and engagement when the scoping phase is completed;
- It was confirmed by the Acting President that the Executive Committee considers this a serious priority and it is committed to pursuing necessary changes with full transparency;
- The Governing Authority will be informed promptly of any emerging issues, which are then addressed through the appropriate process.

10.4 NOTED The Chair, ARC confirmed that the student record system has been considered at length by the Committee. It was emphasised that the core issue lies not with the system itself, but with the complexity of the underlying processes, which currently require excessive manual intervention. While there is no presumption that the current system provider must remain in place, the priority must be to first design and streamline the necessary processes. Only then should a decision be made regarding the most suitable system provider.

10.5 NOTED The Chancellor acknowledged concerns around the risks associated with the student record system but that the only way to reduce these risks it through a focused and robust transformation of the underlying processes. Members were encouraged to concentrate on future solutions rather than past shortcomings. The ARC, Executive Committee and Governing Authority remain actively engaged with this issue.

11. STUDENT RELATED MATTERS

11.1 Student Life Report

11.1.1 NOTED Document entitled the "Report of UL Student Life for the Governing Authority," authored by Ronan Cahill and Síofra Foley, dated 16 May 2025. The President of Student Life and the Deputy President, Welfare Officer, highlighted a wide range of initiatives and achievements outlined in the report. These included leadership reflections, the "Welcome Back Wolfpack" campaign, the Student Forum, engagement with the USI, and various student representation efforts. Key wellbeing and inclusion initiatives were also noted, such as the Wellbeing Hub, gambling supports, the Drugs and Alcohol Harm Reduction campaign, "Wellfair," Flourish Fest, and targeted mental and sexual health campaigns for both men and women. Additional activities included Craft & Chill sessions, the Zen Zone, sensory inclusion efforts, the Commuter Hub, and EDI spaces. Promotional activities reached significant engagement levels, with over 54,000 free samples distributed, more than 4.7 million views, and 45,000 interactions across platforms in the past 90 days. The recent election campaign alone generated 3 million views. Clubs and societies remained highly active, with over 150 weekly events. The Advice and Advocacy Team supported 790 students, conducted over 300 advice sessions, and responded to more than 3,000 queries.

11.1.2 NOTED Mr Cahill expressed his gratitude to the Governing Authority for their support and guidance over the past two years, stating it had been an honour and privilege to represent UL students during what were, at times, challenging circumstances. The Chancellor thanked Mr Cahill for his final comprehensive report, acknowledged his dedication and contributions to the student body, and extended best wishes for his future endeavours.

11.2 Postgraduate Students' Union Report

11.2.1 NOTED Document entitled "Report from UL Postgraduate Students' Union to Governing Authority, 27 May, 2025 – authored and presented by Lucy Edith Kiiza, President, ULPSU". The President, PSU highlighted several key areas in her report, including the recent PSU Quality Review, which outlined important observations and recommendations related to partnership and engagement, collaboration, role clarity, capacity and resources, accountability, planning, governance, and future development. She also reported on the outcome of the ULPSU elections, with a new

President, Vice President Academic, and Vice President Engagement elected. Further updates included her attendance at two governance events; subsidised exam meal vouchers; National Voter Registration Day at UL; volunteering with SERVE in Zimbabwe by previous PSU President; initiatives addressing student safety and antisocial behaviour, as well as the ongoing development of the Food Pantry. Updates from PhD Officers and findings from Survey 2025 were also presented, alongside preparations and handover planning for the upcoming academic year. She noted that ongoing challenges remain in areas such as accommodation, cost of living, research support, immigration, and office space.

11.2.2 NOTED Ms Kiiza expressed her appreciation to the outgoing President, Student Life, Mr Ronan Cahill, and wished him well. The Chancellor, on behalf of the Governing Authority, extended thanks to Ms Kiiza for dedicated work on behalf of the postgraduate and research students.

12. PEOPLE & CULTURE

12.1 NOTED Document entitled "UL Stakeholder Engagement Update and Next Steps", which, as agreed at the previous month's meeting, has been revised to incorporate "accountability", specifically under the "Ethical and Sustainability" section. The updated version of the document was circulated with the meeting papers for members' information.

13. COMMITTEE REPORTS

13.1 Finance, Strategy & Performance Committee (FSPC)

13.1.1 NOTED Document entitled "Finance, Strategy & Performance Committee, Chair's Report to the Governing Authority, 27 May 2025" and accompanying appendices, previously circulated.

13.1.2 NOTED The Chair, FSPC, on behalf of the Committee, briefed the Governing Authority on the matters addressed in the Report including:

- Chair's Update;
- Intellectual Property Policy;
- Legal Recourse with regard to Cappavilla Village option of litigation is foreclosed;
- Ancillary Plan Update – Global Engagement – the VPG&CE will be invited to a future meeting to discuss the issues raised;
- Strategic Scorecard and Strategy Update – the dashboard was welcomed by members and a link will be provided to FSPC and Governing Authority in the coming weeks;
- Tenders for Violet House (Cappavilla Village) – recommended by Committee and dealt with under Item 18;
- New Student Centre – Additional Costs – approved by the Committee;
- Stables Bar Roof & Backlog Maintenance – approved by the Committee;
- Q2 Quarterly Finance Performance Update – the HEA Grant Allocation and absence of the supplementary grant being carried forward remain a challenge;
- HEA Core Grant Allocation;
- HEA Budget Template – recommendation for approval;
- Financial Scenarios;

- Subsidiaries Boards Vacancies;
- Strategic Fund.

13.1.3 NOTED A discussion took place regarding the submission of tender proposals to the FSPC and Governing Authority for approval, even after prior overall approval had been granted by the same bodies. Members expressed a desire to avoid micromanagement by the FSPC while ensuring the Committee discharges its oversight role effectively and appropriately. The CFPO informed members that a policy will be developed in the next 6-9 months to govern capital projects involving significant investment, incorporating infrastructure guidelines and clearly outlining all necessary approval steps including committees; in the interim, the FSPC will continue to approve such projects on a case-by-case basis. This was welcomed by members.

13.1.4 NOTED The Chair, FSPC suggested that given the complexity and scope of the forthcoming strategic document, the process should begin with an annotated outline highlighting past experiences (both positive and negative), lessons learned, future priorities, and necessary actions. Broad agreement on these elements would be beneficial before drafting detailed text. A reasonably advanced draft should be prepared in time to allow prospective Presidential candidates to contribute their vision, helping to avoid a situation where a new President inherits a finalised document they may not fully support. It was also recommended that one or two additional skilled drafters be involved to assist with the process. The aim is to have a clear direction and a working draft of the strategy document to ensure momentum is maintained and the incoming President can engage meaningfully with the process.

13.1.5 AGREED To approve the HEA Budget Template for 2025.

13.2 STUDENT EXPERIENCE, ACCESS & EQUALITY COMMITTEE (SEAEC)

13.2.1 NOTED Document entitled "Student Experience, Access & Equality Committee, Chair's Report to the Governing Authority, 27 May 2025", previously circulated.

13.3 AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

13.3.1 NOTED There was no formal report from the ARC. However, the Chair provided an update on the ongoing tender process for the appointment of external auditors for the University. The process is expected to conclude next week. [redacted]

14. APPOINTMENTS

14.1 Academic Staff Appointments

14.1.1 AGREED In accordance with Section 25(1) of the Universities Act, 1997 to appoint [redacted] as Full Professor in Nursing and Midwifery Research on a [redacted]

14.1.2 AGREED In accordance with Section 25(1) of the Universities Act, 1997 to appoint [redacted] as Head – Department of Maths & Statistics on [redacted]

14.1.3 AGREED In accordance with Section 25(1) of the Universities Act, 1997 to appoint [redacted] as Associate Professor B in Biomolecular Science on a [redacted]

14.1.4 AGREED In accordance with Section 25(1) of the Universities Act, 1997 to appoint [redacted] as Clinical Tutor in Paediatrics Ballinasloe (0.3FTE) on a [redacted]

14.1.5 AGREED In accordance with Section 25(1) of the Universities Act, 1997 to appoint [redacted] as Assistant Professor in Nursing on [redacted]

14.2 Support Staff Appointments

14.2.1 AGREED In accordance with Section 25(1) of the Universities Act, 1997, the filling of the following staff posts:

[redacted]	Programme Manager – EMERGE
[redacted]	Project Manager - Renewal Programme Management
[redacted]	Project Manager - Renewal Programme Management
[redacted]	Executive Administrator
[redacted]	Senior Administrator
[redacted]	Senior Administrator.

14.3 NOTED Salary offer confirmations for April 2025.

14.4 NOTED Memorandum from the Director, Human Resources entitled “Notification of appointments”, dated 27 May 2025 which set out the appointments approved by Governing Authority online since the last meeting on 29 April 2025.

14.5 NOTED Research funded contract appointments for May 2025 as circulated.

15. RISK

15.1 NOTED The Corporate Secretary highlighted the reputational risk associated with the student record system, noting that the risk rating has now been increased and will be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) in June 2025. Additionally, a revised approach to the University’s Fundamental Risk Register (FRR) was outlined, whereby the Executive Committee will review one risk from the FRR at each meeting, enabling a twice-yearly review cycle for each risk. This process will commence at the next meeting, with outcomes reported to the ARC and subsequently to the Governing Authority.

16. S.64 REVIEW RECOVERY PLAN & IMPLEMENTATION

16.1 NOTED Memorandum from Mr David Mangan, Renewal Programme Management Lead, entitled “Consider content of report and provide feedback before submitting report to HEA in advance of HEA Renewal Plan Meeting on 4 June 2025, and “UL Renewal Plan HEA Progress Report”, previously circulated. Mr Mangan joined the meeting for this item.

16.2 NOTED The Acting President provided a comprehensive update on the progress of the University's Renewal Plan, highlighting developments across key structural components including the Steering Committee, Tracker System, and Transformation Office. All 116 recommendations now have designated owners, with clear timelines and review mechanisms tracked through the Renewal Plan Tracker System, which supports structured implementation, monitoring, and reporting. In the last quarter, 80 recommendations were initiated and 19 completed. Three high-priority, high-impact recommendations were highlighted as case studies: the review and update of the University Property Acquisition Policy, the co-creation and embedding of a target culture across the University, and the resetting of the Executive. The report also outlines the governance process ensuring oversight and due diligence from conception to completion, including an internal sense-checking mechanism as the second line of defence in risk management. Plans are in place to procure third-party validation services to complete the Three Lines of Defence model, as recommended in the Renewal Plan. The report concludes with an outline of expected content for the next progress update in Q3 2025.

16.3 NOTED Mr Mangan briefed members on the draft of the initial report required by the HEA, ahead of the upcoming meeting with the Executive Committee on 5 June 2025. He invited members to provide feedback prior to its submission. It was noted that the volume of actions is expected to increase significantly in the next quarter, with a continued emphasis on maintaining accountability and momentum to ensure sustained progress.

16.4 NOTED Discussion including the following:

- A template for the progress report and the matter of external validation are still to be agreed with the HEA. It was emphasised that gaining clarity from the HEA on their expectations as to their requirements regarding external validation prior to scoping for a tender;
- The tender process for external validation is expected to be completed by July 2025;
- It was suggested that incorporating a traffic-like system in future reports would enhance clarity and useability;
- The current strategy prioritises high-impact recommendations as case studies – specifically the Property Acquisition Policy, Target Culture and resetting the Executive) with plans to include additional case studies in future reports;
- Minor editing and removal of repetitive content were recommended to improve the draft report;
- The Tracker, along with supporting evidence, will be made accessible to the campus community via the dedicated Hub;
- Once feedback is received from the HEA, the revised report will be available on the Hub.

16.5 NOTED As previously advised, the Chancellor reiterated that the Protected Disclosure Report will be promptly shared with members once it is received by the University.

17. GOVERNING AUTHORITY INTERIM REPORT

17.1 NOTED This refers to an update requested by members on the Governing Authority committee established in April 2024 under Resolution GA-24-03. The committee was formed to exercise the Governing Authority's functions in relation to the consideration of certain matters under the University's disciplinary procedures. This item was addressed earlier in the meeting under Item 3 on the agenda.

18. TENDERS FOR VIOLET HOUSE (CAPPAVILLA VILLAGE)

18.1 NOTED Document from the Mr Robert Reidy, Acting Chief Commercial Officer (ACCO) entitled "Cappavilla Student Village – Reconstruction and Remediation Works", dated 24 May 2025. Mr Reidy joined the meeting for this item. The ACCO briefed members on the request to proceed to tender approved by Governing Authority in January 2025, that the tender process was now complete and that he was now seeking approval to proceed with the appointment of a main contractor for works to Violet House only. Approval will be sought from the FSPC and Governing Authority to appoint a main contractor for the remaining blocks in Cappavilla Village in the near future. The HEA have confirmed their approval that this first phase can proceed.

18.2 NOTED There are two additional phases remaining, and FSPC members indicated their willingness to convene an additional FSPC meeting over the summer period if required.

18.3 NOTED The ACCO will provide an update on the Cappavilla contracts including the insurance claim to the next CDC meeting.

18.4 AGREED To approve the appointment of the main contractor for the reconstruction and remedial works to Violet House only.

19. NOMINATING & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

19.1 NOTED Membership of the Nominating & Governance Committee was approved at the last meeting, with the exception of the Student Union representative. Since then, the Student Unions have agreed to implement an annual rotation of Student Union members, commencing with the Postgraduate Student Union representative. Accordingly, Ms Kiiza will serve as the representative until August 2025, when the newly elected President will assume the role.

19.2 NOTED The composition and membership of the Nominating & Governance Committee is as follows:

- Chairperson, who shall be an External Member (may include the Chancellor);
- Four External Members of the Governing Authority (including the Chairperson); **Professor Brigid Laffan, Dr Donal Donovan, Ms Aibhlin McCrann; Mr Kevin Fleming**;
- Two Internal Members of the Governing Authority: **Dr Bob Strunz, Professor Edmond Magner;**
- One Student Union Representative of the Governing Authority: **Ms Lucy Kiiza**.

19.3 NOTED The Chancellor expressed an interest in becoming Chair of the Nominating & Governance Committee.

19.4 AGREED Unanimously to approve Professor Brigid Laffan as Chair of the Nominating & Governance Committee.

20. CAO BOARD MEMBERSHIP

20.1 NOTED Memorandum from the Corporate Secretary entitled "University Representation on Board of CAO", dated 20 May 2025, previously circulated.

20.2. AGREED To approve the nomination of Professor Ann Ledwith, Interim Provost & Deputy President, as the University's ex officio representative on the CAO Board of Directors.

21. UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK SIXTH GOVERNING AUTHORITY REGULATIONS AND PROCESS

21.1 NOTED Correspondence from DFHERIS re the University of Limerick (Selection, Election, Nomination and Appointment of Governing Authority Members) Regulations and Process, dated 12 May 2025, previously circulated.

21.2 NOTED As the Chancellor is impacted by the proposed amendments to the Regulations, she stepped out of the meeting, which was then chaired by Dr Donal Donovan.

21.3 NOTED Briefing by the Corporate Secretary that the University submitted draft amendments to the Minister, DFHERIS. He had preliminary discussions with officials in DFHERIS following which they issued a letter. [redacted]. The Corporate Secretary will revisit the amendments and revert to the June meeting with a revised proposal that will meet with the DFHERIS requirements.

21.4 NOTED [redacted]. Following this, a recommendation will be brought to the Governing Authority, requiring approval by at least a two-thirds majority. Members expressed strong support for this approach and requested that the appointment be concluded by September 2025. [redacted]

21.5 NOTED The Chancellor returned to the meeting.

22. UCH AND PCC CHAIRS

22.1 NOTED The Corporate Secretary briefed members that he followed up with Mr John O'Rourke, Acting CEO of the PCC Group. The term of office for the PCC Chair expired on 15 May 2025 after serving two consecutive three-year terms. While the term has lapsed since the last Governing Authority meeting, an extension remains possible under the "Comply or Explain" governance principles. Regarding Ms Judith Woodworth, it was confirmed that she has been a member of UCH since 2013, with her most recent reappointment extending to February 2026. No immediate action is required in her case, though her position will be reviewed as part of the broader

subsidiary review. Additionally, the Charities Governance Code recommends a maximum of nine years for trustee terms as best practice, though it is not a statutory requirement. All of these requirements will now have to be aligned.

22.2 NOTED Based on the information outlined, Mr Dan Geary will be renewed as Chair of PCC for a further period. A comprehensive restructuring of the University's subsidiaries, as part of the S.64 review, is expected to be completed by the end of 2025. It is anticipated that this restructuring will result in an external member of the Governing Authority being appointed as Chair of the subsidiaries. The importance of ensuring this restructuring is carried out correctly was emphasised.

23. PRESIDENT – SEARCH BOARD AND SELECTION BOARD

23.1 NOTED The Chancellor informed members that, following recent developments at the University of Galway where a student representative has been included on both the Search and Selection Boards the University will now also include a student representative on the Selection Board, in addition to the Search Board. This change is intended to ensure alignment with sectoral practice and avoid being an outlier. It will be a matter for Student Life and the PSU to determine which of their Presidents will serve on each board.

23.2 NOTED In response to a query, the Chancellor informed members that the post of President is planned to be advertised in September/October 2025.

23.3 AGREED To approve the Chancellor's nomination of Mr Pat O'Neill, Chair ARC, as the final member of the Selection Board for the President.

24. GOVERING AUTHORITY DATES 2026

24.1 NOTED Issues have arisen with the previously agreed dates 20 January 2026 and 24 March 2026 for Governing Authority meetings.

24.2 AGREED The revised dates for Governing Authority are Tuesday, 27 January 2026, and Thursday, 26 March 2026.

25. HEALTH RESEARCH ANNUAL REPORT 2024

25.1 NOTED The University of Limerick Health Research Institute Annual Report 2024, which had been previously circulated.

26. GOVERNING AUTHORITY WORKPLAN

26.1 NOTED Document from the Corporate Secretary entitled "Governing Authority Workplan", previously circulated for the information of members.

27. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

27.1 Vacancies on FSPC and ARC

27.1.1 NOTED The Corporate Secretary has written to Chartered Accountants Ireland and will also write to the Law Society of Ireland to seek nominations to fill current vacancies on the Audit & Risk Committee and the Finance, Strategy & Performance Committee.

27.2 C&AG Signed UL Consolidated Financial Statements 2024

27.2.1 NOTED The Acting President and the Chancellor acknowledged the significant work undertaken by the Finance Division, as evidenced by the clear audit opinion on the 2024 Financial Statements recently signed off by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). This is an excellent outcome, and sincere thanks were extended to all involved in the extensive preparation and successful sign-off of both the 2023 and 2024 financial statements in very challenging circumstances.

27.3 Charities Regulator

27.3.1 NOTED The Corporate Secretary briefed members on recent correspondence with the Charities Regulator, a copy of which was provided for members' information.

27.4 Next Meeting

27.4.1 NOTED The next meeting of the Governing Authority is scheduled for Thursday, 27 June 2025 and will commence at the later time of 14h00 to accommodate an Honorary Master of Philosophy ceremony taking place earlier that day. The Chancellor informed members that she will chair the meeting remotely.

Documentation of Note

- Charities Regulators Correspondence April-May 2025
- Public Jobs Candidate Information Booklet
- C&AG Signed UL Consolidated Financial Statements 2024
- C&AG Certificate Financial Statements 2024