MINUTES

Board/Committee	:	Governing Authority
Meeting	:	Meeting M26-3
Venue	:	Boardroom, GLISB
Date	:	26 March 2026
Attendance	:	June Arnold; Donal Donovan; Catherine Duffy; Kevin Fleming (MST); Siofra Foley; Conor Houlihan (MST); Ann Marie Kennedy; Shane Kilcommins; Brigid Laffan (Chair); Ann Ledwith; Edmond Magner; Mahdi Nohtani; Orlagh O'Regan; Sinéad O'Flanagan (MST); Paul Stapleton (MST); Bob Strunz; Anthony Weir
Apologies	:	Anne O'Connor
In Attendance	:	John Field; Grainne Frain; Ciara Hogan; John Kelly; Pat O'Neill (MST).

1. OPENING AND GOVERNANCE MATTERS

1.1 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1.1.1 NOTED The Chair requested members to declare if they had a conflict of interest arising in relation to any matters on the agenda. [redacted]

1.2 CONDOLENCES

1.2.1 AGREED The condolences of the Governing Authority be conveyed to the families of:

- Ms Grace Gilmore a PhD student in the School of Architecture and Product Design and a graduate of the BSc in Product Design and Technology.
- Professor Cyril Burkley, a founding member of Electronic Engineering at NIHE and a former member of the Governing Authority (2003–2009).
- Former Councillor Kevin Kiely who served as Mayor 2009/10 and was a member of the GA during that time.

1.3 MINUTES & ACTION ITEMS

1.3.1 AGREED Minutes of M26-2 of 17 February 2026 with one amendment from the CFPO.

1.3.2 NOTED Document entitled "Sixth Governing Authority Action Items to 26 March 2026 Meeting".

1.4 [redacted]

1.4.1. [redacted]

[redacted]

2. ACTING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2.1 NOTED Document entitled "Acting President's Report to Governing Authority, March 2026". A briefing by the Acting President included the following:

- [redacted]
- **Honorary Doctorate:** Wonderful ceremony on 16 February 2026 at the IWAMD, where Ruth Negga and Rhiannon Giddens were awarded Honorary Doctorates by Chancellor Professor Laffan. The event, attended by family, friends and invited guests, was a great occasion celebrating their outstanding contributions to the arts.
- **Best Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Universities in Ireland 2025/2026:** UL's Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering lead the way in Ireland, ranked number 1 and 179th in the world, featuring four outstanding scientists.
- **Medial reporting for 2025:** UL's reputation-building efforts delivered strong gains, with 8,032 media mentions (up 5%) and positive coverage rising to 86%. Negative articles fell sharply from 149 to 17, dropping overall negative sentiment below 1%. Proactive storytelling, transparency, and expanded editorial partnerships significantly improved global reach and sentiment.
- **THE World Rankings & QS Rankings:** A comprehensive overview of the UL's recent performance in national and international rankings, highlighting improvements, areas of concern, and the University's strategic responses. The University is now ranked in four out of five key QS subject areas, with notable achievements in sport (41st globally, 1st in Ireland), education (84th globally, 2nd in Ireland), and performing arts (top 150). However, law and politics have dropped out of the top 400, and life sciences and medicine remain unranked.
- **Sports and Scholarships:** The University has seen record levels of sports scholarship applications, exceeding 750, and recent events such as honorary doctorates and donor scholarships contribute to the University's positive profile.
- **Digital Accessibility:** Developments including myULapp, the Accessibility Hub, engagements on Brightspace and with the National Disability Authority.
- **UL Global:** Internationalisation updates including first UL representative in Sub-Saharan Africa region; ambitions for Henan Polytechnic University; collaboration with Tanzania; Emerge Hub launch, Yerun Network and Alumni Events.
- **Research:** Summary of research activity, performance and key initiatives was set out. The President, VPRI and CFPO recently met all Heads of Departments to reinforce KPI expectations and ensure every department meets baseline annual research targets, supported by the enhanced research dashboard. A growing emphasis is noted on research-driven innovation, stronger regional industry–research collaboration, and increased commercialisation of research.

2.2 NOTED Discussion on performance across the sector and key drivers of improvement including stronger citation impact, alumni engagement, improving scholarly networks and more ambitious departmental ambition.

3. STUDENT RELATED MATTERS

3.1 Postgraduate Students' Union Report

3.1.1 NOTED Document entitled "Report from UL Postgraduate Students' Union to Governing Authority, March 2026 – Authored and presented by Mr Mahdi Nohtani, President, ULPSU". The President, PSU highlighted a range of items in the Report including: Student Liaison and Conflict Resolution Support; Public Speaking Workship Series, Postgraduate Month Events including Professional Headshots and the Postgraduate Ball with over 120 UL students and staff in attendance; Postgraduate Open Day; Academia to Industry Event and Nowruz, Persian New Year Event; challenges faced by staff and students those from Iran.

3.2 Student Life Report

3.2.1 NOTED Document entitled "Report of UL Student Life for the Governing Authority – Authored by Síofra Foley and Orlagh O'Regan as of 16/03/2025". The President, and Deputy President, Student Life highlighted a range of items in the Report including: Refreshers week; Charity Week including charity partners Rape Crisis Midwest; MyUL app; student officer elections with over 3,500 votes cast; governance and financial update including resignation of ULSL Board Chair and appointment of Corporate Oversight Manager; welfare initiatives e.g. SunSmart campaign and breakfast club; ongoing challenges relating to commuting; Clubs & Societies; EDI Update and anti-racism working group. The majority of advice team engagements are financial in nature, with accommodation as the top concern.

3.2.2 NOTED The Commuter Survey revealed that 60% of students commute over an hour, with 97.7% reporting negative impacts on academic success and experience due to transport and financial burdens and requests for increased blended learning. The Acting President will raise this report with the Mayor and LC&CC for broader support.

3.2.3 NOTED Discussion regarding reports of racial and other forms of abuse affecting students, occurring both on and off campus, with at least one report being made each week. Most incidents seem to involve individuals from outside the University community rather than fellow students.

3.2.4 AGREED Data will be compiled and analysed on the number and nature of reported incidents, distinguishing between on-campus and off-campus occurrences, and the findings will be brought to future SEAEC and GA meetings for consideration.

4. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

4.1 AUDIT & RISK COMMMITTEE (ARC)

4.1.1 NOTED Document entitled "Audit & Risk Committee, Chair's Report to the Governing Authority, 17 February 2026".

4.1.2 NOTED The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, briefed the GA on the following:

- Committee Member and Chair Evaluations;
- Consolidated Financial Statements for Financial Year Ended 2025 – recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.2;
- Letters of Support for Subsidiaries 2025 – recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.2;
- Meetings with PwC without Executive;
- Annual Governance Statement 2025 – recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.1;
- Section 66 Renewal Programme Update;
- Internal Audit Update;
- Internal Audit Reviews: PCC and Unijobs Starters/Leavers; FRR Financial Sustainability;
- Data Protection Policy – recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.10;
- Letters of Representation - recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.2;
- Enterprise Risk Management Policy - recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.8;
- Enterprise Risk Appetite Statement - recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.9;
- Special Review of Exam Boards and Awards – Part 2;
- UL Student Life Governance Review;
- ATOM Project Update.

4.2 CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

4.2.1 NOTED Document entitled “Chairs Report to the Governing Authority, 26 March 2026”.

4.2.2 NOTED Ms Ann Marie Kennedy, on behalf of the Committee, briefed the GA on the following:

- Appointment of Deputy Chair of Campus Development Committee;
- Self- Evaluation;
- Update on Sustainability Workshop;
- Framework for Physical Development;
- Capital Development Plan & Capital & Investment Projects Policy;
- List of Projects.

4.3 FINANCE, STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE COMMMITTEE (FSPC)

4.3.1 NOTED Document entitled “Finance, Strategy & Performance Committee, Chair’s Report to the Governing Authority, 26 March 2026”.

4.3.2 NOTED The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, briefed the GA on the following:

- ATOM Business Case – recommendation for approval Agenda Item 5.3;
- Joint GA/EC Strategy Session Update;
- Policy for the Appraisal & Approval of Capital Investment Projects – recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.3;
- City Centre URDF – Preliminary Business Case – recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.4;

- Review of Subsidiaries – Renewal Plan Recommendations - recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.5;
- Memo Unijobs Update;
- Q1 Financial Report;
- Student Life Update;
- HEA Budget Template - recommendation for approval Agenda Item 7.6;
- Regular Report to HEA;
- Borrowing Framework;
- Loan Covenants Annual Review.

4.4 NOMINATING & GOVERNANCE COMMMITTEE (N&GC)

4.4.1 NOTED Document entitled "Chair's Report to the Governing Authority, 26 March 2026".

4.4.2 NOTED The Corporate Secretary, on behalf of the Committee, briefed the GA on the following:

- External Review of Governing Authority;
- Vacancies on Committees – recommendations for approval;
- Appointment of Governing Authority External Member – advertisement to be circulated by Corporate Secretary to members for approval;
- Committee Chair Engagement – report to next meeting of GA.

4.4.3 AGREED To seek expressions of interest from GA members for the following vacancies:

- **Campus Development Committee** – One Internal Member of the GA.
- **Finance, Strategy & Performance Committee** – One External Member and One Internal Member of the GA.
- **People & Culture Committee** – One External Member of the GA.

4.4.4 AGREED The following amendments to the relevant terms of reference:

- **Campus Development Committee:** At least two External GA members **including ~~in addition~~** the Chair.
- **Nominating & Governance Committee**: **Three ~~Four~~** External Members of the Governing Authority (including the Chairperson).

4.4.5 AGREED To temporarily suspend the FSPC quorum requirement of two External Members, pending filling of the Committee's current vacancies.

4.5 PEOPLE & CULTURE COMMMITTEE (P&CC)

4.5.1 NOTED Document entitled "People & Culture Committee, Chair's Report to the Governing Authority, 26 March 2026".

4.5.2 NOTED The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, briefed the GA on the following:

- MarComms Reputational Recovery & Internal Communications Update;
- Review of Integrated Metrics Process;
- Culture Implementation Oversight Group (CIOG) Update;
- People Strategy – Alignment with Mission & Values;

- Dignity & Respect Training Report;
- HR Policies Management Framework Review;
- Culture Transformation Discussion.

4.5.3 NOTED Discussion including improved media sentiment, reduced negative coverage, and P&CC's focus on internal sentiment, trust, and strategic workforce planning. Members discussed the completion rates for mandatory dignity and respect training, noting that managers are responsible for ensuring staff compliance and that data is being monitored at Executive Committee level.

4.5.4 NOTED In response to a query, the Acting President clarified the membership and function of the Culture Implementation Working Group, emphasising its task-oriented, non-discursive nature and alignment with the Mazars report recommendations.

4.6 ACADEMIC COUNCIL (AC) REPORT

4.6.1 NOTED Document entitled “Academic Council Report to Governing Authority”.

5. STRATEGIC MATTERS

5.1 DEEP DIVE: FACULTY OF EDUCATION & HEALTH SCIENCES (EHS)

5.1.1 NOTED Document entitled “Education & Health Science Faculty Deep Dives for Governing Authority”, and presentation entitled “EHS Faculty Office, Strong Individually; Transformational Together”, both dated 26 March 2026. Professor Deirdre McGrath, Dean, EHS and Mr Brian Hartigan, EHS Finance Business Partner, joined the meeting. The detailed presentation included the following:

- **Faculty Growth and Structure:** EHS has expanded significantly since 2008, now comprising of four schools and two departments, delivering around 70 programmes and 53 micro-credentials. Student numbers and fee income have doubled and tripled respectively, with substantial growth in staff and research income.
- **Research Performance and Ambitions:** The Faculty is ranked highly in sport, nursing, education, and psychology, [redacted] Challenges include balancing teaching and research, recruiting top researchers, and addressing parity in academic salaries.
- **Accreditation and Programme Development:** Maintaining accreditation is critical, especially for medicine and nursing, as it impacts international student recruitment and programme reputation. EHS is streamlining programmes and responding to regulatory changes, with a focus on interdisciplinary learning and employability.
- **Strategic Planning and Opportunities:** EHS is aligning its strategic priorities with institutional and national strategies, focusing on research intensification, lifelong learning, academic transformation, and infrastructure investment. Opportunities include international collaboration, philanthropy, and industry partnerships, particularly in health innovation and rural health.
- **Challenges and Threats:** Key challenges include funding for PhD stipends, clinical staff research time, demographic shifts, and competition for students. EHS is addressing these through investment, communication, and performance

management, while monitoring the impact of AI and demographic trends on education.

5.1.2 NOTED Detailed discussion including the following:

- [redacted]
- The Faculty is actively engaged in the ATOM project structures, with strong communication between the Dean, ADAA, faculty leads, and relevant academic staff. Staff are aware of the forthcoming workload associated with implementation.
- Underperforming or inactive programmes have been retired. Faculty resources are being redirected to high-performing programmes, strengthening sustainability and alignment with student demand.
- Members discussed demographic declines and the impact of AI on future student numbers, particularly for teacher education. Opportunities exist to expand international recruitment and develop interdisciplinary programmes, including those related to AI pedagogy.
- The importance of aligning academic recruitment with strategic research priorities. The need for clearer articulation of research-driven hiring, particularly for senior posts, was highlighted.
- Psychology's strong research culture was identified as a case study of effective leadership, mentoring, and research focus, offering potential learning for other Schools, including Medicine.
- [redacted]
- Concerns noted regarding research output per academic and the need to balance teaching heavy workloads with ambitions for enhanced research performance.
- The Dean outlined an ambition for EHS to double or triple research income within five years. The School of Medicine is expected to contribute significantly to this uplift, with a broader aim of improving rankings and research intensity across all Schools.
- While the School of Medicine contributes strongly to student numbers and income, the recently reported decline in ranking metrics is of concern. A detailed analysis is underway to identify specific areas for enhancement.
- Strengthening integration between the Faculty and the Health Research Institute remains a priority. Challenges were noted in distinguishing metrics across faculties and ensuring deeper alignment between research centres and the Institute.
- A positive cultural shift was reported within the Faculty, with improved communication, stronger research engagement, and better staff morale. These improvements were attributed to clearer messaging, effective town hall engagement, and proactive responses to operational issues such as timetabling.
- Some staff concerns persist regarding workload and the pace of organisational change; however, increased consultation, direct communication, and greater leadership visibility are helping to mitigate these concerns.
- Members emphasised that research intensification is the essential next stage of Faculty development, while recognising the need to maintain attention on accreditation, demographic trends, and evolving educational demands. Strong support was expressed for the Faculty's direction and ambition.

5.1.3 NOTED The Chancellor and members thanked the Dean and Mr Hartigan for the excellent paper and presentation and conveyed their best wishes for the work ahead.

5.2 S.66 UPDATE

5.2.1 NOTED Document entitled "Renewal Programme Update – March 2026". Mr David Mangan, RPMO, joined the meeting and his briefing included the following:

- Engagement with the HEA remains positive, with Deloitte confirming strong progress and continued senior-leadership commitment to the Renewal Plan.
- The HEA and Deloitte provided positive feedback on the university's commitment to the Renewal Programme, noting strengthened relationships, strong engagement from the senior leadership team, and high-level support across campus, while also seeking further clarity on overdue recommendations, revised completion dates, and assurance regarding ongoing momentum.
- Significant preparatory work with Recommendation Owners supported a successful onsite meeting on 25 February, including scoping sessions and coordinated presentation development.
- Enhanced graphical summaries demonstrating Renewal Plan trajectory have been developed for Report 4 in line with HEA feedback.
- Progress was demonstrated through four Working Groups (Statute 4, Protected Disclosures, Cultural Implementation, Conflicts of Interest) supporting clustered recommendation delivery.
- UL has completed 75 recommendations (51 completed and validated, 24 superseded) out of 154, with 79 outstanding and 78 in progress; 20 are validated for Report 4, with 31 previously validated items now moving into embedding.
- Report 4, containing 20 recommendations for validation, is scheduled for review by the EC and GA in April.
- SOP2, the Handover and Embedding Procedure, has been approved to guide transition of validated recommendations to business-as-usual and associated risk-management processes.
- Quarterly coordination with the Risk Management Office is in place to map completed recommendations to risk registers and test controls.
- The HEA has issued its minute confirming approval of Report 3 and agreed to consider UL capital proposals on a case-by-case basis.
- HEA highlighted continued focus areas including Capital, Conflicts of Interest and Statute 4 and Codes of Conduct.
- Work has commenced on a campus-wide communications plan, supported by a communications audit that identifies gaps and recommends regular online and in-person engagement, alongside briefings, events and video updates.
- Power Apps dashboards are being developed to improve tracker interrogation and reporting, with secure versions currently being trialled with Internal Audit to support more consistent monitoring of recommendation status.

5.3 ATOM BUSINESS CASE

5.3.1 NOTED Document entitled Academic Transformation Operating Model (ATOM) Programme – Business Case, dated 19/03/26 (Version 3.0, Confidential), together with presentation entitled Academic Transformation Operating Model – Governing Authority Briefing, 26 March 2026. Professor Ann Ledwith attended for this item, joined by Mr

Liam O'Reilly (Director, ITD), Ms Clare O'Shaughnessy (Director, Academic Registry), Ms Marta Guzniczak (Director, Office of the President) and Mr Sean Ryan (Programme Manager).

5.3.2 NOTED This late paper was added to the agenda with approval from the Chair following the later sitting of the FSPC. In line with the Standing Orders, members were required to decide whether to consider the item at this meeting or defer it. The Chair proposed that the item proceed today, with the option to revisit the matter at the next meeting if required. The purpose of the discussion was to identify issues and concerns for incorporation in the next phase.

5.3.3 NOTED The PDP introduced the Business Case as a high-level justification for initiating ATOM, outlining rationale, scope, approach, timeline and indicative investment. Members were reminded that it is not a project plan, financial plan or KPI framework, and therefore does not include detailed year-one deliverables, costed milestones, or project-level schedules.

5.3.4 NOTED Detailed discussion included the following:

- Several foundational workstreams (grading, removal of D1/D2, calendar changes, programme template development) are already in progress but sit outside the Business Case as elements of detailed planning.
- The proposed timeline is approximately 4.5 years, targeting go-live in the 2030–31 academic year, with rolling annual planning reflecting the scale and complexity of the reform.
- Members discussed substantial variability in academic structures (credits, weights, progression rules, grading, discretionary bands, programme architecture) and noted that standardisation will require a significant cultural shift within academic units.
- AC has approved the project scope. The EC, ARC and FSPC have each reviewed the Business Case, and their feedback has already resulted in changes, including a dedicated change manager, commitment to independent milestone assurance, and clearer articulation of lessons learned. The HEA have received a high-level briefing on the direction of travel and were generally supportive.
- Programme redesign, template development, accreditation pathways and system configuration will run in parallel, supported by faculty-level project managers.
- Members emphasised the cultural and structural implications of the reform, including change fatigue, the relationship with academic freedom, and the distinction between standardised "architecture and wiring" and autonomous academic content.
- The ARC and FSPC Chairs outlined matters requiring attention in the project plan, rather than obstacles to approval, including: (i) greater specificity on first-year deliverables and KPIs; (ii) an illustrative programme template; (iii) fuller documentation of lessons learned; and (iv) structured review mechanisms within the first 3–6 months.
- In discussing SITS, differing technical views were expressed regarding the system's capabilities, limitations and long-term suitability. Some members queried the accuracy of certain representations made during the discussion. The Executive provided clarification on the contractual position, sector benchmarking, system functionality and the rationale for remaining on-premise with SITS until 2030. It was

noted that long-term system decisions remain open and will be informed by the simplification of academic architecture.

- Members sought clearer articulation of project-level risks, alignment with the Fundamental Risk Register, and transparent criteria for pause/slow/stop decisions.
- The President and PDP emphasised the urgency of reform, citing historical weaknesses in academic governance and the reputational and regulatory risks associated with inaction.
- Members raised issues of academic workload, incentives, and alignment of administrative responsibilities with promotions criteria.
- It was agreed that the next stage requires a detailed project plan, incorporating workstreams, financial commitments, key milestones, sequencing of architectural and regulatory changes, and clear dependencies. Progression through stages of work, and the release of further resources, will be contingent on achievement of agreed milestones and subject to formal review by GA.
- A structured review within 3–6 months was supported to confirm progress, oversight arrangements, milestones and KPIs, with further reporting aligned to the project's major stages.

5.3.5 NOTED Members discussed the proposed move to a 5/10/15 credit structure. Differing views were expressed on whether GA should formally signal support. It was agreed that GA would note the discussion while recognising the statutory authority of Academic Council in this area. Members noted the importance of alignment with sector norms to avoid disadvantaging students.

5.3.6 NOTED The ATOM project was initiated some time ago and thus the process was not subject to the elements contained in the "Policy for the Appraisal and Approval of Capital and Investment Projects" which is pending GA consideration and approval.

5.3.7 AGREED Subject to the considerations noted above, the Governing Authority approved the ATOM Business Case. This approval includes the indicative resource envelope required to commence the project. A detailed costed project plan and milestones will be submitted to GA for further approval as part of staged reporting.

5.3.8 NOTED Approval does not represent an irrevocable financial commitment. Expenditure beyond the initiation phase will require ongoing oversight, independent milestone assurance and further approval through the agreed reporting and governance structures.

5.3.9 NOTED The Terms of Reference and membership of the ATOM Steering Committee will be circulated.

5.3.10 NOTED Paper from the PDP entitled "System Complexity – Progression Rules", as requested at the previous meeting.

6. STANDING ITEMS

6.1 PEOPLE & CULTURE

6.1.1 NOTED The Director, HR provided a brief update on culture work, noting a productive recent meeting of the People & Culture Committee and ongoing development of the

HR strategy into 2026 and beyond, and a focus on key metrics with regard to the HR function. The Culture Charter has been published and is being shared widely across campus as part of the broader cultural renewal work. The Culture Implementation Oversight Group continues to meet regularly to progress recommendations within the cultural framework. An organisational "pulse check" has been approved by EC and will be issued across units in the coming days to begin gathering data on progress.

6.1.2 NOTED A copy of the Culture Charter was tabled at the meeting.

6.2 FINANCE

6.2.1 NOTED The CFPO briefed members on the finance related items detailed in Section 7.1 to 7.6.

6.3 RISK

6.3.1 NOTED The Corporate Secretary briefed members on the Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Enterprise Risk Appetite Statement in Section 7.8 and 7.9.

7. FOR APPROVAL

7.1 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

7.1.1 NOTED Document entitled "Annual Governance Statement 2024/25".

7.1.2 AGREED To approve the Annual Governance Statement for Year Ended 30 September 2025, and to authorise the Chancellor and President to sign it and submit the AGS to the HEA by 31 March 2026.

7.2 UL CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

7.2.1 NOTED Documentation including the "University of Limerick Annual Report and Consolidated Statements Financial Year Ended 30 September 2025", "Letter of Representation to PwC" and signed Letters of Support for PCC CLG and Unijobs.

7.2.2 AGREED To authorise the President and Chancellor to sign the University of Limerick Consolidated Financial Statements for Year Ended 30 September 2025, Letters of Representation and Letters of Support as presented.

7.3 POLICY FOR THE APPRAISAL AND APPROVAL OF CAPITAL AND INVESTMENT PROJECTS

7.3.1 NOTED Documentation included "Policy for the Appraisal and Approval of Capital and Investment Projects", "Policy for the Appraisal and Approval of Capital and Investment Projects", "Management of Capital Projects Procedure" and "Keystone Procurement Review of draft Policy". The Acting Chief Commercial Officer (ACCO) and Mr Seán Ryan were in attendance for this item.

7.3.2 NOTED Briefing by the CFPO that this Policy arises from the Renewal Plan and provides a consolidated framework for the approval of both capital and investment projects. The FSPC supported the new policy but requested a clearer and simpler presentation; a process flow diagram and a defined review timeline. The Policy now commits to review within three years, with the option to review earlier if implementation issues arise. The Policy now formally defines investment projects such as major IT or organisational change initiatives to ensure they follow the same approval pathway as capital projects, addressing previous uncertainty highlighted during last year's CRM approval. It also establishes a Major Projects Committee, a subcommittee of EC, including an external expert on infrastructure guidelines to ensure compliance before projects progress to EC and GA. The Policy will apply to all new projects.

7.3.3 AGREED To approve the Policy for the Appraisal and Approval of Capital and Investment Projects as presented.

7.3.4 NOTED Approval of the Policy will necessitate revisions to both the FSPC Terms of Reference and Matters Reserved to the Governing Authority.

7.4 CITY CAMPUS URDF – PRELIMINARY BUSINESS CASE (PBC)

7.4.1 NOTED Documents entitled Update on City Campus URDF Funding Application, UL City Campus Master Preliminary Business Case and associated appendices. The ACCO and Mr Seán Ryan were in attendance for this item.

7.4.2 NOTED The CFPO and ACCO briefed the meeting on the Preliminary Business Case, developed in partnership with Limerick City and County Council (LCCC), to support the progression of master planning for the proposed City Centre Campus. Approval was sought for the Governing Authority to indicate support for LCCC's submission of the PBC to the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF). It was emphasised that:

- Submission of the PBC is an interim step enabling further engagement with the URDF;
- No financial commitments arise for UL at this stage;
- If the PBC is approved by URDF, UL and LCCC may proceed to tender for a master-planning and design team;
- The appointment of such a team will require a Final Business Case (FBC), which must be approved by EC, GA and the URDF;
- AECOM and Metropolitan Workshop are identified as partners in developing the master plan.

7.4.3 [redacted]

7.4.4 [redacted]

7.4.5 [redacted]

7.4.6 NOTED The Governing Authority emphasised that the next step requires a Final Business Case, including costed options, financial commitments, risk appraisal, sequencing and key milestones. Progression beyond the PBC stage, and any commitment of UL resources, will be contingent on URDF's response, compliance with the University's Investment Projects Policy, and formal approval by the GA.

7.5 RENEWAL PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS: REVIEW OF UL SUBSIDIARIES (PCC)

7.5.1 NOTED Document entitled "Renewal Plan Recommendations: Review of UL Subsidiaries (Plassey Campus Centre Group), dated 26 March 2026".

7.5.2 NOTED Briefing by the CFPO and ACCO that two subsidiaries (the Alumni company and the Aviation Registry company) are being wound up following the S.64 review, leaving six subsidiaries: Unijobs and five companies within the PCC group. The current proposals relate to the PCC group. The S.64 and HEA feedback highlighted the need to rationalise subsidiary structures, strengthen governance, ensure appropriate board skills and competencies, and improve GA oversight. Mason Hayes & Curran were engaged to advise on company law and governance matters. Three Renewal Plan recommendations were considered:

- **PCD restructuring:** It was recommended to defer the proposal to move PCD from PCC to become a direct subsidiary of UL, pending further review. A recently issued Revenue guideline may affect the tax rationale for PCD's existence, and further analysis is required.
- **Potential merger of PCC and PTC:** Following legal review, it was recommended not to proceed with a merger. Mason Hayes & Curran advised that the process would be lengthy, costly, and offer limited benefit.
- **Establishment of a common board:** It was recommended to proceed with establishing a common board across all five PCC companies. This recommendation was supported by the FSPC.

7.5.3 [redacted]

7.5.4 [redacted]

[redacted]

7.5.5 [redacted]

7.5.6 [redacted]

7.6 HEA BUDGET TEMPLATE

7.6.1 NOTED Document entitled "2026 HEA Budget Template". The CFPO briefed members that the annual HEA Budget Template circulated to members was revised following HEA feedback to present a more optimistic scenario, removing the research deficit and improving subsidiary surplus forecasts.

7.6.2 AGREED To approve the revised annual HEA Budget Template as presented.

7.7 JOINT HONORARY DOCTORATE COMMITTEE

7.7.1 NOTED Document entitled "Joint Honorary Doctorate Committee Proposal to Governing Authority" dated March 2026. The Chair briefed members on the Report.

7.7.2 AGREED On the recommendation of the Governing Authority/Academic Council Joint Honorary Doctorate Committee to approve the award of University of Limerick Honorary Doctorates to:

[redacted]

7.7.3 AGREED [redacted]

7.7.4 NOTED The Chair requested that the Acting President formally convey the GA's strong dissatisfaction that a highly eminent individual, proposed for an Honorary Doctorate but ultimately not endorsed, became aware both of their nomination and, shortly after the meeting of the AC, of the decision not to recommend them. This is a breach of confidentiality, wholly unprofessional and seriously damaging to the reputation of the University.

7.8 ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

7.8.1 NOTED Document entitled “Enterprise Risk Management Policy”. The Corporate Secretary briefed members on the Policy.

7.8.2 AGREED To approve the Enterprise Risk Management Policy as presented.

7.9 ENTERPRISE RISK APPETITE STATEMENT

7.9.1 NOTED Document entitled “Enterprise Risk Appetite Statement”. The Corporate Secretary briefed members on the Statement.

7.9.2 AGREED To approve the Enterprise Risk Appetite Statement subject to one minor amendment.

7.9.3 AGREED In response to a query raised, a report will be provided to the next GA outlining approach where there are deviations from the Risk Appetite Statement.

7.10 DATA PROTECTION POLICY

7.10.1 NOTED Document entitled “Data Protection Policy”. The Corporate Secretary briefed members on the Policy.

7.10.2 AGREED To approve the Data Protection Policy as presented.

7.11 APPOINTMENTS

7.11.1 [redacted]

7.11.2 [redacted]

7.11.3 Appointment of Academic Staff Member in Exceptional Circumstances

7.11.3.1 AGREED In accordance with Section 25(1) of the Universities Act, 1997, to appoint [redacted]

7.11.4 Promotion – Personal Chair

7.11.4.1 AGREED In accordance with the Policy for Internal Promotion to Professor (Personal Chair) to approve the appointment of [redacted]

7.11.5 Support Staff Appointments

7.11.5.1 AGREED In accordance with Section 25(1) of the Universities Act, 1997 to appoint:

- [redacted] as Scheduling and Examinations Manager;
- [redacted] as Finance Manager – Management Planning and Reporting;
- [redacted] as Executive Administrator – Student Records Unit;
- [redacted] as Executive Administrator – Direct Entry Medicine;
- [redacted] as Senior Administrator – Erasmus+ Projects;
- [redacted] as Senior Administrator, Student Records Unit;
- [redacted] as Executive Administrator, Scheduling & Examinations;
- [redacted] as Senior Administrator, UL Global;
- [redacted] as Administrator, School of Nursing & Midwifery;
- [redacted] as Senior Administrator, Student Records;
- [redacted] as Senior Administrator, Widening Participation;
- [redacted] as Executive Administrator, Scheduling & Examinations;
- [redacted] as Senior Administrator Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Programmes.

7.11.6 NOTED Salary offer confirmations for February 2026.

7.11.7 NOTED Research funded contract appointments for March 2026.

7.11.8 NOTED [redacted]

7.11.9 NOTED Future reports should include a breakdown of internal versus external applicants shortlisted for senior posts.

7.11.10 NOTED Work will continue on enforcing compliance with mandatory training requirements, with particular emphasis on managers ensuring that staff in their area are fully compliant.

8. FOR DISCUSSION

8.1 PROVISIONAL CAO STATISTICS 2026

8.1.1 NOTED Report entitled “Provisional UL Undergraduate CAO Applications and First Preferences February 2026”. There was discussion on this item in Agenda Item 2.1 Acting President’s Report.

9. FOR NOTING

9.1. REPORTING OF IP COMMERCIALISATIONS

9.1.1 NOTED Memorandum from the VP Research and Innovation and Director, Technology Transfer Office entitled “University intellectual property (IP) commercialisation report 2025”, dated 26 February 2026.

9.1.2 NOTED The memorandum provided the IP Commercialisation metrics for UL for calendar year 2025. The information consists of a list of shareholdings and interests in external companies; the IP commercialisation comprising licensing, option and assignment of IP entered into by UL in the reported period; and the names of spin-out companies from which UL received revenue, also during the reporting period.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Chairs Bi-Annual Meeting

10.2 NOTED A report to be brought to the next meeting of the Governing Authority on the recent Chairs meeting.

DOCUMENTATION CIRCULATED OUTSIDE THE FIVE-DAY TIMEFRAME: APPROVED BY THE CHAIR

- Annual Governance Statement Y/E 30 September 2025
- Consolidated Financial Statements Y/E 30 September 2025
- ATOM Business Plan
- Academic Council Report
- EHS Slide Deck
- FSPC Chairs Report

DOCUMENTATION OF NOTE

- Oversight Agreement Signed by HEA for 2026
- Correspondence to HEA 13 March re Oversight Agreement: PAYS and Summons