

## **COUNCIL – MINUTES**

### **20 November 2020 (via Teams)**

**PRESENT:** Pro-Chancellor, Rt Hon Alistair Burt (in the Chair); Professor Andy Schofield (Vice-Chancellor); Mr David Barron (lay member); Professor Steve Bradley (Deputy Vice-Chancellor) (*from item 19*); Ms Hanah Burgess (lay member); Mr Anthony Carey (lay member); Professor Sir Ian Diamond (lay member) (*for items 1-9*); Mrs Bobby Georghiou (lay member); Professor Simon Guy (Senate representative); Mr Ian Johnson (lay member); Professor Kevin Jones (Senate representative); Ms Bethan Morgan (student representative); Ms Alison Mullan (Senate representative); Baroness Neville-Jones (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Lord Price (lay member); Professor Ella Ritchie (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Ms Marcia Reid Fotheringham (lay member); Mr Oliver Robinson (Students' Union President); His Hon. Phillip Sycamore (lay member); Mrs Valerie Young (lay member).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr Paul Boustead (Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development) (*for items 8-13*); Mr Andrew Burgess (Director of Estates, Facilities and Commercial Services) (*for item 22*); Professor Nigel Davies (Interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development)) (*for item 21*); Mr Stuart Franklin (Director of Marketing and Engagement) (*for item 18*); Mrs Claire Geddes (Committee Secretary); Professor Louise Heathwaite (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)) (*for item 25*); Mr Simon Jennings (Director of Strategic Planning and Governance); Ms Nicola Owen (Deputy Chief Executive (Operations)); Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley (Director of Finance); Professor Jane Taylor (University Dean for Academic Quality) (*for item 19*).

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** None.

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

1.1 Council noted apologies for absence.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2.1 In relation to item 9, Professor Ella Ritchie declared her role as an Ambassador of the Magna Carta Observatory.

2.2 In relation to item 14, Alistair Burt declared his consultancy work with GK Strategy who had Deloitte (the external auditors) as a client.

#### **3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: 25 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**PAPER A**

3.1 Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2020.

**4. MINUTES OF A JOINT MEETING OF COUNCIL AND SENATE:  
25 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**PAPER B**

- 4.1 Council approved the minutes of the joint meeting of Council and Senate held on 25 September 2020.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

- 5.1 Council noted that the University's response to the USS pensions consultation had been submitted.
- 5.2 Council received a progress report from the Vice-Chancellor regarding the management response and actions to improve the NSS results.
- 5.3 Council noted the submission to the Privy Council of the proposed changes to the statute definitions to enable potential future Pro-Chancellor remuneration.

**6. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE AND QUESTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE**

- 6.1 The Vice-Chancellor reported on the following.
- (i) The Government's guidance regarding Covid-safe arrangements for students to return home for the Christmas vacation.
  - (ii) The ongoing concerns regarding the USS pensions position.
  - (iii) Development of the University strategy, consultation activity with students, staff and external stakeholders and key related activity around sustainability, EDI and the skills agenda.
  - (iv) The establishment of a sub-group to consider the revocation of an honorary degree: a process which would involve both Senate and Council.
  - (v) The standing down of the CEO/Principal of UA92 and proposed interim arrangements.
  - (vi) His establishment of a University Executive Board to enhance University leadership and management decision-making and the standing down of the University Management Advisory Group.
  - (vii) The University's Cyber Security Research Centre's achievement of Gold Academic Status from the National Cyber Security Centre.
  - (viii) The continued management response to the impacts of Covid-19 including: financial management; learning provision and arrangement for the forthcoming academic terms' teaching and learning activity (including assessment methods); relations with the trade unions; and the University's role in testing and vaccine centre provision in support of the local community.

- 6.2 Council noted the importance of student Covid-19 testing in enabling a safe egress of students from campuses across the country.

## **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **7. PRESIDENT, LANCASTER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION: REPORT PAPER C**

7.1 The President of the Students' Union reported on the following.

- (i) The impact of the pandemic on student mental wellbeing and loneliness particularly amongst first year students unable to build social capital through the student experience in the same way as in previous years and his concerns regarding support services provision.
- (ii) Covid-19's negative impacts within the Students' Union in relation to officer capacity and funding, which had limited their ability to engage with the University in the way they would wish.
- (iii) The student officers' support for the proposals regarding the IHRA definition and the climate change emergency declaration.

7.2 The Pro-Chancellor thanked the President and his officers for their work concerning student welfare. Council noted the President's report.

### **8. DEVELOPING LANCASTER UNIVERSITY'S VALUES PAPER D**

8.1 The Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development introduced the paper on the development of the University's values and highlighted the consultation process undertaken, the University community's perception of and relationship with the current values and the significance of the new CUC Higher Education Governance Code in the context of the values' development.

8.2 Members discussed the proposed values and their positioning within the overall strategy. The Council commented on the following:

- (i) how the values would practically influence decision-making and be embedded within systems, policies and processes;
- (ii) the relationship between inclusivity and entry tariff, commenting that inclusivity could be an indicator of excellence;
- (iii) that the celebration of diversity should be amplified as a core value;
- (iv) whether the values were sufficiently ambitious or may, inadvertently limit ambition; and
- (v) the language of the values, how it might be simplified to ensure universal understanding and whether the number of values could be reduced to aid adoption.

Council noted the progress made with values development and confirmation processes as part of the wider strategy.

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| <b>9.</b>  | <b>COUNCIL'S ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION TO ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE</b><br><i>Restricted and Confidential</i>   | <b>PAPER E</b> |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE (IHRA):<br/>DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM</b>   | <b>PAPER F</b> |
| 10.1       | The Vice-Chancellor introduced a proposal regarding the use of IHRA definition of antisemitism as a point of reference and as set out in the paper. Professor Schofield also drew Council's attention to the University's duty to provide a diverse and inclusive environment and freedom of speech. He highlighted the definition's adoption by the Government and other organisations, his consultation through Deans and with the Senate, as well as views on the matter he had received from a number of groups, including the local UCU trade union, and individuals. |                |
| 10.2       | Council discussed the proposal, the range of considerations relating to the definition and <u>approved</u> the inclusion of the IHRA definition as a reference point for use within the relevant staff and student processes through which concerns might be raised.   |                |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>ANNUAL REPORT OF THE REMUNERATION COMMITTEE</b><br><i>Restricted and Confidential</i>   | <b>PAPER G</b> |
| <b>12.</b> | <b>ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC REWARD COMMITTEE</b><br><i>Restricted and Confidential</i>   | <b>PAPER H</b> |
| <b>13.</b> | <b>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TERMS AND CONDITIONS:<br/>HARMONISING THE ANNUAL LEAVE ENTITLEMENT</b><br><i>Restricted and Confidential</i>  | <b>PAPER I</b> |
| <b>14.</b> | <b>AUDIT COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL AND<br/>THE VICE-CHANCELLOR 2020</b><br><i>Some Restricted and Confidential content</i>  | <b>PAPER J</b> |
| <b>15.</b> | <b>FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2020</b>  | <b>PAPER K</b> |
| 15.1       | The Director of Finance gave a brief overview of the Financial Statements reconfirming changes to Note 29, and that the Statements had been reviewed and were recommended by both the Finance and Audit Committee for approval.  |                |
| 15.2       | The Finance Team were congratulated on the clarity of the report and completing it under the challenging circumstances of remote working and audit. Council <u>approved</u> the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2020.  |                |

- 16. ORAL REPORT ON FINANCIAL MATTERS** **ORAL UPDATE**
- 16.1 The Director of Finance provided a report on financial matters, highlighting that the University remained on target to reach its budgeted position and that the Interim Financial return had been submitted to the Office for Students. She clarified that fee income had been higher than expected, but this had been offset by reductions in commercial income, additional costs relating to scholarships (due to higher numbers of eligible students) and payroll cost saving targets not being fully achieved.
- 16.2 Members noted the report, the continued uncertainty regarding Lent term income and that savings from the voluntary severance scheme would be weighted towards 2021-2022.
- 17. LANCASTER UNIVERSITY-UNIVERSITY ACADEMY 92 LTD. UPDATE** **PAPER L**  
*Restricted and Commercial in Confidence*
- 18. ADMISSIONS TRENDS AND OUTCOMES 2020** **PAPER M**  
*Restricted and Commercial in Confidence*
- 19. ANNUAL REPORT ON TEACHING QUALITY ASSURANCE** **PAPER N**
- 19.1 The University Dean for Academic Quality presented the Annual Teaching Quality Assurance report for 2019-2020, drawing attention to: the agility which had been required over the period; the new ways of working developed to support blended learning due to the pandemic; arrangements to oversee revision of any partnership processes; and the future changes required to cement the learning from Covid-19, including streamlining of processes.
- 19.2 Members discussed staff workload, if there were any signs of negative effects on feedback to students (which it was confirmed there were none to date, albeit it was early in the academic year). The Council thanked all staff who had been involved in responding to the pandemic's impact on teaching provision and quality assurance processes.
- 19.3 Council confirmed that the evidence presented in the ATQA Report provided full assurance to it with respect to the statements required by the Office for Students in the University's 2019-2020 return.
- 20. KPIs PERFORMANCE: YEAR-END REPORT FOR 2019-20** **PAPER O**  
*Restricted and Commercial in Confidence*

**21. WIDENING PARTICIPATION ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20 PAPER P**

- 21.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development) introduced the report on progress against the 2019-20 widening participation plan which it was noted was subject to assurance by the Office for Students. Professor Davies drew attention to activity during the pandemic to mitigate Covid-19's effect on young people accessing their education (Connecting Kids Project), new university structures around the management of access and participation and the wider resourcing of the University's access and participation activity.
- 21.2 Members reviewed the report and commented on the need if possible, to increase widening participation student numbers but not at the expense of reducing participation by students from other quintiles.

**22. CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION PAPER Q**  
*Restricted and Commercial in Confidence*

**23. RISK MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 PAPER R**

- 23.1 Council noted the Risk Management Annual Report which formed part of the annual assurance processes and was being received on the recommendation of the Audit Committee, in recognition of the complex risk environment and profile experienced in 2019/20 due to the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic and EU Exit.

**24. BREXIT CONSIDERATIONS AND PREPARATIONS PAPER S**

- 24.1 The Director of Strategic Governance and Planning provided an overview of the University's EU Exit preparedness which had been strategic in approach and was intended to accommodate a no deal basis, were that the outcome. Mr Jennings highlighted the work undertaken to mitigate a potential reduction in EU student numbers particularly with the establishment of the Leipzig campus.
- 24.2 Members discussed the implications of EU Exit on the University's current and future position in terms of: EU students (in particular ERASMUS) and staff, research, the opportunities provided by the Leipzig campus and other strategic relationships with European partners which needed to be protected. Council noted the report.

**25. RESEARCH INTEGRITY REPORT 2019/20 PAPER T**

- 25.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) introduced the Annual Research Integrity Report drawing attention to research integrity activity development in 2019/20, including protocols to manage the impacts of Covid-19. It was reported that none of the complaints received during this year had been upheld on investigation.
- 25.2 Council approved the Research Integrity Report 2019/20.

**26. COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY CHAIRS (CUC) HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNANCE CODE (SEPTEMBER 2020) PAPER U**

26.1 The Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) presented the paper outlining changes to the Code and its new emphasis on diversity and inclusion, culture and values (at a Council and institutional level), and the new element of engagement as well as the Office for Students' expectations concerning the adoption and application of a code as a condition of on-going registration.

26.2 Council noted the significant changes to the Code and considered how the Council could satisfy itself that it was applying the Code in its own practice through working groups in early 2021 and its Council Effectiveness Review due in 2021-2022.

26.3 Council approved the revised Council Statement of Primary Responsibilities.

**27. OFFICE FOR STUDENTS (OfS) PREVENT ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND DATA RETURN PAPER V**  
*Restricted and Confidential*

**28. DRAFT MODERN SLAVERY ACT STATEMENT PAPER W**

28.1 The Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) introduced the revised annual Statement which she stated the University was required to comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015. She highlighted the work to enhance assurance and additional assessments conducted concerning procurement.

28.2 Council approved the Modern Slavery Act Statement for publication.

**29. REPORT ON THE USE OF THE UNIVERSITY SEAL PAPER X**

29.1 Council noted the report by the University Secretary on the use of the University Seal in the period from 22 November 2019 until 20 November 2020.

**30. ANNUAL REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE: ESTATES COMMITTEE PAPER Y**

30.1 Council approved the proposed changes to its Estates Committee terms of reference as recommended by the Estates Committee.

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**31. COUNCIL CHAIR'S ACTIONS PAPER Z**

31.1 Council noted the minor amendments agreed by the Chair under his delegated authority to the University's Complaints Procedure in October 2020.

**32. WRITTEN REPORTS OF MEETINGS**

**PAPER AA**

32.1 Council noted the written reports.

**33. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF COUNCIL BUSINESS**

**PAPER BB**

33.1 Council noted the proposed forward schedule of business.

**34. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

34.1 There was no additional business to report.

**35. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

35.1 Members noted that the next meeting will be held from 1.00 p.m. on Friday 22 January 2020.