

COUNCIL MINUTES

8 September 2020 (Extraordinary Meeting)

PRESENT: Lord Liddle (Pro-Chancellor) (in the Chair); Professor A. J. Schofield (Vice-Chancellor); Mr D. Barron (lay member); Professor S. Bradley (Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor); Ms H. Burgess (lay member); Mr A. Carey (lay member); Mrs R. S. Georghiou (lay member); Professor S. C. Guy (Senate representative); Mr I. Johnson (lay member); Professor K. C. Jones (Senate representative); Ms B. T. Morgan (student representative); Ms A. M. Mullan (Senate representative); Baroness Neville-Jones (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Professor Ella Ritchie (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Mr O. Robinson (President, Students' Union); Mrs V. Young (lay member).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P. T. Boustead (Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development) (*for item 8*); Mrs C. L. Geddes (Committee Secretary); Ms N. C. Owen (Deputy Chief Executive (Operations)); Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley (Director of Finance) (*for items 8 and 9*); Ms M. Reid Fotheringham (Observer).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Professor Sir Ian Diamond (lay member)*; Lord Price (lay member); His Hon. P. Sycamore (lay member); Mr S. N. Reynolds (lay member).

* due to technical issues connecting to the meeting

INTRODUCTION

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Council **noted** apologies for absence.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed new lay members Mr A. Carey and Ms H. Burgess to their first meeting and Ms M. Reid Fotheringham who was observing but would be joining Council as a lay member as the next vacancy arose in 2021.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 It was **noted** that Mr O. Robinson was a member of Lancaster City Council. It was not considered that this represented a conflict of interest with any items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING: 24 JULY 2020 PAPER A

- 3.1 Council **approved** the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 24 July 2020.

4. MINUTES OF A MEETING: 10 JULY 2020 PAPER B

- 4.1 Council **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2020.

5. MATTERS ARISING

5.1 Council **noted** the Degree Outcomes Sub-Group had approved the Degree Outcomes Statement on the 24 July under the delegated authority of Council.

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

6.1 Professor Andy Schofield reported on the following.

- (i) Progress of student admissions for 2020-2021 including: the impacts arising from Government's A-Level grades policy changes; the University's overall net gain in home/EU students and the continuing uncertainty regarding overseas student numbers; and the actions which had and were being taken to mitigate these risks.
- (ii) The University's preparedness for new students' arrival including further development of the academic delivery model and the student experience provision, and the measures taken to make campus Covid-19 safe including the development of an Outbreak Management Plan in close collaboration with the City and County Council. Further guidance from the Department for Education was expected imminently.
- (iii) A further consultation regarding the USS pension scheme and valuation methodologies, noting that the issue of pensions would remain a focus for the Council over the upcoming academic year due to continuing concerns in the sector regarding affordability and deficit recovery.
- (iv) Council noted the University's recent performances in the Guardian League Table ranking 10th and the Times Higher Education Global Rankings where the University has risen to =135th. The Vice-Chancellor stated this performance was testament to the hard work and commitment of the University's staff.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

7. SEARCH COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: PRO-CHANCELLOR APPOINTMENT PAPER C

7.1 The Chair of the Search Committee, Baroness Neville-Jones, introduced the paper highlighting the effectiveness and challenges of the search during the pandemic followed by the rationale of the Search Committee for the recommendation and a profile of the individual proposed to Council for the role.

7.2 Council **approved** the Search Committee recommendation to appoint the Rt. Hon. Alistair Burt to the role of Pro-Chancellor from 1 October 2020 for a term of five years in accordance with the University's Ordinance 10.2.

8. VOLUNTARY PAYROLL COST REDUCTIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR PROGRESSING A VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE SCHEME (VSS) **PAPER D**
Restricted and Commercial in Confidence

9. COVID-19: SHORT-TERM LIQUIDITY **PAPER E**
Restricted and Commercial in Confidence

10. REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE: AUDIT COMMITTEE **PAPER F**

10.1 The Chair of Audit Committee, Baroness Neville-Jones, introduced the paper highlighting key changes to the CUC Higher Education Audit Committee Code of Practice May 2020 and the recommended revised terms of reference for the Audit Committee to align with the Code.

10.2 Council **approved** the revised terms of reference for Audit Committee and noted the adoption of the new CUC Audit Committee Code of Practice from 1 August 2020.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

11. CHAIR'S ACTIONS **PAPER G**

11.1 Council **noted** the report of Chair's action relating to the revocation of an honorary degree.

12. NEXT MEETING OF COUNCIL

12.1 Members **noted** the proposed arrangements for Council activity and hybrid meetings (Covid-19 guidance permitting) over 24-25 September 2020 including a joint meeting with Senate regarding development of the strategy.