

## Council Minutes: 22 March 2024

**PRESENT:** Rt. Hon. Alistair Burt (Pro-Chancellor) (in the Chair); Professor Andy Schofield (Vice-Chancellor); Professor David Adams (lay member) (*online*); Tania Baumann (lay member) (*online*); Rt. Hon. Hazel Blears (lay member); Professor Steve Bradley (Deputy Vice-Chancellor); Alun Branigan (lay member); Hanah Burgess (lay member); Anthony Carey (lay member); Cerys Evans (Students' Union President); Adrian Jonas (lay member); Claire Leitch (Senate representative); Alison Mullan (Senate representative); Josh Newsham (student member); Marcia Reid Fotheringham (lay member) (*online*); Professor Ella Ritchie (Deputy Pro-Chancellor) (*online*); Professor Jo Rycroft-Malone (Senate representative); His Hon. Phillip Sycamore (lay member); Maureen Whilby (lay member).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Phill Dixon (Director of People and Organisational Effectiveness) (*for items 14 and 15*); Julie Ferguson (Emergency Planning and Risk Manager) (*for item 11*); Claire Geddes (Committee Clerk); Professor Alisdair Gillespie (University Academic Dean) (*for item 12*); John Heritage (co-opted member of the Audit Committee) (*for item 11*); Simon Jennings (Director of Strategic Planning and Deputy Secretary); Nicola Owen (Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) and Secretary); Sarah Randall-Paley (Director of Finance); Leanne Taher-Bates (Head of Social Mobility and Student Success) (*for item 13*).

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** None.

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Council noted there were no apologies for absence received for this meeting.
- 1.2 Members congratulated Cerys Evans on her re-election as Students' Union President for 2024-25 and noted that as such she would continue to serve on Council for another year.
- 1.3 The Chair thanked the Executive Dean of the Management School for the presentation she and her senior leadership team had provided to Members on the previous evening.

#### 2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: 26 JANUARY 2024

PAPER A

- 3.1 Council approved the minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 January 2024.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

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

5.1 Council noted a written report from the Executive circulated to Council on 15 March 2024. The Vice-Chancellor reported on the following.

- (i) Arrangements for the Council Away Day on 16-17 May including guest speakers and that advised that requests for session contributions would be made to members shortly.
- (ii) The University's outcome from the Office for Students (OfS) Prevent accountability and data return (ADR) for 2022-23, which was no further requests for information.
- (iii) The University's continued support for students facing financial hardship through its Lancaster Opportunity and Access Fund (LOAF), where the Executive continued to monitor the fund to ensure sufficient availability of funds, with £300k distributed to date this financial year.
- (iv) As circulated to Council for approval by correspondence in February 2024, the appointment of Distinguished Professor Malcolm Joyce as Interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) for a 12-month period.
- (v) The recently concluded successful recruitment and selection process for a new Deputy Vice-Chancellor to succeed Professor Steve Bradley with an announcement to be made in due course.
- (vii) The positive recent visit by senior leaders from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the subsequent discussions regarding funding opportunities for the University's research activity within the region.
- (viii) The University's leading role in the UUK Overseas Campus Network (of which he had been appointed Chair), and the potential opportunities around research funding which were being explored related to global campuses.
- (ix) The beginning of the national pay round negotiations for 2024-25 (which Council had approved the University's participation in by correspondence in February 2024).

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#### **6. STUDENTS' UNION PRESIDENT'S REPORT: MARCH 2024**

**PAPER B**

6.1 The President highlighted the following from the items from the written report.

- (i) The result of the recent Students' Union elections. She highlighted an increased number of candidates (for fulltime roles), higher voter turnout but, that diversity of candidates remained a challenge to be addressed.

- (ii) Progress with the implementation of the Students' Union's new strategic plan which was aligned with the University's our plan and values. She gave Council assurance that this also included giving consideration to longer term plans regarding its commercial operations.
- (iii) The Students' Union Officers' development of a national campaign regarding students' cost-of-living concerns. She highlighted that this would target Government and national bodies and seek changes to the fees and funding structure for higher education and noted the Officer team would value any support Members could offer.

6.2 Council noted the report and welcomed the increased levels of engagement with elections. Members encouraged SU Officers to use their cost-of-living campaign platform to highlight the Union's partnership working with the University and support from it, to inspire other institutions to take similar action.

#### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

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| 7.  | <b>ACADEMIC AND BUSINESS CASE FOR THE RUSKIN: MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTRE</b><br><i>Restricted and Commercial in Confidence</i> | <b>PAPER C</b>      |
| 8.  | <b>KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs): MID-YEAR REPORT FOR 2023/24</b><br><i>Restricted and Commercial in Confidence</i>        | <b>PAPER D</b>      |
| 9.  | <b>OUT-TURN REVIEW 2023/24</b><br><i>Restricted and Commercial in Confidence</i>   | <b>PAPER E</b>      |
| 10. | <b>RESIDENCES REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMME</b><br><i>Restricted and Commercial in Confidence</i>                                    | <b>PAPER F</b>      |
| 11. | <b>RISK APPETITE PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION</b><br><i>Restricted and Commercial in Confidence</i>                             | <b>PRESENTATION</b> |
| 12. | <b>DEGREE OUTCOMES STATEMENT AND ANALYSIS 2022/23</b><br><i>Restricted and Commercial in Confidence</i>                        | <b>PAPER G</b>      |
| 13. | <b>ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION TARGETS</b><br><i>Restricted and Commercial in Confidence</i>                                      | <b>PRESENTATION</b> |

**14. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23 PAPER H**

14.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Director of People and Organisational Effectiveness presented the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report for 2022/23 highlighting presentational changes to increase both its accessibility and readability.

14.2 Members welcomed the report's development but emphasised the need to consider increased granularity in the presentation of disability related statistics, and to contemplate on the inclusion of comparator data from the sector where possible and appropriate.

14.3 Council noted the Council Diversity Monitoring Annual Report 2022/23 and approved its publication on the University website by 31 March 2024.

**15. GENDER PAY GAP PAPER I**

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**16. CELEBRATING THE UNIVERSITY'S 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY PAPER J**

16.1 Council noted the papers on arrangements for the Roses Tournament 2024 (and the open invitation for members to attend the event), and the University's planned programme of events.

**17. HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2023 PAPER K**

17.1 Council received and discussed the annual assurance report regarding University health and safety matters, noting the increased number of audits conducted as well as visits from regulatory bodies.

17.2 Members welcomed the assurance the report provided in relation to health and safety being effectively managed but sought further assurance regarding the University's response to a notice of contravention from the Health and Safety Executive. Council noted the work being undertaken in response to this to enhance related practices in the Life Sciences.

17.3 In subsequent discussion, Council members considered the rise in reported fires nationally connected to lithium batteries and in particular e-bikes storage in residences, and whether this had been considered within the context of student residences. It was agreed that it would be useful for student behaviours to be considered by C-SHAW in relation to this matter as learning from previous incidents on campus had been focused on staff.

17.4 Council noted the report.

**18. COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW ACTION PLAN UPDATE PAPER 1**

- 18.1 The Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) gave a précis of progress against the Council Effectiveness Review Action Plan implementation as approved in March 2023. She highlighted that the review had not identified significant issues and was conducted from a developmental and practice enhancement perspective. She drew attention to areas which were still ongoing including the conduct of a skills analysis of members using a qualitative methodology, to support succession planning.
- 18.2 Council considered the report and noted in reflection that they would still welcome opportunities for current members to develop a greater understanding of Senate and academic issues, particularly the Curriculum Transformation Programme. This included the opportunity to observe a Senate to be offered to all lay members.
- 18.3 Though recognising the challenges of capturing a distilled summary of the University's unique selling points, members urged the Executive to finalise and share a revised University elevator pitch with them.
- 18.4 Council noted that in response to its feedback, an informal Partnerships Assurance Group open to all Council members had now been established that would meet three times a year and which any Council member could attend.
- 18.5 Council noted and commented on the Council Effectiveness Review Action Plan implementation and was satisfied with the progress made.

**\* ITEMS NOT FOR DISCUSSION UNLESS REQUESTED IN ADVANCE TO THE CHAIR**

**19.\* NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT PAPER 1**

- 19.1 Council approved the recommendations from the Nominations Committee for appointments as set out in Sections 1.1, 2.1 and 3.1 of the paper concerning lay member reappointments, lay member appointments to sub committees and the appointment of co-opted members to sub committees.

**20.\* COUNCIL CHAIR'S ACTIONS PAPER 2**

- 20.1 Council noted and homologated the reported actions regarding approval of minor revisions to the membership of CSHaW, and approval to move contractual status to confirm the recent outcome of the tender for PC laptop procurement.
- 20.2 The Chair reported that he had written a letter of condolence to the family of Baroness Henig, a previous member of staff and long-term friend and supporter of the University, and had also written to the University Chancellor to confirm the Council's approval of the Right Hon. Alan Milburn's reappointment.

**21.\* TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW: EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) COMMITTEE PAPER 3**

- 21.1 Council received the recommendation from the EDI Committee for proposed changes to its terms of reference and approved the changes as set out.

**22.\* WRITTEN REPORTS OF MEETINGS**

**PAPER 4**

22.1 Council noted the following written reports of meetings:

- Audit Committee, meeting of 15 January 2024
- Estates Committee, meeting of 9 January 2024

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**23. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF COUNCIL BUSINESS**

**PAPER M**

23.1 Council noted the Forward Schedule.

**24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

24.1 There was no further business discussed.

**25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

25.1 The next meeting, the Council Away Day, will be held on campus from 12:00 on Thursday 16 to 13:00 on Friday 17 May 2024 followed by lunch and the formal Council meeting from 14:00-16:00.

25.2 Council members noted the proposed dates for Council in 2024/25 and that Council sub-committee dates were due to be circulated to relevant chairs shortly.