

THE COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2017

- Present: The Chair of the Council (Mr J. Greenwell), The Treasurer (Mr M. Williams), the Vice-Chancellor (Professor D. Richardson), the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Professor F. Lettice), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Professor N. Ward), Independent Members (Mr S. Blease, Mr J. Clayton, Mr G Jones, Miss G. Maclean, Ms L. McGillivray, Dr K Skoyles and Dr W. Thomson), Members appointed by the Senate (Professor N Boodhoo and Ms H. Lewis), Member appointed by the Support Staff (Mr C. Brown) and the Student Representative (Ms A Rust and Mr T Antoniou-Phillips)
- With: The Registrar and Secretary (Mr B Summers), Director of Finance, Planning & Governance (Mr I. Callaghan) and the Assistant Registrar (Ms L. Williams).
- In attendance: The Executive Deans of Faculty (Professor J Collier, Professor D. Edwards, Professor P Gilmartin and Professor Y Tasker)
- Apologies: Mr T Antoniou-Phillips, Professor P Gilmartin, Mr A. Stronach and Mrs R. Phillips.

78. MINUTES

Confirmed

the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2017 subject to noting that the date of next meeting should have read 26 June 2017.

79. MATTERS ARISING

1. Norwich Powerhouse: the decision to retire from the LLP was ratified by Council.

80. STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

The Chair thanked the student representatives for their thoughtful, considerate and resolute contributions during their time in office and wished them every success for the future. He looked forward to welcoming the incoming student representatives. He also thanked Professor Tasker for her contribution during her time as Executive Dean for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

81. STATEMENTS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

- (1) Data breach: the Vice-Chancellor outlined the circumstances that led to the data breach and immediate actions that had been taken since. He confirmed that the University had made a full and unreserved apology and made a self-report to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and there would be an independent inquiry undertaken by Pricewaterhouse Coopers as the University's internal auditors with fieldwork due to take place during July. It is anticipated that the ICO may also wish to undertake an inquiry.

- (2) TEF: The University had received a silver award in the TEF as previously outlined and noting that the University was adrift from benchmark in employability. Benchmarks are calculated by reference to entry tariff and subject mix which accounts for variances between universities in absolute terms. Employability is a focus of the University and there have been improvements in underlying performance. The TEF result stands for three years but it is possible to re-enter on an annual basis and it is anticipated that some institutions that receive silver or bronze may choose to do so. ET will be discussion the situation in depth at their meeting on 10 July. There are also plans to support students during Graduation week where they have yet to find suitable employment. [Post-meeting update: the University was awarded GOLD on appeal – the only successful appeal for re-grading.]
- (3) Cyber-attack at UCL: it was noted that UCL had recently experienced a cyber-attack which had followed on from recent attacks against the NHS. The University is reviewing its readiness against such attacks and this is subject of a report to Information Strategy and Services Committee (ISSC). A report to Council will be brought in due course.

82. REPORTS FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Received and considered

- (1) an Annual Report and presentation from the Vice-Chancellor (part 2).
- (2) the Vice-Chancellor's standard report to Council. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU16D059)

(In addition to his written report the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University was engaging with JISC on their learner analytics project. An Academic Director for Learning Enhancement had also been appointed. In terms of staffing, Schools have been asked to work towards achieving an optimal ratio between ATR and ATS staffing categories rather than focussing specifically on a target SSR ratio. It was also noted that if there was a strong SSR then it would be expected that most other KPIs should be more easily supported. It was identified that in respect of Table 7 the methodology for allocating a R/A/G rating would need to be revised to appropriately recognise and articulate success.)

83. ANNUAL REPORT: EQUALITY & DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Received

a presentation and annual report from the Equality & Diversity Committee to Council. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU16D060)

(The Chair thanked the Head of Equality and Diversity for her report. In discussion the progression of Schools from Bronze to Silver Athena Swan awards was noted and shows the impact of the work being done. Broadly categorised, at the Bronze stage barriers were acknowledged and at the Silver stage there was evidence of activity showing positive impact. It was also confirmed that there is mandatory training on equality and diversity for all those involved with recruitment and a specific package is being developed to address unconscious bias.)

84. HEALTH & SAFETY PRESENTATION AND REPORT TO COUNCIL

Received

a presentation and report from the Director of Safety Services on behalf of the University Health and Safety Executive. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU16D061)

(In discussion it was noted that there is always a risk of under-reporting accident statistics but these do rely on the entire University community reporting accidents and near-miss events. There was a detailed discussion regarding fire safety in light of the Grenfell Tower tragedy and it was confirmed that the University accommodation (both residential and non-residential) operates in a different fashion with full coverage by both automatic and manual fire alarms and full evacuation on sounding of alarms. There are also regular evacuation drills. The Estates Division is currently undertaking a review of the cladding that is applied to University buildings. The recent Manchester attack was also discussed and it was pointed out that security of the campus is managed by the Access and Security Team. They are in regular contact with the Police and other agencies and have been taking part in appropriate training activity on dealing with hazardous substances. It was acknowledged that it is not possible (nor desirable) to have a fully secure campus but it was important for all users of the campus to be aware of what to do if something were to happen. There is also a balance to be judged between disruption and managing known threats.

It was acknowledged that the Safety Services team were behind schedule on their programme of audits. However, this is a new schedule and the system is being refined and will be brought back on schedule.

In response to a specific point regarding external standards recognition it was confirmed that it was the current preference to work towards achieving the level required to gain a standard rather than actually holding the standard. It was also confirmed that the University Health and Safety Executive had asked for a report identifying the costs associated with external recognition.)

85. BUDGET FOR 2017/18 AND FUTURE YEARS' FORECASTS

Considered

- (1) a paper from the Director of Finance, Planning and Governance providing details of the Budget for 2017/18 and future years' financial forecasts: the HEFCE submission. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU16D062)
- (2) a presentation and report from the Director of Finance, Planning and Governance in respect of the long-term financial plan. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU16D063)

(It was noted that this year's budget saw an anticipated increase in surplus over previous years although this was lower than had initially been planned. This reflects a slowing of the requirement for Faculties to make savings which will now be achieved over a longer timeframe to avoid making staff reductions in one year and having to re-recruit in future years as the student number increases.

In terms of the longer term financial plan it was noted that there were challenges but that the plan was broadly realistic. There were opportunities to manage the University's overall financial position during the life of the plan should this become necessary: the principle one being that the planned Estates works were phased and could be paused if required or deemed

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appropriate. In September there would be presentations to the University's existing finance partners to advise them formally of our plans and to identify any "red-lines" that they might have in respect of approving additional borrowing. It is anticipated that the results of this will be shared with Council at the November Strategy Day.)

RESOLVED

to approve the budget as submitted and to submit the HEFCE plan.

86. REPORT TO COUNCIL FROM SENATE AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Received

- (1) the confidential annual report from Senate to Council. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU16D064)
- (2) the report from the Student Experience Committee. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU16D065)

(It was noted that whilst Student Experience Committee formally reports to Senate the Council would continue to wish to see this report on an annual basis. It was also noted that the Student Representatives on Council would be meeting with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

87 USS PENSION SCHEME VALUATION

Received

an update on the triennial valuation of the USS Pension Scheme and a recommendation that Finance Committee be delegated to respond to any consultation on behalf of Council. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU16D066)

(The formal survey would be considered by the Executive Team with draft responses confirmed by Finance Committee on behalf of Council. It was considered appropriate to reference the investment policy of the USS in our response to the UK survey.)

88. FINANCE COMMITTEE

Received

the confidential report of the Finance Group which took place on Monday 5 June 2017. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU16D067).

89. ITEMS FOR REPORT

Received

the following Item for Report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU16D068).

- (1) Sealings
- (2) Heads of Schools for 2017/18