

THE COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2017

Present: The Chair of the Council (Mr J Greenwell), the Treasurer (Mr M Williams), the Vice-Chancellor (Professor D Richardson), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Professor N Ward), the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Professor F Lettice), 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 (Mr J Robinson)

With: The Registrar and Secretary (Mr B Summers), Director of Finance, Planning & Governance (Mr I Callaghan), the Assistant Registrar (Ms L Williams), the Assistant Head of Corporate Communications (Mr S Dunford), and Senior Administrative Assistant (Mrs R Phillips).

In attendance: The Pro-Vice-Chancellors of Faculty (Professor S Barrow, Professor J Collier, Professor D Edwards and Professor P Gilmartin)

Apologies: Ms M Leishman, Mr A Stronach

1. MINUTES

Confirmed

the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2017.

2. CHAIR'S ACTION

There were no actions to report.

3. STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

The Chair welcomed Professor Sarah Barrow to her first meeting of Council and Jack Robinson as one of the two new student representatives. Mary Leishman was unable to attend this meeting. The Chair looked forward to working with all three new people. He also noted that this was the last meeting of Council at which Brian Summers will be present as Registrar and Secretary. The Chair thanked him for a fantastic term of office and stated that the University owed a debt of gratitude for his service.

The Chair announced that Dominic Christian had been appointed as the new Chair of the Sainsbury Centre Board.

The Chair congratulated the University on the announcement that Kazuo Ishiguro had received a Nobel Prize for Literature. Mr Ishiguro was due to speak at the University this week at an event which has sold out. The Chair will write a letter of congratulations to Mr Ishiguro on behalf of Council.

There had been a suggestion that Council meetings might start slightly earlier this academic year but the balance of opinion was that the current start time of 10.30 was sufficient.

4. STATEMENTS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University had been successful in the appeal against the original TEF announcement and had now been awarded TEF Gold. In addition, the University had recently learned that we had achieved our highest ever ranking in the Times/Sunday Times ranking (13th). Over the summer the press has reported many stories about universities and their funding including specific campaigns on Vice-Chancellor remuneration packages. It is anticipated that the Committee of University Chairs will opine on this subject following their annual meeting. During the summer the press and ministers also started to attack standards/degree inflation. In this context it should be noted that the University was number one for added value in the Guardian and the Vice-Chancellor was proud of this achievement and could point to the reasons behind the success. There had also been significant discussion about the current funding model culminating in an announcement at the Conservative Party Conference of a freeze on regulated tuition fees at the current level of £9,250 whilst a full review of the current funding model takes place. It is anticipated that this will hold until the end of the current parliament. There is more work to be done to model this change in the long-term financial plan and the results of this work will be reported to Council in due course. It is clear from the University's perspective that the total unit of resource cannot be lessened (whatever the source) but there may be changes to those sources. In terms of UEA cash balances are held to provide resilience against such changes and this is reflected in our current long-term plan. On a similar subject the Vice-Chancellor had written an article for the Eastern Daily Press highlighting the value of higher education. To combat potential threats it is important that the University continues to explore alternatives to the traditional business model. To that end, two degree apprenticeship programmes are in the process of being launched: the first aimed at Senior Leaders and the second in the Nursing field.

The University's work with the other Norwich Research Park institutions continues with good progress made in respect of the Quadram Institute. The Sainsbury Laboratory was now on a similar journey and, if successful would add to the University's research metrics. The Sainsbury Laboratory will also announce Nick Talbot as their new Chair (Nick is currently DVC at Exeter University and a UEA alumnus).

Further media comment has been made in respect of "essay mills" and stating that universities should do all they can to prevent the operation of such activities on campus. The University is exploring ways of ensuring that any impact is minimised through training for academics, technical solutions and reinforcement of current plagiarism messages.

5. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Received

the Vice-Chancellor's report to Council. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU17D001)

There were no additional comments in respect of this report other than those covered in minute four above.

*6. EMAIL INCIDENT

This minute is confidential and is attached as a separate sheet.

*7. STUDENT NUMBERS AND FINANCES

This minute is confidential and is attached as a separate sheet.

8. KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Considered

a report providing a summary of key league table information. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU17D003)

The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University was occupying the best place in its history in terms of metrics which is to be celebrated and reflects the hard work of the Schools, Faculties, Professional Services, Students' Union and Students. However, it was also important to reflect on those metrics that were not as strong as they could be (teaching quality, student satisfaction with assessment and feedback and graduate prospects). Graduate prospects are improving for UEA but also for others and there needs to be continued focus to ensure that this metric continues to improve. It is also important to ensure that spend per student captures all spend in the relevant categories to ensure optimal results. It was also noted that it would be useful to add the target KPI to the relevant tables.

9. CODE OF PRACTICE RELATING TO STUDENTS' UNIONS REVISIONS

Considered

the revisions to the Code of Practice. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU17D004)

RESOLVED

to adopt the revised code of practice as presented.

10. SENATE MEMBERSHIP

Considered

following the retirement of the previous Director of ISD and the decision to split the Division into two, the Library on the one hand and IT services on the other, membership of Senate had to be adjusted to reflect this. The Vice-Chancellor recommended that the Director of ISD was replaced with the Librarian.

RESOLVED

to approve the Vice-Chancellor's recommendation.

*11. RECEIPT OF A DONATION

This minute is confidential and is attached as a separate sheet.

*12. DEEP DIVE: NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY AND TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

This minute is confidential and is attached as a separate sheet.

13. FINANCE COMMITTEE

Received

a report from the Finance Committee from its meeting on 15 August 2017 and 21 September 2017. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU17D008)

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14. APPOINTMENT OF ACTING REGISTRAR AND SECRETARY

Confirmed

the Vice-Chancellor's recommendation following the retirement of the current Registrar and Secretary that Mr Ian Callaghan be appointed as Acting Registrar and Secretary until such time as a formal proposal is submitted in respect of a permanent appointment.

15. COUNCIL: TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP 2017-18 AND RESERVED AREAS OF BUSINESS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Received

the terms of reference and membership of the Committee 2017-18. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU17D009)

16. SCVA CHAIR

Reported

that the new Chair of the SCVA Board will be Dominic Christian from 1 August 2017.

17. ITEMS FOR REPORT

Received

the following Items for Report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. COU17D010)

(1) Sealings

18. DATES OF MEETINGS

Reported

that the dates of future Council meetings were:

Monday 20 November 2017 (during CSC) (all day meeting)

Monday 5 February 2018 - 10.30am – 3pm

Monday 12 March 2018 - 10.30am – 3pm

Monday 14 May 2018 - 10.30am – 3pm

Monday 25 June 2018 - 10.30am – 3pm