

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 22 November 2017

Present: Bridget Towle (Chair)

Janet Arthur	David Moore
Paul Boyle	Amy Moran
Gary Dixon	Andrew Morgan
Cathy Ellis	Paul O'Brien
Janet Finch	Mark Peel
Martin Hindle	Emma Raven
Dominic Lockett	John Schwabe
Suzanne Macleod	Vijay Sharma

Carole Thorogood

In attendance: Iain Gillespie and Philip Baker (for 17/M112); Martyn Riddleston; Dave Hall (Secretary); and Neil Cox (Assistant Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from Mehmooda Duke, Ian Johnson and Steph Osborn.

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

17/M89 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (IN RELATION TO AGENDA ITEMS FOR THIS MEETING)**

John Schwabe declared an interest in respect of the business discussed under 17/M112.

17/M90 **MINUTES**

Council considered the unreserved minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2017. **Council approved** them as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

17/M91 **CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

a. Agenda management

The Chair suggested that, in order to further assist Council to focus effectively on the more substantive and time consuming items of business on its agendas, Council should experiment with routinely taking the Reserved Section of business first, starting with the agenda for this meeting. **Council agreed** to adopt this suggestion [ACTION: NEIL COX].

b. Office for Students

Council received a briefing paper on the establishment from 2018 of the Office for Students (alongside the disestablishment of HEFCE), as the new regulator for higher education institutions in England.

Although the Department for Education was still consulting on the detailed role of the OfS, it was clear that the new regulator would exist to protect the interests

of student as customers, not HEIs as suppliers. However, it would play no part in the oversight of the research mission of HEIs, and this was likely to present new strategic challenges for institutions in conveying the continued synergy between teaching and research.

Council noted that the Board of Universities UK had expressed concern at the more assertive and directive tone of the OfS consultation document, with its possible implications for institutional autonomy.

c. 'Fit and Proper Persons'

The Chair reminded members of the need to submit their signed 'Fit and Proper Persons' declaration form for 2017-18. As at the date of the meeting five remaining forms were awaited.

17/M92 **PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BUSINESS**

The President and Vice-Chancellor drew Council's attention to various topical items and developments, including:

- a. contrary to recent publicity the University was *not* proposing to establish an 'overseas campus' in mainland Europe, although it was actively exploring possible European collaborative opportunities;
- b. the Advertising Standards Authority had challenged Leicester's claim to be ranked as a "top 1% world university", on the grounds that because the estimated number of universities worldwide could not be relied upon, there was significant doubt as to whether the University was truly in the top 1% or not. The ASA's interpretation of the relevant data differed from that applied in independent assessments by the compilers of national and international league tables and rankings, on which the original claim was based, but any reference to this metric would be removed from all future promotional materials as soon as was practical;
- c. Leicester was proud to have officially launched its new Menopause Policy, as the first UK university to have such a policy in place;
- d. the Chancellor's 2018 budget was delivered just a few hours before the start of the Council meeting, but the early headlines and analysis suggested no new announcements of significance for the HE sector;
- e. the UCU was about to open a postal strike ballot in opposition to proposals from Universities UK for the movement of the Universities Superannuation Scheme from its current Defined Benefits structure to a Defined Contribution arrangement, in response to significant challenges arising from the 2017 actuarial valuation. The postal ballot would run from 27 November until 19 January.

17/M93 **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Council considered the University's Performance Assessment Dashboard update for November 2017, with a supporting set of eight Strategic KPI Reports, one for each Strategy.

Council noted that some KPIs had been changed since the last report in May 2017, to reflect changes to priority action areas and to improve the ability to measure progress. However, some measures could only be updated annually, following the submission of statutory returns and the release of comparable sector data. This would be reflected in the May updates.

With specific regard to the Learning Strategy KPIs for Student Satisfaction and Teaching Quality, **Council noted** that these were derived exclusively from responses to specific questions in the National Student Survey. Since the NSS was completed by mainly final-year undergraduates, Council suggested that wider measures from the student body might provide a more rounded assessment of the University's performance in this area. Similarly, the measures applied under Research and Enterprise seemed to be dominated by those for research, and Council requested that the next update in May 2018 should include a brief commentary on the feasibility of developing an appropriate set of measures for enterprise performance [ACTION: BECKY JOHNSON].

17/M94 **SENATE**

Council considered a report of a meeting of Senate held on 8 November 2017. **Council noted** in particular:

- a. that Senate had endorsed for submission to Council the Annual Academic Quality Assurance report for 2016-17 (dealt with separately under 17/M114);
- b. that Senate had endorsed the next steps to be taken in the development and implementation of a new institutional academic workload model, following a pilot project with five departments/schools representing all three colleges;
- c. that experience gained by the University in establishing the relationship with Dalian University of Technology would prove valuable in informing other future international initiatives.

17/M95 **STUDENTS' UNION ELECTIONS 2018**

Council noted that Ordinance 22(8) required that the conduct of the election of Officers of the Students' Union be subject to inspection by a person appointed by Council.

Council approved the appointment of Mark Peel, in his capacity as Provost, to oversee the elections with effect from 1 January 2018.

17/M96 **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE**

Council received a report of a meeting of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee held on 2 November 2017. **Council noted** that this was the first meeting of the Committee held under the new governance structure for EDI, with a revised constitution for the Committee.

17/M97 **HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Council considered a report of a meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on 25 October 2017. **Council approved** the Committee's constitution and terms of

reference for 2017-2018, for the addition of the Occupational Health Manager to the ex-officio membership.

17/M98 **STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Council received a report of a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Alumni Association held on 29 September 2017.

Council was pleased to note the Committee's planned focus on developing the alumni community to create a more dedicated mentoring and networking framework, to benefit students and graduates at all career stages, and to reach out to students from all backgrounds, particularly those who would not benefit from such support through other networks.

17/M99 **REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

Council considered a report of the Nominations Committee.

Council approved a recommendation from the Committee that Martin Hindle be invited to continue to serve as a lay member of Council for a further period of three years, from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2021 [ACTION: NEIL COX].

Council noted that the Committee had approved the naming of the main lecture theatre in the George Davies Centre (formerly the Centre for Medicine) as the 'Chetwode Lecture Theatre'.

17/M100 **VAN GEEST FOUNDATION**

Council considered a report of the Annual Meeting of the van Geest Foundation managing trustees, held on 19 October 2017. In accordance with clause 15.1.4 of the Declaration of Trust document, **Council approved** an amendment to the Trust Deed, to replace reference to the Department of Cardiovascular Sciences 'Research Strategy Board' with the Department of Cardiovascular Sciences 'Leadership Team'.

17/M101 **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

Council considered the University's latest risk register as updated for the autumn term 2017. The register was comprised of the Strategic Risk Register as the set of top ULT risks, and the Corporate Risk Register.

Council noted the details of and reasons for key changes made to the content of the registers, and to movements in the classification of individual risks, since last reported to Council at the July meeting. Council was pleased that the format of the Strategic Risk Register was continuing to evolve, in order to ensure that a concise and focussed view was maintained of the key strategic risks.

17/M102 **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND RISK APPETITE STATEMENT**

Council considered the latest versions of the University's Risk Management Policy and Risk Appetite Statement, noting that both documents had also been reviewed and endorsed by ULT and the Audit Committee at their recent meetings, with no material changes requested from the versions previously approved by Council.

Council confirmed its approval of the Risk Management Policy and the Risk Appetite Statement, and its willingness to accept and encourage an increased degree of risk in pursuit of the University's mission and objectives, whilst minimising exposure to compliance, brand and reputation, and overall financial risks.

17/M103 **HONORARY DEGREES BOARD**

Council endorsed the recommendations of the Honorary Degrees Board for the award of Honorary Degrees and Fellowships, for conferral from 2018. **Council noted** that it was intended that the majority of awards in July 2018 would be made to women, to mark the centenary of the extension of the suffrage.

17/M104 **REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

Council received the Register of Members' Interests as recently updated for 2017-2018. Members were reminded that any changes to their registered interests should be notified to the Assistant Secretary as soon as they occurred, rather than waiting for the annual call for updates.

17/M105 **UNIVERSITY SEAL**

Council received details of the affixing of the University seal to documents, as listed in the Appendix attached to the signed copy of these minutes as C/17/M105(App).

17/M106 **FORWARD BUSINESS SCHEDULE**

Council received the current schedule of the business expected to be dealt with to Council meetings in the remainder of 2017-18.

17/M107 **DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Council noted the dates and times of its remaining meetings in 2017-2018:

Wednesday 21 March 2018 at 4pm

Thursday 19 April 2018 (Awayday)

Monday 14 May 2018 at 4pm

Wednesday 11 July 2018 at 4pm

CHAIR

Duration of meeting (Unreserved and Reserved Business): 2 hours and 55 minutes