

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

COUNCIL

16 October 2024

Annual Report of the Nominations Committee for 2023-2024

Purpose of this report

1. The Nominations Committee reports to Council following its meetings, and to Court periodically, as required by the flow of business, but does not present its full minutes to either body. Instead, it reports by way of specific recommendations and updates, and otherwise submits an annual report to Council.
2. This is the Nominations Committee's Annual Report to Council for 2023-24 covering relevant activity in the period from 1 August 2023 to the Committee meeting held on 23 September 2024, when it was approved by the Committee. Council is asked **to note** this report, which is normally published on the University's website.

Membership

3. The membership of the Nominations Committee includes a majority of lay members and staff members of Council *ex officio*. In the period covered by this report the membership was as follows:

Lay members

Gary Dixon	Member and Chair throughout
Martin Cullen	Member to 25 September 2023
Sophie Dale-Black	Member throughout
Cathy Ellis	Member from 1 September 2023
Liz Blyth	Member from 9 September 2023

Staff members

Nishan Canagarajah	Member throughout
Henrietta O'Connor	Member throughout
Catherine Morley	Member from 9 September 2023 (Senate member of Council)

4. The University's Registrar and Secretary, Geoff Green, was in attendance at all meetings of the Committee.
5. The role of Secretary to the Committee was carried out by Alison Benson, Governance Office, with support and cover provided by other members of the Governance Office as necessary.
6. Activity in the period covered by this report was considered by the Committee at meetings held on 8 September 2023, 25 September 2023, 1 February 2024 and 10 June 2024. The outcome of business during the year is summarised below, including a summary of previous reports to Council made throughout the 2023-24 year.

Terms of Reference

7. Following an update to the philanthropic Naming Policy, the Nominations Committee was no longer required to approve the philanthropic naming of buildings, facilities, centres, institutes and units, including rooms, significant public spaces and posts. The Nominations Committee terms of reference were revised accordingly and approved at the June 2024 meeting.

Chair of Council

8. Following a discussion at its June 2024 meeting, the Committee approved the process and timeline for the recruitment of a new Chair of Council.

Lay members of Council – New Appointments and Reappointments

9. In February 2024, the Committee discussed succession planning and the process to address vacancies. Members agreed to seek to fill one substantive lay member vacancy from 1 August 2024 using the named candidate process.
10. Via electronic circulation in April 2024, the Committee agreed to recommend to Council that Cathy Ellis be appointed, by election, as the substantive University Treasurer and Senior Lay Member for a three year term, from 1 August 2024. Following Cathy Ellis' substantive appointment as University Treasurer, there were two lay member vacancies on Council.
11. During June 2024, the Committee recommended the following courses of action for approval by Court and Council:
 - a) The reappointment of George Acquah as a Council appointed lay member of Council, for a second three year term to 31 July 2027;
 - b) The appointment of Mary Curnock Cook as a Court appointed lay member of Council for an initial three year term from 1 August 2024;
 - c) In principle, the appointment of Glynis Wright as a Court appointed lay member of Council for an initial three year term from 1 August 2024, subject to satisfactory outcome of the interview process.

Student Member of Council

12. The Committee considered a proposal to increase student representation on Council, with effect from the 2025/26 academic year. During July 2024 Council approved, in principle, the addition of a second student member. Further scoping work would take place over the summer of 2024, with a further report to be submitted to Nominations Committee thereafter.

Council Membership of University Committees and Attendance Monitoring

13. Attendance records of members of Council at meetings of Council and its four key 'compliance' committees were published for the first time within the University's Financial Statements for 2016-17. This information has since been published annually in the Financial Statements.
14. At its meeting in September 2023 the Committee reviewed the 2022-2023 attendance record of all Council members at meetings of the governing body, and the attendance record of Council members serving on the four key 'compliance' committees of Council – the Audit and Assurance, Finance and Infrastructure, Nominations and Remuneration committees. The Committee identified no major concerns with members' attendance records during 2022-23, and these were subsequently published in the Financial Statements for that year.
15. During the year the Committee considered attendance monitoring in order to ensure that committee members were fulfilling their roles and to facilitate consideration of committee allocations for 2024-25. This information was made available to the Committee via its SharePoint site and will be regularly updated by the Governance Office to enable early discussion of any concerns or issues.
16. The Committee approved the final Council membership of University committees for 2023-24 at an additional meeting held on 8 September 2023.

17. The Committee considered an initial proposal for lay Council membership of University committees for the following academic year. A final proposal would be submitted to the Committee for approval at the start of 2024/25.

Council and Committee Succession Planning

18. A summary of current Council memberships with projected end of terms and vacancies, alongside the current Council skills matrix, was considered at the February 2024 meeting. It was agreed that a wider external recruitment process would be appropriate for lay member vacancies that arose from 1 August 2025. Members would consider a process timeline at a future meeting.

Council Effectiveness, Induction and Development

19. The Committee considered and implemented a new induction and development programme for Council in 2022-2023, which commenced with a strategic away day for Council and Executive Board members held in September 2022. This was well-received and was repeated in September 2023 and September 2024.
20. The next Council Effectiveness Review would be required to take place in 2025 and require external input.

Ceremonial Governance

21. After consideration of proposals and updates relating to the University's ceremonial governance appointments, the Committee approved a generic role descriptor for Pro-Chancellors. Members further agreed that the establishment of any new Pro-Chancellor role should have a specific focus and title.
22. The Committee recommended that Vijay Sharma be appointed as Pro-Chancellor (Community Engagement), with effect from 1 November 2023. This appointment would be for an initial three year term and was approved by Council at its October 2023 meeting.
23. The importance of the role of Public Orators was discussed in preparing orations for Honorary Degrees. A role descriptor outlining the expectations and duties of Public Orators, and the appointment process, had been developed and was approved by the Committee at its September 2023 meeting.

Corporate Governance Code of Practice, Fit and Proper Persons Assurance, EDI Monitoring

24. At its February 2024 meeting, the Committee noted the annual Fit and Proper Persons procedure assurance report, assuring compliance with requirements of Office for Students registration and of the Finance Act 2010. The assurance given by Nominations Committee was also reported to the Audit and Assurance Committee (AAC) in April 2024 to enable AAC to comply with its full remit.
25. EDI demographic information as disclosed by Council members for 2023-34 is attached at the Appendix.

Legacy Gift Approval

26. The Committee considered a proposed legacy gift of £1.132m, which was subsequently approved by Council at its March 2024 meeting. It was noted that there was a discrepancy between the Schedule of Delegation and the Gift Acceptance Policy. The Schedule of Delegation would be updated to align with the Gift Acceptance Policy; gifts in excess of £1m would be approved by Nominations Committee and would not require onward approval by Council. Such approvals would be reported to meetings of Council.

Appointment of new Full and Associate Members of Court

27. At its February 2024 meeting, the Committee considered a proposal to extend the appointment of all Court members with end dates of 31 December 2023 for a further year, to 31 December 2024. This would also enable a comprehensive review of Court memberships during 2024. Council approved the extensions to membership at its March 2024 meeting.
28. During 2023-24, Council approved recommendations from the Committee for the following individuals to be invited to be appointed as Associate Members of Court, each to serve for a three year term in the first instance.

Name	College/School/Department	Emeritus Professor from
Elizabeth Draper*	Population Health Sciences	1 January 2024
Simon James	School of Archaeology and Ancient History	1 November 2023
Simon Knell*	Museum Studies	1 October 2024

*Invitation accepted (to date)

29. At the time of writing this report the current total membership of Court stood at 99 full members (three of which are currently members of Court in more than one capacity) and 116 Associate members. There is no specified maximum for the total membership number in either category, although the 2015 review of the membership of Court proposed that the total number of Full members should be maintained at 'around 100'. Associate members of Court do not attend the annual meeting.

Action required

30. Council is asked **to note** this report, which will be published in due course on the University's website.

Alison Dubas

Assistant Secretary to Council; Secretary to Nominations Committee

[28 August 2024]

Appendix: Council member EDI demographic information 2023/24 (derived from EDI disclosures only)

Council 2023-24 EDI Demographic					
Disability					
Disclosed	%	Not Disclosed	%	PNTS	%
3	15%	16	80%	1	5%
Ethnicity					
White	%	Minority Ethnic	%	PNTS	%
16	80%	3	15%	1	5%
Religion					
Disclosed	%	No Religion	%	PNTS	%
12	60%	6	20%	2	10%
Sexual Orientation					
Heterosexual/Straight	%	LGB+	%	PNTS	%
17	85%	2	10%	1	5%
Gender					
Male	%	Female	%	PNTS	%
10	50%	10	50%	0	0%
Grand Total					
20					