

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 5 July 2017

Present:

Dr B Towle (Chair)

Mrs J Arthur	Mr A Morgan
Professor P Boyle	Professor P O'Brien
Mr G Dixon	Professor E Raven
Ms M Duke	Dr N Reed
Mr M Hindle	Professor J Schwabe
Mr I Johnson	Dr V Sharma
Mr P Lawson	Ms C Thorogood
Mr D Moore	Mr L Trotman

In attendance: Mr D Hall (Secretary); Mr N Cox (Assistant Secretary); Mr M Riddleston; and Professor P Baker (for the business recorded under minute 17/M60).

Apologies for absence were received from Dr D Lockett, Professor S Macleod, Ms A Moran and Professor M Peel.

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

17/M48 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mr G Dixon declared an interest, as a Trustee of the Students' Union.

17/M49 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Council considered the minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2017. **Council approved** them as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

17/M50 **CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

The Chair:

- a. introduced a preliminary outline of planned business to be spread across the five scheduled meetings of Council in 2017-2018. **Council noted** that this did not represent the sum total of business for the year, only those items that were known about at the present time. The schedule would be adjusted as necessary throughout the year, and the Nominations Committee would take a close interest in ensuring that all topics of key interest to Council were covered appropriately;
- b. reflected on the Council/ULT Awayday held on 8 June 2017 at the Brookfield site. **Council agreed** that it had been a very well structured and organised event, with an appropriate range and number of topics, and a very high standard of presentations. Lay members particularly welcomed the opportunity to meet informally with, and hear about the work of, those members of ULT who were not on Council.

17/M51 **PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BUSINESS**

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

- i. the University's 'Silver' award in the TEF. The award outcomes for universities across the sector had been somewhat mixed and surprising, and some institutions were believed to be preparing to submit appeals. There were no plans for Leicester to appeal or resubmit at this stage;
- ii. in the aftermath of the 2017 General Election result, the government was coming under increasing pressure to reconsider the current HE fees regime. Backtracking on tuition fees still seemed highly unlikely, but some movement on maintenance fees/grants was regarded as a possible area where some flexibility might be shown;
- iii. student recruitment at the University's Dalian campus in China seemed to be going very well;
- iv. the appointment of Nicola Dandridge, the current chief executive of Universities UK and a strong advocate for international students, as the inaugural chief executive of England's newly established Office for Students, had been very positively received by the sector.

17/M52 **COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW**

Council received the report of the external review of Council's effectiveness, conducted by staff from Lancaster University in May 2017.

Council agreed that responsibility for examining the various detailed recommendations and suggestions arising from the review, and for bringing back proposed responses/actions for consideration by Council, would rest with the Nominations Committee. The aim would be for all agreed changes to be fully implemented from 1 August 2018.

The Chair indicated that any members of Council with a particular interest in this area, who were not members of the Nominations Committee, would be welcome to contribute to the Committee's deliberations on this matter, and to attend any relevant meetings.

Mr Trotman asked for it to be recorded that he did not support Recommendation 9 in the report, which proposed that the post of Chair of the Alumni Association be discontinued as one of the *ex-officio* positions on Council.

17/M53 **SENATE**

Council considered the report of a meeting of Senate held on 28 June 2017.

Council approved the creation of a new School of Allied Health Professions and **noted** accompanying amendments to the departmental structure within the College of Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology. These developments were further explained and expanded upon in the Head of College's presentation under 17/M60.

17/M54 **APPOINTMENT OF NEW LAY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL AND COURT**

Council considered a report and recommendations of the Nominations Committee regarding lay appointments to Council and Court.

Council approved:

- a. the following appointments to Council, each for an initial term of 3-years effective from 1 August 2017:

Dame Janet Finch
Ms Cathy Ellis

Council noted that the appointment of Ms Ellis was amongst the constituency of members appointed to Council by Court and therefore formally required final approval by Court, to be obtained by correspondence. The appointment of Janet Finch was a direct appointment by Council;

- b. exceptionally, the extension of the appointment of Dr Dominic Lockett to serve on Council until 31 July 2018, five months beyond the normal maximum service limit of nine consecutive years;
- c. the appointment of Dr Sarah Furness to serve as a Full Member of Court, until 31 December 2020 in the first instance.

17/M55 **LAY APPOINTMENTS TO UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES AND GROUPS FOR 2017-2018**

Council received details of intended lay appointments to University committees and groups for 2017-2018, as determined by the Nominations Committee on behalf of Council. **Council noted** that one additional lay position had been added to the constitution of the Finance Committee.

The Chair indicated that if any lay members had any issues or queries regarding the committee(s) to which they had been appointed, they should contact her as soon as possible after the meeting.

17/M56 **ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTAL REVIEWS**

Council received details of a revised approach to be taken by the University for the future conduct of its regular reviews of academic schools and departments, in which lay members of Council had been involved (as review panel members) for many years.

Council noted that the revised approach would extend the duration of the reviews from one day to two days. However, lay members would continue to be required to attend just the first day of each review (in order to satisfy quality assurance processes), with the option to attend the second day if their schedules and other commitments allowed, or to share any observations with the review panel chair.

17/M57 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE**

Council received and noted a report of a meeting of the Equality and Diversity Committee held on 24 May 2017.

17/M58 **HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Council received and noted a report of a meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on 5 June 2017.

17/M59 **STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Council received a report of a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Alumni Association held on 5 June 2017. With regard to the current activities of the Development and Alumni Relations Office, **Council noted** that consideration was being given as to how to ensure that an appropriate distinction and balance was maintained between alumni engagement in its widest sense, and specific fundraising activities targeted at alumni.

17/M60 **COLLEGE OF MEDICINE, BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES AND PSYCHOLOGY**

Council received a wide ranging and comprehensive presentation from the Head of the College of Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology, Professor Philip Baker, on current developments, achievements and challenges within the College. These spanned the full range of teaching, research, enterprise and international activities.

Council noted that, in most aspects of the College's academic mission, 2016-17 had been a highly successful year, with a particularly outstanding performance in research awards (more than doubling in value to £29m) and philanthropy, which needed to be sustained. On the teaching side, wide ranging measures were being taken to expand and diversify the teaching portfolio, including the creation of a new School of Allied Health Professions; and on enterprise there was determination to take advantage of the Life Sciences Opportunities Zone at Charnwood to access the government's new Midlands Engine Investment Fund. The Head of College indicated that he was particularly keen for lay members to visit the Charnwood site to see the potential it offered and to suggest how this might be exploited to best effect.

One of the most pressing challenges facing the College was to address the failing NSS performance in medicine, which had not improved in recent years. A package of remedial actions was now in place, but the nature of the NSS process meant that sustained improvements could only be achieved and delivered over time, there were no 'quick wins'.

Council noted that the College was likely to adopt a new and more succinct title, to more clearly convey its strategic focus on 'life sciences'.

17/M61 **RESEARCH INTEGRITY 2017 ANNUAL REPORT**

Council considered the 2017 annual statement on research integrity, as required under the national *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*.

Council noted the work undertaken by the Research Ethics and Integrity Training Group, and the full range of other actions taken across the University to support and strengthen the understanding and application of research integrity issues across the institution.

17/M62 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR MARK THOMPSON**

Council expressed its sadness at the death of Emeritus Professor Mark Thompson on 13 June 2017. A graduate of the University, he was a Professor of Law at Leicester from 1996 and Head of Department for Law between 1999 and 2000. He also held the role of Pro-Vice-Chancellor from 2004 and then Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor from 2007 to 2015.

17/M63 **CONGRATULATIONS**

Council congratulated Mehmooda Duke on her recent appointment as a Deputy Lieutenant of Leicestershire.

17/M64 **COURTESIES TO RETIRING MEMBERS**

Council expressed its appreciation to the following individuals, who would be standing down as members of Council on 31 July 2017:

Mr Peter Lawson (after four years in the role)

Dr Neville Reed (after nine years in the role)

Council recorded in particular the contribution made by Mr Lawson and Dr Reed to the work of the Council and its committees during their terms as lay members of Council, and extended to them its very best wishes for the future.

Council also noted that Mr Trotman did not intend to serve for a further term as Chair of the Alumni Association and would therefore stand down from Council as soon as his successor was appointed, probably in autumn 2017. Council recorded its appreciation for Mr Trotman's contribution to the work of both the Council and the Alumni Association.

17/M65 **DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Council noted the dates and times of Council meetings in 2017-18:

Monday 25 September 2017 at 4pm

Wednesday 22 November 2017 at 4pm (dinner with lay members afterwards)

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 45 minutes