UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
Thursday, 24 March 2022

CONFIRMED MINUTES

Author: Ms Alison Jones, University Secretary, 5 April 2022

Present: Mr Jonathan Thornton (Chair), Mr Bernard Ainsworth, Mr Delroy Beverley, Professor Hazel Bryan, Mr Robert Cox, Professor Bob Cryan, Mr Mark Fisher, Mrs Virginia Lloyd, Ms Tonya Magennis, Reverend Professor Jessica Malay, Mr Krish Pilicudale, Baroness Kathryn Pinnock, Professor Isobel Pollock-Hulf, Miss Natalie Stuart, Professor Tim Thornton

In attendance: Mrs Kim Ansell (Advance HE), Dr Laura Chambers, Mrs Lydia Devenny, Mr Tim Hosker, Ms Alison Jones, Professor Jane Owen-Lynch

Apologies: Mr Ajaz Ahmed, Mr Rhys Davies

PRELIMINARY ITEMS

The Chair welcomed Mrs Kim Ansell from Advance HE who was observing the meeting as part of the University’s external review of governance effectiveness. The Chair also welcomed Mrs Lydia Devenny to her first meeting of University Council.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1.1 Baroness Kathryn Pinnock declared a declaration of interest in respect of item 15 (Southgate Development) due to her position on Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council.

2. MAJOR ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Market Review

2.1 The Dean of Education and Professional Development provided members with an overview of the recent Government Market Review of Initial Teacher Training, and highlighted the following:

- The new framework for Early Career training and national teaching professional qualifications. This framework removed the automatic eligibility of higher education institutions (HEIs) to deliver these qualifications, meaning that each HE provider now had to apply for accreditation to deliver these programmes.
- A new government-led Institute for Teaching had been established with degree-awarding powers, thus competing against other HEIs.
- Other recommendations focusing on monitoring the content, sequencing, quality and delivery of all aspects of the training curriculum, ensuring consistency across partnerships and between providers, and providing clarity to trainees about the graduate employment market.
- A review of placements and the mentoring received by trainees.
- Increased frequency of Ofsted inspections, which would move to every three years.
Lifelong learning had not been included in this review exercise, but it was anticipated that this would be subject to review in the near future.

2.2 Members observed the impact of the market review on placement management and mentoring, noting that the School was undertaking a cost modelling exercise to monitor the effect of a more resource-intensive model.

2.3 The Dean of Education and Professional Development confirmed that the University of Huddersfield had submitted its bid to continue delivering initial teacher training, noting the strategic and reputational risks if accreditation was not granted. Members considered the impact that the changes had already had on the existing partnership with local providers, including the loss of several partners, including SEND delivery and increased international recruitment. It was emphasised that University-led professional development was still viewed as exceptionally high quality nationally due to its links to educational research and pedagogic practice, level of resources, and support, and that graduate employment prospects remained strong.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Resolved: that the minutes of and confidential supplement for the meeting held on 24 November be accepted as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 There were no matters arising.

5. CHAIR’S BUSINESS

5.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, noting that the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions by the UK government would allow for the planning of face-to-face meetings, engagement with various areas of the University, and social events for Council members. The University Secretary confirmed that planning was already underway for these activities, and members would receive further details in due course.

5.2 The Chair congratulated Miss Natalie Stuart on her success on being awarded a place on the Ernst and Young Graduate Scheme, and Mr Mark Fisher on his recent appointment to Chief Executive of NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

6. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS

6.1 The Vice-Chancellor updated members on a wide range of news from around the University, including:

- A special prize-giving event had been held at St James' Palace, London to award the University's third Queen's Anniversary Prize. The award was given to the University's Centre for Precision Technologies for its innovative research.
➢ The opening of a new Huddersfield AI Transport Research Centre at the 3M BIC, working in collaboration with Kirklees Council’s traffic control team to develop smart city technology solutions.
➢ The University’s Institute of Railway Research (IRR) will work with DB Cargo UK to deliver the ERDF LCR Smart Rolling Stock Maintenance Research Facility.
➢ The IRR had also received a £1m upgrade for the UK’s only full-size railway bogie test rig.
➢ The Knowledge Transfer Partnership between the University and Paxman Scalp Cooling will focus on developing cooling systems to aid with chemotherapy side effects.
➢ Funding had been awarded from the UK Community Renewal Fund for the Huddersfield Business School to work in collaboration with Wakefield Council and Spectrum People to help local businesses recover from the pandemic.
➢ The University recently hosted the first online academic policy engagement roundtable on the safety of women and girls.
➢ A 12-month £50k project was underway with Brarista to assess how AI can improve their online bra fitting service.
➢ 3D printed snow scenes created by the 3M BIC were used as part of the BBC’s promotional video for the 2022 Winter Olympics.
➢ Researchers at the University used ancient DNA to show that the Orkney Islands experienced large-scale female immigration during the Early Bronze Age.
➢ The University launched its own Apprenticeship Awards as part of National Apprenticeship Week.
➢ The University had been awarded the Bronze Engage Watermark from the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement.
➢ Professor Heather Clark’s biography of Sylvia Plath, Red Comet, had been named one of the New York Times’ 10 Best Books of 2021.
➢ Professor Grigoris Antoniou has been elected Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering.
➢ Huddersfield Business School had been awarded the Small Business Charter.
➢ Music student Tommy Tynan won the position of principal tuba player with the widely acclaimed Welsh brass band, The Cory Band.

6.2 The Vice-Chancellor went on to brief members on the recently published Government response to the Augar review, outlining the decisions made and the potential impact on the University and on matters which were currently subject to consultation. The Government had decided the following:

- To change student loan financing and repayment thresholds and timescales
- To freeze tuition fees at the current level until 2024-25
- To introduce some specific new areas of funding
- To reject a move to Post-Qualifications Admissions.

6.3 Members queried the impact such outcomes would have on the University’s financial planning. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that various scenarios had been mapped out according to the growth of specific income streams (such as international recruitment), but uncertainty remained in the sector due to additional national pressures such as increasing inflation. It was noted that the University’s Key Performance Indicator linked to annual fee-income growth may require revision in view of the prospective changes outlined.
6.4 Members noted that the deadline to respond to the consultations (on student number controls, student finance, minimum eligibility requirements, the future of foundation years, eligibility criteria for state scholarships, and growing levels 4 and 5 provision) was May 2022, and the draft University budget for the next academic year would be presented at the July meeting of Council. The final outcomes of the Government’s consultations were expected to be published in the autumn, prior to the University’s budget being finalised at Council’s November meeting. Members agreed that the Council Strategy Day in October should consider these matters in further detail.

6.5 The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University had suspended research and collaboration activity with Russian universities in line with Universities UK advice. Students and staff from both Russia and Ukraine had been contacted by the University with offers of support.

7. UNIVERSITY SECRETARY’S BUSINESS

7.1 The University Secretary provided a brief summary of the report, highlighting that a new report template had been adopted. Members were asked to provide feedback on the new report format outside of the meeting.

7.2 Members were also briefed on a range of governance matters which had been considered by the Governance and Membership Committee at its meeting on 15 February 2022, including:

➢ A progress update on the external review of governance effectiveness. The final report would be presented to Council at its next meeting.
➢ A recommendation to approve the revised Articles of Association for the Students’ Union.
➢ A recommendation to formally extend the terms of office for several Council members. It was noted that Governance and Membership Committee had considered the extensions to membership in the context of the Skills Matrix and diversity. All concerned had been contacted by the University Secretary, and had confirmed that they were willing to continue on University Council, should this be approved.
➢ The application of the University Seal since the last meeting.

7.3 Following scrutiny, University Council approved the amendments to the Articles of Association for the Students’ Union.

7.4 In response to member queries, the University Secretary confirmed the maximum length of time that a member could serve on Council, outlining the different conditions for Committee Chairs. It was confirmed that additional members could be elected pending a formal nomination process.

7.5 Members of the Council whose term of office was under consideration left the meeting as their membership was discussed (with the Vice-Chair of Council assuming the role of Chair where required), and returned when notified to do so. Following detailed consideration, members resolved to approve the following appointments with effect from 1 August 2022 for a further three-year term of office:
the re-appointment of Mr Jonathan Thornton as Chair of Council
for a further three years, and for him to retain his respective
council appointments;
the re-appointment of Baroness Kathryn Pinnock as Vice-Chair of
Council for a further three years, and for her to retain her respective
council appointments;
the re-appointment of Mr Bernard Ainsworth, Mr Rhys Davies and
Ms Tonya Magennis as external members of Council for a further
three years, and for them to retain their respective council
appointments;
the re-appointment of Mr Rob Kelly as a co-opted member of Audit
Committee for a further three years.

INSPIRING:

8. STUDENTS’ UNION REPORT

8.1 The Students’ Union President updated members on a range of SU
activities, including:

- A wide range of student engagement activity, including the
  successful Welcome #2 week in January that welcomed both new
  and returning students to campus via a range of online and in-person
  events, and other events and activities held throughout the
  semester.
- Increased participation in sports clubs and societies, with Varsity
  having taken place on 20-23 March at the University of Bradford.
- The refurbishment of the Students’ Union shop, and the introduction
  of self-service check-outs.
- A mid-point review of the Union’s Strategic Plan, with revisions
  agreed.
- The outcomes of the annual elections for the Union’s Sabbatical
  Officers. A report on the conduct of the elections would be
  considered at the June meeting of Governance and Membership
  Committee.

8.2 Members received an update on the cost of living and its impact on student
finances, and the subsequent impact on the overall student experience. It
was noted that accommodation expenses (including utility bills) varied
across suppliers and landlords, and members agreed there was further
scope for the University and the Students’ Union to collaborate closely to
provide a range of support mechanisms.

8.3 The Chair congratulated Miss Natalie Stuart on her leadership as the
outgoing Students’ Union President, and the Sabbatical Officers for their
efforts in increasing student engagement with SU activities. Members
recommended that a further report on the cost of living crisis and its impact
on students should be brought forward to a future meeting of Council.

9. UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF STUDENTS

9.1 The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Teaching and Learning, summarised recent
consultations from the Office for Students (OfS) that had focused on three
aspects of teaching and learning policy, namely metrics (student outcome
and experience indicators), condition B3 of Registration for HE providers
(progression linked to employment), and the Teaching Excellence
Framework. The University had made strong representations in response to
each of these consultations, particularly in the context of progression data where there were significant regional variations in employment markets. The report was noted by members.

10. APPRENTICESHIP DELIVERY

10.1 Members received the report on apprenticeship delivery at the University, noting the internal audit and quality assurance work that had been undertaken during the current academic year. Council noted that the University had recently been subject to an Ofsted inspection in this area, and whilst the final report had yet to be received, early indicators of the final outcomes were positive. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor acknowledged the support of members of Audit Committee and the institution’s internal auditors in advance of the Ofsted inspection, and also thanked the Director of Apprenticeship for his preparatory work.

INTERNATIONAL:

11. INTERNATIONAL APPLICATIONS, ENROLMENTS AND RETENTION

11.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor provided members with a report on international applications and enrolment figures.

11.2 Members noted the report, and congratulated the efforts of staff in Schools, the International Office and overseas partners.

The following item was taken out of order.

14. HOME APPLICATIONS, ENROLMENTS AND RETENTION

14.1 Council members were briefed on the latest applications, enrolments and retention figures for Home students.

INNOVATIVE:

12. UPDATE ON RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE ACTIVITY

12.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor briefed members on recent research, innovation and knowledge exchange activity, including:

- The completion of new teaching and research facilities in T1/T2 for
the School of Computing and Engineering.

- Enhancements to laboratories for the Institute of Railway Research (IRR), and a visit from the Minister of State for Transport to launch the new IRR facilities.
- An extension to the Government’s guarantee to protect Horizon Europe funding.

13. UPDATE ON KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PARTNERSHIPS

13.1 Members received an update on knowledge transfer partnership (KTP) activity for the previous academic year from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Progress against stated targets had been lower than anticipated as a result of the pandemic, and the report included the steps that would be taken to enhance activity over the forthcoming year, including greater benchmarking of competitor activity and designated training for selected staff. Members noted the targets for February 2023 for each School.

GROWTH AND EFFICIENCY:

15. SOUTHGATE DEVELOPMENT

15.1 The Vice-Chancellor introduced the paper presented by the University’s Senior Executive’s preferred option for moving forward highlighted. The report also included a request to approve the appointment of BAM Construction at a fixed cost to carry out tendering works for the next phase of construction.

15.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported on the latest national and local trends in applications data for Nursing programmes, noting that demand for these graduates remained high. Furthermore, the number of 18-year-olds applying to study at university nationally was expected to increase over time, and international applications to University of Huddersfield programmes had also risen. A number of planned innovation developments would also situate the Southgate campus and its facilities as an essential part of regional growth within the West Yorkshire Economic Recovery Plan.

15.3 Council members considered the options outlined in the business case.

15.4

Mrs Virginia Lloyd and Mr Delroy Beverley left the meeting.
16. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

16.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor presented the revised Corporate Risk Register, which had been discussed extensively and challenged by both the Senior Leadership Team and by Audit Committee. Members were informed of the proposed revisions made to the Inspiring and Growth and Efficiency themes of the Register, and resolved to approve the 2022 Risk Register as recommended by Audit Committee.

Professor Isobel Pollock-Hulf left the meeting. University Council was no longer quorate after this point.

17. **FINANCIAL REPORT**

17.1 The Director of Finance presented the latest set of management accounts for the period to 31 January 2022 (as received at Estates and Finance Committee on 4 March 2022) and provided members with an update on the University’s financial performance. The main points included:

Members welcomed the report and congratulated the Executive on its strong financial performance to date.

**OTHER COUNCIL MATTERS:**

18. **COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE**

18.1 Members received the schedule for Council and its Committee meetings for the 2022/23 academic year.

19. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

19.1 The minutes of the following meetings were noted:

Audit Committee, 27 January and 3 March 2022
Estates and Finance Committee, 4 March 2022
Governance and Membership Committee, 15 February 2022
A summary of the Senate meeting held on 9 March 2022.

Members noted that representatives from the University’s newly-appointed external auditors KPMG had been in attendance at the March meeting of Audit Committee.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

20. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

20.1 Members queried whether Council should receive matters relating to staffing (as associated with the Strategy Map) more frequently. The University Secretary confirmed that this had been considered as part of a recent internal audit and as part of the external review of governance effectiveness.
21. **AVAILABILITY OF AGENDA, PAPERS AND MINUTES**

21.1 **Resolved:** to exclude the following papers from the open version under Standing order 11.8.

- Agenda item 3  Minutes of the last meeting (confidential supplement only)  UC_2022_03_24_P3
- Agenda item 10  Apprenticeship Delivery  UC_2022_03_24_P10
- Agenda item 11  International, Applications, Enrolments and Retention  UC_2022_03_24_P11
- Agenda item 12  Update on Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Activity  UC_2022_03_24_P12
- Agenda item 13  Update on Knowledge Transfer Partnerships  UC_2022_03_24_P13
- Agenda item 14  Home Applications, Enrolments and Retention  UC_2022_03_24_P14
- Agenda item 15  Southgate Development  UC_2022_03_24_P15
- Agenda item 16  Risk Management  UC_2022_03_24_P16
- Agenda item 17  Financial Report  UC_2022_03_24_P17
- Agenda item 19  Committee minutes (confidential supplements only)  UC_2022_03_24_P19

22. **DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Thursday 7 July 2022, 13:00 (venue tbc)

(* = Further details in the Confidential Supplement to these minutes, excluded under Standing Order 11.8)