

Confidential

## COUNCIL

11 February 2020 at 14:00

Oak 1 and 2

## MINUTES

*Sections marked Commercial in Confidence are claimed as exempt from publication under Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act on the grounds of commercial sensitivity.*

<b>Members:</b>	Chair – External member	Mr Michael Queen
	Joint Vice-Chair – External member	*Mr Vib Baxi
	Joint Vice-Chair - External member	Ms Rachel Hubbard
	Treasurer - External member	Vacant
	President & Vice-Chancellor	Prof Max Lu
	Provost & Executive Vice-President	Prof Michael Kearney
	Vice-Provost, Education	Prof Osama Khan
	Vice-Provost, Research & Innovation	Prof David Sampson
	Chief Operating Officer	Ms Anne Poulson
	Vice President, External Engagement	Mr Patrick Degg
	President, Students' Union	Ms Gemma Paine
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Esat Alpay
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Helen Griffiths
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Amelia Hadfield
	External member	*Mr Elliot Antrobus-Holder
	External member	Dr Tony Bragg
	External member	Ms Judith Eden
	External member	Mr Charlie Geffen
	External member	Dr Mike Goodfellow
	External member	*Mr Peter Maskell
	External member	Ms Pam Powell
	External member	Ms Jan Sawkins
	External member	Mr Nick Standen

\*denotes member unable to attend

**In attendance:** Ms Ros Allen, Head of Governance Services  
Ms Martine Carter, Director of Strategy and Executive Officer  
Mr Phil Grainge, Chief Financial Officer  
Ms Sarah Litchfield, University Secretary & Legal Counsel

**By invitation:** Ms Ajay Ajmobi, VP Voice, USSU (minute 20/010)  
Mr Will Davies, Director of HR (minute 20/015)  
Ms Lucy Evans, Chief Student Officer (minute 20/015)  
Mr Matt Purcell, Director of Health and Safety (minute 20/016)  
Mr Stephen Wells, Director of Estates, Facilities & Commercial Services (minute 20/016)

## **A INTRODUCTORY ITEMS**

### **20/001 Preliminary items**

- .1 The Chair welcomed Osama Khan to his first Council meeting.

### **20/002 Apologies**

- .1 Received from Elliot Antrobus-Holder, Vib Baxi and Peter Maskell.

### **20/003 Declarations of Interest**

- .1 None

### **20/004 Minutes**

- .1 The minutes of the meeting held 25 November 2019 were **adopted**.

### **20/005 Matters Arising**

- .1 The updated actions log was **noted**. It was noted that options for the ERP HR system were being evaluated and a paper would come to Council or a subcommittee in due course.
- .2 Council **ratified** the Chair's approval of the Financial table for OfS submission.

### **20/006 Vice-Chancellor's Report**

- .1 Council noted an update on the Corona virus. A University Silver command team was meeting daily and precautionary measures were in place. The University was monitoring the situation for students and staff in China or planning to travel to China and was providing advice as required. Council would continue to be kept informed.
- .2 A number of positive national developments around academic activities were noted, in particular a new Global Talent visa and £300m additional funding for Mathematics, largely for scholarships and research.
- .3 If additional medical school places were to be announced the University would need to consider whether it wished to resubmit its application with a revised business case.
- .4 It was noted that under Section 4. Research Awards, the £119k from the National Institute of Health had been received by Dr Richard Wu.

## **B ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR APPROVAL**

### **20/007 Recommendations from Nominations Committee**

- .1 Council **approved** the recommendations as follows:
- The appointment of Nigel Jones to Council and Audit and Assurance Committee
  - The appointment of Pam Jestico to Council and to Finance Committee when a place becomes available.

- .2 Council **ratified** the decision taken electronically to extend of the appointment of Tony Bragg by one year to 31 January 2021.
- .3 Council formally **approved** Judith Eden's appointment to Audit and Assurance Committee. It was noted that an induction session would be set up for new members to the Committee.
- .4 Council received an update on the recruitment of a new University Treasurer.

**20/008 Emeritus Reader appointment**

- .1 Council **approved** the recommendation for Dr Philip Hancock to be made Emeritus Reader.

**20/009 November Awayday follow up**

- .1 Council received an update on progress against the key areas to work on identified at the November 'awayday' session. The March follow-up event will review progress in more detail. It was agreed that one of the areas for discussion in March would be how the University should position itself in the future in terms of entrance tariff and teaching style.

**20/010 BAME attainment gap**

- .1 The Students' Union VP Voice attended to present with the University VP Education.
- .2 Council recognised that dealing with the attainment gap was a high priority for the University and viewed data on degree progression and outcomes by ethnicity, gender and entry qualification. Challenging targets for the reduction of the attainment gaps had been set.
- .3 There was discussion of the wider gap between the attainment of black and white BTech students, than A 'level students. It was recognised that there were wider issues with BTechs which could make the transition to a traditional university system more challenging for students.
- .4 It was noted that there was a nationwide BAME attainment gap, but some universities (notably King's College, Kingston, Derby and Hertfordshire) appeared to have made good progress to narrow the gap.
- .5 Council noted the activity that had been led by the Students' Union VP Voice to further investigate BAME students' experience of academic life, wellbeing, sense of belonging and their student voice. It was recognised that there were wider issues than just attainment to be further investigated, including diversity of teaching and learning, how reports of racism and discrimination were dealt with, and focused support for BAME students. Things that were already in place were noted:
- University had a zero-tolerance policy towards all abuse.
  - The new Report and Support tool enabled anonymous reporting of issues.
  - An 'In conversation with the VC' on what the University was doing to deal with the BAME attainment gap was planned for 10 March.
  - Two poster campaigns were planned.
  - An academic in the Department of HE was reviewing the quantitative data.
  - A peer mentoring scheme was in place for certain students, with mentors of a similar background studying the same subject.
- .6 Council thanked Ajay Ajmobi and Osama Khan for a thought provoking and useful

presentation and asked for a regular update on progress against the action plan. Ajay Ajmobi would forward specific suggestions from students.

#### **20/011 NSS/Student experience report**

- .1 Council noted the update on the Student Experience Action plan. Osama Khan would shortly be taking over the lead in this area as part of his VP Education portfolio.
- .2 The improvements to student satisfaction emerging from the Pulse survey were welcomed. It was, however, noted that final year students appeared to feel less part of the University community than first year students, perhaps due to a proportion of final years having just returned from a year's study or work placement.
- .3 Data from the I-Grad survey of Level 4 and 5 students was being processed and would be reported to Council in due course.
- .4 There was discussion of the issue of feedback and assessment as this remained an issue for students at Surrey and nationally. Council noted the progress highlighted in the paper and the continuing challenges. The launch of the MySurrey app will give students access to a number of systems and services that are important in their day-to-day lives at Surrey, and future technological developments will allow the University to manage timely turnaround of assessment and feedback.

#### **20/012 2018/19 Access and Participation Annual Monitoring Return**

- .1 Council noted the 2018/19 Annual Monitoring Return. It was noted that the OfS defined 'progression' as moving from study into work and that this was a very different definition to that understood by most in the University sector.
- .2 The most significant challenge in the plan was to reduce the attainment gap and activity and investment would be reprioritised to focus on this area. The key attainment gap was BAME, but there were smaller gaps arising from social mobility issues.
- .3 Council **approved** the monitoring return for submission to the OfS.

#### **20/013 Annual Corporate Risk Management and Risk Appetite Statement**

- .1 Council **approved** the Risk Appetite statement.
- .2 Council noted the updated Risk Register, noting that many of the new risk level post mitigating actions would not be updated until actions were resourced through the Arnaud Planning Round.
- .3 It was **agreed** that an update on the University's preparation and procedures for a major incident on campus would come to Council.  
**Action: AP**
- .4 A report on the University's response to the OfS requirements to be informed of 'reportable incidents' would come to May Council.  
**Action: SL**

#### **20/014 Health and Safety**

- .1 The Director of H&S and the Director of Estates, Facilities and Commercial Services joined the meeting to present the item.
- .2 Council **noted** the Annual Health and Safety Report and there was further discussion on assurance matters, the reporting of near misses, 'sharps' injuries, the multi-skills requirements on the Security team and the RIDDOR rate target.
- .3 Council **noted** the update on Fire Safety. It was noted that the University was concluding an audit of the fire safety management and maintenance of its premises portfolio, which incorporates the compliance review recently requested by the Secretary of State. The audit would be independently scrutinised by a legal firm. The key risks were around maintaining fire compartmentalisation, how buildings were managed and ensuring the appropriate resources in terms of staff, time and money were in place. The residences were all low-rise and had a rigorous system of fire drills. The audit and associated action plan establish a framework for formalising the University's fire risk management system.
- .4 Council **noted** the Health and Safety Report.

#### **20/015 Annual student and staff welfare reports**

- .1 The Director of HR and the Chief Student Officer joined the meeting for the discussion of the item.
- .2 Council **noted** the report on student welfare. The following additional points were noted:
  - It would be useful to have the Report and Support data broken down by category in future reports, when there was enough data to do so.
  - The VC and CSO had been in discussion with Guildowns, the on-campus medical practice, about lifting the cap that is currently imposed on any new registration. This year, new students have been able to register with other Guildford practices, and will continue to be helped to do so.
  - The services need to continue to develop so that they can be proactive as well as reactive. It was key to provide early intervention where there were concerns about student welfare and catch any issues of worry or concern before they escalated into bigger problems. The period of transition from school to university was a key time when students may need more support, and this was especially pertinent throughout a students' first year at University. Student support needed to extend to pre-enrolment to facilitate this transition.Council expressed its gratitude to the Chief Student Officer for her hard work and significant contribution over the previous year.
- .3 Council **noted** the report on staff welfare. The following additional points were noted:
  - It was anticipated that all staff would be offered a free flu jab before next winter.
  - Executive Board had signed off a number of initiatives focused on the key priorities to improve the staff experience. These included leadership training, a review of the promotions process and celebrating success in culture and engagement.
- .4 Future reports to Council would focus on an overall Surrey experience, rather than staff and student experience separately.

#### **20/016 Campaign**

- .1 Council received a presentation from the VP External Engagement on Campaign 2020, a University-wide public fundraising campaign to secure philanthropic support for core areas of activity, advance the University of Surrey strategically and raise its profile both nationally and internationally.
- .2 It was noted that reports on funds raised, in accordance with standard sector rules and rationale, included funds pledged, but not legacy donations. Non-fulfilled pledges were typically a very small proportion of philanthropic income received.
- .3 A new Naming Policy had recently been approved, governing the basis on which the University would consider recognising philanthropic support through the naming of buildings, parts of buildings and smaller items such as lecture theatre chairs.
- .4 Volunteer hours will be an important part of campaign goals and included activities such as giving talks, attending alumni events and acting as mentors.

**20/017 Publishing Council minutes on the University external website**

- .1 Council **approved** the proposal to publish Council minutes on the University external website.
- .2 After discussion of the pros and cons of the different options for the form the minutes should take, it was **agreed** to produce minutes that would be, as far as possible, fit for publishing without amendment. Where absolutely necessary, confidential information could be included in the minutes for Council and redacted in the web version. It was **agreed** that the minutes of today's meeting would be the first set to be published.
- .3 It was noted that major project decision histories were included in the Document Library on Convene for all Council members to access. To enable members to track Council discussion of other items, the Council Cycle of Business would be added to Convene.

**Action: RA**

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**C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

- 20/018 Latest student numbers**  
Council **noted** the report.
- 20/019 OfS conditions matrix**  
Council **noted** the report.
- 20/020 Annual TRAC and TRAC-T return**  
Council **noted** the report.
- 20/021 Blackwell Park**  
Council **noted** the report.
- 20/022 Summary minutes of sub committees**  
Council **noted** the report.

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**D CLOSING ITEMS**

- 20/023 Any Other Business**  
None

**20/024 Dates of next meetings**

2020

25 March (planning away day)

7 May

16 July

26 November (meeting plus strategy away day)

**Mr Michael Queen  
Chair**