

**COUNCIL**  
**8 February 2023 at 2pm**  
**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 Charlie Geffen
	Joint Vice-Chair – External member	Mr Vib Baxi
	Joint Vice-Chair - External member	Ms Rachel Hubbard
	Treasurer - External member	Mr Robert Napier
	President & Vice-Chancellor	Prof Max Lu
	Provost & Executive Vice-President	Prof Tim Dunne
	Chief Operating Officer	Mr Andy Chalklin
	President, Students' Union	Ms Diana Dakik
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Esat Alpay
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Karen Bullock
	Member elected by Senate	Dr Daniel Horton
	External member	Mr Elliot Antrobus-Holder
	External member	Prof Julia Buckingham
	External member	Ms Judith Eden
	External member	Ms Pam Jestico
	External member	Mr Nigel Jones
	External member	Ms Pam Powell
	External member	Sir Philip Rutnam

**In attendance:** Ms Ros Allen, Head of Governance Services  
Ms Martine Carter, Vice-President Strategy, Planning & Performance  
Mr Phil Grainge, Chief Financial Officer  
Ms Sarah Litchfield, University Secretary & Legal Counsel

**By invitation:** Mr Will Davies, Chief People Officer (23/012)  
Mr Patrick Degg, Vice-President External Engagement (23/013)

**A INTRODUCTORY ITEMS**

**23/001 Preliminaries**

- .1 There were apologies from Elliot Antrobus-Holder and Karen Bullock.
- .2 Sir Philip Rutnam was welcomed to his first Council meeting.

**23/002 Declarations of Interest**

- .1 None

**23/003 Minutes**

- .1 Council **approved** the minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 November 2022 for publication. Council **approved** the minutes of the Council/EB Awayday held on 25 November 2022, but not for publication.

**23/004 Matters Arising**

- .1 The updated actions log was **noted**.
- .2 It was noted that all the actions were complete or for a later meeting.

**23/005 Chair's Items**

- .1 Council noted the following:
- Approval of Philip Rutnam as a new lay Council member by Convene resolution on 25 January 2023.
  - Approval of Council sub-committee lay memberships by Convene resolution on 30 January 2023.
  - Chair's approval to minor amendment to the Innovate Surrey Ltd Governance Agreement to enable Council to remove any director (to reflect the articles).
  - Chair's approval for the VC to sign resolutions relating to subsidiaries on behalf of the University, where these have been approved by Council
- .2 It was noted that the Annual Corporate Risk Management report would come to the March meeting.

**23/006 Vice-Chancellor's Report and Performance Monitoring**

- .1 The VC presented the report.
- .2 It was noted that Lifelong learning entitlement legislation currently under government consideration would have an impact on HE and FE, so is being closely watched. The VC has taken part in a very productive, government-led discussion with universities and leaders of industry on commercialisation, out of which an innovation collaboration forum is proposed.
- .3 The following additional points were noted on developments at Surrey:
- .3.1 Cost-of-living issues and strikes are impacting the whole sector. There are 18 strike days planned over the next few months. The University has a learning recovery plan to minimise the impact on students. There was discussion of the impact on staff pay of participating in a strike or action short of a strike.
  - .3.2 The excellent TEF submission was noted.
  - .3.3 The worsening of the academic: non-academic staff ratio is primarily due to fewer research assistants and an increase in non-academic staff. Measures have now been put in place to further control non-academic staff recruitment.
- .4 The following points were discussed with respect to student recruitment:
- .4.1 The Semester 2 starts are currently registering; based on those that have completed the pre-arrival processes there is confidence that the stretch target will be achieved, and likely exceeded.
  - .4.2 Surrey is performing ahead of the sector average in terms of increases to UG applications but currently short of the numbers required to meet targets. The sector as a whole saw an

unexpected decline year on year in applications, despite the demographic expansion. It is hypothesised that this is linked to cost-of-living concerns and the affordability of study. There are still opportunities to increase applications, particularly from overseas students.

- .5 Noting that it had been announced that the Chief Financial Officer was leaving at the end of April after seven years at Surrey, the VC took the opportunity to formally thank him for his contribution to Surrey. The University is starting the process of identifying his successor.

### **23/007 Strategy Update and November Awayday Follow Up**

- .1 Martine Carter presented the report.
- .2 It was recognised that the main opportunity for transformation lies in education rather than research; with growth in scale of teaching delivery enabling more research to be supported. There was discussion of innovative education and learning from international developments, feasibility and viability, the need for strategic direction in new programme development and megatrends. An analysis will be brought forward in due course to illustrate the University's strengths and potential strengths against the opportunities externally. The Council encouraged the Executive to be ambitious and bring forward the challenging opportunities as readily as the more incremental steps.
- .3 The process and phases were noted. The process is comprehensive, designed to both deliver a compelling strategy but also bring the wider community with it. There will be structured interviews with Council members and discussion of the Strategy at every Council meeting, with a more detailed discussion at the November Awayday. The University is aiming to bring the final Strategy for Council approval in February 2024.

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

### **23/008 Education and Student Experience Report**

- .1 Esat Alpay gave a presentation on the extension of the 85 Plan work, specifically in relation to addressing continuation issues.
- .2 Continuation has dropped to 82%. There may be systemic and national issues as it has dropped across all three Faculties, although there was significant variation between the academic areas in terms of continuation rates, and thus the importance of School-level continuation plans. It was noted that students drop out for a number of reasons, academic and non-academic. Post-pandemic transition may be a particular problem, including issues of the A-level learning experience. Cost of living is a particular issue currently; the University provides bursaries and hardship funds and a lot of other help and is working hard in conjunction with the Students' Union to ensure that students are aware of what is available. Where students do withdraw, the University tries to ensure that students leave with an award.
- .3 The update on the 85 Plan for continuation was noted, specifically the current strategies for addressing the issue through MySurrey Engagement, the work of the Student Success Team, the CDR work and SSJ activities. Each Faculty has collated and disseminated School / department levels continuation plans; examples of shared practice were demonstrated through the summary tables in the presentation slides. Further analysis and endorsement of the plans was

also achieved through individual School-level support meetings involving the PVC-A, PVCED, ADE, HoS and DLT.

### **23/009 Research and Innovation Report**

- .1 Tim Dunne gave a presentation.
- .2 The following points were noted:
  - The issue of research bureaucracy both in the University and nationally was recognised.
  - There needs to be confidence in research integrity, and we need to ensure that the process is joined up with other parts of the University such as legal. Research integrity is a very broad term, covering a number of potential issues.
  - Recruitment of the new PVC R&I continues with a view to having them in post for the summer. He or she will be consulted on Phase 2.
- .3 It was noted that 29 Surrey Future Fellowships have been offered from a global field of 1425 applications. The fellowships are spread across all three of the Faculties and the appointments represent eleven nationalities and are 62% women and 29% BAME. Six of the appointments are dual between Faculties and institutes.

### **23/010 Finance Update**

- .1 Phil Grainge gave a presentation.
- .2 It was noted that there had been an exceptional Finance Committee the previous week to review the management accounts.
- .3 It was noted that the budget includes a £2m p.a. contribution to the sinking fund from 2024, subsequently growing with inflation.
- .4 The opportunities identified to improve the finances were noted. These opportunities would largely close the cash gap, with the details being worked through for inclusion in the Q2 forecast.
- .5 There was discussion of the implications of the reduction on capital expenditure to close the cash gap. It was noted that some of the reduction had been achieved through amendments to phasing of expenditure, including in Strategic Workstream projects. The paused projects largely lie in Estates, IT, Surrey Sports Park and Surrey Research Park. Cash would be released in March if the finances had improved to enable the highest priority projects to go ahead.

### **23/011 Student Recruitment Scenarios**

- .1 Andy Chalklin presented the paper.
- .2 There was discussion of the impact of the increased student numbers on resource allocation to Faculties. It was noted that the 'No detriment' rule has meant that some schools have more resources than the number of students would normally support. If the student numbers go beyond plan the system would automatically allocate more resources as required and the additional student numbers creates the budget for this. There is an issue for February PGT starters as additional students have been taken in at short notice so there may not have been sufficient time to recruit additional staff. The no detriment rule is expected to fall away after

three years on the expectation that recruitment challenges should be resolvable in that timeframe.

- .3 The sector challenge for the recruitment of nursing students, particularly into adult nursing and mental health, was recognised. Cost of living issues have particularly impacted these students. The University maintains a strong relationship with the Royal Surrey County Hospital.

**23/012 Commercial Developments (COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE) REDACTED**

**23/013 Procedure on Sensitive Jurisdictions: an update (COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE) REDACTED**

**23/014 Legacy Gift Approvals**

- .1 Patrick Degg presented the paper.
- .2 It was noted that, in accordance with internationally accepted fundraising norms, the gifts will count as part of the Campaign total. As they are more than £1m, they require Council approval. Council **approved** the acceptance of the two legacy gifts.
- .3 Council asked in future just to receive confirmation that the due diligence had taken place.

**23/015 Items for Future Meetings**

- .1 Charlie Geffen presented the item.
- .2 Council members were asked to let Ros Allen know of items for the agenda or briefings.

**C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

**23/016 Committee Reports**

- .1 Audit and Assurance Committee Report  
Council **noted** the report.
- .2 Executive Board Report  
Council **noted** the report.
- .3 Senate Report  
Council **noted** the report.
- .4 Student Experience Committee Report  
Council **noted** the report.

**23/017 Annual Reports**

- .1 Annual Health & Safety Report

Council **noted** the report.

.2 CMA Task Group Annual Report

Council **noted** the report.

.3 Annual HR Report

Council **noted** the report.

.4 TRAC Return

Council **noted** the report.

.5 SSP Annual Report

Council **noted** the report.

**23/018 Information Pack for Reference**

.1 Council noted the pack.

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**D CLOSING ITEMS**

**23/019 Any Other Business**

.1 None

**23/020 Date of next meeting**

29 March 2023

**Mr Charlie Geffen, Chair**