

COUNCIL
Thursday 3 October 2024 from 14.00-18.00
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.

Members:	Chair – Lay member	Mr Charlie Geffen
	Joint Vice-Chair – Lay member	Mr Vib Baxi
	Joint Vice-Chair - Lay member	Ms Rachel Hubbard
	Treasurer - Lay member	Mr Robert Napier
	President & Vice-Chancellor	Prof Max Lu
	Provost & Executive Vice-President	Prof Tim Dunne
	Chief Operating Officer	Mr Will Davies
	President, Students' Union	Mr Liam White
	Member elected by Senate	Dr Josh Andresen
	Member elected by Senate	Dr Charo Hodgkins
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Jin Xuan
	Lay member	Prof Julia Buckingham
	Lay member	Ms Judith Eden
	Lay member	Ms Pam Jestico
	Lay member	Mr Nigel Jones
	Lay member	Ms Pam Powell
	Lay member	Sir Philip Rutnam
	Lay member	Dr Helen Turner

In regular attendance: Ms Ros Allen, Head of Governance Services (secretary)
Ms Martine Carter, Vice-President Strategic Growth
Mr Matthew Knight, Chief Financial Officer
Ms Sarah Litchfield, University Secretary & Legal Counsel

By invitation: Prof Lisa Collins, PVC Research and Innovation (24/151)
Mr Patrick Degg, Vice-President Global (24/143-144)
Prof Eunice Ma, PVC Education (24/138)
Prof Bob Nichol, PVC and Executive Dean of FEPS (24/137)
Mr James Raven, External Consultant (24/133)
Mr James Smith, HR Business Partner, FEPS (24/137)
Prof Iis Tussydiah, Dean of Surrey Business School (24/143)
Mr Tom Windle, Director of International Partnerships (24/143)

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

24/126 Preliminaries

.1 There were apologies from Sarah Litchfield.

24/127 Declarations of Interest

.1 None

24/128 Minutes

- .1 Council **approved** the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 July 2024 for publication, subject to redaction of confidential items.

24/129 Matters Arising

- .1 The updated actions log was **noted**. The note on post cyber-attack measures had been circulated the previous day. The COO provided an overview of the preventative measures.

24/130 Chair's items

- .1 Charlie Geffen reported on the pre-meeting discussions for lay members, noting that the focus had been on Blackwell Park, finances, international students, Surrey Online Learning and GIFT City.
- .2 Council ratified the appointment of Will Davies as Chair of Operate Surrey Ltd, as approved by Chair's action. Council noted the Chair's approval of the complaint investigation report and recommendations and the Convene resolution approval of the SSPL Revolving Credit Facility.

24/131 Vice-Chancellor's Report and Performance Monitoring (STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL)

- .1 The VC presented the report.
- .2 The University has welcomed close to 6000 new students this semester, including the first cohort of 40 medical students.
- .3 The University is monitoring for any student issues related to the Middle East situation.
- .4 The new government appears to be keen to work with the HE sector. The proposal to index link the fees to inflation over the next 5 years, whilst it is positive, will not correct the reduction in value over the last period. UUK had suggested that fees should be increased £12.5k to deal with the drop in value of fees. The government is considering reintroducing the maintenance grant for some students. The sector needs to show how it will support the government in its aims such as the skills agenda. However, there was concern regarding the aim for 70% of young people to attend Higher Education as it would put significant pressure on a challenged sector.
- .5 Vision 2041 will be launched on 23 October as part of the Surrey Showcase. EB has started to develop a detailed 5-year action plan for the Strategy which will come to the Council Awayday.
- .6 The University is focused on marketing and communications, particularly reputation and rankings.
- .7 Advancement raised £15.3m in 2023/24 with £7.1m cash received in-year, positioning Surrey well for the close of the fundraising campaign in February. **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE.**
- .8 The following brief updates were noted:
- Research awards are at an historic high of £52m.
 - Surrey has signed an agreement with Surrey County Council and two other local universities to drive economic growth and deal with the priorities of economic inequality, thriving communities and sustainability.

- The University has launched a pioneering programme for students to design a satellite.
- Surrey has signed an agreement with Tsinghua University in China on climate research.
- Emma Rowsell has been appointed as acting Chief Student Officer whilst Kerry Matthews is on maternity leave.
- The acting FHMS dean will be Roberto La Ragione, Head of School of Biosciences. Council noted its thanks to Paul Townsend for his contribution over the last four years.

.9 Tim Dunne provided an update on Surrey Online Learning (SOL) with the following points noted:
REDACTED AS COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE.

24/132 Management Accounts (Commercial in Confidence)

.1 Matthew Knight gave a presentation.

.2 **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE.**

24/133 REDACTED AS COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE.

24/134 Blackwell Park cash release (Commercial in Confidence)

.1 The update was noted.

24/135 Accommodation Cash Release (Commercial in Confidence)

.1 Matthew Knight reported that requirements and assumptions were being refined with a view to bringing a proposal to Council in November.

24/136 Rankings

.1 Tim Dunne gave a presentation.

.2 Council recognised that Surrey does not have a position in the global rankings commensurate with its empirical performance.

.3 The QS is the most important international league table. 45% of the QS score is based on the opinions of academics and employers worldwide. Surrey mobilises its academics to contact their peers at other universities and is also looking at international co-authors. The other international rankings are more skewed towards research excellence and scale.

.4 Council recognised the issues and noted the activities to deal with them. Whilst the University directs agents to point potential students at the international subject rankings, they cannot discount league tables.

.5 A new marketing and communications director has been appointed, with a new reputation manager being currently appointed to his team.

24/137 FEPS Change programme (Commercial in Confidence)

.1 Bob Nichol and James Smith attended to present the paper.

.2 **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE.**

24/138 Student academic misconduct

.1 Professor Eunice Ma attended to give a presentation.

.2 **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE**

.3 In response to the AI challenges, the University has published an institutional position statement along with guidance and training for staff and students, put on events and workshops and launched an 'AI in education toolkit'. The Students' Union have been activity involved and consulted on measures.

.4 It was noted that Surrey was ahead of much of the sector. The planned and suggested future initiatives were discussed.

- The increase in cases may require an expansion of the number of Academic Integrity Officers, although it was recognised that academic involvement is also required.
- The University is embedding awareness raising activities into welcome week.
- The University needs to review the way students are assessed to minimise the potential for the unauthorised use of AI. For example, through on-the-spot presentations.
- The University is piloting the use of KEATH.ai alongside normal marking systems for a variety of subject areas.
- There should be consideration of employers' needs for AI as most students will need to use AI in their future jobs.
- It is the responsibility of module leaders to ensure that students have equal access to AI, where it is required.

24/139 Education and student experience update

.1 Council noted the paper

24/140 Research and Innovation update

.1 Council noted the paper

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR APPROVAL

24/141 ISL update (Commercial in Confidence)

.1 Lisa Collins attended to present the paper.

.2 It was noted that interviews for the ISL Managing Director (MD) post were taking place the following day. There is significant activity taking place to prepare for the MD's arrival, alongside responding to the spin-out review.

.3 **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE.**

.4 It was noted that the University was working towards producing a document covering the whole picture of what Surrey offers regarding innovation, including the Research Park.

- .5 Helen Turner offered her experience to contribute to innovation activities at the University.
Action: LC and MK to arrange to meet HT to discuss.

24/142 USSU priorities for 2024/25

- .1 Liam White presented the paper.
- .2 The priorities were drawn from the new sabbaticals' manifestos. Progress against priorities will be monitored through the University-Students' Union Committee.
- .3 The key points were noted:
- Cost of living issues are a key priority. As one of the measures, the SU is moving away from paid evening events, to more free/affordable social events and is committed to continuing to do so throughout the year.
 - The SU is contributing to a national campaign for increased student funding with a goal to expand the London weighting scheme for universities in the South East. The SU is trying to get a commitment of support from the local MP.
 - Private accommodation is a particular issue. Whilst the national 'Renters rights' bill should have a positive impact in many ways, it could have an unintended consequence of reducing the amount of accommodation available for students.
 - Employability is a key priority, including working with the University to improve the quality and impact of the Professional Training Year.
 - Measures to improve Access, Participation and Student Success were noted.
- .4 Council recognised the great atmosphere on campus with plenty of positive engagement.

24/143 REDACTED AS COMMERCIAL SENSITIVE.

24/144 Donation acceptance

- .1 Patrick Degg attended to present the paper.
- .2 Council **approved** the acceptance of the legacy donation.

24/145 Items for future meetings

- .1 Council noted that there were a significant number of items for the next meeting, so some may need to be provided as outline briefings. It was suggested that there should be a monthly session at the same time every month where these briefings could take place.
Action: Members to feedback to RA on their preferences.

C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

24/146 Health and Safety Report

- .1 Council noted the paper.

24/147 OfS regulation to address harassment and sexual misconduct

- .1 Council noted the paper.

24/148 Whistleblowing benchmarking

.1 Council noted the paper.

24/149 Annual oversight report in relation to the USSU

.1 Council noted the paper.

24/150 Committee Reports

.1 Council noted the reports.

24/151 Information Pack for Reference

.1 Council noted the pack.

D CLOSING ITEMS

24/152 Any Other Business

.1 Members were asked to review their web bios if they have not already done so and let RA have any changes by Monday.

24/153 Date of next meetings

18 November 2024

Mr Charlie Geffen, Chair