

COUNCIL
Monday 31 March 2025 from 14.00-18.00
08BB04 and Teams
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 – 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 Nigel Jones
	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 (to 25/035)
	Member elected by Senate	Dr Charo Hodgkins
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Jin Xuan
	External member	Prof Dame Julia Buckingham
	External member	Ms Judith Eden
	External member	Ms Pam Jestico
	External member	Ms Pam Powell
	External member	Sir Philip Rutnam
	External member	Dr Helen Turner
	External member	Dr Linda Wilding

In 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: Mr Mark Ashton, Associate Dean Education, FABBS (25/028)
Prof Annika Bautz, PVC and Exec Dean FABBS (25/028)
Prof Lisa Collins, PVC Research & Innovation (25/037)
Mr James Emans, Savills (25/027)
Mr James Raven, Surrey Research Park Advisor (25/027)
Dr Jim Shaikh, Managing Director ISL (25/037)

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

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| 25/025 | Preliminaries |
| .1 | There were apologies from Pam Powell and Linda Wilding. |
| 25/026 | Declarations of Interest |
| .1 | None |
| 25/027 | Surrey Research Park (SRP) – REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE |
| 25/028 | Update on FABSS Programme Review |

- .1 Mark Ashton and Annika Bautz attended to present the paper after an introduction from Tim Dunne.
- .2 The mission and strategic priorities along with an example from each School were noted.
- .3 The Faculty are currently reviewing the whole provision in order to optimise the portfolio. The review is data driven and includes sector benchmarking. Each School is reviewing the provision in their area with a view to bringing forward proposals on new programmes, rationalisation of programmes and those which should be closed. In the longer term, there will also be review of online learning provision. Continuing Professional Development will be considered as part of the 'Diversification of activities' workstream, not this programme review
- .4 Where new programmes are introduced, new staff will be needed where Staff:Student ratios require them. Efficiencies and streamlining of provision are part of the work so should enable new programmes to be taught without new staff in many instances.
- .5 Postgraduate Overseas numbers are decreasing sector-wide and Surrey Business School is particularly impacted. There is a focus on ensuring that the offering in this area is attractive to both home and overseas students.

25/029 Minutes

- .1 Council approved the minutes of the Council meeting held on 5 February 2025 for publication.

25/030 Matters Arising

- .1 The updated actions log was noted. Matthew Knight reported that his first action was covered by his item later on the agenda so could be closed. The Capex action was ongoing.

STANDING ITEMS

25/031 Chair's items

- .1 Council ratified the following resolutions:
 - Reappointment of Julia Buckingham to a second term on Council, approved by Convene resolution on 21 March.
 - Appointment of Helen Turner to Audit and Assurance Committee, approved by Convene resolution on 21 March.
 - Reappointment of Ann Limb as a Pro-Chancellor, approved by Convene resolution on 21 March.
 - Appointment of Linda Wilding to Council and as Chair of Audit and Assurance Committee, approved by Convene resolution on 25 March.
 - Letter of support for Blackwell Park Ltd, approved by Chair's action on 25 March.
- .2 The Chair provided a briefing on pre-meeting discussions. The main focus was on the search for the VC's successor and Surrey Research Park.

25/032 Vice-Chancellor's Report and Performance Monitoring

- .1 The VC presented the report.

- .2 The following further points were noted:
- The Spring budget did not include tuition fee indexation, but it will be considered as part of the comprehensive spending review.
 - The VC met the International Collaboration Department to discuss Surrey's Transnational Education aspirations. They are supportive.
 - **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE**
 - There has been a 65.5% response rate at Surrey to date, for the National Student Survey. With one month to run, it is hoped to get close to an 80% response rate.

- .3 Noting that it was their final meeting, the VC expressed his thanks to Vib Baxi and Judith Eden on behalf of the executive.

25/033 Management Accounts – REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE

25/034 Blackwell Park – REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE

25/035 Stag Hill House

- .1 Will Davies presented the paper.

.2 Multifunctional Events Space

The following points were noted:

- There has been consultation with academic colleagues on the space to ensure that it would work for teaching. If student numbers then grew faster than anticipated, the space could be increasingly used for teaching.
- The intention is to create flexible space that could be used for a number of purposes and sizes of event. It would replace the marquee, particularly for graduation events.
- There was some concern that the targeted income projections were too optimistic. It was noted that they were based on enquiries received and advice from an Events Company.
- **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE**
- As income grew, additional facilities, such as more Audio-Visual equipment, could be added as required.
- Parking would not be an issue.
- **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE**
- The University has a successful Conferencing function which is hampered by lack of space. Additional staffing requirements have been costed into the business case.
- As well as bringing in income, academic conferences are also good for reputation.

.3 Data Centre

The Data Centre will not be located in the lower ground floor of Stag Hill House, but the Manor Park Data Centre is now proposed. The CoSTAR Data Centre would be co-located in the Manor Park Data Centre as there are two vacant data halls available.

.4 Community Health Hub

There is discussion with NHS Surrey Heartlands regarding providing a Community Health Hub in the building. It would have its own entrance and car parking and bring in – **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE** - in rent. It would also link to the University's academic areas.

25/036 University Strategy

- .1 Martine Carter presented the paper.
- .2 It was noted that a small number of business cases for Vision 2041 are being progressed.
- .3 The following brief updates were noted:
 - EB received a proposal for a new Pan University Institute in Space and are expecting a business case shortly.
 - **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE**
 - With respect to the Professional Training Year, it is strongly promoted so that students understand that it will help them find a job after they graduate. They get help from Employability team. International students take part, but in smaller proportions.
 - The six-week judicial review for solar farm has commenced. Three parties are tendering. Compton Parish Council raised concerns that will need to be addressed or struck out.
 - **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE**
 - The Digital Strategy covers how digital can be used to improve our services and give our staff digital skills, as well as how it can be used in teaching and learning.
- .4 Council asked for a dashboard to show progress against the strategic projects. A list with a RAG rating against each project will be provided while a more sophisticated dashboard is developed.
Action: MC

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR APPROVAL

25/037 Innovate Surrey Ltd (ISL) Investment Fund update

- .1 Lisa Collins and Jim Shaikh attended to present the paper.
- .2 Jim Shaikh introduced himself and his background before presenting on his plans for the first three months and his initial observations. The following points were noted:
 - More centralisation is required, with the necessary support and resources in place.
 - Currently, the University is spinning out 1-2 companies a year. To be top ten, this would need to increase to 4 p.a, and 7-8 p.a. for top five. The initial focus is on at least doubling the number of spin outs.
 - However, the key to success is not just the number of spin outs, but their success.
 - **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE**
 - Surrey Research Park provides space for incubating new spin outs.
- .3 **REDACTED AS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE**

25/038 VC Recruitment update

- .1 Charlie Geffen provided an update on the recruitment of a new VC.
- .2 Perrett Laver have ten definite candidates, about ten people actively considering applying and another ten to fifteen who are interested. Charlie Geffen has met some of the candidates. There are no candidates from the US currently.

- .3 The proposal for engagement with stakeholders will be shared with Council. It is planned to invite shortlisted candidates to spend a day on campus, meeting a number of groups (including Research, Education, Sustainability, Global and Growth), chaired by an Executive Board member. There will be an external member on each group who will report to the recruitment panel.

Action: TD to share engagement plan with Council.

- .4 Some staff members have fed suggestions to Perrett Laver. The Trade Unions are also involved.

25/039 Effectiveness Review Pulse Survey Report

- .1 Charlie Geffen presented the report.
- .2 There was discussion of communication between Council and Senate with the following points noted:
- Council supported the proposal to offer a yearly meeting between lay members and Senate. Tim Dunne would welcome feedback from members on what this should cover.
 - Senate would be kept informed on relevant Council discussions.
 - Charlie Geffen is meeting with Senate members shortly.

- .3 Ros Allen and Sarah Litchfield will look at the internal controls point.

25/040 Council Code of Conduct

- .1 Sarah Litchfield presented the report.
- .2 The Code of Conduct was first introduced in 2022 and it had been agreed that it should be reviewed on a three yearly basis. Council noted the amendments.
- .3 Council approved the updated Code of Conduct.

25/041 External Members of Council recruitment

- .1 Charlie Geffen gave a verbal update.
- .2 Council noted that Linda Wilding was not available for the March or May meetings but would endeavour to attend the May dinner.
- .3 It was noted that four people were being interviewed on 15 April with a view to appointing up to three new external Council members.

25/042 BPL Governance Agreement

- .1 Sarah Litchfield presented the paper.
- .2 The two proposed changes were noted.

- .3 Council **approved** the BPL Governance Agreement and agreed that the additional requirement for notices to be emailed to the Company Secretary should be included in all of the Subsidiary Governance Agreements.

25/043 Items for future meetings

- .1 Council noted the paper. Members were asked to let RA know of any other items to be covered.

C	ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY
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25/044 Health and Safety Report

- .1 Council noted the paper.

25/045 Treasury Management Annual Report

- .1 Council noted the paper.

25/046 Report and Support Annual Report

- .1 Council noted the report.

25/047 Academic Promotions Annual Report

- .1 Council noted the report.

25/048 HR Annual Report

- .1 Council noted the report.

25/049 EDI Annual Report

- .1 Council noted the report.

25/050 Consumer Protection Task Group Annual Report

- .1 Council noted the report.

25/051 Committee reports

- .1 Council noted the reports from Nominations and Governance Committee, Executive Board, Finance Committee and Partnerships and Reputation Committee.

25/052 Information Pack for Reference

- .1 Council noted the pack.

D	CLOSING ITEMS
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25/053 Any Other Business

- .1 None

25/054 Date of next meeting

22 May 2025

Mr Charlie Geffen, Chair