



COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 November 2020

Present: Sir Keith O’Nions (Chair), Vicky Bailey, Professor Dame Jessica Corner, Rebecca Craven, Lynette Eastman, Madeleine Fox, Professor Rachel Gomes, Ian Kenyon, Professor Kevin Lee, Sonya Leydecker, Professor Andy Long, Professor Jo Lynn, Sherry Madera, Trevor Moss, Dr Gabriele Neher (from minute 3743.6) , Richard Newsome, Professor Clive Roberts, Nora Senior, Professor Sarah Speight, David Tilly, Professor Shearer West

Apologies: None

In attendance: Dr Paul Greatrix, Rowena Hall, Margaret Monckton, Tim Watkinson, Sally Blackamore (for minute 3745), Professor Graham Kendall (for minute 3746), Professor Nick Miles (for minutes 3746 and 3747), Professor Sarah Sharples (for minute 3748), Jason Carter (for minute 3748), Neil Hawthorne (for minute 3748), Haf Merrifield (for minute 3751), Linda Goodacre (for minutes 3752 and 3753), Andy Nolan (for minute 3752), Jonathan Leeding (for minute 3753), Amanda Pettingill (for minute 3753), Professor Todd Landman (for minute 3753), Professor Kevin Shakesheff (for minute 3756), Professor Katharine Reid (for minute 3753), Professor Zoe Wilson, (for minute 3753), Dean Farrelly (for minute 3753).

STANDING ITEMS

3738 Welcome and Quoracy

- .1 The Chair reported that the number of external members in attendance at the meeting did not exceed the number of internal members. In order to achieve quoracy on items where Council approval was required, a number of the internal members present at the meeting would become observers and would not contribute to or vote on the relevant items. This corresponded to Minute 3741 where Professor Corner would become an observer and Minutes 3745, 3749, 3753, 3754, 3755 where Professor Corner and Professor Speight would become observers.
- .2 It was the last meeting as a member of Council for Trevor Moss who had been a member of Council since 2015 and had also served as a member of the Pensions Board and of Finance Committee. His support and contribution during his time on Council was recognised by the Chair and members and he was warmly thanked for his efforts.

3739 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

3740 Minutes

Council AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2020 as a true and accurate record of the meeting and NOTED the Action Log.

3741 Chair's Business

- .1 The Chair requested the approval of Council to the appointment of Sonya Leydecker as a member of Finance Committee. Council members AGREED the appointment.
- .2 The publication of a UUK report on tackling racial harassment in higher education was highlighted. A link to the report would be circulated to Council members following the meeting.

ACTION:	Action Owner	Due Date
.3 Circulate a link to the UUK report on tackling racial harassment in higher education.	Registrar	December

3742 Vice-Chancellor's Report

- .1 Council NOTED the Vice-Chancellor's Report (paper C/20/104).
- .2 The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that plans for those students who wished to return home for the Christmas period during the government's travel window were well underway, alongside plans for how students might return to the University in January. Plans centred on the University's testing service which had not been in place when students arrived at the start of term. It was expected that government would provide guidance on the January return which would likely impact on the University's plans. It was expected that the guidance was unlikely to meet the varying different needs and circumstances of students.
- .3 The University was working closely with its civic partners across the City including Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, as part of the Chief Officers' Forum, and with regional Public Health England. The Vice-Chancellor advised of the University's involvement at a regional level with economic recovery activity alongside the East Midlands Development Corporation and D2N2 which she had joined as a board member.
- .4 A Council member asked about the University's plans to manage the impact of Brexit in the New Year. The Registrar confirmed that the Brexit Taskforce and the No-Deal Group had continued to meet regularly. The incident team had recently participated in a scenario based exercise testing the University's readiness for a number of post-January arrangements. There was confidence that the University was as well-placed as it could be.
- .5 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the longer term impacts of Brexit on staffing, student recruitment, student mobility and research were being considered and potential mitigations developed.

3743 COVID-19 Impact Update

- .1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor confirmed that from a high point in October which saw the University with 1,500 active COVID-19 cases amongst the student population, it currently had 23 active cases; one in halls of residence, one in third party halls of residence and 21 in private housing. Staff cases reached a high of 44 cases, but had reduced to nine active cases. All reported staff cases in all job families had been investigated fully and in the case of teaching staff, no links to face-to-face teaching had been identified.

- .2 Testing capacity on campus had reached 1,500 tests per day which would support plans for students to return home for Christmas. In the week commencing 9 November, access to asymptomatic testing was made available to all staff. 285 walk-in tests were taken and there were no positive results. 439 students were tested with one positive result.
- .3 Teaching would move online by 9 December to support students who wished to travel during the 'student travel window'. There were some exceptions for students on health care, social care and veterinary courses.
- .4 All students would be advised how to book a test and to arrange their travel around it. If their test result was positive, the student would be asked to take a pillar 2 test and self-isolate. Students would also be asked to book a slot to leave campus so that the process and numbers of people coming on to campus could be carefully managed.
- .5 It was anticipated that around 500 students would remain on campus during the winter break and provision was being put into place to support those students.
- .6 Plans for the return to campus in January were underway and government advice was awaited.

Dr Gaby Neher joined the meeting.

- .7 A Council member was keen to understand staff morale and engagement. The Vice-Chancellor explained that staff had been under enormous pressure for a sustained period of time. This had culminated in a range of staff responses. Many were tired, but some remained energised by the continued challenges. Open meetings were being held across Faculties and Professional Services which had been well attended and provided an opportunity for staff to engage with senior staff and to speak freely raising questions as they needed. It was considered that the online nature of the meeting was key to its success and the learning from the approach would be taken forward.
- .8 More regular engagement with the Senior Leaders' group had also been very positive with the group cohering purposefully as a strategic leadership group. Senate Council members corroborated the value of the more regular sessions.
- .9 The Students' Union Education Officer confirmed that student feedback in general on the blended learning approach was very positive and students valued every face-to-face learning opportunity provided. The social aspect of learning was missing, something which had been identified as an issue at a national level.
- .10 The Students' Union Development Officer reported to Council on the wellbeing of students and the negative emotions which were being experienced: loneliness, confusion and boredom. The Students' Union had been implementing approaches to support students in each of the areas.
- .11 Student compliance with lockdown and social distancing rules remained a challenge in a small number of instances. The majority of students were following the rules. A number of engagement mechanisms had been used to reach non-complying students with limited success.

FINANCE MATTERS**3744 Financial Performance to September 2020**

- .1 Council RECEIVED paper C/20/105.
- .2 The Chief Financial Officer REPORTED that significant uncertainty remained in connection with the financial impacts on income during 20/21. The budget assumed an income reduction of £150m including reductions in tuition fee income and in commercial and research income. Whilst research income was performing better than forecasted, commercial income was lower than had been anticipated.
- .3 The Latest Revised Forecast was underway and due to be completed by Christmas. This would provide more clarity on the current position.

3745 Global Review and Financial Statements 2019/20

- .1 Council RECEIVED paper C/20/12.
- .2 The Chief Financial Officer reported that an earlier version of the draft Financial Statements had been received by the Audit and Risk Committee which had considered the audit aspects and was supportive of their approval. The Finance Committee had reviewed the draft Financial Statements including a paper setting out the basis of their preparation on a going concern basis and laying out the key financial judgements. The Finance Committee was supportive of their approval.
- .3 Council was advised that there were two accounting adjustments to be made to the draft Financial Statements presented as part of the paper.
- .4 The Chair of Finance Committee reaffirmed Finance Committee's support of the Financial Statements and for their approval by Council.
- .5 Council AGREED that the revised Financial Statements setting out the adjustments and including a narrative of the changes, should be circulated to Council for approval.
- .6 Subject to the approval of the revised Financial Statements by Council via circulation, it was AGREED that the Vice-Chancellor, Treasurer, and Chief Financial Officer be authorised to sign them and the Chair be authorised to sign the Letter of Representation.

ACTION	Owner	Due
.7 To circulate the revised Financial Statements to Council for approval.	Chief Financial Officer, Secretary	15 December

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS**3746 UNM Report**

- .1 Council NOTED the University of Nottingham, Malaysia Report (paper C/20/106) presented by the Provost and CEO, which provided an update on the current COVID-19 restrictions in Malaysia and their impact on the University.
- .2 The Provost confirmed that online delivery of teaching continued as a result of the latest Conditional Movement Control Order which would be in place until 6 December. Research performance continued to be strong.

- .3 It was anticipated that finances would be challenging for the 2020/21 academic year and it was hoped that border controls would support recruitment and that the in-person delivery of the ASEAN and beyond programme would be possible.
- .3 It was reported to Council that the Provost, Professor Kendall would be retiring from the University at the end of January 2021. The Chair thanked Professor Kendall for his hard work and contribution to the successes at the University of Nottingham, Malaysia. The Chair's thanks and recognition was endorsed by Council members.

Rebecca Craven left the meeting.

3747 UNNC Report

- .1 Council NOTED the University of Nottingham, Ningbo, China report (paper C/20/107) presented by the Provost.
- .2 The Provost updated Council on student recruitment which had seen an understandable reduction in international students and some initial reduction in the number of students recruited through the Gaokao. This had resulted from a misconception that international staff were not present in China. There had been large increases in domestic PGT and PGR admissions as students had been unable to travel overseas for postgraduate programmes. Following a Ministry of Education announcement, an additional 220 high scoring Gaokao students were admitted as result of them being unable to travel overseas to their original choice institution.
- .3 UNNC had received an award from the European Chamber of Commerce in China for its response to the pandemic.
- .4 Future plans included a primary focus on the development of the Campus looking specifically at digital and people with a view to becoming digital by default. It was also planned to create a UNNC academy to offer development opportunities to staff.
- .5 The Provost confirmed that the Campus was reviewing its supply chains and arrangements for internships to better understand its position in relation to the UK Modern Slavery Act.

Rebecca Craven rejoined the meeting

3748 Update on Health and Safety

- .1 Council RECEIVED and NOTED paper C/20/108 from Professor Sarah Sharples, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and People and Chair of the Health and Safety Committee.
- .2 Council NOTED the outcome of the health and safety compliance visits from the Environment Agency in connection with radiation safety and the Health and Safety Executive in respect of biological and COVID-19 safety.
- .3 An update on the halls of residence fire safety remedial works was provided including details of mitigating actions and relocation of students.

- .4 The Council member of the Health and Safety Committee confirmed that there was progress being made on the Health and Safety remedial plan.
- .5 Council also NOTED paper C/20/122, including minutes of the meeting of Health and Safety Committee held on 4 November 2020.

3749 Road Map to Diversity - Recommendations

- .1 The Vice-Chair introduced paper C/20/109 which proposed a commitment to the increasing the diversity of Council's membership and a road map to achieving the commitment.
- .2 The Registrar confirmed that the Nominations Committee had approved the University's participation in the first wave of a board apprenticeship scheme established by an executive search agency. The scheme was designed to identify individuals from underrepresented groups, likely in an earlier part of their career than was traditional for members of governing bodies, whose experience would benefit from an apprenticeship role on a governing body. The aim was to develop a pool of future board members.
- .3 Council's unanimous view was that its membership must become more diverse, therefore it should make a clear and unequivocal commitment to achieving greater diversity and be seen to be working towards meeting that commitment.
- .4 Council considered the proposed commitment to diversity set out in the paper and subject to an amendment to the wording in connection with gender representation to reflect that not all individuals identified with a gender, it was AGREED.
- .5 Council AGREED that the option to extend Council membership to 20 as agreed as part of the recommendations resulting from the Council Effectiveness Review, should be effected. The membership would reduce to 19 when the next external Council member stood down from Council.
- .6 Council considered the content of the proposed Action Plan. There were a number of themes of activity contained in the plan, which included work to ensure that barriers to the recruitment of individuals from underrepresented groups were removed from the recruitment process.
- .7 Council considered that, in addition to recruitment panel members receiving training, Council as a whole should participate in a facilitated session on diversity. It was suggested the action plan should reference an appraisal of Council performance as a whole, not just individual member appraisal.
- .8 The importance of the induction process to supporting new Council members to feel able to participate fully in discussions was NOTED.
- .9 Council ENDORSED the approach of adopting an action plan to support the delivery of its commitment to diversity and, subject to a number of amendments to reflect the feedback provided during the meeting, AGREED the Action Plan.
- .10 The Chair reported that Nominations Committee had begun to consider the composition of the interview panels for the next round of Council member recruitment. It had been suggested that the panel should include a representative from one of the staff networks. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the PVC EDI and People was giving initial consideration to the establishment of an EDI expert group.

.11 Professor Roberts and Professor Gomes, both Senate members of Council, reported that details of the Council Effectiveness Review had been shared with Senate at its last meeting and they had given a brief presentation on the agreed reduction in number of Senate members on Council and the plans to develop greater diversity in Council membership. Senate appeared to be supportive of the changes, although limited feedback was provided in the meeting, with the focus of the discussion instead moving to the role and responsibilities of the Senate members who sit on Council. Senate welcomed Council's approach to the sharing of information and the opportunity for the discussion.

.12 It was AGREED that regular reporting on progress of the delivery of the Action Plan would follow the same approach as that agreed for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations resulting from the Council Effectiveness Review.

ACTION	Owner	Due
.13 Make amendments to the commitment to diversity and action plan as suggested by Council	Secretary	15 January
.14 Arrange for a whole Council facilitated discussion on equality, diversity and inclusion	Secretary	15 January

3750 Vice-Chancellor's Objectives

- .1 The Vice-Chancellor introduced paper C/20/110 setting out her both her full term objectives and her critical path objectives for 20/21. The objectives had been devised in discussion with the Chair. UEB had had an opportunity to consider the objectives at its last meeting.
- .2 Council considered and NOTED the objectives given their current context as well as the opportunities, challenges and the success indicators.
- .3 Council were concerned that the COVID-19 pandemic had necessitated a more operational focus for the Vice-Chancellor, but they were assured that strategic focus remained on local, civic and national engagement on key issues.

3751 Global Strategy 2020 Closing Report

- .1 Council NOTED paper C/20/111 introduced by the Director of Planning, Performance and Strategic Change.
- .2 Council was advised that the proposals for the performance framework and dashboard, the principles for which had been agreed by Council at a previous meeting, would be presented to Council in the New Year and were being developed with an eye to the lessons from the GS2020 indicator set.

3752 Estate Development Framework

- .1 Council NOTED paper C/20/112 introduced by the Director of Development and Sustainability which provided an update on the progress of major building projects including the Power Electronics and Machine Centre building and works at the North Lab at Sutton Bonington. Details of emerging projects were also provided.
- .2 Progress in the development of the Estates Development Framework was reported with focus on the four areas of priority.

- .3 The Chair of Finance Committee observed that the University needed to understand its capacity for change in order that it was able to deliver planned for activities and respond to opportunities. It would be important to understand the correct operational sequencing for activities. It was confirmed that all projects under the Estates Development Framework would be subject to a mature prioritisation process before they were permitted to progress through the approvals process.
- .4 Council NOTED that a review of accessibility across the campuses had been commissioned.

3753 Business Case: Florence Boot Hall Refurbishment

- .1 Paper C/20/120 was RECEIVED. Council NOTED that a sub-group of the Finance Committee had RECOMMENDED option 3 as set out in the paper for approval by Council.
- .2 Council was provided with an overview of the project which proposed to address a number of health and safety issues at the halls of residence, combined with a programme of refurbishment. Plans focused on developments to benefit students, ensuring the works were faithful to the heritage of the building, and addressing the health and safety compliance issues which had necessitated the closure of some space within the building.
- .3 Council NOTED that the project had moved up the order of priority as a result of the health and safety compliance issues. There were only two projects which had been assessed as higher priority than the refurbishment of Florence Boot Hall and neither were at a stage where capital outlay was required. There was an option to apply for a SALIX grant which if successful would reduce the cost of the project to the University from £13.3m to £11m.
- .4 Both the Chair of Council and the Chair of the Finance Committee were keen that business cases were provided to the full Finance Committee in future.
- .5 Council APPROVED the preferred option 3 as set out in the business case. Council recommended that communications around the announcement of the significant strategic investment were managed carefully given current financial challenges caused by the pandemic.

ANNUAL ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

3754 Prevent Annual Monitoring Return

- .1 Council NOTED paper C/20/113 and the University's approach, which was to focus on the welfare of its students in the first instance.
- .2 Council AGREED the Annual Accountability and Data Return for submission to the Office for Students

3755 Annual Statement on Research Integrity

Council APPROVED the Annual Statement on Research Integrity for publication (paper C/20/114).

Gaby Neher left the meeting.

COMMITTEE AND OTHER REPORTS**3756 Update from the Faculty of Science**

- .1 Council RECEIVED a presentation (paper C/20/115) from Professor Kevin Shakesheff, Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Science which provide details of the developments within the Faculty during the last year.
- .2 The Faculty had responded well to the challenges of providing a blended approach to learning and ensuring its laboratory based teaching was delivered in a COVID-19 secure manner. Details of research successes were provided including grant awards and appointments as well as highlighting the activities of some early career researchers.
- .3 The FPVC explained the challenges of changing student choice and ensuring the Faculty was able to respond to those changes and confirmed that a review of support structures within the Faculty was underway.

Jessica Corner, Rebecca Craven, Rachel Gomes and Sarah Speight left the meeting.

3757 Audit and Risk Committee

Council received and NOTED the minutes and report from the meeting of Audit and Risk Committee held on 3 November 2020, as set out in paper C/20/121 including the internal Audit Annual Opinion 2019/20 and the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report.

3758 Finance Committee

Council received and NOTED the report from the meeting of Finance Committee held on 3 November 2020 and the Finance Committee Sub-Group held on 13 November 2020, as set out in paper C/20/124.

3759 Nominations Committee

- .1 The Chair reported that an executive search firm had been appointed to support the recruitment of two Council members. Interviews would be scheduled in late February/early March.
- .2 An updated Council member role description would be circulated to members after the meeting for consideration, comment and approval.

ACTION	Owner	Due
.3 To circulate the updated Council member role description to members for comment	Secretary	5 December

3760 Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference

- .1 Council RECEIVED paper C/20/125.
- .2 The Registrar reported that the Terms of Reference had been amended to recognise the decision made by Council that the membership of the Committee should be expanded to include all external members of Council. An amendment had also been made to clarify the opportunity, at the discretion of the Chair, to commission professional advice where required to ensure the Committee was properly advised.

.3 Council AGREED the Terms of Reference.

3761 Honorary Degrees Committee

Council NOTED paper C/20/116.

3762 Council Effectiveness Review Recommendations Implementation Monitoring

- .1 Council RECEIVED paper C/20/119 which set out the first report from the oversight group of the progress in the implementation of the recommendations agreed following the 2020 Council Effectiveness Review.
- .2 The progress tracker indicated the practical progress of administrative process changes, but consideration would need to be given to how to measure how the changes were being experienced within Council and by members.
- .3 Council AGREED that future reports should be provided quarterly by circulation with an annual review of progress at a Council meeting.

3763 UUK Guidance – Managing Risks in Internationalisation: Security Related Issues in Higher Education

- .1 Council NOTED paper C/20/117.
- .2 The Registrar confirmed that a working group would be established to develop an approach to the report.

3764 Council Agenda – Forward Plan

- .1 Council RECEIVED and NOTED paper C/20/118.

ACTION	Owner	Due
.2 To include a copy of the Forward Plan on the agenda for each meeting of Council	Secretary	Ongoing

Date of Next Meeting: 2 February 2021, 10.30-16.30