



## COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 September 2021

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**Present:** Sir Keith O'Nions (Chair), Dr Pearl Agyakwa, Vicky Bailey (until minute 3850), Lynette Eastman, Rachel Gomes (until minute 3850), Sonya Leydecker, Professor Andy Long, Professor Jo Lymn, Sherry Madera, Piyali Mitra, Richard Newsome, Stephen Odell, Nora Senior, George Sullivan, Chris Taylor, David Tilly, Professor Shearer West (from minute 3843)

**Apologies:** Professor Roshan das Nair

**In attendance:** Dr Paul Greatrix, Rowena Hall (from minute 3843), Margaret Monckton, (from minute 3843), Tim Watkinson (from minute 3843),

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### 3842 RESERVED

### STANDING ITEMS

#### 3843 Welcome and Quoracy

- .1 The Chair welcomed members and guests to the meeting.
- .2 Apologies were received from Professor das Nair. Professor Gomes, the Treasurer and the Chair of Audit and Risk Committee would need to leave the meeting early.
- .3 The Secretary confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

#### 3844 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

#### 3845 Chair's Business

RESERVED

#### 3846 Vice-Chancellor's Report

- .1 The Vice-Chancellor reported on the launch of the Biodiscovery Institute which had been held earlier in the week and had been attended by a number of Council and Executive Board members. Two executive chairs of UK Research and Innovation had also been in attendance. The launch event was a success and many staff who had attended reported that as a result of the event they were keen to return to more regular on campus working.
- .2 An update on the proposed purchase of the 'Castle Meadow Campus' was provided. Council members had been advised of the opportunity to purchase the former HMRC site by circulation.

- .3 The proposed acquisition afforded the University a number of opportunities to progress its ambitions to support the levelling up agenda and local regeneration post-pandemic. There were options to consider the site as the location for the Digital Nottingham project and as a potential site for an expanded Nottingham University Business School. The possibility of the campus having a more professional focus was being explored which might entail a primary focus on final year undergraduate and PGT activities and CPD provision.
- .4 An offer had been made which remained subject to Council approval. A business case would be first submitted to Finance Committee and if it received support, a communication about the potential purchase would be released. It was planned to submit the business case to Council for approval at its next meeting in October.
- .5 It was AGREED that the business case would be circulated to all Council members alongside the circulation to Finance Committee.
- .6 An overview of plans for managing COVID-19 at the start of session were provided. Students were being regularly reminded about vaccination and would be requested to test on return to campus. Vaccination rates amongst students registered at the Cripps Health Centre were high.
- .7 The University would continue to follow national guidelines in response to the pandemic. Therefore, the wearing of face coverings in enclosed spaces would be recommended not mandated.
- .8 Large lectures would be avoided in semester one, but all other teaching should be delivered face-to-face.
- .9 When asked by a Council member, the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University supported the recent decision on USS pension changes. It was AGREED that a summary of the current USS pension position would be circulated to Council members.
- .10 Ongoing issues resulting from the School of Medicine restructure continued to be managed. An external investigator had been appointed to examine a series of grievances raised. An investigation into a whistleblowing complaint was almost complete. An advisory board had been established, chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and with membership from the School, to support the progression of cultural change within the School.
- .11 It was confirmed that proposed changes following the Augar Review were still awaited.

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>Due</b>
.12	Circulate the business case for the acquisition of Castle Meadow Campus to Council members at the same time it was circulated to Finance Committee	Secretary	24 September
.13	Circulate a summary of the developments associated with the USS pension scheme	Secretary	24 September

**3847 RESERVED**

**3848 Governance Apprentice Programme**

- .1 The Chair reminded Council that Nominations Committee had approved the University to join a national governance apprentice programme to support future board diversity. Nominations Committee had agreed to recruit two governance apprentices to join the University and attend Council meetings for a year.
- .2 The Registrar confirmed that University had received 23 high calibre applications and shortlisted seven candidates for interview for the two positions. Interviews took place in July.
- .3 The Chair and Vice-Chair of Council and the Students' Union Development Officer were included in the shortlisting and interview panels and confirmed that the standard of applications was high and there had been hard decisions to shortlist and recommend for appointment.
- .4 A paper would be circulated to Nominations Committee for approval setting out the details of the two candidates recommended for appointment. If approved, a paper would be circulated to Council recommending the approval of their appointment.

**3849 Council Forward Plan**

- .1 Council members were asked to provide feedback and comment on the Council Forward Plan which was hosted on Council's Teams site.
- .2 Suggestions for future inclusion on the Forward Plan included pensions items where appropriate, the future of the University business model in the backdrop of COVID-19 and a session on the future development of the international campuses.
- .3 A Council member sought confirmation on when the next Council Effectiveness Review was due. The Registrar confirmed that it would be due to start in the next 18 months.

<b>ACTION</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>Due</b>
.4	Update the Council Forward Plan with the suggestions made by Council members.	Secretary	30 September

**3850 Any Other Business**

- .1 A Council member had requested a discussion on the potential impact to UNNC of the change in Chinese policy on delivery of private education in China.
- .2 The Council member lead for UNNC and UNM provided her view on the purpose and objective of the policy change which was to prevent organisations making profit from education. Well-established not for profit organisations such as the University were seen as playing a positive role in China. It would be important to reiterate the University's not for profit approach at appropriate junctures.
- .4 The Registrar supported the Council member's view that the policy change was not directed at universities, but rather at maintaining academic standards in schools. Education policy in China would need to stay under review.
- .5 A briefing note had been prepared by the Provost, UNNC on the policy and would be circulated to Council members.

<b>ACTION</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>Due</b>
.6	Circulate a briefing note on Chinese education policy changes to Council. .	Secretary	24 September