

**6 July 2023**

## **Council**

### **Minutes**

**Minutes of the Council meeting held on Thursday 6 July 2023 at 2.00 pm in Austen/Blake Conference Room, Canham Turner.**

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**Present:** George Garlick (Chair), Huey Arslan, Heidi Broadhead, Professor Rob Dover, Vanessa Lee, Ursula Lidbetter, Professor Dave Petley, Rashmi Rungta, Julia Whittaker, Denise Wilson

**In attendance,** Jeremy Hartley, Peace Igi-Ehon, Dr Chris Ince (Secretary), Dr Darren Mundy, Derek Ord (Assistant Secretary), Raji Destiny Ibrahim Raji, Deborah Robinson and Sarah Wilson

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		<b>Action by</b>
<b>72</b>	<p><b>Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declaration</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Deborah Robinson and Raji Destiny Ibrahim Raji.</p> <p>Apologies were received from: Professor Phil Gilmartin, Professor Simon Green, Professor Paul Hagan, Professor Stephen Hardy, Professor Becky Huxley-Binns, Matt Jukes, Neil Robinson and Rosalyn Schofield</p>	
<b>73</b>	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2023 were approved as a correct record.</p>	

<p><b>74</b></p>	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>(a) <u>Action Summary</u></p> <p>Council received an Action Summary. It was noted that all items had been completed, were on the agenda or due for completion later in the year.</p>	
<p><b>75</b></p>	<p><b>Terms of Reference and composition of the committee, and plans for the next academic year</b></p> <p>The Terms of Reference and composition of Council were received.</p> <p>It was suggested that the delegated authority to Governance and Nominations Committee should include direct reference to governance issues.</p> <p>The composition would be checked against the most recent Charter changes.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That with the above amendments, the Terms of Reference and Composition be <b>approved</b>.</p> <p>Members were invited to consider possible topics and areas for focus in the next academic year, either for formal meetings, lunchtime briefings, or online informal meetings. Suggestions and requests should be emailed to the Secretary.</p>	<p>Gov Mgr</p> <p>All</p>
<p><b>76</b></p>	<p><b>Chair's Report</b></p> <p>The Chair had no items to report.</p>	
<p><b>77</b></p>	<p><b>Management Report</b></p> <p>Council received the latest Management Report, covering several topics.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor thanked the members of Council for their help and support during his first year in post. Deborah Robinson was welcomed and congratulated for her appointment as Interim Dean. Professor Darren Mundy was congratulated for his</p>	

	<p>appointment as permanent Dean and for his promotion to Professor.</p> <p>Peace Igi-Ehon and Huey Arslan were thanked for their excellent work throughout the year as HUSU Presidents.</p> <p><u>Senior Staff Recruitment</u></p> <p>It was reported that good progress was being made in recruiting to senior staff vacancies. Interviews for the post of Deputy Vice-Chancellor had taken place and a second interview with one candidate would take place shortly.</p> <p>There was a shortlist of four candidates for the PVC (Research) post, who would be interviewed in the coming weeks.</p> <p>It was reported that interviews for the two vacant Dean roles would take place over the next few weeks.</p> <p>It was noted that once appointed, it may take time for staff to take their positions, as they may be subject to long notice periods in their current roles.</p> <p><u>Research Funding</u></p> <p>It was reported that it was likely that the UK would join the Horizon Europe research Framework Programme, which would give access to €90bn of funding.</p> <p><u>Industrial Action</u></p> <p>It was reported that although industrial action was continuing nationally, only four staff had participated in the marking and assessment boycott at Hull. It was confirmed that exam boards were taking place as normal and there had been no negative impact on students or their graduation.</p> <p>It was noted that nationally, there had been different levels of impact, with very difficult situations in some institutions. It was reported that UCU was now targeting Masters dissertation marking, and that this could have an impact on the availability of post-study visas for Masters students. It was expected that the impact in Hull would be minimal but the national effects could be difficult.</p>	
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	<p>It was confirmed that although there were attempts to restart talks, UCU and UCEA had very distant and opposing stances.</p> <p>It was also noted that due to a large deficit in the Teachers Pension Scheme, there may be a group of institutions facing extra financial difficulties, although this would have no direct effect at Hull.</p> <p><u>Pay Scales</u></p> <p>It was reported that following significant work between the University and the local trade unions, a number of changes to the lower bands of the staff pay scales had been made and recently announced to staff.</p> <p>As part of the People Strategy and the overall University focus on social justice, the lower pay bands had been re-drawn. This had resulted in a pay uplift for most staff in these bands, at a reasonable cost to the institution. It was reported that the feedback from staff had been very positive. It was felt that the changes would also help with local recruitment to roles in these pay bands, which had been increasingly challenging.</p> <p>It was confirmed that temporary staff employed through the Temporary Staffing Service (TSS) would also see a pay uplift. Staff employed through contracts are employed via procurement and subject to a different process.</p> <p>It was clarified that the changes might lead to an improvement in the gender pay gap.</p> <p><u>Student Admissions</u></p> <p>It was reported that the student admissions situation continues to be very complex.</p> <p>Home UG applications were down slightly, due to a reduction in health-related areas, mostly following a reduction in mature applicants for cost of living reasons and the NHS not being seen as an attractive employer currently due to negative press coverage. Modelling predictions showed that student numbers would be roughly on target after Clearing although it was noted that there were many uncertainties in the admissions area, including the transition back to 'normal' A level grades following Covid-related changes.</p>	
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	<p>It was reported that many institutions were now making a financial loss for each Home UG student recruited, and that this may affect how high-tariff institutions treat the Clearing period.</p> <p>It was reported that International PGT numbers were very high, with over 40,000 applications, leading to an extra processing burden.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the University was not planning to significantly recruit more international PGT students. It was felt that the target numbers would be achieved even following the recently announced national visa changes.</p> <p>It was noted that there was a high attrition rate between applications and offers and those paying a deposit and confirming a place, due to the nature of the international student application process. It was also noted that the University has a fixed number of visas which can be used, which places an overall limit on international student recruitment.</p> <p>It was confirmed that although students are surveyed during their course, applicants are not asked during the process about their motivation for choosing Hull. It was noted that the reputation of the University had improved and that the majority of international students studying here reported having a very positive experience before, during and after study, which had been shown in the International Student Barometer.</p> <p><u>REF 2028</u></p> <p>It was reported that more information had been released recently about the next REF process. There would be many significant changes, including a move from individual to institutional assessment and a focus on the research environment.</p> <p><u>Change Projects</u></p> <p>It was noted that the largest current change project, related to Professional Support in academic areas and student support, was progressing well. Consultation was due to commence the following week, and the intention remained to deliver the first phase of change by 1 September. It was noted that this was a fast moving project which would support academic staff and students, giving a single physical service centre initially in Student Central and then moving to the Library.</p>	
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	<p>It was clarified that work was ongoing to better identify the profit margin per Home UG student. It was confirmed that the figure will vary between subjects and that some information was included in the Budget.</p> <p>It was noted that this was an important issue to understand better as we transition to recruiting more Home UG students. This would be a focus in the next meeting of Council.</p> <p>It was confirmed that all costs should be taken into account, including the marketing effort.</p> <p>It was clarified that there were some areas where the cost per student appeared to be very high and that these were in areas where student recruitment had stopped but current students were continuing to be taught at an increasing cost per student until all had completed their studies.</p> <p>The impact of recent falls in ranking tables was queried and it was confirmed that current rankings were based on data which lagged by one to three years. It would therefore also take time for current and future improvements to show in rankings. It was felt that rankings did not always affect application numbers significantly but should be improved nevertheless.</p> <p>It was noted that there are now many conflicting and possibly confusing rankings, with the Daily Mail recently announcing it would introduce its own ranking system. It was not yet known how this would be calculated.</p>	Gov Mgr
78	<p><b>Research Update</b></p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor gave a presentation on behalf of Professor Simon Green, Interim PVC(RE), who was attending a meeting with the University of Mariupol in exile in Budapest.</p> <p>The process taken across spring 2023 to undertake a review of research performance and strategy in each department was outlined.</p> <p>It was reported that the overall conclusion was that investment was required to unlock, attract and retain talented researchers to deliver on the University's vision to increase research confidence and capacity.</p> <p>The actions and timeline were discussed and it was confirmed that the project was ambitious in its speed but that this was necessary.</p>	

	<p>It was noted that the timeline would take account of the transition to a permanent new PVC(RE).</p> <p>It was noted that the performance between subjects and faculties was varied, with some areas failing to meet relatively low targets. It was also noted however, that due to the time and cost of making research funding applications, it would often be more efficient to submit fewer, more successful applications than to submit a large number of unsuccessful ones. It was noted that this approach could be seen to have started to take place.</p> <p>The importance of ensuring that research facilities are reviewed and upgraded was noted, as there was a lot of out of date or end of life equipment and labs in use.</p> <p>It was confirmed that as part of the wider plan, the Research Institutes would be realigned with Faculties and that the Doctoral College would be enhanced.</p>	
<p><b>79</b></p>	<p><b>Chair's Action</b></p> <p>(a) <u>Appointment of Chancellor</u></p> <p>The formal appointment on Chair's Action of the new Chancellor, Alan Johnson, for five years from 1 July 2023 was noted.</p>	
<p><b>80</b></p>	<p><b>Appointment of a Pro-Chancellor</b></p> <p>Council received a recommendation from Governance and Nominations Committee to appoint a new Pro-Chancellor, Dame Eleanor King.</p> <p>It was noted that the recommendation had arisen from the search for the new Chancellor, and had been considered at that time.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the appointment of Dame Eleanor King as Pro-Chancellor of the University for three years from 6 July 2023 be <b>approved</b>.</p> <p>It was noted that there would be opportunities to meet the Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor, for example at forthcoming graduation ceremonies and other formal events.</p> <p>It was suggested that the Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor could be invited to attend a Council event or meeting in future. This would be considered.</p>	<p>USCCO / Gov Mgr</p>

	<p>It was agreed that the different periods of appointment would be investigated.</p>	Gov Mgr
<b>81</b>	<p><b>Hull University Students Union Update Report</b></p> <p>Council received the latest HUSU Update Report.</p> <p>The President of Union Development outlined the work recently undertaken by HUSU and its members and officers.</p> <p>It was reported that work had been undertaken on disability parking on campus, on WelcomeFest planning and on democratic reform.</p> <p>It was noted that the new social and study space, The Nest, was progressing well and that refurbishment of Asylum should start over summer.</p> <p>The President of Education outlined her experiences on a recent study trip to South Africa, where she had experienced their culture, history and current student activism. The trip had allowed her to share knowledge and experience with students from a wide and diverse background.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all the Presidents for their successful terms of office and for their positive and helpful engagement with Council.</p>	
<b>82</b>	<p><b>Financial Performance Update</b></p> <p>The Committee received and noted the detailed Financial Performance Update.</p>	
	<p>(a) <u>Finance Update</u></p> <p>It was reported that the YTD Overall Deficit was £6.2m, £1.3m adverse to Q2F and £1.1m adverse to prior year.</p> <p>Income was reported to be £146.5m, £1.0m favourable to Q2F and £9.8m favourable to prior year due to increased student population and increased return from investments.</p> <p>Non-pay costs (excluding energy) was reported to be £46.2m, £1.7m adverse to Q2F.</p> <p>Energy costs were reported to be £6.6m, £0.5m adverse to Q2F and £3.6m adverse to prior year, due to increased rates.</p>	



	<p>The YTD Operating Surplus was reported to be £1.4m adverse to Q2F due to higher than projected student attrition from year 1 to year 2. It was noted that Home UG student numbers had dropped by 360</p> <p>It was reported that tuition fee payments from Nigeria were affected by the slow processing times in that country, leading to an increase in creditors. It was noted that the issue was not that students were not paying, rather the system itself was proving to be very slow.</p> <p>The Q3 forecast showed a surplus of £17m, £2.2m adverse to Q2F due to high student attrition and increased energy costs.</p> <p>Operating income was forecast to be £204.6m, £0.2m favourable to Q2F.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Q3F EBITDA was £27.5m, which ensured that all covenants would be met.</p> <p>It was noted that some of the financial metrics used to compare against sector average were out of date.</p> <p>Council received a capital investment update, and it was confirmed that Deloitte were now assisting with the Digital Spine Project.</p> <p>It was confirmed that many other projects were progressing well.</p> <p>Issues with the development of the solar farms were reported. Planning permission for the onsite campus solar farm had been rejected by Hull City Council and the offsite solar farm would be considered in September. The rejection would be examined and an appeal would be submitted.</p> <p>Work was continuing on planning for the grid connections for all solar farms.</p> <p>Council received a detailed and lengthy business case relating to the need for a replacement High Performance Computing (HPC) facility. The business case had been considered and recommended by the Finance and Investment Committee.</p>	
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	<p>It was noted that the business case included the view of an external consultant, and was for a total of £6m, consisting of £4.5m up front and a further £1.5m for a mid-term upgrade.</p> <p>It was noted that a HPC was essential to support both research and teaching. The existing HPC – VIPER had been in existence since 2016 and had supported £10.7m of research and contributed to more than 160 publications. VIPER was considered to be reaching the end of its useful life.</p> <p>It was noted that more research projects would need the use of HPC in future.</p> <p>It was reported that options had been considered regarding on-campus, hybrid and cloud solutions and that an on-campus / cloud hybrid was thought the best option.</p> <p>It was noted that HPC was used extensively by DAIM for their teaching and research.</p> <p>It was confirmed that ICT has a specialised team to support the HPC and would use consultants to assist with the transition.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the £6m HPC2 capital business case be <b>approved</b>.</p>	
	<p>(b) <u>Operational Budget and 5 year Financial Projections</u></p> <p>Council received and noted the 23/24 Operational Budget and 5 year Financial Projections.</p> <p>The higher than expected level of student attrition was noted.</p> <p>It was reported that 76% of students had said that the current cost of living rises were having a significant impact. It was also noted that the current student cohort were heavily affected by Covid and had received some inflated A level grades.</p> <p>It was felt that these had all contributed to the high attrition rate, which was not specific to Hull.</p> <p>It was noted that those students taking their A level exams this summer would be taking their first ever public exams, and this was an indication that the negative effects would last for some time.</p>	

	<p>It was reported that some institutions were now in a difficult position and were cost-cutting. Hull was not in this position, having made difficult decisions in previous years.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the aim remains to grow Home UG numbers but in a realistic manner. The impact from current and recent projects would start to be seen shortly.</p> <p>It was also confirmed that International PGT numbers would soon reach a peak before reducing slightly, in order to maintain the optimum mix of student types.</p> <p>It was noted that our current International fees were close to the level of Home fees and that these will slowly rise to be nearer the sector norm.</p> <p>It was reported that although our financial situation was strong, there remained many uncertainties which would need to be closely monitored.</p> <p>It was noted that the plan is to grow the surplus over time, but also to invest significantly. Council would be asked to contribute opinion of the surplus / investment ratio.</p> <p>It was confirmed that some courses were taught at a loss, but usually due to the need to complete the teaching for courses that were no longer running.</p> <p>A scenario and sensitivity analysis had been undertaken, with possible mitigations identified. In all but one scenario, the mitigation would cover the negative impacts.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the aim for a net surplus of £60m, 19.4% of income, by 27/28 remains but there is also a need to reinvest.</p> <p>It was confirmed that new KPIs would be devised and brought to a future meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that there would be a large number of investments and capital projects to come. It was queried whether lessons had been learned from Covid, allowing change to take place at speed, allowing rapid investment. It was confirmed that there was a shortage of project management expertise, which had the potential to delay progress. It was also noted that although there were attempts to recruit appropriate staff, there was also a balance to be struck relating to the academic and PSS staff balance.</p>	
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	<p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the 23/24 Budget and financial plans for 24/25 – 27/28 be <b>approved</b>.</p>	
	<p>(c) <u>Property Disposals</u></p> <p>Council received and noted the latest update regarding the proposed disposal of Ferens Hall and The Lawns.</p>	
<b>83</b>	<p><b>Risk Management Update</b></p> <p>Council received the updated Risk Management Policy, Risk Management Procedure and Risk Register.</p> <p>It was reported that minor changes had been made to the Risk Register to reflect recent discussions.</p> <p>It was noted that the revised Risk Management Policy and Procedure had been recommended by ULT and Audit and Risk Committee, and covered the required annual review and update.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the amended Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Procedure be <b>approved</b>.</p>	
<b>84</b>	<p><b>Hull University Students Union Code of Practice</b></p> <p>Council received and noted the updated HUSU Code of Practice. It was reported that the document had been subject to the normal annual review and amendments had been made.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the updated HUSU Code of Practice be <b>approved</b>.</p> <p>It was reported that the Code would also be noted at Senate.</p>	
<b>85</b>	<p><b>Performance Indicators and League Table Update</b></p> <p>Council received and noted the latest Performance Indicators and League Table Update.</p>	

86	<p><b>Policy Items for Approval</b></p> <p>Council received the following Policy items for approval, following recommendation from the relevant committee.</p>	
	<p>(a) <u>Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy</u></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy be approved.</p>	
	<p>(b) <u>Whistleblowing Policy</u></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the Whistleblowing Policy be approved.</p>	
	<p>(c) <u>Modern Slavery Statement</u></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the Modern Slavery Statement be approved.</p>	
	<p>(d) <u>Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy</u></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy be approved.</p>	
	<p>(e) <u>Standing Orders</u></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the Standing Orders be approved.</p>	
87	<p><b>Office for Students</b></p> <p>It was noted that there had been no reportable events since the previous meeting of Council.</p> <p>It was reported that the outcomes from the OfS consultation on sexual harassment were expected soon.</p> <p>It was reported that the OfS had chosen not to issue new guidance regarding Freedom of Speech following recent government</p>	

	decision. The relevant University policies would be updated in due course to reflect the changes.	USCCO
<b>88</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Committees</b></p> <p>(a) <u>University Ethics Committee – 3 May 2023</u></p> <p>The minutes of University Ethics Committee held on 3 May 2023 were received.</p> <p>(i) <i>UEC Terms of Reference and Composition 2023/24</i></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the University Ethics Committee Terms of Reference and Composition 2023/24 be approved.</p>	
	<p>(b) <u>Audit and Risk Committee – 5 June 2023</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 5 June 2023 were received.</p>	
	<p>(c) <u>Senate – 7 June 2023</u></p> <p>The minutes of Senate held on 7 June 2023 were received.</p>	
	<p>(d) <u>Governance and Nominations Committee – 20 June 2023</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Governance and Nominations Committee held on 20 June 2023 were received.</p> <p>(i) <i>GNC Terms of reference and composition 2023/24</i></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the Governance and Nominations Committee Terms of Reference and Composition 2023/24 be approved.</p> <p>(ii) <i>Committee Appointments</i></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the recommended committee appointments be approved.</p> <p>a) Ursula Lidbetter to be appointed as Chair of Governance and Nominations Committee from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2025.</p>	

	<p>b) Denise Wilson to be appointed as Chair of Remuneration Committee from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2025.</p> <p>c) Andrew Haigh become a lay member (currently co-opted) of Finance and Investment Committee when he joins Council, from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2026; and a member of Remuneration Committee from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2026.</p> <p>d) Helen Kemp-Taylor to remain on Audit and Risk Committee for a further year to 31 July 2024.</p>													
	<p>(e) <u>Finance and Investment Committee - 22 June 2023</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Finance and Investment Committee held on 22 June 2023 were received.</p>													
<b>89</b>	<p><b>Valedictions</b></p> <p>Thanks were expressed for the work of members or attendees leaving – Paul Hagan, Huey Arslan, Peace Igi-Ehon and Julia Whittaker.</p>													
<b>90</b>	<p><b>Dates of Meetings 2023-24 (Note amended start times)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>Date of Meeting</b></th> <th><i>Deadline for papers</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Thursday 19 October 2023 at 1.30 pm</td> <td><i>05/10/2023</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 14 December 2023 at 1.30 pm</td> <td><i>30/11/2023</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 22 February 2024 at 1.30 pm</td> <td><i>08/02/2024</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 25 April 2024 at 1.30 pm</td> <td><i>11/04/2024</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 4 July 2024 at 1.30 pm</td> <td><i>20/06/2024</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Other dates to note:</b></p> <p><u>Council Dinner</u> Wednesday 18 October 2023, 7.00 pm Wednesday 3 July 2024, 7.00 pm</p> <p><u>Council Away Day</u> Wednesday 22 May 2024</p>	<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<i>Deadline for papers</i>	Thursday 19 October 2023 at 1.30 pm	<i>05/10/2023</i>	Thursday 14 December 2023 at 1.30 pm	<i>30/11/2023</i>	Thursday 22 February 2024 at 1.30 pm	<i>08/02/2024</i>	Thursday 25 April 2024 at 1.30 pm	<i>11/04/2024</i>	Thursday 4 July 2024 at 1.30 pm	<i>20/06/2024</i>	<b>All members</b>
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<b>91</b>	<b>Any other business</b>  <b>(a) <u>Council timings</u></b>  It was agreed that future meetings of Council should commence at 13:30 rather than 14:00.  <b>(b) <u>Ferens Educational Trust</u></b>  It was noted that the annual return to the Charity Commission was overdue by over a month, having also been significantly late in the previous period. This would be raised with the relevant staff.  <b>(c) <u>Art Exhibition</u></b>  It was reported that from 13 July to September, an art exhibition would be open in the University Art Gallery featuring 90 images by Ukrainian photographers and photojournalists documenting Russia's invasion of Ukraine. All members were invited to attend.	  Gov Mgr    USCCO       All
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Signature of Chair

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Date of signature

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