

14 December 2023

Council

Minutes

Minutes of Council held on Thursday 14 December 2023 at 1.30 pm in Austen/Blake Conference Room, Canham Turner.

Present: George Garlick (Chair), Heidi Broadhead, Professor Rob Dover, Andrew Haigh, Professor Kevin Kerrigan, Ursula Lidbetter, Dr Catherine Murray, Professor Dave Petley, Raji Destiny Ibrahim Raji, Rashmi Rungta, Neil Robinson, Rosalyn Schofield, Denise Wilson

In attendance: Joanne Gibbons, Jeremy Hartley (until end of item 38), Professor Philip Gilmartin, Professor Stephen Hardy, Professor Becky Huxley-Binns, Dr Chris Ince (Secretary), Jan Juillerat (AdvanceHE), Professor Fiona Matthews, Professor Darren Mundy, Derek Ord (Assistant Secretary), Deborah Robinson, Professor Dirk Schaefer

Minutes 23 - 48

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| 23 | <p>Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declaration</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Jan Juillerat (AdvanceHE), who was observing the meeting as part of the ongoing Governance Review.</p> <p>Apologies were received from: Matt Jukes, Vanessa Lee and Sarah Wilson</p> | |
| 24 | <p>Minutes of last meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2023 were approved as a correct record.</p> | |

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| <p>25</p> | <p>Matters arising</p> <p>(a) <u>Action Summary</u></p> <p>08 Trends in 18-year-olds choosing University. It was reported that one third of current first year students had considered other options before applying to the University and that this was a trend that was repeated nationally. It was noted that more 16- and 17-year-olds were in employment than three years ago.</p> <p>It was noted that although there were more 18-year-olds demographically, fewer were considering university and that mid-tariff students in particular were delaying making decisions regarding their next steps. New behaviours were being observed carefully.</p> | |
| <p>26</p> | <p>Chair's Report</p> <p>(a) It was reported that nearly all lay member appraisals had been completed and that outcomes would be reported to GNC.</p> <p>(b) Thanks were expressed to the Chair of ARC who had attended a recent CUC Chair's event.</p> <p>(c) It was noted that the unveiling of the portrait of the previous VC had recently taken place and had been a very successful event.</p> | |
| <p>27</p> | <p>Management Report</p> <p>Council received the Management Report, including updates of strategic and management importance, and internal and external context.</p> <p>Members of Council were thanked for their support and challenge over the last calendar year. Council thanked the interim Dean of FHS for her excellent work.</p> <p>It was noted that the sector was facing increasing difficulties, particularly in student recruitment in health-related subjects. It would be vital to work closely with the local NHS on communications to young people regarding the careers available within the NHS. Students were reportedly increasingly looking at nursing apprenticeships which together with UCAS deadlines</p> | |

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| | <p>being later than usual, was leading to changes in student and school behaviour.</p> <p>International student recruitment was noted as continuing to be difficult across the sector, exacerbated by visa rule changes.</p> <p>It was reported that the next REF would be delayed by a year to 2029, with submission in late 2028. Although this would allow an extra year to make improvements, this would also result in having to work with current QR funding for an extra year.</p> <p>The proposed regional devolution deal was noted as moving towards consultation. If approved, it was thought that this would provide skills and innovation opportunities, and the possibility of an investment zone, which would include the University at its heart.</p> <p>The continuing situation in Gaza was noted and it was reported that although there had been some related incidents in some institutions, there were none on campus currently. Support was available to staff and students if required.</p> <p>The Brand and Identity project was reported to be on target and a rollout was expected in February.</p> <p>The restructure of the Admissions function was reported to be progressing.</p> <p>The VC had visited East and South East Asia and reported meeting a large number of alumni who had expressed a desire to continue to work with the University.</p> <p>It was reported with pleasure that both the next Artistic Director of the National Theatre, and the Government's choice for the new BBC Chair were Hull alumni.</p> <p>It was reported that the contract had been signed for the new London Study Centre, and that the Dean was now in place. A small cohort would be recruited for May, subject to visa allocation approval, with a larger cohort in September.</p> <p>It was noted that some political parties had acknowledged that the current university funding model was not sustainable, and that some change may be expected after the next election.</p> | |
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| 28 | Finance Year End <p>Council received a set of financial year-end documents for consideration and approval. It was confirmed that all papers had been examined in detail by both Finance and Investment Committee and Audit and Risk Committee and had been recommended for approval.</p> <p>The year-end process was reported to have passed much smoother than in the previous year, and that there were no going concern issues.</p> <p>The external audit findings were reported to be mainly minor and technical. Changes in response to these would be reported to ARC in Spring.</p> <p>It was felt that the financial outcomes reported were good in light of the current financial challenges in the sector.</p> <p>The significant risks, judgements and estimates were listed and discussed, these being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Borrowing covenants• Pensions Provisions• Impairment of Assets• West Campus Residence• Service Concessions• Investment Property (Newland Science Park)• Debt Provision• Subsidiary Companies• Associate Companies• Financial Instruments (Loan Notes) <p>All outcomes were noted.</p> <p>The work related to the Going Concern Review was discussed in detail. It was reported that the original budget was revised against actual student intake, before a range of scenarios were considered, including a reverse stress test. Mitigating actions were then identified and re-forecasts completed before outcomes analysed.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the external auditors had reviewed the Going Concern report and had found no issues.</p> | |
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| | <p>The External Audit Findings Report was noted and considered to be a very useful document. It was confirmed that the central findings would be addressed.</p> <p>The Finance team were thanked for arranging conversations with Council members who were not members of ARC or FIC, to discuss and answer questions about the finances in advance.</p> | |
| | <p>(a) <u>Accounting Presentation and Judgemental Issues</u></p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Accounting presentation and judgemental issues be noted.</p> | |
| | <p>(b) <u>Annual Report and Financial Statements</u></p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2023 be approved.</p> | |
| | <p>(c) <u>Going Concern Report</u></p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Going Concern report be approved and presented to the External Auditors.</p> | |
| | <p>(d) <u>Letter of continual financial support for Lampada Digital Solutions Limited</u></p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the letter of continual financial support for Lampada Digital Solutions Ltd be approved.</p> | |
| | <p>(e) <u>Letter of continual financial support for UoH Energy Co Ltd</u></p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the letter of continual financial support for subsidiary UOH Energy Co Ltd be approved.</p> | |

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| | <p>(f) <u>Management Representation Letter</u></p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Management Representation letter to the External Auditors be approved.</p> | |
| | <p>(g) <u>External Auditors' Audit Findings Report</u></p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the External Audit Findings Report be accepted.</p> | |
| <p>29</p> | <p>Sustainability Report</p> <p>Council received the 2022/23 Sustainability Report.</p> <p>It was reported that there had been many discussions in ARC over the previous eighteen months regarding the content of the report and that it was very pleasing to have a final product available of such good quality. It was noted that it is very rare for the first such report to be formally assured, and that the External Auditors had been able to do so.</p> <p>It was noted that the report should help to enhance the reputation of the institution, as well as meet our obligations under green finance initiatives. The Finance team were congratulated for their excellent work.</p> <p>It was reported that the document was intended to address a number of audiences and included social justice issues. The outcomes were linked to UN sustainable development goals. KPIs had been included, with targets assured by external auditors. It was noted that the allocation of green finance funds was also audited.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the University marketing team were planning how best to promote the report and would be looking for feedback and comment when this takes place.</p> <p>It was confirmed that consultants had been used to help pull the content together and tell a coherent story. Further productions of the report would continue to be developed, although future editions may be shorter.</p> | |

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| | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the 22/23 Sustainability Report be approved.</p> | |
| <p>30</p> | <p>New KPIs and Comparators</p> <p>Council received a new framework of core KPIs and proposed next steps to develop targets and milestones. It was noted that discussions regarding new KPIs had been ongoing within Council and ULT for some time.</p> <p>The new KPIs had been grouped into Academic and Operational areas and were designed to provide a high-level snapshot for Council at each meeting. The KPIs covered six main themes and were designed to be simple enough to be easily understood and presented and able to drive action if needed.</p> <p>It was noted that although the KPIs were designed to be presented at every Council meeting, there was a large body of data available to Council on request, and deep dives into any areas would be possible. Many other reports were available and brought to Council or its committees throughout the year.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the KPIs were linked to Strategy 2030 and gave broad confidence in progress towards that strategy.</p> <p>It was noted that sources of data were shown, providing lead indicators and baselines. Individual KPIs were discussed in detail, and next steps confirmed to be agreeing targets and comparator institutions.</p> <p>It was felt that overall, the new KPIs were much improved, comprehensive, and concise.</p> <p>It was confirmed that some indicators could be examined at a lower, programme level and that trend data could also be examined. The KPIs could be reviewed at a later date to ensure continued relevance.</p> <p>KPI7 – Social Responsibility: Degree Awarding Gap was discussed at length. It was noted that there were many possible measures for this area, but that to introduce different metrics would result in swapping one demographic for another and that the chosen measure was closely linked to our academic mission.</p> <p>The inclusion of a measure of spend on transformation programmes was suggested and discussed. It was noted that any</p> | |

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| | <p>measure of spend might be an enabler rather than a KPI measure, which should measure outcomes.</p> <p>It was noted that many measures are monitored by other committees of Council and that the KPIs are only one piece of a suite of reporting. It was suggested that a deep dive on one theme should be included in the agenda for each meeting of Council, which would include more detailed reports and measures.</p> <p>It was agreed that further thought should be given to the measures used for KPI7.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That, subject to further refinement, the framework of core Council KPIs be approved. The next steps were noted and the refined KPIs will be further discussed, with targets and comparators, at the next meeting.</p> | <p>Sec</p> <p>DVC</p> <p>DVC</p> |
| <p>31</p> | <p>CRM Business Case</p> <p>Council received a Final Business Case for a new cloud-based CRM.</p> <p>It was reported that there were many CRM systems in use within the institution, of varied complexity and technology. These were not linked in any consistent way. The desire was to procure a single system that would support all users, covering students from recruitment to alumni, and all external contacts.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the business case had been considered by FIC in detail and recommended for approval.</p> <p>It was clarified that the system would link to SITS, but not be a part of it.</p> <p>The timeline for implementation was considered ambitious but achievable with assistance from consultants.</p> <p>The need for staff training and skills enhancement was noted, as well as the need for a culture change to ensure the system would be used effectively.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the proposal for a new CRM system at a capital budget of £5.4m be approved.</p> | |

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| <p>32</p> | <p>Freedom of Speech Policy</p> <p>Council received the revised Freedom of Speech Policy.</p> <p>It was noted that the OfS was gaining additional powers in this area and would be releasing further information in the coming months. It was necessary to update the Policy irrespective, to ensure that it aligns with the University Ethics framework. It was confirmed that the revised policy has been considered by UEC, Senate and ULT and was recommended for approval.</p> <p>It was suggested that a list of proscribed organisations may be useful as an appendix. This would be considered.</p> <p>It was confirmed that any breaches of the Policy would be handled through existing staff or student disciplinary processes. Such policies would be checked to ensure that they clearly cover this area. The new legislation would also give a right of complaint to the OfS.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the changes in OfS would give them oversight of some of the activities of HUSU, and that they were aware of this change.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the revised Freedom of Speech Policy be approved.</p> | <p>USCCO</p> <p>USCCO</p> |
| <p>33</p> | <p>Senate Composition Changes</p> | |
| | <p>(a) <u>Changes to Senate Composition</u></p> <p>Council received a proposal to amend the composition of Senate. It was reported that the proposal had been considered three times by Senate and that an EDI assessment had taken place with no issues found.</p> <p>The proposal was to reduce the size of Senate, whilst ensuring that all School were represented.</p> <p>It was noted that HR was not represented on Senate, but that the items discussed were of an academic nature, and any staff implications were normally brought through ULT.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the changes to the composition of Senate be approved.</p> | |

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| | <p>(b) <u>Amendments to Ordinances</u></p> <p>Proposals to amend the University Ordinances were received.</p> <p>It was reported that the main amendments were required due to the approved changes to the composition of Senate.</p> <p>It was noted that there were also a number of minor changes to role titles, and the movement of the list of awards to become a separate appendix.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the changes to the University Ordinances be approved.</p> | |
| <p>34</p> | <p>Annual Senior Remuneration and Severance Report</p> <p>Council received the Annual Report. It was noted that there is a requirement to produce and publish the report annually.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the remuneration of senior staff and Vice-Chancellors in particular remained an issue of public interest.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Annual Senior Remuneration and Severance Report be approved for publication.</p> | |
| <p>35</p> | <p>Annual Statement of Research Integrity</p> <p>Council received the Annual Statement of Research Integrity.</p> <p>It was noted that research misconduct policies were under review and that there was an aim to improve research culture in the institution. It was noted that some issues were not being reported and that this was being addressed.</p> <p>It was clarified that although there had been staffing issues in the research support area, restructure had taken place and all tasks had been covered.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Annual Statement of Research Integrity be approved.</p> | |

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| <p>36</p> | <p>Approval of Honorary Degrees</p> <p>Council received a list of eight nominations for the award of honorary degrees. It was confirmed that these had been recommended for approval by the Honorary Awards Committee and Senate.</p> <p>It was noted that the list was not particularly diverse and that this had been noted and discussed by HAC. Awards could only be made from those nominations received, and Council was asked to consider making nominations.</p> <p>Council was reminded of the confidential nature of the list, and that those nominated may not yet be aware of the fact.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the nominations for the award of Honorary Degrees be approved.</p> | |
| <p>37</p> | <p>Hull University Students Union Articles of Association</p> <p>Council received the proposed revisions to the HUSU Articles of Association.</p> <p>It was reported that the proposals had been discussed by the University and HUSU, and that they now required approval before being put to a referendum of students.</p> <p>It was noted that the proposals included a reduction of the President team to two, with an increase in the number of part-time paid officers. It was felt that this would give greater coverage of all areas, strengthen the democratic structure, and increase student engagement.</p> <p>It was confirmed that a number of measures related to induction and orientation would be put into place to address the problems encountered during prior elections.</p> <p>It was clarified that the increased costs of the proposed structure were covered by HUSU.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the proposed changes to the HUSU Articles of Association be approved.</p> | |

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| <p>38</p> | <p>Finance Forecast</p> <p>Council received the updated full year forecast.</p> <p>It was reported that the operating deficit was £1.6m adverse to budget and £0.4m adverse to PY, with slightly reduced operating income and increased pay and non-pay.</p> <p>It was noted that student numbers were reduced and that there would be a decrease in the planned January DAIM intake.</p> <p>It was confirmed that all covenants were budgeted to be met.</p> <p>It was noted that pension contribution changes should have a positive effect, as would reductions in energy costs.</p> <p>The relative robustness in the financial position was welcomed.</p> | |
| <p>39</p> | <p>Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report</p> <p>Council received and noted the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report.</p> | |
| <p>40</p> | <p>Health and Safety Annual Report and Statement of Intent</p> <p>Council received the Health and Safety Annual Report and Statement of Intent. It was reported that the report and statement had been recommended by the Health and Safety Committee.</p> <p>It was noted that the main theme of the report was the return to pre-Covid levels of activity and H&S related reports.</p> <p>It was reported that a number of Health and Safety policies were being reviewed, and that the Statement of Intent was a top-level policy that required approval.</p> <p>It was noted that reports of near misses were particularly useful and should be examined against comparator figures.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Statement of Intent be approved.</p> | |

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| <p>41</p> | <p>Risk Register</p> <p>Council received the latest Risk Register. It was reported that there were no major updates to the Register. A full review would take place in early 2024.</p> | <p>USCCO</p> |
| <p>42</p> | <p>Hull University Students Union Report</p> <p>Council received the latest HUSU Report, outlining the work of HUSU and the President team.</p> <p>Highlights of the report were outlined, including the bike hub, accessibility issues, reasonable adjustments, academic misconduct training, skills teams, PG student support, sport funding and employability workshops.</p> <p>HUSU were thanked for their comprehensive report.</p> | |
| <p>43</p> | <p>Prevent Report</p> <p>Council received the annual Prevent Return. It was confirmed that the return had been signed by the Chair of Council and submitted by the deadline, after consideration by Council at the last meeting.</p> | |
| <p>44</p> | <p>Rankings Update</p> <p>Council received the latest ranking update.</p> <p>It was noted that rankings are a useful indicator, but that competitors may be making the same improvements and so the institutions may be improving as a cohort but not changing relative to each other.</p> <p>It was confirmed that a set of approximately twelve comparator institutions was being developed, which will allow better data analysis and more detailed insight.</p> | |
| <p>45</p> | <p>Minutes/Summaries of Committees</p> | |
| | <p>(a) <u>Honorary Awards Committee – 23 October 2023</u></p> <p>Council received and noted the minutes.</p> | |

| | (b) <u>University Ethics Committee – 25 October 2023</u> Council received and noted the minutes. | | | | | | | | | |
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| | (c) <u>Remuneration Committee – 13 November 2023</u> Council received and noted the minutes. The Annual report was approved earlier on the agenda. | | | | | | | | | |
| | (d) <u>Finance and Investment Committee – 21 November 2023</u> Council received and noted the minutes. | | | | | | | | | |
| | (e) <u>Joint Audit and Risk/Finance and Investment Committee</u> Council received and noted the minutes. | | | | | | | | | |
| | (f) <u>Senate – 22 November 2023</u> Council received and noted the minutes. The changes to the composition, and to Ordinances were approved earlier on the agenda. | | | | | | | | | |
| 46 | Valediction To note the following valedictions: Deborah Robinson was thanked for her contribution to Council as Interim Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences. | All members | | | | | | | | |
| 47 | Dates of Meetings 2023-24 <table border="1" data-bbox="316 1467 1136 1668"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date of Meeting</th> <th><i>Deadline for papers</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <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> Other dates to note: <u>Council dinner</u> Thursday 4 July 2024, 7.00 pm <u>Council Away Day</u> Wednesday 22 May 2024, 11.30 am | Date of Meeting | <i>Deadline for papers</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> | All members |
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| 48 | Any other business (a) External Governance Review – Survey Council was reminded of and encouraged to complete the online survey for the external governance review. | All |
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