

Council

Minutes

Minutes of Council held on Thursday 8 December 2022 at 2.00 pm in the Kingsley Suite, Canham Turner

Present: George Garlick (Chair), Huey Arslan, Heidi Broadhead, Professor Rob Dover, Professor Becky Huxley-Binns, Matt Jukes, Vanessa Lee, Ursula Lidbetter, Professor Dave Petley, Neil Robinson, Rashmi Rungta, Rosalyn Schofield, Matthew Swindells, Julia Whittaker, Denise Wilson

In attendance: Ola Fadipe, Professor Phil Gilmartin, Jeremy Hartley, Professor Paul Hagan, Professor Andrew Heyes, Dr Chris Ince (Secretary), Dr Darren Mundy and Derek Ord (Assistant Secretary)

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		Action by
20	<p>Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declaration</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the new member elected by Senate: Professor Rob Dover</p> <p>Apologies were received from: Professor Stephen Hardy, Dr Dave Richards, Sarah Wilson</p> <p>Matt Jukes declared an interest in agenda item 9 – Property Disposals. It was agreed that he would remain in the meeting for this item but not speak on it.</p>	
21	<p>Minutes of last meeting</p> <p>19(a) Ferens Education Trust –</p> <p>It was reported that the overdue annual return and accounts for the Ferens Education Trust had not yet been resolved and final accounts were still to be submitted.</p>	

	<p>With the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2022 were approved as a correct record.</p>	
22	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>(a) <u>Action Summary</u></p> <p>The Committee received an Action Summary. It was noted that all items were in progress, complete or on the agenda for discussion.</p>	
23	<p>Chair's Report</p> <p>It was noted that annual appraisals of lay members of Council had commenced.</p> <p>It was reported that the Chancellor had indicated that she would be leaving the post following the January 2023 graduation ceremonies. A search for suitable candidates for the position of Chancellor had commenced. It was noted that a search was also underway for Pro-Chancellors, and members were invited to forward any suggestions for suitable candidates to the Secretary.</p>	All members
24	<p>Management Report</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Management Report.</p> <p>It was reported that the national Science and Innovation budget had been raised, which may present opportunities for growth in this area. An Investment Zone Programme had also been announced which would be pursued if possible, including in conjunction with local authorities.</p> <p>Visits to all departments and schools were continuing, with staff proving to be very engaged, although with concerns over morale in some areas. It was noted that the new People Strategy was in the process of being embedded which would improve on this issue. Staff had reported frustration with IT systems, noting an effect on academic staff research time. It was reported that work was planned and underway to resolve these issues.</p> <p>A good outturn was reported for student admissions, and although it was too early to report on the next intake, early indications showed that nationally students appeared to be applying later, although applications to Hull were 5% up, against the national trend.</p>	

	<p>It was reported that student progression to later years of study was at a lower rate than had been forecast. It was felt that this was a sector issue, possibly related to the effects of Covid.</p> <p>It was reported that the inquest into the death of student Harry Bolton had been widely reported in the press recently, with the cause of death related to a sepsis infection caught in a private hall of residence. It was confirmed that the University had a protocol for handling student deaths that includes making contact with friends and family.</p> <p>It was queried whether Council members could be informed of such issues in particular and other press statements in general. It was agreed that this would be discussed with Internal Communications.</p> <p>It was noted that OFSTED had recently revisited and that 'Reasonable Progress' had been found in all areas of the University's apprenticeship provision. This was a very positive result, with thanks expressed to the PVC(Ed) and staff of the Faculty of Health Sciences. It was noted that there remained much work to do in readiness for the next full inspection.</p> <p>It was reported that the University had improved by eleven places to 24th in the People and Planet league table, taking it into the First-Class group of institutions and the top institution in Yorkshire. This was a large and sustained improvement over time.</p> <p>There had been significant work to review the University estate, including the choice of new buildings or refurbishments of existing ones and the timeline of investments. There was a desire to make some smaller improvements in the short term, with a survey currently underway, eliciting a very good response including many useful comments. It was clarified that capital investment linked to the private placement does not need to be on new buildings but must be for 'green' purposes.</p>	USCCO
25	<p>Education Strategy KPI annual report</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Education Strategy 2020-2025 Report on progress against KPIs.</p> <p>It was reported that there had been continued increase in entry tariff to 130, against a KPI target of 128.</p> <p>The fall in NSS scores for Organisation and Management was noted, and it was reported that this was largely due to timetabling</p>	

	<p>problems related to process issues and procedures not being followed. Work was underway to resolve these issues as swiftly as possible.</p> <p>It was clarified that in relation to the tariff, students come to university with varied qualifications and the highest are used in reporting. Lower offers are made in some cases to assist with widening participation aims. Overall, students were arriving with higher qualifications than the published tariff.</p> <p>In relation to student progression, it was noted that this was an issue to be resolved as soon as possible. It was clarified that although progression is above the OfS benchmark, it remains below the internal target. Issues affecting progression were thought to include Covid, the current cost of living and recent divestment from some apprenticeship provision. It was noted that there were many discussions regarding progression throughout the sector, indicating that this was a national issue.</p> <p>It was clarified that the NSS scores were extremely sensitive to very small changes in responses but that some areas had scores which remained too low.</p> <p>It was noted that the University takes many local students and that their successes could be celebrated more locally.</p>	
<p>26</p>	<p>Capital Investment Principles</p> <p>The Committee received the Principles for Capital Investment Decisions.</p> <p>It was noted that there were ten principles to be considered and that these were to be considered as guidance; it was not expected that every project would align with every principle.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Principles for Capital Investment Decisions be approved.</p>	
<p>27</p>	<p>Digital Transformation Programme</p> <p>The Committee received information regarding the proposed Digital Transformation Programme.</p> <p>It was reported that much work had been undertaken to analyse core systems and processes. The request presented was to allocate capital funds to three priority pieces of work. It was</p>	

	<p>confirmed that detailed business cases would follow in due course for approval of each project.</p> <p>It was reported that a process was underway to source a digital transformation partner, or partners, to assist with the procurement of the required systems.</p> <p>It was clarified that the Capital Investment Committee would examine each case in detail and they would report to FIC and then to Council. The membership of CIC was clarified.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the goal is to remove as many redundant systems as possible. It was reported that there were twenty seven CRM systems in use, and the aim is to have one.</p> <p>It was noted that some members of Council had significant expertise in implementing systems. It was confirmed that the University would be keen to take advantage of advice and support offered, although it may not be appropriate to have lay members as part of a project board reporting to ULT. The governance structure and inclusion of lay members with relevant expertise would be considered.</p> <p>It was suggested that a ‘deep dive’ into systems issues could be made over lunch at a future meeting. This would be considered.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the allocation of £21.5m over the finance periods from Aug-22/Jul-23 to Aug-24/Jul-25 to implement the Digital Transformation Programme be approved.</p>	<p>USCCO</p> <p>Secretary</p>
<p>28</p>	<p>Property Disposals</p> <p>(a) <u>Disposal of land to the south of Cottingham Road</u></p> <p>The Committee received a proposal regarding the disposal of land and property to the south of Cottingham Road.</p> <p>It was reported that Council had previously approved the sale of the Dennison Centre and associated land, and that an offer had been made to purchase.</p> <p>It was noted that options had been reviewed and that the recommendation was now to withdraw from the sale. It was felt that the property could have a future use for the University, and that the building or land may be repurposed.</p>	

	<p>It was clarified that there were no firm plans to occupy the property but it was not felt appropriate to leave it empty for a long period.</p> <p>The location of the property and land was felt to be advantageous to the University and could be built into the emerging estate plan.</p> <p>It was noted that the prospective purchaser had independently incurred costs, and was a local buyer that the University had not previously dealt with, but with whom we do have a good relationship.</p> <p>The decision was considered together with 28(b), as it was felt that the proposals were closely related and should be considered as a whole.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the following be approved :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Withdrawal of the sale of the Dennison Centre and associated land2. Incorporation of the Dennison Centre and associated land into the emerging Estate Strategy and Masterplan to determine its future use and potential redevelopment to meet the needs of the University <p>(b) <u>Sale of The Lawns and Ferens Hall</u></p> <p>The Committee received an update to the proposal to sell The Lawns and Ferens Hall, and a number of letters and messages related to the proposal from external individuals and organisations.</p> <p>It was reported that two offers to purchase had been made for Ferens Hall only, and two for The Lawns and Ferens Hall together.</p> <p>One of the combined offers was reported to be an unconditional offer made on behalf of the Home Office. The purchase process was reported to be very quick, at high value and that the properties would be used for accommodating people seeking asylum in the UK. It was confirmed that the proposal to sell to the Home Office had been recommended by ULT and FIC.</p>	
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	<p>It was noted that Council had previously approved the sale but that due to the potential controversial nature of the bid, the proposal had been presented to Council.</p> <p>It was noted that the properties cost approximately £0.5m to maintain per year and that their condition was deteriorating. It was confirmed that the interior and exterior of The Lawns was listed, and that Ferens Hall was not listed. The benefit of selling the properties was to provide funds to invest in academic areas, including in new equipment which can lead to improved staff and student recruitment.</p> <p>It was reported that discussions had been held with the Home Office and that assurances had been received that the site will be run in a different way to other asylum seeker accommodation, and will include the provision of services on site, thus reducing the impact on existing local services. The recommendation was to proceed with the sale on that basis.</p> <p>It was noted that a significant number of detailed representations had subsequently been received from local authorities, MPs, the NHS and police expressing concerns over the sale and the assurances of the Home Office.</p> <p>It was reported that in the light of the many reservations expressed, the recommendation would now be to pause the sale process and convene an urgent meeting with interested parties including the local authorities, MPs, NHS and Police, to discuss the issues and explore ways to resolve the issues.</p> <p>A lengthy discussion was held regarding the proposal. It was noted that the proposed capital receipt was significant, and the cost of maintenance also high, and therefore a feasible and sustainable option must be found as soon as possible. The obligation of Council through the Charter was clarified, and it was noted that decisions must be taken in the best interests of the University, although these should also take into account local concerns.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the proposed sale receipt was not included in current budgets.</p> <p>The possibility of delisting The Lawns was discussed and on the basis of previous conversations with English Heritage, was not felt to be a likely option.</p>	
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	<p>The use of The Lawns for student accommodation was not felt possible due to the relatively remote location to campus and the style of the accommodation.</p> <p>It was confirmed that interest in purchasing The Lawns alone was very small, given the listing and the work required to change its use.</p> <p>It was noted that either property could be used for housing asylum seekers, irrespective of the purchaser.</p> <p>The need to provide accommodation for asylum seekers was felt to be important, but not to the detriment of local services. There was felt to be a need to put a package together that would be attractive to potential purchasers. The need to reach a conclusion quickly was emphasised, and that this must take account of local concerns and the duty of Council to act in the interests of the University.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the process of the proposed sale of The Lawns and Ferens Hall be paused, and that a round table meeting be held as soon as possible with interested parties including local authorities, MPs, the NHS and police, in order to discuss the issues raised and to produce a substantial plan and proposal for consideration at the Council meeting in February 2023.</p>	
<p>29</p>	<p>Update on Energy Savings Action</p> <p>The Committee received an update on energy savings actions.</p> <p>It was reported that a number of energy saving initiatives were planned or underway.</p> <p>It was noted that good progress had been made with the energy saving campaign, including a week of activities on campus. The EDI assessment related to the reduction in the temperature setpoint had been completed and that implementation would follow.</p> <p>It was requested that the progress towards net zero be reported in the form of a waterfall plan in future updates.</p>	<p>PVC(Int)</p>
<p>30</p>	<p>CEG London Proposal</p> <p>The Committee received a proposal for a London Study Centre.</p>	

	<p>It was reported that work had been ongoing on planning for a London Study Centre in collaboration with existing partner CEG, utilising their property. It was noted that this would not have the status of a separate London campus.</p> <p>It was reported that the proposal did not have any financial capital commitment for the University, and that details were currently being discussed, with a Heads of Agreement with CEG being finalised. Council were asked to provide ‘in principle’ support.</p> <p>The diversification to London was felt to be a positive proposal, and the possibility to link students back to Hull for further study was welcomed.</p> <p>The proposal was thought to be low risk, and based in an excellent location which would allow marketing to more students than at present. Non-academic possibilities for the location would also be possible.</p>	
<p>31</p>	<p>Student Marketing and Recruitment Strategy</p> <p>The Committee received an update on the Student Marketing and Recruitment Strategy.</p> <p>It was reported that much work had already been completed and that positive signs as a result were already apparent. It was noted that full results would take time to appear, but that data had been gathered and analysed such as web traffic, open day attendance and applications. All were reported to be growing.</p> <p>It was noted that there was a move to review our comparator institutions from those we are similar to towards those we wish to be similar to, and to monitor those comparisons differently.</p> <p>It was confirmed that better insight data was now being received, which was starting to inform our course offering, allowing us to be more proactive in our marketing.</p> <p>It was reported that the insight data was showing a contraction to the region in some subjects and a need to better project the University nationally. Work was ongoing to ascertain why applicants and enquirers do not subsequently enrol.</p>	

32	HUSU Update The Committee received the HUSU update report. The work of each President and their area was outlined, including work with students, in conjunction with the University, and externally. It was noted that a large effort was made recently to assist with the latest TEF student submission. It was reported that HUSU were planning to host an SU conference in 2023. It was noted that Hull City Council provides a conference service which may be of assistance.	
33	Finance Update The Committee received and noted seven papers relating to the end of the financial year. It was reported that all documents were complete except an outstanding technical issue related to the Private Placement Loan Notes and more specifically the embedded derivative relating to a make whole amount and currency swap breakage clause in the Loan Notes Purchase Agreement. These had been adjusted for the fair value of this embedded derivative asset but the audit opinion on this specific item was yet to be concluded. It was noted that a technical evaluation and valuation was ongoing. It was confirmed that the joint FIC/ARC meeting had discussed the Loan Notes in detail. It was clarified that the Loan Notes had originally been considered simple but that the External Auditors had queried this at a late stage. It was confirmed that all documents were in their final form and that no issues had been raised by the audit partner. Any material changes that may arise would result in Council being reconvened. (a) <u>Accounting Judgements Paper</u> The Committee received and noted the accounting presentation and judgemental issues for the year ended 31 July 2022.	

	<p>(b) <u>Annual Report and Financial Statements</u></p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2022.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2022 in its current form and as presented which is still subject to full audit clearance.</p> <p>(c) <u>Going Concern Assessment</u></p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Going Concern report.</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</u></p> <p>The Committee received and noted the letter of continual financial support for its subsidiary Lampada Digital Solutions Ltd.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the letter of continual financial support for Lampada Digital Solutions Ltd be approved.</p> <p>(e) <u>Management Representation Letter</u></p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Management Representation letter to the External Auditors.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Management Representation letter to the External Auditors be approved.</p> <p>(f) <u>External Audit findings</u></p> <p>The Committee received and noted the current draft External Audit Findings Report.</p>	
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	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Report be approved subject to there being no material changes and the final version would be confirmed, on this basis, with the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee</p> <p>(g) <u>OfS return</u></p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Annual OfS Financial Return.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Annual Financial Return be approved for submission to the OfS.</p>	
<p>34</p>	<p>Performance Indicators and League Table Update</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the University of Hull Performance Trends and KPIs, and league table update.</p>	
<p>35</p>	<p>Student Partnership Agreement</p> <p>The Committee received the Student Partnership Priorities 2022/23.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Student Partnership Priorities 2022/23 be approved. • That Council approval not be required in future unless priorities are changed. 	
<p>36</p>	<p>Honorary Degrees</p> <p>The Committee received information regarding six recommendations from Honorary Awards Committee and Senate for the award of an honorary degree.</p> <p>Members were reminded that the information provided must remain strictly confidential.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the six recommendations for the award of honorary degrees be approved.</p>	

<p>37</p>	<p>Annual Health and Safety Report</p> <p>The Committee received the 2021/22 Annual Health and Safety Report.</p> <p>It was reported that the year had involved a transition from providing a Covid response to a more normal service. More work was underway on safety reviews and there was felt to be a need to raise the profile of Health and Safety at ULT.</p> <p>It was noted that there was work to be undertaken on the Health and Safety culture and on near-miss reporting.</p> <p>It was clarified that the University did not receive a report from HUSU, but that this may be usefully included and that this would be considered.</p>	<p>USCCO</p>
<p>38</p>	<p>Minutes of Committees</p> <p>(a) <u>University Ethics Committee – 19 October 2022</u></p> <p>The minutes of the University Ethics Committee held on 19 October 2022 were received.</p> <p>(b) <u>Honorary Awards Committee – 31 October 2022</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Honorary Awards Committee held on 31 October 2022 were received.</p> <p>(c) <u>Senate – 16 November 2022</u></p> <p>The minutes of Senate held on 16 November 2022 were received.</p> <p>(i) <i>UEC Terms of reference and composition</i></p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the University Ethics Committee terms of reference and composition be approved.</p> <p>(d) <u>Joint Audit and Risk Committee/Finance and Investment Committee– 28 November 2022</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Joint Audit and Risk Committee/Finance and Investment Committee held on 28 November 2022 were received.</p>	

	<p>(i) <i>ARC Annual Report</i></p> <p>It was noted that the report was now closer linked to risk management.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report be approved.</p> <p>(e) <u>Finance and Investment Committee– 28 November 2022</u></p> <p>The minutes of the special meeting of Finance and Investment Committee held on 28 November 2022 were received.</p>									
<p>39</p>	<p>Valedictions</p> <p><u>Assem Allam</u></p> <p>The Committee noted with sadness the recent death of Assem Allam, and extended its condolences to his family. His significant and lengthy support for the University and its mission was noted with appreciation.</p>									
<p>40</p>	<p>Dates of Meetings 2022-23</p> <p>It was noted that the start time of the meeting of 23 February may be amended due to the large amount of discussion expected.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="316 1285 1187 1563"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date of Meeting</th> <th><i>Deadline for papers</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Thursday 23 February 2023 at 2.00 pm</td> <td>09/02/2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 27 April 2023 at 2.00 pm</td> <td>13/04/2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 6 July 2023 at 2.00 pm</td> <td>22/06/2023</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Other dates to note:</p> <p><u>Council Away Day</u> Wednesday 24 May 2022</p>	Date of Meeting	<i>Deadline for papers</i>	Thursday 23 February 2023 at 2.00 pm	09/02/2023	Thursday 27 April 2023 at 2.00 pm	13/04/2023	Thursday 6 July 2023 at 2.00 pm	22/06/2023	<p>All members</p>
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41	Any other business (a) <u>Mandatory Training</u> It was reported that there were a number of areas of mandatory training for all staff, and that current focus was on cyber-security. As lay members have access to some University systems, they are included in the requirement to complete the appropriate training. An invitation to do so would be sent.	USCCO
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Signature of Chair _____

Date of signature _____