

**27 April 2023**

## **Council**

### **Minutes**

**Minutes of the Council meeting held on Thursday 27 April 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, Matt Jukes (via Teams), Vanessa Lee, Ursula Lidbetter, Professor Dave Petley, Neil Robinson, Rashmi Rungta, Rosalyn Schofield, Julia Whittaker, Denise Wilson

**In attendance:** Professor Phil Gilmartin, Professor Simon Green, Jeremy Hartley, Professor Paul Hagan, Professor Stephen Hardy, Dr Chris Ince (Secretary), Dr Darren Mundy, Derek Ord (Assistant Secretary), and Sarah Wilson

Minutes 58 - 71

		<b>Action by</b>
<b>58</b>	<p><b>Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declaration</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from: Professor Becky Huxley-Binns</p>	
<b>59</b>	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>	
<b>60</b>	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>(a) <u>Action Summary</u></p> <p>The Committee received an Action Summary. It was noted that all items had been completed or were on the agenda.</p>	

	<p>It was confirmed that the Annual Return, Accounts and Trustees' Annual Report for the Ferens Education Trust had now been submitted. Work was already underway for the 2023 submission.</p>	
<p><b>61</b></p>	<p><b>Chair's Report</b></p> <p>(a) It was reported that Matthew Swindells had stepped down from Council, and that a replacement member would be sought via the Governance &amp; Nominations Committee.</p> <p>(b) It was reported that progress had been made on the appointment of a new Chancellor, and that two suitable candidates had been identified and approached. Details of the recommendation would be circulated to members before Council is invited to approve a formal recommendation.</p> <p>(c) It was noted that Council appraisals had been completed and that a report would be collated and recommendations for improvement made to Governance and Nominations Committee and then to Council.</p>	
<p><b>62</b></p>	<p><b>Management Report</b></p> <p>Council received and noted the Management Report and associated presentation. The Vice-Chancellor highlighted sections of particular interest.</p> <p>(a) <u>Senior Staff Recruitment</u> Progress was noted on the process of replacing senior staff, including the DVC, PVC(R&amp;E) and two Deans. It was reported that the process of recruiting a Deputy VC was progressing to plan and that a final selection was expected in mid-June. Lay members would be invited to join some recruitment panels.</p> <p>(b) <u>Industrial Action</u> An update was provided on the ongoing industrial action by some members of UCU. It was noted that action short of a strike (ASOS) had commenced on 20 April, and that this would include a marking and assessment boycott. It was confirmed that a pay deduction of 40% per day would be applied those taking part in ASOS.</p> <p>It was confirmed that planning was underway to mitigate the effects of the action on students, including the use of alternative regulations, prioritising the marking of finalists' assessments and considering the inclusion of later</p>	

	<p>graduation dates. It was felt that the numbers of staff taking ASOS would be low.</p> <p>The importance of clear communication to students was noted and it was confirmed that careful messaging would be used to ensure that students were not unduly worried.</p> <p>It was confirmed that some finalist students were concerned, but that the University was not expecting a large impact from ASOS.</p> <p>(c) <u>Pay Awards</u> It was reported that the UCEA and UCU had reached an impasse regarding the 2023/24 pay award and that the award offered had been implemented. It was noted that UCU did not agree and did not accept the final award.</p> <p>(d) <u>Pension Update</u> It was reported that the USS pension scheme had been revalued at the end of March and that the results were awaited. It was reported that, depending on the results of the valuation, the priority would be to improve benefits and reduce contributions whilst agreeing a Future Valuation approach and continuing dialogue with the Pensions Regulator and the Department for Work and Pensions.</p> <p>It was noted that the valuation process in the past had been complex and unsatisfactory and that there was a desire within the sector for a review of the governance of the scheme.</p> <p>(e) <u>Student Applications</u> Council received the latest student application data. It was reported that the application cycle was proving to be very complex and difficult. There had been an increase in application numbers, driven by International PGT applications – this was sector wide but Hull was particularly high.</p> <p>Home UG application numbers were reported to be down by around 4%. This was again sector-wide and driven by reductions in applications to health related subjects. This was felt to be influenced by the current industrial action and the rising cost of living affecting the choices of mature students. It was confirmed that 382 of the 418 reduction in applications were in the health subjects.</p>	
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	<p>International UG numbers were reported to have increased significantly.</p> <p>Home PGT applications were reported to have reduced as a result of a buoyant job market for graduates and recent graduates having had a Covid-affected student experience.</p> <p>It was reported that confirmation and clearing, when A level results were released, would be difficult to predict. It was noted that some Russell Group institutions may reduce their Home UG intake for financial reasons and increase overseas numbers. This may lead to different student choices and acceptances.</p> <p>It was confirmed that although some institutions may lose money teaching Home UG students, due to a lower cost base this was largely not an issue for Hull at this time. The situation was confirmed to be very dynamic and the continuing prospect of fixed fees and high inflation was a concern.</p> <p>The variation in conversion rates between Home and International applications was noted, and it was confirmed that a fixed number of visas were available for Hull to issue to International applicants, although it is possible to request more.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the priority remains to grow the Home UG student numbers and that there must not be an over-reliance on International PGT student numbers.</p> <p>It was confirmed that significant work had been undertaken in specific regions, which had successfully increased applications from those countries.</p> <p>(f) <u>Delivering Strategy 2023</u> Council received an update on the range of projects underway in order to deliver Strategy 2030.</p> <p>It was confirmed that Identity and Brand would feature at the Council Away Day.</p> <p>There were a number of projects underway related to people, including reviewing career structures for academic and professional services staff.</p>	
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	<p>It was confirmed that work was underway to improve regional engagement and knowledge exchange and that this could include more engagement with independent schools.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the implementation of the sustainability strategy was a live project and needed to be implemented across the institution.</p> <p>(g) <u>Academic and Student Support</u> The ongoing project to enhance academic and student support was outlined. It was reported that support was currently provided at a number of hubs in faculties and centrally, but not in schools. It was confirmed that the proposition was to have a number of support staff in schools, for faculties to take on a more strategic role, to have a single physical student hub and for most support to be managed centrally and delivered locally.</p> <p>It was reported that work had been undertaken with external support to better understand the current model and to design a new model. Discussion and engagement with staff would continue, with an aim for a single service centre to be in place for September 2023. Other changes would be phased in thereafter.</p> <p>(h) <u>The Deep</u> It was reported for information that the governance of The Deep was proposed to change, by dissolving the Members' Agreement currently in place. This would allow The Deep to act as a true charity. Partnerships with the University would continue.</p> <p>(i) <u>Update Sessions</u> It was suggested that due to the amount of work and projects ongoing, it would be useful to Council members to have an optional monthly online update session.</p>	Secretary
63	<p><b>Student Population Report</b></p> <p>Council received a presentation on the makeup of the current student population.</p> <p>It was reported that despite a decrease in students from the national and local market, there had been an increase in numbers from the 'hyper-local' market. It was noted that many had</p>	

	<p>disadvantaged backgrounds and that this can affect progression and completion, and final degree classification. Social and financial issues were noted as being strong decision drivers.</p> <p>It was reported that the awareness of the University of Hull was low further away geographically, and that the University was seeking to grow its share of the Home UG market.</p> <p>International student numbers continued to grow and it was confirmed that there was a need to also grow the Home student numbers.</p> <p>It was reported that overall student characteristics had not changed significantly over time, and that these were not seen as a significant driver of student choice.</p> <p>It was confirmed that there was a need for the University to clearly define what it sees its students to be.</p> <p>Meaka Edwards was thanked for the report which gave a useful baseline.</p>	
<p><b>64</b></p>	<p><b>Finance Update</b></p> <p>The Committee received the Finance Update.</p>	
	<p>(a) <u>Finance Update</u></p> <p>The 2022/23 P6 Financial Update was presented.</p> <p>It was reported that the YTD operating deficit was £1.1m adverse to forecast and £3.7m adverse to prior year. Income was reported to be £0.3m favourable to forecast and £5.3m favourable to prior year, reflecting higher student numbers and improved investment returns.</p> <p>Energy costs were reported to be £3.3m, adverse to both forecast and prior year, reflecting significant price increases.</p> <p>The Q2 forecast was reported to show an operating surplus of £19.2m and operating income of £204.5m.</p> <p>The cash position was reported to be £99.8m, and it was confirmed that approximately half of this figure was from the recent Private Placement.</p>	

	<p>Council received an update to the Capital Programme. The spend at P6 was reported to be £7.9m with major project spend on DAIM and Student Central.</p> <p>The outline aims of the 23/24 budget were presented, with an overall aim of supporting Strategy 2030.</p> <p>The current risks were presented, which included the lower than projected student numbers, reduced catering income, high energy costs and a higher pay award.</p> <p>It was reported that following the expressions of interest into the tender for external Audit services, the Audit and Risk Committee had recommended to reappoint Grant Thornton for a further 5 years, with a change in audit partner. This contract would include the audit of the Sustainability Report.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the reappointment of Grant Thornton as External Auditors for 5 years be approved.</p>	
	<p>(b) <u>Capital Update</u></p> <p>The Committee received the Capital Update.</p> <p>It was reported that a number of projects had moved through 'gates' as progress had been made. It was noted that further development of the solar farms was expected following local authority planning approval, expected in the coming weeks.</p> <p>The Statement of Account for Private Placements was presented. It was noted that there had been no change since the previous meeting, and that the University was not at risk of any default events.</p>	
65	<p><b>HUSU Report</b></p> <p>The Committee received the HUSU update report. The President highlighted the extensive work undertaken in each area of HUSU's work.</p> <p>It was reported that a number of difficulties had been experienced with HUSU's latest student elections, with a number of candidates found to have broken the election rules. Concern was expressed that this may impact on student experience and thus rankings, but it was felt that the impact would be on the running of HUSU rather</p>	

	<p>than on a significant number of students. It was confirmed that HUSU would undertake a democratic review with a view to learn lessons and improve processes. It was confirmed that the University had not been involved in the election process but if necessary, there would be a check for any student discipline issues.</p> <p>The President was thanked for the Report and for his work in difficult circumstances.</p>	
<p><b>66</b></p>	<p><b>Honorary Degree Nominations</b></p> <p>The Committee received the details of four individuals whose nomination for an honorary degree had been recommended by the Honorary Awards Committee and then by Senate.</p> <p>Members were reminded of the requirement that the details remain strictly confidential at this stage.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the award of an honorary degree to each of the four named individuals be approved.</p>	
<p><b>67</b></p>	<p><b>Performance Indicators and League Table Update</b></p> <p>Council received and noted the Performance Indicators and League Table Rankings.</p> <p>A discussion was had regarding the future of the Council KPI report. It was noted that some KPIs had no associated target, that some had already been met and that some key areas did not currently have a KPI. It was noted that REF measures are rarely reported on and that the KEF is not included.</p> <p>The inclusion of the staff FTE measure was queried as there was no context to the figure.</p> <p>It was noted that with a new strategy, it was important to align the KPIs accordingly. There may also be other metrics which are not KPIs but may be useful to measure.</p> <p>It was noted that some long term targets could usefully have associated annual targets, to assist with planning.</p> <p>It was felt that target numbers for many KPIs would be better than percentages.</p>	



	<p>It was agreed that there be a review of metrics and KPIs, to be discussed at an online or informal meeting, with a view to bringing a detailed proposal to the first meeting of 23/24. The metrics and KPIs will be linked to the strategy, and to the budget process. Council in future will include KPIs in the Part 2 agenda, for more detailed discussion.</p>	Secretary
68	<p><b>Committee Almanac 2023/24</b></p> <p>Council received and noted the draft almanac for 2023/24.</p>	
69	<p><b>Chair’s Action – Digital Spine Business Case</b></p> <p>It was noted that the Digital Spine Full Business Case had been approved via circulation and Chair’s Action.</p> <p>It was noted that changes had been suggested to the document, and it was confirmed that these would be incorporated.</p> <p>It was noted that the document was difficult to read in places and it was agreed to circulate the updated version.</p>	<p>USCCO</p> <p>USCCO</p>
70	<p><b>Minutes of Committees</b></p> <p>(a) <u>Senate – 15 March 2023</u></p> <p>The minutes of Senate held on 15 March 2023 were received.</p>	
	<p>(i) <i>Annual Statement of Research Integrity</i></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Annual Statement of Research Integrity be approved.</p> <p>(ii) <i>Tuition Fee Schedule</i></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>That the Tuition Fee Schedule be approved.</p> <p>The proportion of income by fixed fees compared to fees set internally was queried. It was agreed that this be included in the next Annual Budget papers.</p>	CFO

	<p>(b) <u>Remuneration Committee Extraordinary Meeting – 16 March 2023</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Remuneration Committee held on 16 March 2023 were received.</p> <p>(c) <u>Audit and Risk Committee – 20 March 2023</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 20 March 2023 were received.</p> <p>(d) <u>Finance and Investment Committee– 30 March 2023</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Finance and Investment Committee held on 30 March 2023 were received.</p>					
<p><b>71</b></p>	<p><b>Dates of Meetings 2022-23</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="316 936 1185 1055"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="316 936 751 972"><b>Date of Meeting</b></th> <th data-bbox="751 936 1185 972"><i>Deadline for papers</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="316 972 751 1055">Thursday 6 July 2023 at 2.00 pm</td> <td data-bbox="751 972 1185 1055">22/06/2023</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Other dates to note:</b></p> <p><u>Council Away Day</u> Wednesday 24 May 2022</p> <p><u>Council Dinner</u> Wednesday 5 July 2023</p>	<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<i>Deadline for papers</i>	Thursday 6 July 2023 at 2.00 pm	22/06/2023	<p><b>All members</b></p>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<i>Deadline for papers</i>					
Thursday 6 July 2023 at 2.00 pm	22/06/2023					

Signature of Chair

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Date of signature

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