

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 08 APRIL 2022

Present: Lord Keith Bradley (Chair), Jennifer Bayjoo, Brian Boag, Councillor Phil Cusack, Dr Tony Coombs, Garry Dowdle, Ben Gallop, Philip Green, Merlyn Lowther, Professor Helen Marshall, Ian Moston, Sean O'Hara, Akeem Ojetola, Festus Robert, Alan Roff and Helen Taylor.

Apologies: Angela Adimora, Professor Dame Sue Bailey, Councillor John Merry, Micheal Omoniyi, Sam Plant, Professor Mike Wood and Dr Elsa Zekeng.

In attendance: Julie Charge (Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Finance), Professor Karl Dayson (Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Enterprise), Peter Gregory (interim Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development); Dr Sam Grogan (Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience), Alison Jones (Head of Academic Quality Management), John McCarthy (Associate Chief Operating Officer), Jackie Njoroge (Director of Strategy), Huw Williams (Chief Operating Officer) and Elaine Pateman Salt (secretary).

By Invitation: Lauren Beckett (Director of Advocacy, USSU) [COU.22.26; COU.22.27]; and Nia Prys Williams (Energy Manager) [COU.22.38].

COU.22.20 WELCOME

Noted:

- i) that members were welcomed back to an 'on-campus' meeting;
- ii) that Ms Jennifer Bayjoo had been appointed to the membership as the staff member for professional services, and that she was welcomed to her first meeting;
- iii) that the Chair and Mr Festus Robert, President of the University of Salford Students' Union (USSU) had represented the University at the Service of Remembrance held for HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh;
- iv) that the Chair congratulated Mr Robert on being elected President of the USSU for a second term, commencing from June 2022.

COU.22.21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Noted: that there were no declarations of interest pertaining to the agenda.

COU.22.22 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Confirmed: the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 January 2022 (COU/22/15), subject to addition of the word 'health' which had been omitted from minute reference COU.22.10, Reported iv).

ACTION: COMMITTEE SECRETARY

COU.22.23 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Noted: that the action regarding the relationship between Council and Senate taken under minute reference COU.22.46 (10 July 2020) had been delayed due to changes in the regulatory and policy environment, but that there had been internal changes undertaken in the intervening period and that a report would be made to the next meeting.

COU.22.24 CONFIRMATION OF STARRED ITEMS

Confirmed: that Item 27 (Use of University Seal; COU/22/36) was noted without discussion.

COU.22.25 RESOLUTION IN WRITING

Received: a report of the resolution taken by correspondence since the previous meeting regarding approval for the appointment of the professional services staff member to the membership (COU/22/16).

Reported: that the resolution was recorded as follows:

RESOLVED: that Ms Bayjoo be appointed as the professional services staff member with effect from 1 April 2022.

COU.22.26 STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Received: (in advance) a video presentation on the experience of students studying at the MediaCity UK campus; a paper was tabled presenting the key points arising from the preparatory survey of students studying at MediaCity UK campus.

Reported:

- i) that 30 students studying at MediaCity UK campus had been surveyed, with some coming forward to participate in the video capture;
- ii) that overall, the environment was considered friendly and a great location to link with industry;
- iii) that the general facilities were said to be of a good standard, but that in particular the availability of 'industry-level' equipment was a positive highlight;
- iv) that a third of respondents had not suggested any improvements;
- v) that of the remaining two thirds of respondents relatively minor improvements had been suggested, for example an increased number of power sockets;
- vi) that some of the improvement suggestions were not wholly within the control of the University, for example the cost of food and transport links;
- vii) that it was acknowledged Salford Quays was an expensive area to live and study in the city;
- viii) that the sense of belonging was strong in half of the respondents who felt very connected to the campus and their programme, but that a number had not visited Peel Park campus or had not met students studying outside their course;
- ix) that despite the comment above, this did not seem to have negatively impacted on their experience;
- x) that it had been suggested that more activities could be provided, for example quiz nights.

Noted:

- i) that there was currently a bus link between Peel Park campus and MediaCity UK campus but that it was the ambition of the University to integrate to a multimodal transport hub centred on the proposed refurbishment of Salford Crescent train station and work under the Campus Masterplan;
- ii) that notwithstanding the comment regarding the library facility made in the video presentation, there had been no other concerns raised through the survey;
- iii) that it was surmised the recent library move may have led to the comment being made;
- iv) that Mr Ben Gallop worked at MediaCity UK and commented that he was pleased to hear the ethos of a 'shared environment' contributed to the sense of belonging for this cohort;
- v) that Mr Gallop confirmed the issues related to cost of food and drink from local retailers;
- vi) the view that it was possible students studying at Peel Park campus were similarly not aware of the facilities and equipment available at MediaCity UK campus;
- vii) the view from an industry perspective that all students should have equity of access to industries based at MediaCity UK, particularly given the wide range of employment opportunities both inside and outside the arts and media sector;
- viii) that it was common for students to equate a sense of belonging primarily to their programme, then to their School and following this to their University;
- ix) the view that it was partly the role of USSU to support the University to develop breadth to the sense of belonging;
- x) that the USSU had run campaigns on understanding the role of the Union and the benefits of membership to MediaCity UK students;
- xi) that through the USSU, students had access to all sports facilities and social activities available at Peel Park campus, but it was acknowledged that it was not known how embedded this knowledge was;
- xii) that the USSU aimed to develop greater engagement between campuses through the Sabbatical Officer responsible for Arts and Media;
- xiii) the view that the student experience could be a result of 'learned helplessness' for example, in the issue raised about access to the room booking system, and that students should be encouraged to come together as a community to resolve issues or seek

resolution;
xiv) the view that developing empowerment in the student body was important.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and that a brief feedback report be given to the next meeting.

ACTION: USSU

COU.22.27 **UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD STUDENTS' UNION**

Received: on the endorsement of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team, an update on the operation of the University of Salford Students' Union (COU/22/30).

Reported:

- i) that the Annual Report of the Trustees had been appended to the Report;
- ii) that the Annual Report covered a period of 16 months following the incorporation of the University of Salford Students' Union (USSU);
- iii) that the National Union of Students' (NUS) Returning Officer had confirmed the election results, and that Mr Festus Robert had been re-elected as President;
- iv) that the Report included a comprehensive overview of the challenge received from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) regarding the Union's treatment of value added tax (VAT);
- v) that the progress to sell the pension scheme was ongoing but that it was hoped to reach a conclusion within the next 12 months;
- vi) that the partnership work between USSU and the University was detailed in the Report, including alignment to the Enabling Student Success (ESS) workstream;
- vii) that the USSU had been nominated for Students' Union of the Year (North-West) award and had placed second but was 'highly recommended';
- viii) that Mr Akeem Ojetola would display the award certificate for members to view.

Noted:

- i) that members congratulated USSU on their award and noted their hard work towards achieving a successful outcome;
- ii) that a number of students' unions had been affected by the HMRC challenge and had joined together to collectively review and appeal the challenge;
- iii) that there could potentially be a financial impact if the appeal was not upheld and that the USSU had started a fund to meet a future claim, but that it did not have any monies held for a retrospective claim and that this would inevitably lead to a financial impact;
- iv) the view that the scale of the impact should be included in future reports;
- v) that the reported key performance indicators (KPIs) against extracurricular activities engagement were broadly aligned to the sector average;
- vi) that engagement in physical sports activities had been impacted by the restrictions imposed during the pandemic, and that no competitive sports games had been held for 12 months;
- vii) that the USSU sought to continually improve its extracurricular activities range and offer;
- viii) the view that e-sports had become more prevalent during the pandemic and offered an alternative way to participate in recreational and competitive sports;
- ix) that the University was developing an e-sports gaming arena, and would offer Higher National Diploma's (HNDs) in this area under the Greater Manchester Institute of Technology (GMiOT);
- x) that the School of Arts, Media and Creative Technologies (SAMCT) had developed a very strong link with a local sixth form college whose students were expressing an interest in applying to the University on the basis of this development;
- xi) the view that it was positive to hear of the developments in e-sports, and that this could also attract industry to the University as it was a growing sector;
- xii) the view that this type of development also demonstrated how the University and its students benefited from the cross-site initiative of MediaCity UK;
- xiii) that the Chair particularly thanked the USSU on behalf of the members for its partnership during the previous two years, in facing the challenge of the pandemic;
- xiv) that it was hoped by both parties the relationship had benefited by closer working and would continue to flourish in a 'post-pandemic' environment.

RESOLVED: that the Report and Annual Report be noted, and that the potential size and scale of financial impact arising from the HMRC challenge be included in future updates to the

COU.22.28 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Received: a report from the Vice-Chancellor on key issues affecting the University (COU/22/17).

Reported:

- i) that the external policy environment continued to be challenging;
- ii) that the undergraduate fee had been confirmed at £9250 per annum until 2025;
- iii) that this value had been fixed since 2012 and that the University's income had reduced in real terms during the intervening 11-year period;
- iv) that the University had been successful in its bid to establish the GMloT, and that this meant it should be in a good position to respond to the Government's policy to 'boost' higher technical qualifications;
- v) that the Office for Students (OfS) had published new regulations regarding quality and standards and in particular was consulting the Sector on minimum thresholds for the revised B3 condition of regulation;
- vi) that the University had been preparing for such an eventuality and had modelled its programme portfolio against the proposals;
- vii) that there were some 'hotspot' programmes requiring additional support, but that there had been significant improvements across a range of programmes close to the threshold;
- viii) that the University was preparing for a more highly regulated regime in coming years;
- ix) that the University community had been appalled by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and that the University was working through Universities UK (UUK) to consider its position regarding collaboration or work with Russian organisations;
- x) that it had also made financial and physical donations at a local level;
- xi) that the update on management of the campus operations during the Covid-19 pandemic would be discussed in detail during the following agenda item;
- xii) that the University had been ranked sixth on the English Social Mobility Index 2022 and that given the University's mission and heritage regarding widening participation, placing within the top ten was a very proud moment for all involved.

Noted:

- i) that the Chair had verbally invited the Minister of State for Higher Education Michelle Donelan to visit the University and have more exposure to the higher education pathways being created through the GMloT, and this would be followed up at an appropriate time;
- ii) the view that the financial impact of the fixing of the undergraduate annual fee should not be underestimated, and that by 2025 this could potentially mean a reduction of 25-30% income in real terms from today;
- iii) that changes in student loans also meant students would pay back loans over 40 years (extended from the current 30-year repayment period), potentially at higher interest rates;
- iv) the view that it could be harder to attract applicants on programmes where graduate outcomes did not meet the new thresholds;
- v) the view that communities benefited from graduate skills irrespective of attainment of a threshold salary for a graduate-level job;
- vi) the view that institutions would be forced to change operations in the future, and that the University had been right to have started to address its portfolio;
- vii) that the University was fairly confident that there would be time (and that it had the capability to) address programme thresholds once it had improved the institutional position;
- viii) that a breach in any single threshold could lead to an OfS review, but that it had been clearly stated that the highest risks (i.e., those with multiple breaches) would be prioritised and that it was anticipated there was limited capacity for the OfS to carry out a high number of reviews each year;
- ix) that the University would seek to take internal action to close a programme if it were deemed a high risk to a quality threshold;
- x) that the University had made progress on its ESS action plan in the past year;
- xi) that Innovation Greater Manchester (GM) had received part of the £30m which had been apportioned to the region from the national Innovation Fund (£100m);
- xii) the University was appointed to the Innovation GM Board and was consequently writing parts of the action strategy;

- xiii) that monies through Innovate UK would be allocated through a priority list against the economic priorities for the GM region and that there would be a requirement for two-to-one matched funding in these instances;
- xiv) that the University was to visit Lincoln University Innovation District again in the next week to take further learning from its development;
- xv) that there were three core innovation areas in the Innovate GM prospectus: Oxford Road and ID Manchester; Atom Valley covering Rochdale, Bury and the surrounding area; and The Crescent innovation district;
- xvi) the view that the Corporate Strategy would be a way to sustainably manage development of the innovation district;
- xvii) that the University continued to develop provision through different pathways to broaden its income, for example through HNDs, growing international student numbers, higher technical programmes, developing 2+2 courses with international partners;
- xviii) the view that funding from industry should also be further explored;
- xix) that the University was in a better position to do this now that the four schools had been established and that the Industry Collaboration Zones (ICZs) had been embedded across them;
- xx) that the University had recently signed an agreement with Microsoft to offer its micro-credential certifications and accreditations;
- xxi) the view that micro learning opportunities could develop a funding stream from industry partners and should be explored as part of the Corporate Strategy deliberations;
- xxii) the view that one way to increase employment and graduate outcomes was to support graduates who sought to form companies with the possibility of their also drawing on the future talent from their alma mater in recruitment;
- xxiii) that this also shifted reliance from industry partners as the single model, and could connect industries to new businesses;
- xxiv) that employability was one of the main pillars of the proposed Learning and Teaching Strategy, which included better use of placements and expansion of the business launch facility;
- xxv) that members were reminded students owned any intellectual property (IP) they produced as part of their studies or research.

COU.22.29 **CAMPUS OPERATIONS (COVID-19)**

Received: an update on the University's management and operation of the campuses during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic (COU/22/18).

Reported:

- i) that the written update included the plan to return to 'business-as-usual' (BAU) operations;
- ii) that there were four key parts to the plan: to stop a range of activities; to move decision-making back within business areas; to embed some of the improved processes into BAU (for example, in risk assessment); and to develop a management plan for an outbreak in communicable diseases;
- iii) that it was intended some informal support would remain in place;
- iv) that the highest number of reported cases for the University had been recorded for March 2022, and that monitoring continued regarding potential disruption to delivery;
- v) that no major escalations had been received since the formal return to BAU.

Noted:

- i) that it was the intention to remove the update as a standing item on future agendas, but that this would be subject to continued progression towards a 'new normal';
- ii) that members thanked the operations management teams and the Executive for their hard work over the previous two years, and commended the University for its management of operations during such an exceptional time;
- iii) that the University was returning to its standing policies and guidelines on travel, and that risk assessment included consideration of the need to travel versus conducting activities virtually;
- iv) that there continued to be a wide range of virtual conferences offered;
- v) that travel risk assessment encompassed student travel, i.e., for fieldwork;
- vi) that an alternative way to investigate travel requirements was also to consider carbon footprint and that the University was providing information on carbon footprint of any option to travel to make this visible to the individuals involved.

RESOLVED: that the standing agenda item on Campus Operations (Covid-19) be discontinued.

COU.22.30 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS' NEW ONGOING CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

Received: a report on changes to new ongoing conditions of registration issued by the Office for Students (OfS) under the Higher Education regulatory framework for England, effective from 1 May 2022 (COU/22/19).

Reported:

- i) that in issuing the new conditions, the OfS had signaled that it would be taking an interventionist approach to future regulation;
- ii) that it was anticipated the approach would be similar in style to that used by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED);
- iii) that the outcome on the consultations for minimum thresholds for condition of regulation B3 was expected to be published shortly.

COU.22.31 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHANCELLOR CLOSED

Considered: on the recommendation of Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee, the preferred candidate for appointment to the role of Chancellor of the University of Salford (COU/22/20).

Reported:

- i) that following a rigorous process a preferred candidate was proposed for approval;
- ii) that the candidate was Ms Lucy Meacock, and that the appointment would run for a term of five years commencing on 16 June 2022;
- iii) that the Chair further endorsed the proposal and confirmed that the candidate was expected to provide genuine advocacy for the University through her links to the area, her passionate promotion of disadvantaged youth into education and her demonstrable record in supporting the University since receiving an honorary award;
- iv) that learning would be taken from the nomination and consideration processes, particularly around early engagement with future candidates (or those who might emerge as a potential candidate).

Noted:

- i) that the appointment of Pro-Chancellors could also be a way to develop and grow advocates for the University, and that this might be a route for growing diversity for honorary roles;
- ii) that an installation event had been scheduled for 16 June 2022, and that invitations would be issued shortly.

RESOLVED: that Lucy Meacock be appointed as the seventh Chancellor of the University, for a period of five years.

(Secretary's note: members were reminded at the close of the item that the approval was strictly confidential until the appointment had been offered, accepted and a joint public statement had been issued by both parties. The public statement was made on 26 April 2022).

COU.22.32 LOAN RESTRUCTURE CLOSED

Considered: on the recommendation of the finance and resources committee, a proposal to restructure the interest rates for the university's corporate loans (COU/22/21).

Reported:

- i) - redacted -

Noted:

- i) - redacted -

RESOLVED:

- i) that a sub-group be established for the purpose of completing the review of the options regarding the - redacted - loans, including external advice, to determine a final proposal;
- ii) that the sub-group be given delegated powers to approve an option on behalf of the Council (noting that members had approved the quantity of expenditure under their responsibilities outlined in the Financial Regulations), to be reported to FRC and Council;
- iii) that the sub-group be comprised of the Chair, Chair of FRC, Chair of ARC and Lead Member for Finance (also a serving member of FRC);
- iv) that it be confirmed to - redacted - that the University of Salford has the capacity and authority to renegotiate the terms of its corporate loans;
- v) that any two of Professor Helen Marshall, Vice-Chancellor, Julie Charge, Executive Director of Finance or Andrew Hartley, Director of Legal and Compliance be authorised on behalf of the University to sign any paperwork;
- vi) that subject to the confirmation of the accounting treatment with the external auditors, the undernoted be approved:
 - a) - redacted -

(Secretary's note: following the meeting, Mr Hartley's title was corrected and has since been updated to 'Director of Legal and Compliance' for the minutes).

COU.22.33 OWNERSHIP TRANSFER OF SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES

Considered: on the recommendation of the Finance and Resources Committee, a proposal to transfer ownership of two dormant subsidiary companies from University of Salford Enterprises Ltd to the University (COU/22/22).

Reported:

- i) that following the adoption of a revised strategy for University of Salford Enterprises (USE) Ltd, the Board proposed moving two dormant subsidiary companies to the ownership of the University;
- ii) that the USE Board had considered all dormant subsidiary companies under its ownership and had approved retaining ownership of a digital IT company in case this could be utilised in the future.

Noted:

- i) that Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) received quarterly reports from USE and had endorsed the revised strategy and recommended the proposed transfer of ownership for approval;
- ii) that one of the companies had traded previously but not at a loss, and consequently there would be no accounting impact in transferring ownership.

RESOLVED: that the transfer of University of Salford (Health Services Training) Ltd and Skyscope Ltd from the control of USE to the control of the University be approved.

COU.22.34 EXTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE PROVIDERS CLOSED

Considered: on the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee, a proposal to re-appoint KPMG as the provider of external audit services to the University for a further period of two years (COU/22/23).

Reported:

- i) that the option to extend the contract for a further two years was included in the terms;
- ii) that the market for external auditor services was limited and fees had increased;
- iii) that the proposed increase for external audit services for the subsidiary companies was considered a disproportionate increase in charges and consequently the proposal included the option to consider a different provider for those businesses.

Noted:

- i) that Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) supported the proposal and recommended it for approval;
- ii) the view that other sectors had similar issues with competition for external audit services and that there was a market issue;
- iii) that ARC had recommended the University commence the process for seeking a replacement as early as possible, allowing maximum time to address the market concerns;
- iv) - redacted -
- v) the view that USE Board was best placed to discuss and consider its requirements for external audit services.

RESOLVED:

- i) that the audit contract be extended for a further two years, with KPMG undertaking Group audit, University audit and audit of the main trading subsidiary (Salford Professional Services Ltd);
- ii) that another firm of auditors be considered for other subsidiaries with appointment determined by the respective Company Board (subject to any required amendment to financial regulations being approved by FRC).

COU.22.35 REGISTER OF INTERESTS, GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY (MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST)

Considered: on the recommendation of the Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee, proposed amendments to the Register of Interests, Gift and Hospitality Policy (COU/22/24).

Reported:

- i) that the ad hoc revisions to the Policy were proposed to ensure greater clarity particularly for the declaration of paid honorariums;
- ii) that it was also the intention to remove the word 'significantly' throughout the policy statements to mitigate against ambiguity but that the Policy had also been cross-referenced against the Financial Regulations to ensure alignment with financial values related to gifts and hospitality;
- iii) that following approval the Policy would be publicised more widely to the University community.

RESOLVED: that the revisions to the Policy be approved with immediate effect.

COU.22.36 MEMBERSHIP: PROTOCOL FOR RECRUITMENT AND DIVERSITY CHARACTERISTICS DATA

Considered: on the recommendation of the Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee:

- i) a proposed revision to the Statement of Protocol for Member Recruitment and Succession Planning; and
- ii) the proposed production of an annual statement from the Committee regarding progress and/or maintenance of diversity balance within the membership reflective of the student body, published on the University website and Annual Report (public disclosure) (COU/22/25).

(Secretary's Note: Mr Brian Boag reminded members of his entry to the Register of Interests as Diversity Advisor and Chair of Diversity Panel for the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) at the outset of the discussion).

Reported:

- i) that the proposal covered two aspects – that the recruitment protocol reflected the objectives approved by Council for its membership; and how the Council could collect and use data on membership diversity;
- ii) that the use of data was to produce a statement annually on behalf of Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee (GNEC).

Noted:

- i) the view that the proposal was limited in detail regarding how reflection of the student body diversity characteristics might be achieved, for example it was unlikely that the age profile could be reflected in the membership;
- ii) the view that there were no examples of an annual statement and that this might breach confidentiality;
- iii) the view that monitoring of diversity characteristics could be challenging, and that in the case of the University community reflecting the characteristics of the student body all senior appointments characteristics should be published;
- iv) that the Chair of GNEC was not in attendance to comment on the concerns raised, and the view of the Chair that the proposal be deferred to the next meeting;
- v) the view that the proposal was lacking a strong narrative on the leadership angle and had focused too much on the composition of the membership;
- vi) the view that it would be useful to receive the proposal alongside the recruitment process.

RESOLVED: that the proposal and accompanying comments be referred back to GNEC for further reflection and deferred to the next meeting of the Council for consideration.

ACTION: CHAIR, GNEC

COU.22.37 COUNCIL MEMBER EVALUATION SURVEY CLOSED

Received: on the recommendation of Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee, the management response to the Council member evaluation survey 2020/21 (COU/22/26).

Reported:

- i) that the Report included the successful highlights from the 2020/21 member evaluation survey and also details of the proposed actions to address dissatisfaction;
- ii) that the next survey was due to be issued shortly.

Noted:

- i) - redacted -

COU.22.38 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Received: on the recommendation of the Finance and Resources Committee, the Environmental Sustainability Plan Annual Report 2021 (COU/22/27).

Reported:

- i) that the Report covered the period since the Plan had been adopted in January 2021;
- ii) that the lead section covered carbon footprint and energy emissions;
- iii) that the University had actively participated in the activities supporting the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) earlier in the year;
- iv) that the University had committed to achieving net zero carbon (NZC) by 2038 which was aligned to the Greater Manchester ambition, and to several institutions in the sector;
- v) that there was an interim target to achieve NZC on direct emissions by 2030;
- vi) that the Sustainability Team was a small unit but had achieved results over the period of the Report;
- vii) that however, to take the Plan forward a new governance structure had been established;
- viii) that Professor Karl Dayson, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise had been appointed to the role of Executive Sponsor for the Plan;
- ix) that green recovery (post-Covid 19) had been included in the University's Innovation Strategy;
- x) that the University remained committed to responsible investment and divestment in fossil fuels;
- xi) that some institutions were moving to stop accepting research funding from energy companies harvesting fossil fuels;
- xii) that the next step in the Plan was to advocate a buildings decarbonisation plan and that it was hoped leverage for new buildings would be achieved through the Campus Masterplan projects;
- xiii) that another key live workstream was to assess feasibility for a photovoltaic campus, and that this would likely result in a future capital bid;
- xiv) that the main challenges to achieving environmental sustainability continued to be engagement, financial resource, and person resource.

Noted:

- i) that FRC had been impressed by the clarity and ambition of the Plan and supported the view that the correct structure had been established but that a stronger narrative needed to be drawn together from across the University;

- ii) that it was hoped the establishment of the governance structure would progress this in the coming year, and that part of this was to appoint an operational lead;
- iii) that Professor Dayson had been appointed Executive Sponsor for a period of three years;
- iv) that the University was keen to be a role model for sustainability;
- v) that a 'placeholder' had been included in the budget for the Campus Masterplan to achieve the NZC goals;
- vi) that as capital proposals were developed members would be able to see NZC being addressed;
- vii) that there was no 'silver bullet' in achieving NZC, but that the new governance structure was expected to make a real difference to institutional engagement with the goal;
- viii) that the decarbonisation plan would cover a period of 16 years from commencement and that it would inevitably evolve during that period;
- ix) that the sector was very ambitious and set stretching targets, and that the University had similarly set itself challenging goals;
- x) that the University had not set itself a league table placement target, but had outlined that it wanted to be considered a leader for environmental sustainability particularly through its partnerships with industry;
- xi) that environmental sustainability was strategically important to the University;
- xii) the view that it was right that the refreshed Corporate Strategy included approach to environmental sustainability;
- xiii) the view that the Environment Sustainability Team provided a consistent output against objectives;
- xiv) that a focus on indirect emissions in the coming years would be challenging, for example the emissions arising from international student travel versus the University's intent to grow this cohort;
- xv) that however, the University was very well placed to become a leader for sustainability from its research outputs;
- xvi) that Energy House 2 (EH2) was a unique global facility, and that it also leveraged opportunities to partner with industry;
- xvii) that the Ignition Living Lab had been successful;
- xviii) that sustainability would also be introduced into the content of taught programmes;
- xix) the view that inclusion of research outputs narrative (from the research community) should be included in future annual reports;
- xx) that a decarbonisation plan was being developed which would look at the University's estate up to 2038;
- xxi) that there was also active engagement with the goals of the Plan in preparation of the next budget;
- xxii) that the Annual Report had also been well received by Finance and Resources Committee and Audit and Risk Committee at their recent meetings.

RESOLVED: that the Report be noted.

COU.22.39 **GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2021**

Received: on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee, the Gender Pay Gap Report 2021 (COU/22/28).

Reported:

- i) that the University had maintained its median pay gap (11.1%);
- ii) that the national median pay gap was circa 15.4%;
- iii) that the University ranked 55th out of 134 Higher Education institutions;
- iv) that it continued to be the case that the pay gap was greater across the lower grades and lesser across the higher grades;
- v) that the action plan had been included;
- vi) that the professorial promotions exercise was expected to have a positive impact on the pay gap;
- vii) that it was the first time in three years that the promotion exercise had been undertaken;
- viii) that there was evidence that some female new employees commenced on a lower salary than their counterpart male new employees;
- ix) that this issue was within the control of the University and action would be taken to address during the recruitment process.

Noted:

- i) that the University was not formally required to consider the Report against other data that was produced;
- ii) that however, Remuneration Committee (RemCo) had discussed intersectionality, for example with the Ethnicity Pay Gap Report, and anticipated that there would be greater opportunity to also relate both to the University's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) action plan in the future;
- iii) the view that it was unacceptable for persons with similar skills and experience to be appointed on different starting salaries;
- iv) that initial analysis demonstrated the imbalance mainly arose through the salary spine structure, whereby male applicants were at a higher spine point in their current positions and consequently negotiated an equivalent or incremental increase to salary;
- v) the collective view that the advertised salary should be appropriate to the role;
- vi) that VCET had discussed this issue and determined that it be addressed as soon as possible;
- vii) that under their respective terms of reference, Remco would continue to consider the principles of gender pay to ensure the correct policies were in place and FRC would ensure cost implications were not a barrier in eliminating gender pay disparities.

RESOLVED: that the Report be noted.

COU.22.40 **ENABLING STUDENT SUCCESS**

Received: a presentation on the University's action plan for enabling student success, in the context of value for money (COU/22/29).

Reported:

- i) that the work on enabling student success (ESS) had been undertaken for two years during a particularly difficult time period and the efforts of academic and professional services colleagues was commended;
- ii) that the external policy landscape had begun to be clarified and that the ESS actions were focused on delivery of value for money;
- iii) that much of the work was incremental on a day-to-day basis but that steady improvements were being made;
- iv) that the University had been ranked sixth in the Higher Education Policy Institute's (HEPI) social mobility index, a result that it was very proud to have achieved;
- v) that degree completions had increased by 4.9% in the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) institutional performance data indicators;
- vi) that continued efforts were required to further impact on access and participation but that there were no statistically relevant gaps on continuation rates;
- vii) that attrition had significantly improved in the School for Science, Engineering and Environment (SEE);
- viii) that establishment of the Quality Management Office (QMO) had been completed;
- ix) that the QMO and the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Centre (LTEC) would be the joint instruments to address student success;
- x) that the Associate Chief Operating Officer was the executive lead for customer service initiatives;
- xi) that the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Student Experience had held a number of fora with Programme Leaders to categorise and prioritise issues impacting on delivery of the ESS action plan;
- xii) that one of the issues arising from the fora was around resourcing and that this was being addressed;
- xiii) that a 'whole University' almanac had been developed to support proactive workload;
- xiv) that a new learning and teaching strategy was being developed;
- xv) that ESS work was increasingly being embedded in BAU.

Noted: that progress continued to be made.

COU.22.41 **SENATE**

Received: the (unconfirmed) minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 23 February 2022 (COU/22/31).

Reported:

- i) that Senate had discussed the ongoing review of its practices and future role;
- ii) that the body had acknowledged change was needed;
- iii) that the impact of change would extend to Council and VCET, and that a workshop would be undertaken at a future date to consider this.

Noted:

- i) the view of the Chair that the workshop should include all members across the three bodies in the first instance;
- ii) the view that further clarification on the role of Council regarding Senate would be welcomed.

COU.22.42 **QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORT CLOSED**

Received: on the endorsement of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team, a detailed report on organisational and financial sustainability. Also included was the University's performance against lead indicators during Quarter 2 2021/22, and the Top 10 Risk Profile had been appended on the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee (COU/22/32).

Reported:

- i) - redacted -

COU.22.42 **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSIVITY REPORT**

Received: on the endorsement of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team, the Quarter 2 2020/21 report on the University's action plan for ensuring equality, inclusivity, and diversity (COU/22/33).

Reported:

- i) that the Report provided an update on operational progress;
- ii) that PwC (the University's appointed internal audit services provider) had undertaken an internal audit on staff inclusion and diversity processes and the recommendations arising had been highlighted in the Report;
- iii) that VCET had discussed the recommendations and started to address the strategic priorities;
- iv) that it was hoped that an appointment to the role of Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) could be announced by the next meeting.

Noted:

- i) that the intention behind appointing a senior operational lead was to 'join up and land' the strategic commitments;
- ii) that EDI was treated as BAU within the University and was not seen as a separate project;
- iii) that it was likely further resources would be put into the supporting structures once an appointment had been made;
- iv) the view that some actions could be addressed more quickly than stated in the action plan.

COU.22.43 **QUARTERLY FINANCE REPORT CLOSED**

Received: on the recommendation of the Finance and Resources Committee, the Quarter 2 2021/22 finance report (COU/22/34).

Reported:

- i) - redacted -

COU.22.44 COMMITTEE CHAIRS' REPORTS

Received: the Committee Chairs' Reports (COU/22/35).

Reported:

- i) that RemCo had noted the minimal impact of industrial action to date;
- ii) that RemCo had discussed professorial pay review and had requested further information on the grading structure;
- iii) that RemCo had reviewed the revised Committee of University Chairs' (CUC) Remuneration Code published in November 2021;
- iv) that ARC had held a very productive meeting and the Chair commented on the importance of influencing the behaviour of all individuals in order to achieve institutional objectives;
- v) that the Chair of FRC thanked members for their contributions to the debate on the corporate loans earlier in the meeting, and that the Committee was very supportive of the work of the University's Finance Team.

COU.22.45 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Noted: that the deadline to vote on the naming of the new SEE building was 29 April 2022 and members were invited to participate.

COU.22.46 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Reported: that the next meeting was scheduled for Friday 15 July 2022.

Noted: that the 2022/23 schedule of committee meetings had been agreed and would be issued to members shortly.