

**UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD**

**COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2017**

Present: Baroness Beverley Hughes, (Chair), Geoff Bean, Dr Mike Burrows, Phil Cusack, Garry Dowdle, Jill Evans, Ben Gallop, Amina Helal, Councillor Paul Longshaw, Professor Helen Marshall, Ian Moston, Jelili Mustapha, Sean O'Hara, Ceewhy Ochoga, Sam Plant, Professor Susan Price, Joyce Redfearn (until minute COU.17.09), Tom Russell, Margaret Rowe and Professor Tony Warne.

Apologies: Julia Fawcett.

In attendance: Julie Charge (Director of Finance), Vikki Goddard (Chief Operating Officer), Dr Sam Grogan (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student Experience), Andrew Hartley (Director, Legal and Governance), Jo Makin (Interim Corporate Governance Manager, until minute COU.17.07), John McCarthy (Director of Marketing & Student Recruitment), Jackie Njoroge (Director of Strategy), Richard Stephenson (Deputy Vice-Chancellor) and Martin Toner (Secretary)

By invitation: Mark Butler and David Cockayne (Good Governance Institute (GGI), observers)

**COU.17.01 MEMBERSHIP**

Noted: the Schedule of Council attendance (COU/17/01).

Reported: that Margaret Rowe had joined Council as the academic representative of Senate in place of Jonathan Carson, who had left the University.

Confirmed: the nomination of Councillor Paul Longshaw as Council member in place of Councillor Derek Antrobus.

Professor Rowe and Councillor Longshaw were welcomed to the Committee.

**COU.17.02 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (COU/17/02)**

Confirmed: the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 25 November 2016.

**COU.17.03 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Noted: the update on the previous meeting's actions appended to the minutes. There were no other matters arising which were not included elsewhere on the agenda.

**COU.17.04 STARRED ITEM**

Confirmed: that agenda item 16 (Use of University Seal) was noted without discussion.

**COU.17.05 CHAIR'S ACTION**

Reported: that no Chair's Action had been taken since the previous meeting.

**COU.17.06 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT (COU/17/03)**

Considered: a report from the Vice-Chancellor on key issues affecting the University, including the undernoted:

1. Senior Appointments

In addition to those appointments included in the report, the University had also recently appointed Joanne Purves of the University of Sheffield as PVC International and Regional Partnerships. Ms Purves would be joining the University on 18 April 2017.

## 2. Employability

Council noted the actions to improve employability involving Unitemps, graduate internships and the PgCert Management and Personal Development. An assurance was received that these were being underpinned by actions within the mainstream teaching syllabus and that employability formed a key component of the ongoing syllabus review to ensure Industry Collaboration Zone (ICZ)-readiness.

## 3. Medical School

Further clarity was required on the curriculum and the location of student registrations before agreement could be reached on the nature of the legal entity of the Medical School, although there was a broad consensus that the School should be run on a not-for-profit basis. It was intended to reconvene the Council working group in early February.

## 4. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations

The University's fiftieth anniversary celebrations would begin on 10 February with the presentation of the institution's new Coat of Arms followed by a VIP dinner, to which all Council members and partners were invited.

COU.17.07

### **TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (TEF) (COU/17/04)**

Considered:

- i) a report on the process undertaken by the University to decide whether to participate in the TEF Year 2 pilot scheme in 2017/18;
- ii) a tabled paper (COU/17/04a) confirming the decision of the Senate meeting on 12 January to participate in the pilot and requesting the endorsement of Council.

Reported: that the key benefits accruing from participation in the pilot scheme were that the University would be able to charge a higher student fee in 2018/19, and the additional experience gained by the University in preparing to submit for a Silver rating in the following year. While the likely outcome of the pilot would be that the University would be rated Bronze, it was highly likely that the press would use Freedom of Information requests to produce unofficial league tables including all institutions regardless of whether or not they participated.

Noted:

- i) that the University would make use of the option to increase student fees in 2017/18. Further proposals to increase student fees under TEF would be considered within the University budget, and the University would continue to provide a mechanism by which it described the use to which its income was put. Evidence suggested that a small fee increase was unlikely to have a detrimental effect on application rates; however this was to some extent due to the attractive loan conditions currently available;
- ii) the Students' Union (USSU) had done been proactive in articulating what "teaching excellence" meant to students;
- iii) a clear strategy for moving the University to Silver was required.

**Agreed:**

- i) to endorse the decision of Senate that the University participate in the Year 2 TEF pilot;
- ii) to endorse the decision to raise student fees in 2018/19 by the full available amount;
- iii) that the University develop a communication strategy to explain its decision to enter the TEF pilot and the consequences, and to explain to students how the additional income would be used;

**[ACTION 1: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MARKETING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS]**

- iv) that a summary be produced setting out how the University's strategy would achieve the objective of Silver status by 2018/19.

**[ACTION 2: DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR]**

COU.17.08 **CAMPUS FRAMEWORK (COU/17/05)**

Considered: a report on the progress made on the development of the Campus Framework, including the principles for the Masterplan.

Reported: that the Campus Framework Programme Board had been working closely with the Council sub-group established to support the development of the Framework. The Board and sub-group recognized that it was critical to integrate the cultural, physical and digital dimensions of the Framework; however the 10-15 year timeframe for physical campus development was not suitable for the faster-moving digital landscape and therefore it had been agreed to develop a 5 year Digital strategy in tandem with the Framework. Significant progress had been made in the past few months, particularly in terms of working together with Salford City Council, including on the wider development of Chapel Street.

Noted: that the proposed ratification date of October 2017 for completion of the Digital Strategy appeared conservative and it was hoped that the strategy could be completed earlier.

**Agreed:**

- i) that Council endorsed the key principles of the Masterplan brief and the strands of work in the overview;
- ii) that the Council sub-group should continue to support the work of the Programme Board;
- iii) that a further update on the Campus Framework and the Digital Strategy would be brought to Council in July 2017.

**[ACTION 3: CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER]**

COU.17.09 **PERFORMANCE REPORTS (COU/17/06)**

Considered:

- i) a report setting out the University's new performance reporting schedule;
- ii) an in depth performance report on student retention (COU/17/06a);



- iv) a tabled RAG dashboard report on University performance against institutional KPIs (COU/17/06c).

1. Quarter 1 2016/17 Performance

Reported: the revised performance reporting schedule had been designed to inform the University and Council more quickly on the effectiveness of actions being taken to improve performance against KPIs. Due to the change to the FRS 102 financial reporting standard it would no longer be able to benchmark Pay to Income performance against competitors and so it would not be included in the core performance indicators, although it would continue to be visible to Council through finance reports. As part of the new performance schedule it was intended that each Council meeting would consider an area of performance in detail.

Noted: that the opportunity for in depth analysis was welcomed; however Council wished to retain greater visibility around the University's current KPIs.

**Agreed:**

- i) that the new performance reporting schedule and format be adopted, subject to the inclusion of a one-page RAG dashboard progress report;
- ii) that Pay to Income Ratio and Estate Utilisation be retained in the suite of core KPIs.

**[ACTION 4: DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY]**

## 2. Retention

Reported: that despite the actions undertaken by the University, this metric had yet to show consistently positive movement. The University had undertaken an accelerated action plan which prioritized the re-shaping of the student learning experience at Level 4, and in particular during the first semester. Following this, a year-on-year fall of 0.5% had been recorded in the attrition rate for December 2016; however in general there was likely to be a significant lag between the implementation of actions and visible effect in terms of key metrics.

Noted: that Council welcomed the format of the report. The key message of the report was that every student recruited should have the opportunity to have a successful university experience. The University was developing a pilot using analytics to make the personal tutor role into a more proactive function for student development and enablement. The University was seeking to foster a more supportive academic culture by for example holding bi-monthly meetings of Deans and Associate Deans to track progress on school-level actions around improving the student experience. Next year's Welcome, Registration and Induction process would be revised to recognize and meet the needs of all types of students.

**Agreed:** that a costing of the actions being undertaken to address retention be produced for Council.

**[ACTION 5: PVC, STUDENT EXPERIENCE; DIRECTOR OF FINANCE]**



Paragraphs from this minute have been redacted as they are considered to be exempt information as defined by section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

### COU.17.10 **QUARTERLY FINANCE REPORT (COU/17/07)**

Considered: the Quarter 1 2016/17 financial forecast.

Reported: that the overall surplus position was £1.5m lower than the budgeted figure of £8.5m, largely due to the reduction in tuition fee income. While a series of actions to mitigate against this had already been introduced, the benefits were only now beginning to crystallise. Work was underway to reduce the pay to income ratio which had risen due to the fall in income; this would be done primarily through the loss of unfilled posts and phasing of staff in the schools and professional services. Capital Project Spend retained a Green rating despite being below forecast due to cost slippage around the New Adelphi building.

### COU.17.11 **STUDENT RECRUITMENT (COU/17/08)**

Considered: an update on the University's position regarding student recruitment as of December 2016.

Reported: that in presenting information on student recruitment the University intended to provide a more sophisticated and useful set of metrics. Initial figures on the January intake were encouraging. The failure to hit student number targets for 2016/17 was due to challenging retention rates as well as the shortfall in recruitment.

Noted: that for 2017/18 entry, the changes in nursing and allied health funding had had a significant impact on applications, with a 27% year-on-year fall in the subject area. It was noted that most of the programmes affected enjoyed an application to places ratio sufficient to absorb this reduction without a resultant fall in recruitment. In terms of non-degree nursing training, the University currently had 84 students with partner institutions as part of an FE training pilot scheme and was looking to develop nursing apprenticeships. The University's Recruitment strategy was contained within the Academic Growth & Diversification sub-strategy and was being refined in the light of scenario planning. The

University was seeking to diversify its overseas student markets by arranging visits to countries where it had not previously had a significant presence, and by identifying potential partners for in-country, trans-national education programmes. A more detailed international strategy would be developed once the new PVC International and Regional Partnerships was in place.

**Agreed:**

i) that Council would receive a report outlining the University's recruitment strategy, as part of the overall planning round;

ii) that an updated report be submitted to Council in July, which would include a breakdown of recruitment information by school;

**[ACTIONS 6-7, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS]**

iii) that an international strategy be presented to Council later in the year.

**[ACTION 8: PRO-VICE CHANCELLOR, INTERNATIONAL]**

**COU.17.12 SPACE UTILISATION (COU/17/09)**

Considered: a report outlining how the University had achieved its space utilisation target in 2016/17.

Reported: that the main driver in achieving a space utilisation rate of 23.4% against a target of 21% was the new approach to timetabling. Further year-on-year improvements were anticipated and planning could now be done on an individual building basis.

Noted: that the space utilisation rate remained below the threshold of 25% for the HEFCE threshold of "Fair". It was hoped that the investment identified in the Campus Masterplan would have a significant positive impact. Council noted the work undertaken by those involved in achieving this result.

**COU.17.13 REPORT FROM GOVERNANCE, NOMINATIONS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE (COU/17/10)**

Received the minutes of the Committee's meeting on 1 December 2016.

**COU.17.14 REPORT FROM THE HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE (COU/17/11)**

Received the minutes of the Committee's meeting on 1 December 2016.

**COU.17.15 REPORT FROM STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE (COU/17/12)**

Received: the minutes of the Committee's meeting on 1 December 2016.

**COU.17.16 USE OF UNIVERSITY SEAL (COU/17/13)**

Received: a report on the use of the University Seal since the previous meeting.

**COU.17.17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The annual Council Strategy Day would take place on Friday 24 March 2017. This was expected to include a short meeting of Council to consider the Quarter 2 2016/17 performance and finance reports, with the majority of the day devoted to consideration of the GGI outputs.