

COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2018

Present: Lord Keith Bradley (Chair), Professor Dame Sue Bailey, Dr Anthony Coombs, Phil Cusack, Garry Dowdle, Andrea Dunstan, Ben Gallop, Merlyn Lowther, Professor Helen Marshall, Dr Priscilla Nkwenti, Sean O'Hara, Kobby Ofori, Sam Plant, Professor Sheila Pankhurst, Professor Margaret Rowe, Tom Russell, Emily Voss-Bevan.

Apologies: Geoff Bean, Amina Helal, Cllr John Merry, Ian Moston, Professor Susan Price, Helen Taylor.

In attendance: Alison Blackburn (Registrar and Secretary), Julie Charge (Executive Director of Finance), Professor Karl Dayson (Dean of Research), Louise Edwards-Holland (Director of HR and Organisational Development), John McCarthy (Executive Director of Marketing, Recruitment and External Relations), Jackie Njoroge (Director of Strategy).

Secretary: Elaine Pateman Salt

COU.18.101 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

COU.18.102 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Confirmed: the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 23 November 2018, subject to minute COU.18.89 Reported iii) being amended to read *'that no high-level recommendations had been made by KPMG in the report'* (COU/18/82).

COU.18.103 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no further matters arising or actions due that were not already on the current or future agendas.

COU.18.104 **CONFIRMATION OF STARRED ITEMS**

Confirmed: that agenda item 14 – Use of the University Seal – would be noted without discussion (COU/18/90).

COU.18.105 **VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

Received: a report from the Vice-Chancellor on key strategic issues (COU/18/83).

Reported:

- i) that the following colleagues had been awarded personal professorships: Dr Andrew Clark; Margaret Rowe; Dr Caroline Davey; Dr Lisa Scullion; Dr Zeeshan Aziz;
- ii) that the following colleagues had been appointed Readers: Dr Claudia Trillo; Dr Priya Mondal; Dr Arjit Mukhopadhyay; Dr Stephen Parnell;
- iii) that the promotions added to the University's research profile.

Noted:

- i) that members congratulated Margaret Rowe on the award of personal chair;
- ii) that the University had been placed in Cluster E for the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) and this was the largest group;
- iii) that Cluster E was, in the majority, a comparable group of institutions.

COU.18.106

UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD CHANCELLOR

Considered: the nomination for the re-appointment of the Chancellor, on the recommendation of the Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee (COU/18/84).

Reported:

- i) that the incumbent Chancellor, Professor Jackie Kay MBE, had been appointed in October 2014 for a standard five-year period;
- ii) that the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team had commenced discussions regarding planning for succession and had recommended to the Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee that, in order to effect this successfully, that Professor Kay's term be extended;
- iii) that Professor Kay had performed very strongly against the role descriptor;
- iv) that the proposed re-appointment period was a further three years effective from January 2019 (thus, a 27-month extension in real terms);
- v) that the time period of the re-appointment was to allow for a considered succession plan to be implemented;
- vi) the view from the Committee, that, in appointing the next Chancellor consideration should be given to candidates' alignment with the Industry Collaboration Zones (ICZ) Strategy.

Noted:

- i) that the Charter of the University allowed for one Chancellor to be appointed at any one time;
- ii) that the potential gap highlighted between the ICZ Strategy and the current incumbent had been compensated for during consideration of the recommendation, although it was further noted that Professor Kay had been appointed prior to the establishment of the ICZ Strategy;
- iii) that further maturity of the ICZ Strategy was expected during the period of the re-appointment and this would afford the opportunity for targeted succession planning, and that this had already commenced;
- iv) the view, endorsed by the student members, that Professor Kay was very popular and had a real connection with the student body.

RESOLVED:

- i) to approve the re-appointment of Professor Jackie Kay MBE as Chancellor of the University of Salford for a period of three years from January 2019 to December 2021;
- ii) To receive an interim update, on the recommendation of the Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee, on the implementation of the succession plan.

ACTION: REGISTRAR AND SECRETARY

COU.18.107

SENATE

Received: an oral report from the meeting of the Senate held on 12 December 2018.

Reported:

- i) that classifications of degrees were considered, which had been prominent in recent news about the sector;
- ii) that the practice of the University was to discount the two lowest scoring modules from the degree classification formula, and that this was common practice in the sector;
- iii) that a national review was to be conducted regarding the classification algorithms and the Senate was to await the guidance produced before considering any action(s);
- iv) that the use of unconditional offers to applicants for undergraduate study had been reviewed;
- v) that the University only made unconditional offers to applicants with predicted ABB grades (or equivalent score);
- vi) that 19% of the offers made by the University for undergraduate entry in September 2018 had been unconditional and of those offers, 90% of applicants achieved their predicted or higher outcomes. Of the remainder, the outcomes

- vii) qualified them for entry under conditional entry level requirements; that the Senate was satisfied that the University was not unduly utilising unconditional offers nor affecting the credibility of its entry tariffs to gain market share and/or putting the student experience and attainment at risk;
- viii) that the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) application had been discussed;
- ix) that a nomination for award of the title 'Professor Emeritus' had been received and that this was recommended to the Council.

Noted:

- i) that the University was expected to participate in the applicant marketplace and part of this was the considered use of unconditional offers;
- ii) that Merlyn Lowther had observed the meeting of the Senate and recommended members to the same.

RESOLVED: to consider, by circulation, the recommended nominee for award of the title Professor Emeritus.

ACTION: REGISTRAR AND SECRETARY

COU.18.108

LAND ASSEMBLY

Received: a report on the land assembly under the Campus Masterplan, on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team (COU/18/85).

Reported:

- i) that the update was to ensure that the most up-to-date position for the development of land in the Adelphi and Crescent areas had been shared with all members;
- ii) that the design codes for each area had been compiled and were available for review;
- iii) that a single lead development partner was to be sought via an Open Journal of the European Union (OJEU) tender process;
- iv) that the key criteria for the development partner had been drafted and were to be confirmed at a further joint meeting with Salford City Council before the end of December 2018;
- v) that the procurement process was expected to commence in January 2019.

Noted;

- i) that minor costs had been incurred from the appointment of Cushman Wakefield (as independent commercial advisors) and Mills and Reeve (as legal advisors) to the University;
- ii) that the risk profile was expected to change significantly from this point in proceedings and the project risk was also to be captured within macro-level corporate reporting, and consequently given further consideration by the Audit and Risk Committee;
- iii) that the Finance and Resources Committee was to continue to give consideration to the financial planning and deployment of resources, with both Committees providing assurances and recommendations to the Council;
- iv) that there had been 20 registrations of interest in the development partner role to-date;
- v) that the development partner commitment was expected to be long-term. It had not been made explicit that the successful partner would be based locally; rather a decision would be made on proven track-record and evidence of innovation.

COU.18.109

QUARTERLY FINANCE REPORT

Received: the Quarter one financial forecast 2018/19, on the recommendation of the Finance and Resources Committee (COU/18/86).

Reported:

- i) that postgraduate recruitment had impacted on income, however that the planned contingency had offset the majority of this;
- ii) that Salford Professional Development (SPD) was reported as a significant proportional shift since the last report. The budgetary forecast re-set was to be

- closely monitored by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team;
- iii) that cashflow was below the £20m position at £19.6m;
 - iv) that a reduction in capital expenditure was forecast and this was mainly due to the timing of expenditure on Energy House 2;
 - v) that the University was compliant with its banking covenants;
 - vi) that the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) April 2019 uplift had been included in the forecast, however no further adjustments had been made until a position was clear and that other membership institutions were similarly affected;
 - vii) that a small number of staff were members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) for which a 7% increase had been proposed;
 - viii) that the University and College Union (UCU) was due to ballot members on strike action related to the pay award;
 - ix) that the outcome of the pension scheme consultations and ballot action was likely to be at the same time in February 2019.

Noted:

- i) the role of the Finance and Resources Committee as a scrutiny body regarding the University's ability to accurately forecast and/or take learning from realised variance;
- ii) the different margins for undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision;
- iii) that the increase in the marketing budget was not solely to mitigate postgraduate recruitment, although this had been a part of the requirement;
- iv) that the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team was confident that SPD was working towards achieving its re-set forecast and this was also to be driven by University of Salford Enterprises (USE) Board and further scrutinised through the year by the Finance and Resources Committee;
- v) the view that the regeneration of the varsity sports facilities had an impact on student recruitment and retention and the potential for an earlier start to the planned works could be considered.

COU.18.110

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

Received: the detailed report on student continuation, including the University's performance against lead indicators during Quarter one 2018/19, on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team (COU/18/87).

Reported:

- i) that there had been a small improvement in student continuation from 88.4% (2017) to 88.6% (2018) as measured at the 1 November census point;
- ii) that a number of competing factors influenced continuation; known negative influencers included commuting to the University, entry as a mature student, previous academic attainment or preparedness, caring responsibilities and financial hardship;
- iii) that how students experienced University life beyond academic delivery was also critical;
- iv) that the University continued to interrogate the reasons behind a student's decision to leave or interrupt studies, take learning, test plans and address issues;
- v) that the appended risk register had been previously considered by the Audit and Risk Committee;
- vi) that the external environment remained turbulent.

Noted:

- i) that the student journey was complex and the view that, whilst the variable factors had been well-rehearsed, it was important that members understood whether the activities undertaken made a difference;
- ii) that it was challenging to track the impact from individual activities as these had been implemented as complementary improvements. However, some data would be forthcoming: for example access usage of commuter lounges and data from the monitoring of semesterisation on defined cohorts;
- iii) that the University of Salford Students' Union (USSU) was jointly involved in strategic planning to mitigate attrition, for example co-curating the commuter lounges and providing student spaces;
- iv) that Sean O'Hara had been hosted for a visit to University House, the home of USSU, and recommended members to the same;

- v) that view that the lived experience and co-production was critical to students' success;
- vi) that the HE sector continued to research the factors impacting on continuation and that the University fully utilised its sector networks and its open relationship with USSU to improve practice;
- vii) that small issues potentially had a large impact on the student experience and should not be ignored: a recent example of this had concerned the challenge of attending a placement night shift without access to a vehicle or without a driving licence.

COU.18.111 **TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK PATH TO SILVER UPDATE**

Received: a report on the activities toward the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) silver status, recommended by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team (COU/18/88).

Reported:

- i) that this was the fourth year of the TEF;
- ii) that the report included tabular information in the same format as that considered by a TEF panel;
- iii) that the data was aggregated from a three-year period with single or double negative flags highlighted as applicable;
- iv) that the University data was following an upward trajectory, however that negative flags existed for student employability outcomes;
- v) that the flags related to data from 2014/15 (from students who entered study in 2012/13);
- vi) the view from the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team that the negative flags did not reflect the current student experience;
- vii) that there was not an opportunity to make a provider submission for TEF award in 2020, and therefore the University planned to make a provider submission in January 2019;
- viii) that from 2020 both provider and subject submissions would be required for TEF award and the University had calculated, on the current published guidance, this would require 37 individual subject submissions, representing a significant administrative burden;
- ix) that the narrative for a January 2019 provider submission was to focus on the achievements of the past two academic years;
- x) that TEF award status was no longer aligned to the power to increase fees.

Noted:

- i) the view that it was to no detriment to enter for a silver award even if the outcome was to remain awarded a bronze status;
- ii) that the sector experienced significant administrative burden for data return and activities such as TEF or Research Excellence Framework (REF) submissions;
- iii) that of the ten programmes that required improvement support and monitoring (the PRISM initiative) four had been indicated as not successfully impacting on National Student Survey (NSS) scores and this was to be analysed by the Dean of Students and presented to the Student Experience Committee in due course;
- iv) that the University, unlike some TEF silver award institutions, had not received any conditions of registration from its successful application to the Office for Students;
- v) that members supported the decision to proceed with a provider submission in January 2019.

COU.18.112 **COMMITTEE CHAIRS' REPORTS**

Received: the Committee Chairs' reports (COU/18/89).

Reported:

- i) that the Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee had approved the implementation of a skills profiling matrix for members and that a skills analysis self-assessment was to be sent out in early January 2019 for members to complete;
- ii) that the skills profile matrix was to inform both membership succession planning and existing members' development;
- iii) that the Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee had received the

- second iteration of the evaluation survey responses and thanked members for completion;
- iv) that the Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee had received a 'deep dive' presentation on international academic partnerships viewed through the ethics framework and this had provided credible assurance. Further presentations had been scheduled;
 - v) that the Student Experience Committee had received and discussed reports outlining the TEF provider submission and student employability data;
 - vi) that the Student Experience Committee had received a 'deep dive' presentation on the welcome, registration and induction process (WRI);
 - vii) that the report of the Honorary Degrees Committee included names of the successful nominees proposed to receive an honorary award of the University.

Received: an oral Committee Chair report for the Remuneration Committee.

Reported:

- i) that the Vice-Chancellor's pay and performance had been considered and approved at a separate meeting of the Committee as per its terms of reference;
- ii) that it was agreed that the Total Reward Framework (TRF) would have a significant impact on the whole university staff body and the Committee had not felt that it was sufficiently assured to recommend component parts related to senior managers for approval. At least two extraordinary meetings were to be scheduled;
- iii) that Aviva had been endorsed as the provider for the additional defined contribution pension scheme;
- iv) that the 2018 gender pay gap report had been received and the median pay gap had fallen from 21% in 2017 to 11.2% in 2018.

Noted: that the drop in median gender pay gap was largely attributed to the impact of the establishment of Unitemps, the University's recruitment service.

COU.18.113 **CONTINGENCY PLANNING**

Noted: that the impact of a potential no-deal Brexit was under consideration by the Brexit Task Group and that this was a University-wide tactical plan across several loosely defined scenarios.

RESOLVED: to receive an updated Contingency Planning Report [COU.18.97], on the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee, via circulation in January 2019.

ACTION: CHAIR, BREXIT TASK GROUP

COU.18.114 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other items of business were received.

COU.18.115 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Council meeting was to be held on Friday 29 March 2019.