

COUNCIL 3

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2021

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| Members | Baroness Ann Taylor (Chair) | Abdulraouf Abdussalam | Shahnaz Ali |
| | Dr Pam Bagley | Karl Bates | Jo Beaumont |
| | Michael Bell | Dermot Bolton | Professor Shirley Congdon |
| | Kersten England | Terry Hartwell | Amir Hussain |
| | Karen McMahon | Sally Neocosmos | Mohammed Pandor |
| | Professor Rami Qahwaji | Samera Shabir | Stuart Watson |
| | Prof Vishanth Weerakkody | | |

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| Apologies | Carl Chambers | Maurice Watkins | Michael Ziff |
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In attendance: Professor John Bridgeman, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Innovation and Engagement
 Jacqui Holgate, Assistant Head, Governance (Secretary)
 Professor Zahir Irani, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Innovation and Quality
 Stuart McKinnon-Evans, Chief Finance Officer
 Joanne Marshall, Director of People and Campus Services
 Riley Power, University Secretary

50.20-21 **Register of Interests (Document EB58/20-21)**

50.1 Council received the register of Council members interests, noting that it would be updated to include an additional interest from Ms England who had become a member of the Resolution Foundation Advisory Board.

51.20-21 **Minutes of the Meeting on 24 February 2021 (Document C59/20-21)**

51.1 The minutes of the meeting held on the 24 February 2021 were approved by circulation prior to the Council meeting.

52.20-21 **Matters Arising and Action Tracker (Document C60/20-21)**

52.1 Council received a report on matters arising from the Council meeting on 24 February 2021 and the actions taken since that meeting to address them.

53.20-21 **Report from the Chair**

53.1 The Chair provided a brief update on the series of informal 1:1 meetings that were being held with members of Council. These were positive meetings in which common themes were emerging.

53.2 The Chair also drew attention to the meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Group that would take place 18 May. Relevant highlights from the meeting would be shared with Council as appropriate.

53.3 Council noted that offline approval had been given to two-time critical approval requests since the previous meeting: a transformative gift to fund the creation of a Space Satellite Technology Centre and the final arrangements for the embedded International Foundation College which was part of the University's longer-term strategy to support the achievement of international recruitment targets.

54.20-21 **Vice-Chancellor's Update Report (Document C61/20-21)**

54.1 The Vice-Chancellor provided an update on key matters affecting the University, noting that the University continued to prepare for the return of campus student activities post 17 May and the development of the Taught Student Offer Framework for 2021/22 which would be campus-based and deliver a meaningful, engaging, and inclusive student offer.

54.2 Recent successes were highlighted, and Council was pleased to note that the University had retained its institutional Athena Swan Bronze award and achieved an additional Athena Swan Bronze award in the Faculty of Engineering and Informatics. These awards clearly demonstrated the University's commitment to fostering and embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion in all activity; this was strongly welcomed by Council.

54.3 The request by the Chair of Council for members to retweet and share relevant social media posts (for example, student achievements, successes, new rankings etc) in order to increase the University's social media engagement and reach was noted.

54.4 Council also noted that Tracy Brabin had been elected as the first Mayor of West Yorkshire, and the first female metro mayor in England. A congratulatory letter would be sent to Ms Brabin on behalf of Council.

54.5 **ACTION: send congratulatory letter to Ms Brabin on behalf of Council (University Secretary)**

55.20-21 **Report from the University Secretary (Document C62/20-21)**

55.1 Council received a report from the University Secretary on the ongoing work related to areas of governance pertinent to Council and the University. Following consideration of the report, Council **approved** the following items which had been endorsed by the Governance and Nominations Committee:

- revised Council Committee Terms of Reference for 2021/22.
- new Court Terms of Reference for 2021/22.
- updated Statement of Primary Responsibilities which detailed the principal responsibilities of University Council.
- revised Regulation 15 on Elections to the Council, Senate and Faculty Boards.
- nominations for Honorary Awards.

- 55.2 Points noted in discussion included:
- a request for equality and diversity data for honorary award recipients to be circulated to Council, for information.
 - that a position paper was being developed on the IHRA and APPG definitions and their adoption; this would be presented to Senate in June and Council in July.
- 55.3 SECRETARY'S NOTE: a process was in place for the collection of equality and diversity data from honorary award recipients; however only a small number of recipients had completed the E&D form to date. As the statistical sample increased further detail would be provided to Council. E&D data was also monitored by the Honorary Degrees Committee.
- 55.4 **ACTION: add position paper on IHRA and APPG definitions to Council to July agenda (University Secretary)**
- 56.20-21 **University of Bradford Union of Students (UBU) Quarterly Report (Document C63/20-21)**
- 56.1 Council received a report from the UBU Education Officer and UBU Student Affairs Officer on recent activities and current issues which included student welfare and safety and the outcome of the recent UBU elections. Council noted the high-profile events that had been undertaken by the Students' Union which included hosting a live hustings for the West Yorkshire Mayoral Election Candidates, and was pleased to note the high level of student engagement with sports and volunteering activities which maximised opportunities for students to develop communities and friendships and supported wellbeing. The value and impact of the UBU Kick Start programme was also noted.
- 56.2 Council recognised the work of the outgoing Student Affairs Officer, Samera Shabir, who would reach the end of her final term of office in June and extended thanks to Ms Shabir for her valuable contribution and engagement in the business of Council and the Committees of which she had been a member over the last two academic years. Abdulraouf Abdussalam, Education Officer, would continue as a member of Council for 2021/22 and would be joined by his colleague Inshaal Ahmed, the incoming Student Affairs Officer from July 2021.
- 57.20-21 **Draft Key Performance Indicators (Document C64/20-21)**
- 57.1 Council considered in detail a proposed new set of key performance indicators which would assist Council, Senate and Committees to understand how the University was performing against its eight core strategic objectives. Outstanding data and yearly targets needed to be confirmed as part of this work; however, the report showed the current progress based on ongoing discussions with strategic leads.
- 57.2 Council welcomed the proposed KPIs and offered feedback on a number of points that could inform further developments, including the need for some KPIs to be more ambitious. In response to a question on the number of KPIs presented, the University Secretary noted that the detail provided was a breakdown of what was captured within the main indicators and that this detail would be presented in a clear report format that assisted Council in forming a judgement on performance against these indicators. The University Secretary also confirmed

that the majority of the KPIs were able to draw on data collected for existing University returns (i.e., financial indicators, league tables positions, staff and student survey data etc) and as such the data was readily available. The University's commitment to intentionality of EDI in its approach to recruitment was also discussed.

57.3 Council noted that (i) the KPIs and targets were expected to evolve over the period to 2025/26 in response to achievements and challenges, external developments and initiatives, and the availability of new datasets in relevant areas; (ii) that detailed scrutiny of more granular measure relating to each of the sub-strategies would be monitored through the Committees of Council and Senate with the status of those implementation plans reflected in the high-level performance indicators at Senate and Council; (iii) that relevant strategic leads had developed, or were developing detailed implementation plans. 'Deep dives' on elements of the University Strategy would be scheduled in 2021/22; this would enable members to have meaningful dialogue with executive leads on the strategic objectives.

57.4 Council noted that further work would be undertaken by Executive Board to stress test the targets and a final suite of KPIs would be presented to Council at its strategy discussion in early June.

57.5 **ACTIONS:**

- **present final suite of KPIs to the informal Council briefing event on 8 June (University Secretary)**
- **schedule 'deep dives' on elements of the University Strategy via the informal Council briefings (University Secretary)**

58.20-21 **Draft People Strategy (Document C65/20-21)**

58.1 Council considered the draft People Strategy, an enabling strategy of the University Strategy which placed staff at the heart of its plans and recognised that their collective talents, efforts, and commitments would deliver the University's vision, mission, and values over the next five years.

58.2 Council welcomed and **approved** the strategy subject to the following: to highlight compliance / challenge with values and behaviours; relationship with the Campus Trade Unions; wellbeing; and to reduce the number of strategic objectives to 5, to align with the strategic themes, and have a set of strategic actions.

58.3 Council noted that a delivery plan was in development to support implementation of the new enabling strategy.

59.20-21 **Mid-Year Financial Forecast and Budget Assumptions 2021/22-2024/25 (Document C66/20-21)**

59.1 Council considered a report on the University's 2020/21 financial position, noting that the mid-year financial forecast predicted a surplus in the management accounts which was ahead

of the original budget. This reflected strong student recruitment and continued firm cost control.

59.2 Points noted in discussion included:

- that the financial forecast had been subject to scrutiny by the Finance Committee and Executive Board.
- the increase in the level of tuition fee debt from international students. Work was underway to mitigate the risk associated with the overall debt position; this would be monitored closely by the Chief Finance Office.
- the University's decision not to proceed with the Government's Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loans Scheme (CLBILS).

59.3 Council **agreed** the budget assumptions outlined in the report noting that these would inform the planning and budgeting process in 2021/22. Attention was also drawn to the increasing cost of the USS pension scheme, and the adverse impact that this would have on the 2021/22 budget and on employees.

60.20-21 **Financial Regulations (Document C67/20-21)**

60.1 Council considered and **approved** the revised Financial Regulations which set out the responsibility for financial management and control within the University.

61.20-21 **Recommendation on Future of Emm Lane/Heaton Mount Site (Document C68/20-21)**

61.1 Secretary's Note: Council noted that one Council Member, Amir Hussain, had previously been commissioned by a bidder in the original tender process to produce some outputs related to their bid. Mr Hussain advised Council that he no longer had an active interest in that proposal given the outcome of the tender process. Council noted these matters and agreed that there was not a conflict of interest that would preclude Mr Hussain participating in the discussion of this item.

61.2 The Chief Finance Officer introduced the report and highlighted (i) that an extensive local and national marketing campaign for the sale of the Manningham site (comprising Emm Lane, Heaton Mount and Waterhead) had been undertaken by the University's appointed property agent; (ii) the criteria that had been used to evaluate the bids, as approved by Council in February 2020; (iii) that independent due diligence had been undertaken which included an assessment on compatibility with the University's mission, strategies and values, as well as a focus on ethical matters.

61.3 The options for the University, as set out in the proposal, had been thoroughly explored throughout the year; these were outlined by the Chief Finance Officer:

- do not sell the site and continue to hold unutilised. This option was costly to the University (circa £500K pa), leaving the asset dormant, with little prospect of a change in market conditions promising a better future outcome.
- progress a joint venture or other arrangement to retain a long-term interest. This did not represent a core business activity of importance to the University Strategy, and any

benefits for the University would be slow to mature, and uncertain. There was insufficient market interest in this option to yield good value.

- proceed to complete the sale, selling to the bidder whose proposal ranked highest on the evaluation.

61.4 Council noted that the proposal had been considered in detail by an extraordinary meeting of Finance Committee, Executive Board, and the University Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee had considered the ethical dimensions associated with the sale of the site and had requested additional assurance for the preferred bid.

61.5 A report which addressed the specific concerns raised by Ethics Committee had been circulated to Council, for information. Lay member of Council, and Islamic Scholar and Iman, Mr Mohammed Pandor confirmed that adequate assurance had been provided to address the concerns raised by Ethics Committee regarding interfaith and community activity. An assessment of compatibility with the University's mission, strategies and values had also been undertaken by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, EDI.

61.6 Council carefully considered the matter, robustly debating the opportunities and risks associated with the options outlined, noting the advice of the Chief Finance Officer was to proceed with a sale; this was endorsed by the Executive Board and the Pro-Chancellor and Treasurer. Council challenged the Chief Finance Officer on the proposal and in response to the queries raised, the CFO confirmed:

- that from an estate's strategic perspective, the University did not require the surplus land and property. The focus for estates management, and investment, remained on the City campus.
- that a joint venture/partnership arrangement did not fit with the University Strategy.
- that a clawback mechanism on the purchase price and/or restrictive covenants would be included should the site be used for alternative purposes/uses not set out in the statement/proposal.
- that assurance had been sought from the preferred bidder on interfaith activity and gender equality (M61.5 refers).
- that resources generated from the sale would be ring-fenced for future capital and non-recurrent investment and would not be used for operational activity; this aligned with the current financial strategy.

61.7



Note: part of the above minute has been redacted as it is considered to be exempt information as defined by section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which covers commercial interests.

62.20-21 **Student Recruitment Update (Document C69/20-21)**

- 62.1 Council considered a report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Innovation and Quality on applicants, offers and acceptances across all market segments for September 2021 and on marketing and recruitment activity for conversion, and late applications. Council was reassured that mechanisms were in place to deliver a resilient and fit for purpose service during the Clearing period which would commence in late July. Council was also updated on the business risks facing the University in respect of the potential exposure caused by new and returning students from 'red list' countries and competitor pricing strategies.
- 62.2 Council noted that detailed application and decision data would continue to be monitored closely by Executive Board and a further briefing will be presented to the Council in July.

63.20-21 **The Taught Student Offer 2021/22 and the Learning, Teaching & Student Experience Strategy (Document C70/20-21)**

- 63.1 Council received an update on the Taught Student Offer Framework 2021/22 and **endorsed** the principles driven approach which was being used by each Faculty to design their programme-based offer in order to promote high-quality teaching, learning and assessment. A comprehensive communications plan had been produced to share key messages about the 2021/22 Student Offer with enquirers, applicants, current students, and key external stakeholders.
- 63.2 Council commended the work that was being led by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Innovation and Quality on the design of the 2021/22 Student Offer, noting that it was being developed within the context of the University Strategy, local and national roadmaps and the new Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy (LTSE). A brief overview of the post 17 May offer, which included the return of in-person activities, was also provided. Council was pleased to note the University's continued commitment to, and responsibility for, providing a consistent and high-quality student experience.
- 63.3 Council noted that the 2021/22 Student Offer provided an opportunity to commence with the implementation of the LTSE Strategy that was approved by Council in Summer 2020.

63.4 **ACTION: add further update on the 2021/22 Student Offer to Council schedule of business (DVC, AIQ)**

64.20-21 **Mandatory Gender Pay Reporting 2020 (Document C71/20-21)**

- 64.1 Council considered a report on the University's gender pay gap for 2020, noting that whilst the overall median gender pay gap for 2020 had improved (20.2% compared to 24.9% in 2019), this continued to be adverse to the sector median benchmark of 15.5%. Council noted that the reduction in pay gaps would be a key performance indicator for the University and would be addressed through the implementation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion sub-strategy and the People enabling strategy.

- 65.20-21 **Business from Committees (Documents C72-78/20-21)**
- 65.1 Council received and noted summary reports from the following meetings: Senate; Audit Committee; Finance Committee; University Ethics Committee; Governance and Nominations Committee; Honorary Degrees Committee; People Committee; and Remuneration Committee.
- 66.20-21 **Access and Participation Plan 2019/20 Monitoring Return (Document C79/20-21)**
- 66.1 Council received and noted the report.
- 67.20-21 **Prevent Duty Update (Document C80/20-21)**
- 67.1 Council received and noted the report.
- 68.20-21 **USS Pension Scheme Update (Document C81/20-21)**
- 68.1 Council received and noted the report.
- 69.20-21 **Workforce Data Report, Quarter 2, 2020/21 (Document C82/20-21)**
- 69.1 Council received and noted the report.
- 70.20-21 **Health and Safety Activity Report, Quarter 2, 2020/21 (Document C83/20-21)**
- 70.1 Council received and noted the report.
- 71.20-21 **Terms of Reference and Membership 2020/21 (Document C84/20-21)**
- 71.1 Council received and noted the report.
- 72.20-21 **Draft Council 4 Agenda: 7 July 2021 (Document C85/20-21)**
- 72.1 Council received and noted the report.
- 73.20-21 **Council Schedule of Business for 2020/21 (Document C86/20-21)**
- 73.1 Council received and noted the report.
- 74.20-21 **Any Other Business: Council Residential 2021**
- 74.1 Council noted that the residential event would take place on 14-15 October 2021.