



COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 October 2022

Present: Sir Keith O’Nions (Chair), Dr Pearl Agyakwa, Vicky Bailey, Ravi Bhalla (from minute 3973), River Butterworth, Sultan Chaudhury, Professor Rachel Gomes, Ian Kenyon (from minute 3978), Sonya Leydecker, Sherry Madera, Piyali Mitra, Richard Newsome, Stephen Odell, Nora Senior, Professor Shearer West

Apologies: Lynette Eastman, Professor Joanne Lymn

In attendance: Jason Carter (Director of Governance and Assurance for minute 3974), Professor Neil Crout (Interim PVC RKE for minute 3978), Alison Dubas (minutes), Dr Paul Greatrix (Registrar), Professor Jeremy Gregory (FPVC Arts), Professor Sam Kingman (FPVC Engineering), Margaret Monckton (CFO), Jason Phoenix (Castle Meadow Programme Director for minute 3975), Tim Watkinson (Director of Communications and Advocacy)

3968 Welcome, Apologies, Quoracy

- .1 The Chair welcomed members and guests to the meeting.
- .2 Apologies were received from Lynette Eastman and Professor Joanne Lymn.
- .3 The Secretary CONFIRMED that the meeting was quorate.

3969 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3970 Minutes of the Meetings held 27 and 28 June 2022 and 5 September 2022 and Action Log

Council RECEIVED and APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held 27 and 28 June 2022 and 5 September 2022 (C/22/87).

3971 Chair’s Business

- .1 Council RECEIVED a verbal report from the Chair.
- .2 The Chair informed Council members of the ongoing work on the University’s business continuity planning. Ian Kenyon and Sherry Madera had been briefed on the University’s plans.
- .3 Council members were reminded to contact the Registrar if they wished to volunteer to be the second external Council member on the University’s Health and Safety Committee.

3972 Vice-Chancellor’s Report

- .1 Council RECEIVED a verbal report from the Vice-Chancellor.

- .2 The Vice-Chancellor REPORTED on the recent changes within the UK government, including the appointment of the new Higher Education Minister, and DISCUSSED the implications such changes could have upon universities.
- .3 The Office for National Statistics had recalibrated how research and development expenditure was calculated. There were concerns within the sector that there would not be further investment in research and development.
- .4 A devolution deal had been agreed in Nottingham, Nottinghamshire and Derby and Derbyshire, which would bring additional investment into the regions over the coming years. It was anticipated that a Mayor would be appointed during 2024.
- .5 Although there had been news stories published about some students facing issues in finding accommodation, this was not reflective of the situation at the University of Nottingham.
- .6 The University continued to provide support to Ukrainians. A Working Group continued to meet, which had oversight and continued to monitor the situation.

3973 RESERVED

3974 Health and Safety

- .1 Council RECEIVED papers C/22/88 and C/22/95 from the Chair of the Health and Safety Committee, presented by the Director of Governance and Assurance.
- .2 There continued to be good progress on health and safety compliance across the University, with a focus upon the development of hazard maps and risk registers for Faculties and Professional Services departments.
- .3 The new Director of Health and Safety would commence in post on 1 November 2022, and would continue to implement the health and safety programme and raise the profile of health and safety across the University. There would be a continued focus upon ensuring the health and safety team followed a business partner approach in supporting the University and that the team would work with Faculties and Professional Services departments to reduce health and safety risk profiles.
- .4 There had been three cases of reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences regulations (RIDDOR) since the last report submitted to Council. Members were assured that all incidents had been fully investigated and action had been taken to prevent reoccurrence of similar incidents.
- .5 Council NOTED the report as outlined within paper C/22/88.

3975 Castle Meadow Report

- .1 Council RECEIVED paper C/22/76 from the Castle Meadow Campus Programme Director.
- .2 Risks associated with Castle Meadow Campus had been reviewed. The overall risk rating for the Castle Meadow Campus programme would remain amber until such point that a full health check of the programme had been completed.

- .3 A deep dive into the Castle Meadow Campus risk profile would be undertaken. Following conclusion of this exercise, a paper would be developed that would provide Council with a greater insight into the risks and mitigating actions that needed to be implemented. The analysis of risks and proposed mitigations would be included in the report that would be submitted to the November 2022 meeting of Council.
- .4 A budget for the Castle Meadow Campus programme had been approved by Planning and Resources Committee and there was a clear 19 month programme of events and activity planned for the project.
- .5 Council members welcomed the report and the format in which it was presented. It was DISCUSSED that some costs associated with the programme were still unknown and members were keen that this be addressed and updated once the information was available. When fully developed, the Castle Meadow Campus business case would include detailed financial requests and a timeline by which it was hoped certain milestones would be achieved.
- .6 Council NOTED the Castle Meadow Campus report (paper C/22/76).

3976 Finance Overview: 2021/22 Financial Year End

- .1 Council RECEIVED paper C/22/89 from the Chief Financial Officer.
- .2 The University had a draft surplus post investments of £60.4m, which was £18.8m higher than the latest revised forecast (LRF) reported in May 2022. Similar surplus situations were being reported at other institutions. It was recognised that there needed to be improved financial planning and forecasting to prevent similar positions occurring in the future. A Working Group, chaired by the FPVC Engineering and PVC Education and Student Experience, would be convened to review resourcing levels to ensure that appropriate budgets were being allocated.
- .3 It was NOTED that the year end financial figures would change as there was a significant accounting adjustment to be made in relation to pension scheme costs.
- .4 Council NOTED the 2021/22 Financial Year End paper (C/22/89).

3977 Finance Overview: MTFP Financial Risk Update

Council RECEIVED and NOTED paper C/22/90 from the Chief Financial Officer.

3978 Research Strategy Business Case

- .1 Council RECEIVED paper C/22/86 from the Interim PVC RKE.
- .2 Alongside new initiatives, the Research Strategy business case; comprised some components which had been present within the previous strategy, such as match funding and pump priming. Other components were a continuation of existing actions, such as continuation of the Fellowship scheme. New initiatives included changing and improving the research culture across the University. Council DISCUSSED the challenges in measuring and monitoring the improvement of research culture at the University. Members would welcome regular progress updates and opportunities to provide guidance on any challenging aspects of the delivery and implementation of the strategy.

- .3 A significant level of work had been undertaken to estimate the benefits of the new research strategy, which would be measured through key performance indicators (KPIs) on citations and research income.
- .4 Council members sought assurance that, should there be any aspects of the strategy that were not on track to be achieved, these should be quickly identified and addressed. This would be achieved via the collection of robust data throughout delivery of the strategy and regular reporting. There was a governance structure in place for monitoring the Research Strategy, with regular reports being submitted to Planning and Resources Committee.
- .5 Council APPROVED the Research Strategy business case and the request for £27.9m of investment over a five-year period.

3979 The Role of Senate

- .1 Council RECEIVED paper C/22/94 from the Registrar.
- .2 The Registrar provided Council with an overview of the work of the Senate Effectiveness Review Group, which had resulted in a series of recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of Senate. Senate occupied a distinctive position within the University's governance structure and had evolved over time, in line with expectations of the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) Code of Governance and Office for Students (OfS) principles.
- .3 Following the conclusion of the Senate Effectiveness Review, Council had been requested to confirm the precise role and responsibilities of Senate. In particular, Council was requested to consider the key recommendation that Ordinance XV, which outlined the key responsibilities of Senate, be reviewed.
- .4 The RECOMMENDED option in the paper was that Ordinance XV be revised and distilled in to order to focus clearly on the primary responsibilities of Senate. Should this be agreed by Council, it was proposed that the Registrar would engage with the CUC and explore similar changes which had been undertaken at peer institutions to inform a revised Ordinance for Council to consider.
- .5 Council DISCUSSED the following:
 - .1 That any revision to the Ordinance must seek to focus the business of Senate on areas and issues that were its primary purpose; education and research. However, the Ordinance must not be so prescriptive that it would restrict Council from asking Senate to undertake other business, not specifically related to education or research, on occasions;
 - .2 Senate agenda should be structured in a way that enabled Senate to focus upon, and discharge, its primary duties;
 - .3 That it would be beneficial to seek advice and input from the CUC and other institutions which had undertaken similar exercises to determine the role and responsibilities of Senate. Exercises of this nature were common practice within the sector.
 - .4 That Senate was the most senior academic authority within the University and that it was entirely appropriate that matters related to education and research were its focus. A method could be devised to allow Senate to have the opportunity to discuss topics that were not its primary responsibility. An option

might be to schedule informal sessions before each meeting of Senate to enable members to discuss such topics and have an opportunity to ask questions about other University business.

- .6 Council members were reminded that the process for the appointment of Senate members to Council would be revised as part of the implementation of the Senate Effectiveness Review recommendations.
- .7 Council APPROVED the progression of option c within paper C/22/94, that Ordinance XV would be revised and distilled to focus clearly on the primary responsibilities of Senate. The Registrar would progress this work in liaison with the CUC and peer institutions, to seek their advice and guidance in the revision of the Ordinance. The proposed revised Ordinance would be submitted to Council for discussion and consideration.

ACTION		Owner	Due
.8	The proposed revisions to Ordinance XV, to help clarify the role and responsibility of Senate, would be submitted to Council for discussion and consideration.	Registrar	November 2023

3980 Faculty of Social Sciences Overview

- .1 Council RECEIVED paper C/22/91 from the FPVC Social Sciences.
- .2 Council NOTED the following:
 - .1 Student recruitment targets had been achieved within all Schools, save for an over recruitment within the Nottingham University Business School (NUBS);
 - .2 In terms of the Research England Framework (REF), there had been increases in absolute scores for all Schools within the Faculty, increases in relative position for some Schools and a decreases in relative position for others;
 - .3 That further work was required to improve the Faculty's position within the Guardian University Guide rankings;
 - .4 The Faculty had recently appointed a new APVC for Education and Student Experience, Professor Helen Williams. The APVC for Research and Knowledge Exchange had recently stepped down from the role and this would be recruited to over the coming weeks.
- .3 The NUBS business case had been revisited and reviewed. The case would focus on quality, enhancement and growth and would have a phased investment approach. Further refinement and development of the business case continued and the case would be submitted for Council's consideration once finalised.
- .4 Consideration continued to be given to relocating NUBS to the Castle Meadow Campus.
- .5 For future Faculty reports submitted to Council, members requested that additional information be provided on how the work of the Faculty supported the delivery of the University's objectives and KPIs as outlined within its performance framework.
- .6 Council NOTED the Faculty of Social Sciences Report (paper C/22/91).

3981 Finance Committee Report

Council RECEIVED and NOTED paper C/22/97 from the Chair of Finance Committee.

3982 Audit and Risk Committee Report

Council RECEIVED and NOTED paper C/22/96 from the Chair of Audit and Risk Committee.

3983 Honorary Degrees Committee Report

Council RECEIVED and NOTED paper C/22/92 from the Registrar.

3984 Access and Participation Plan Progress Report

- .1 Council RECEIVED paper C/22/77 from the PVC Education and Student Experience.
- .2 Council NOTED the continued work to achieve each of the five priority areas within the Access and Participation Plan (APP).
- .3 Following the appointment of a new director for the office to fair access, all Universities had been required to submit a variation to its APP plans. Feedback was awaited from the OfS on the University of Nottingham's variation. A key element of the variation had been a focus upon how Universities played a role in addressing the attainment challenges of pre-16 aged students.
- .4 The OfS had just launched a consultation on a revamp of the APP, which would close at the beginning of November 2022.
- .5 Council members commended the ongoing work on the APP. However, members would welcome the opportunity to have sight of a more accessible version of the plan, that clearly articulated the work being undertaken and the positive impacts that resulted from the work. A shorter, accessible version of the APP was available and this would be circulated to Council.
- .6 Council NOTED the APP Progress Report (paper C/22/77).

ACTION		Owner	Due
.7	Detailed sessions on the APP would be scheduled onto Council agenda. Sessions would provide members opportunity to understand how the University's APP had a positive impact upon students, who would be invited to speak to Council about their experiences.	Registrar/ PVC ESE	Ongoing
.8	The shorter, accessible version of the APP report would be circulated to Council for information.	PVC ESE/ Secretary	November 2022.

3985 Council Forward Plan

Council RECEIVED and NOTED paper C/22/93 from the Secretary.

3986 Student Suspensions and Discipline Cases

- .1 Council RECEIVED a verbal report from the Registrar.
- .2 Two students had been permanently excluded from the University following fitness to study outcomes.

3987 Council Instruments for Annual Approval

- .1 Council RECEIVED and APPROVED the following:
 - .1 The Standing Orders of Council as presented in paper C/22/78;
 - .2 The Roles, Powers and Responsibilities of Council as presented in paper C/22/79.
- .2 Council NOTED the Council Members Requirements and Expectations as presented in paper C/22/80.

3988 Membership Information and Guidance

- .1 Council RECEIVED and NOTED the following:
 - .1 The Conflict of Interest Policy as presented in paper C/22/81;
 - .2 The Responsibilities and Liabilities of Council members as presented in paper C/22/82;
 - .3 The Membership and Periods of Office of Council 2022/23 as presented in paper C/22/83;
 - .4 Council Members' Attendance 2021/22 as presented in paper C/22/84.
- .2 Council had not set a minimum attendance expectation of its members. However, this would be considered by a future meeting of Nominations Committee and consideration would be given to introducing a minimum attendance expectation.

3989 Modern Slavery Act 2015 Statement for 2022

- .1 Council RECEIVED and APPROVED paper C/22/85 from the Registrar.