



MINUTES OF A COUNCIL MEETING

Held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO
1.	<p><b><u>Apologies &amp; Absences</u></b></p> <p>For a record of attendance, apologies and absences, see attached list.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Anne George and Tom Robinson, the two new student members of Council.</p> <p>The Chair reflected on the timing of the meeting on the day of a General Election and how a potential change in Government would mean changes for the sector and also the significance of the decisions to be taken on the short, medium and long-term financial sustainability of the University. The uncertainty of student numbers for September remained, but the need to be proactive now and to act consciously and with insight was critical.</p>		
2.	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>All the staff members of Council and all the staff attendees declared that they were members of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). Lesley Thompson declared that her husband was also a member of USS. Ruth Bagley declared an interest in Perrett Laver.</p>		
3.	<p><b><u>Student Story</u></b></p> <p><i>Item confidential.</i></p>		
4.	<p><b><u>Minutes and Actions</u></b></p> <p>(i) <u>Minutes</u></p> <p>Council received and approved the minutes of the Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Actions List</u></p> <p>Council received and noted the actions.</p>		

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5.	<u>Matters Arising</u>		
<b>PART A – REPORTS &amp; APPROVALS</b>			
6A.	<p><u>Vice-Chancellor’s Report</u></p> <p>(i) <u>Vice-Chancellor’s Report</u> Members received an update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Financial Sustainability at Keele, which was covered elsewhere on the agenda.</li> <li>▪ Keele Day – he thanked all the staff and students that had made the day a tremendous success and that it had brought many people onto campus for the first time.</li> <li>▪ General Election – both the University and the Students’ Union had been active in encouraging students to vote, and the University had been careful to conform with the guidance for universities and charities on engaging with candidates. It was noted that the party manifestos included little mention of universities other than an acknowledgement that the system was in trouble, but it was hoped that the outcome of the election would bring some help to the sector.</li> <li>▪ <i>Item commercial in confidence.</i></li> <li>▪ Keele Business School (KBS) – Council received a report on KBS due to its central position in determining the success of the University in both financial and academic terms. A number of changes had been made to both staffing and courses that it was hoped would deliver significant changes.</li> <li>▪ Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024 – the University had received positive rankings, including ranked in the top 10 globally for sustainable development goals 10 (reducing inequalities) and top 15 globally for sustainable development goals 16 (promoting peace, justice and strong institutions). Both of these placed us 4<sup>th</sup> in the UK for the same measures.</li> <li>▪ College Leaders Visit – Keele had hosted a visit from its five partner colleges in June to celebrate joint collaborations over the past year and to discuss future projects. They were Newcastle &amp; Stafford Colleges Group, Stoke on Trent College, City of Stoke on Trent Sixth Form College, Telford College and Shrewsbury Colleges Group.</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) Review of Graduate Visa Route – the Home Secretary asked the MAC to conduct a ‘rapid review’ of the graduate visa and Universities UK coordinated a communications and lobbying campaign in an effort to protect it by highlighting the damage that could be done by changing it. The outcome of the review was a recommendation not to withdraw the Graduate Route, which the government confirmed before the announcement of the election. The University was working through the Agent Quality Framework to ensure we were compliant.</li> <li>▪ Graduation Ceremonies – this year’s summer ceremonies would be taking place 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024.</li> <li>▪ Academic Partnerships Annual Report – the report, which had been considered by Senate, summarised our partner relationships, which were an increasingly important component of our Academic Delivery Plan. It included a Quality Assurance Agency Quality Evaluation and Enhancement of UK Transnational Education report on our dual award with Beijing Foreign Studies University, which was complimentary.</li> <li>▪ Access and Participation Plan – the Plan had been submitted to the Office for Students (OfS) and some very minor comments had been received so far.</li> </ul> <p>(ii) <u>Risk Management &amp; Key Performance Indicators</u></p> <p><i>Item commercial in confidence.</i></p>		
7A.	<p><b><u>Student Reports</u></b></p> <p>(i) <u>Report of the Students’ Union (SU)</u></p> <p>The Union Development &amp; Democracy (UDD) Officer presented his report, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have Your Say Day and democratic reform – this was part of a great deal of work taking place on student voice, including Speak Week, which received 1,500 responses.</li> <li>▪ Emergency General Meeting – an EGM was called to adopt an official position regarding the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict.</li> <li>▪ CEO recruitment – interviews had taken place, and the appointee would be announced shortly.</li> <li>▪ General Election – the SU had worked closely with the NUS to encourage students to vote, and the SU Building was used as a polling station.</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Update from Interim CEO - including working towards achieving a financially sustainable future, freedom of speech and working collaboratively with the University.</li> </ul> <p>(ii) <u>Report of the Keele Postgraduate Association (KPA)</u> The President of the KPA presented her report, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Challenges, Impact and Solutions – a summary of meetings, events and information sharing in the KPA.</li> <li>▪ Future Planning – including that an application had been made to the Charity Commission to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.</li> <li>▪ Reaching out and raising voices – work in the KPA to hear the student voice.</li> <li>▪ Supporting students through the cost-of-living crisis.</li> <li>▪ Bringing cultures together – a large number of events were organised by the KPA to foster a sense of community amongst KPA members.</li> <li>▪ KPA Constitutional changes – the new draft had been shared with the Governance Team and the Charity Commission.</li> </ul>		
8A.	<p><b><u>Annual EDI Impact Report 2023-2024</u></b></p> <p>The University’s Annual Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Impact Report 2023-2024 was presented.</p> <p>The report fulfilled the University’s statutory obligations but more importantly evidenced to our stakeholders our progress in the delivery of our EDI strategy objectives.</p> <p>This was the first report on progress against the new EDI Strategy, as such it mainly described activity in progress rather than measurable impact of that activity, which would develop over time.</p> <p>The Staff Profile Report 2022-2023 was also presented, which provided an analysis of the University’s workforce by protected characteristic for 2022-23. The workforce report provided baseline data to inform action setting and progress monitoring in our EDI work. The University had invested in a new post of Assistant Director of EDI who would work to refine our approach to reporting in future years to focus on the demonstrable impact of actions.</p> <p>Council commended the report, which was clear and a</p>		

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	pleasure to read and provided encouragement that the University was working hard to further improve its position.		
9A.	<i>Item commercial in confidence.</i>		
10A.	<p><b><u>Secretary's Report</u></b>  The Secretary to Council presented her report as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council approved the Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedure &amp; Guidelines.</li> <li>▪ Council approved the Risk Management Policy.</li> <li>▪ Council approved amendments to the terms of reference of the Business Review Committee and the Nominations &amp; Governance Committee.</li> <li>▪ Council approved the committee membership for 2024-2025.</li> <li>▪ Council also received updates on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Governance Apprenticeship Scheme 2024-2025</li> <li>○ Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education Annual Statement</li> <li>○ Office for Students' consultation</li> <li>○ Chair's action</li> <li>○ Documents signed under seal</li> <li>○ Training and useful resources.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
11A.	<p><b><u>Committee Reports</u></b>  Council received updates on the recent meetings of the Audit &amp; Risk Committee, Nominations &amp; Governance Committee, Senate, Business Review Committee and Equity, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Oversight Group.</p>		
<b>PART B – THEMED DISCUSSION ITEM</b>			
12B.	<p><b><u>Financial Performance &amp; Financial Strategy</u></b>   <i>Item commercial in confidence.</i></p>		
<b>PART C – ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>			
13C.	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b>  The Chair noted that it was the last meeting for a number of members – Richard Barnes, Tracy Bullock, Masi Noor, Jade Cioffi and Rachana Dhaka as well as Governance Apprentices Tariq Khan and Waleed Backler. Council thanked them all for their valuable contributions.</p>		

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14C.	<u>Date of Next Meeting</u> The date of the next meeting would be 12 <sup>th</sup> September 2024.		

## ATTENDANCE LIST – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024

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	Mike Farrar	Pro-Chancellor
	Richard Barnes	Deputy Pro-Chancellor (in the Chair)
A	Sally Bucknell	Deputy Pro-Chancellor
	Richard Callaway	Deputy Pro-Chancellor
	David Hall	Honorary Treasurer
	Professor Trevor McMillan	Vice-Chancellor
	Professor Mark Ormerod	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost

### MEMBERS OF UNIVERSITY STAFF

	Dr Abbie Rutter	Senate Member
A	Dr Masi Noor	Senate Member
A	Dr Shalini Sharma	Senate Member
	Emma Colley	Appointed by the Professional Services Staff

### LAY MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE COUNCIL

	Ruth Bagley
	Tracy Bullock
A	Jane Burns
	David Brown
	Tim Forman
	Simon Greenhalgh
A	Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal
	Sherree Schaefer
	Dr Lesley Thompson

### STUDENT MEMBERS

	Tom Robinson	Union Development & Democracy Officer, Students' Union
	Anne George	President, Keele Postgraduate Association

### SECRETARY TO COUNCIL

	Clare Stevenson	Secretary to Council
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### IN ATTENDANCE

	Dr Mark Bacon	Chief Operating Officer
	Frances Hewison	Chief People Officer
	Pascale Vermassen	Chief Financial Officer
	Tariq Khan	Governance Apprentice
	Jade Cioffi	Former Union Development & Democracy Officer, Students' Union
	Rachana Dhaka	Former President, Keele Postgraduate Association

### SECRETARIAT

	Fiona Dumbelton	Governance Secretariat Manager
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Key A = Absent