



Keele
University

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL

Held on Thursday 15th September 2016

The Chair welcomed Professor Nick Forsyth and Professor Graham Rogerson to their first meeting as Senate members of Council for the Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences and the Faculty of Natural Sciences respectively. He also welcomed back Dr Helen Parr who had been re-elected as a Senate member of Council for the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences.

The Chair also noted that change in format and quantity of the papers presented and members agreed that it was very much welcomed.

For a record of attendance, apologies and absences, see attached list.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Harris declared an interest as (i) KPMG are his personal accountants and (ii) his employer has tendered to provide advice to the University and that (iii) his employer acts for USS.

2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS

(a) Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2016 were approved and signed.

(b) Actions List

Council received and noted the actions list. It was reported that the appointment of the Chair of Audit Committee as Deputy Pro-Chancellor was due to receive formal approval by the Privy Council on 12th October 2016 and that a review of the Distinctive Keele Curriculum has been undertaken and that it is being re-branded whilst retaining the underlying principles.

PART 1 – REPORTS

1A. COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

1B. COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

1C. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Council received the first of a new report introduced as part of the changes to the Council agenda for 2016-2017.

The paper is intended to act as a 'catch-all' to ensure that Council receives high level information across all current governance matters and to ensure that members are meeting their regulatory obligations.

The report included the following:

- An update on progress in implementing the actions from the 2014 Review of the Effectiveness of Council, which are either completed or on track.
- The Committee of University Chairs (CUC) published the Higher Education Code of Governance in December 2014, which sets out an expectation that the Secretary to Council will carry out an annual self-assessment of compliance with the Code. The outcome of this self-assessment was presented, along with an overview of the actions to be taken forward over the coming months.
- Reviews of the effectiveness of individual members are undertaken after the first 12 months on Council and biennially thereafter. This summer, the Chair and Deputy Pro-Chancellors undertook nine reviews. There were many positive outcomes, including the excellent relationships that exist between Council and the executive, the value of briefings and visits and members' willingness to engage further to support the University. There were also a few areas for development that will be taken forward, including establishing mentors, more frequent opportunities for reflecting on individual effectiveness and greater information sharing amongst the executive on the experience and expertise of Council members to ensure that those that wish to engage further can do so to maximum effect.
- A report by executive recruiters Saxton Bampfylde was circulated, which provided some useful thinking about the role of a university governing body and the challenges faced.
- It was noted that the University operates in an environment with an ever increasing number of regulatory demands; therefore, it is important that Council has a clear understanding of its compliance-related obligations and the actions taken by the University to meet them. An update was provided on compliance with the Competition & Markets Authority's advice on consumer law requirements with regard to how we market to and support our students. Council questioned the degree of flexibility in the University's terms and conditions for increasing tuition fees for current students should the need arise. It was reported that the terms and conditions are currently being re-drafted with the assistance of Eversheds LLP.
- As part of the Committee Review in 2014-2015, it was identified that there should be an annual report from Council to Senate to give Senate an overview of Council's activities. The report was approved subject to a minor amendment to the item on student accommodation, which should indicate that proposals are still be explored.
- Council was asked to consider two amendments to the schedule of delegation; firstly delegating approval of the KeeleSU and KPA budget to the Director of Finance & IT and the Secretary to Council and, secondly, inclusion of Council's review of the KeeleSU and KPA accounts on the recommendation of the Director of Finance & IT.

Council **resolved:**

That the proposed amendments to the schedule of delegation be approved.

- Council noted that Chair's action was taken on two occasions between the last meeting and this meeting.

PART 2 – SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS

2A. REPORT OF THE SENIOR REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

Council received a report of the meeting of the Senior Remuneration Committee held on 7th July 2016.

The Chair also gave an overview of the workings, membership and business of the Committee to aid Council's understanding in this area.

PART 3 – STRATEGIC OVERVIEW REPORTS

3A. COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

3B. COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

PART 4 – THEMED DISCUSSION ITEMS

4A. PEOPLE STRATEGY 2016-2020

The Director of Human Resources & Student Services presented the draft People Strategy 2016-2020.

The Strategy describes the University's key ambitions in relation to attracting, retaining, developing, leading and valuing our staff as a basis for creating the conditions necessary to deliver the University's Strategic Plan. This is, however, within the constraints of finite resources and an increasingly complex and uncertain environment.

It was noted that the effectiveness and success of our University depends crucially upon the contribution made by our staff.

The strategic vision is *"To work in collaboration to build a sustainable, high performance organisation in which all staff and students are fully engaged and who are enabled to make an effective and relevant contribution"*.

The strategic aims and objectives are:

- Being an employer of choice
- Developing and empowering our staff
- Encouraging and developing innovative leaders
- Fostering a culture of inclusion, innovation, engagement and wellbeing
- Promote the global outlook and impact of our staff

It was reported that the nature of academic freedom is that it creates a distinctive environment that sustains the core work of teaching and research but creates resistance to

traditional forms of leadership. Informal leadership networks are being harnessed to secure buy-in.

Council welcomed the draft Strategy.

4B. COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE