

Council

MINUTES AND ACTIONS

13 October 2016

10.00 – 17:30

Council Chamber, Northcote House, Streatham Campus

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Attendees

Present

Sarah Turvill	Pro Chancellor and Chair
Sir Steve Smith	Vice-Chancellor
Dr Sarah Buck	Pro Chancellor
Richard Hughes	Pro Chancellor (Finance)
Professor Janice Kay	Provost
Richard Atkins	Lay Member
Jo Binding	Lay Member
Gerry Brown	Lay Member
Nicholas Bull	Lay Member
Kiron Farooki	Lay Member
Toby Gladwin	President, Students' Guild
Judy Hargadon	Lay Member
Professor Dave Hosken	Senate Representative
Sir John O'Reilly	Lay Member
Professor Tim Quine	Senate Representative
Alison Reed	Lay Member
Professor Michelle Ryan	Senate Representative
Richard Sargeant	Lay Member
Sally Turner	Professional Services Representative

Secretary

Mike Shore-Nye	Registrar and Secretary
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With

Professor Dan Charman	Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean (College of Life and Environmental Sciences)
Andrew Connolly	Chief Financial Officer
Scott Farmer	Chief Executive, Students' Guild (Maternity Cover)
Professor Mark Goodwin	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Innovation and Impact
Jacqueline Hodges	Deputy Secretary to the Council (Minutes)
Jacqui Marshall	Deputy Registrar and Head of HR
Tom Murray-Richards	Exeter President, FXU
Dr Michael Wykes	Director of Planning (for the League Table Report item)
Jo Hamilton	Deputy Head of Admissions & Data Manager (for the Admissions Report item)
Chris Lindsay	Head of Governance & Compliance (for the Draft Report from Audit Committee item)
Ian Blenkharn	Director of Student Experience (for the Admissions Report and Exeter Sexual Violence Taskforce item)
Drs Astrid Wissenburg	Director of Research (for the Global Systems Institute item)

Apologies

Sir Michael Barber, Jane Chafer, Professor Nick Talbot, Professor Steve Tomlinson

16.99 CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

- i. The Chair opened the meeting with an introduction to new members. Jo Binding, Kiron Farooki, Alison Reed, and Richard Sargeant had joined Council as Lay Members on three year terms. Professor Dave Hosken had recently been elected as Senate representative and Toby Gladwin and Tom Murray-Richards joined as the new Exeter Students' Guild President and Exeter President of FXU respectively for the 2016/17 academic year. Richard Atkins was also now formally a Lay Member of Council having been in attendance for the previous year.
- ii. Jacqueline Hodges was introduced as the new Deputy Secretary to the Council, a role created to support the Registrar and Secretary with the governance and management of Council business.
- iii. Apologies were noted.

16.100 MINUTES OF THE 7th JULY 2016 – CNL/16/101

Summary: The minutes of the 7th July meeting were approved subject to a few minor amendments.

16.111 ANNUAL REVIEW OF COUNCIL – CNL/16/102

Summary: Council's Standing Orders require Council to review its governance statements on an annual basis to ensure continuing compliance. A paper compiling these statements was presented to Council for discussion and approval.

- i. Discussion was held on including details of Dual Assurance within the statements. The Registrar explained that the separation of the management of the Dual Assurance process from Council's governance statements enabled greater freedom to create groups without the need to wait until the next Council meeting.
- ii. Explanation was also provided to give clarity on delegations. The Registrar clarified that the Standing Committee of Council existed to enable fast responses to urgent or emergency situations, whereas delegated authorities granted under section 2 of the Standing Orders was designed to address lower level issues.
- iii. The Chair suggested amending the term 'Lay Member' to 'Independent' or 'Non-Executive' Member to better reflect the nature of the role. It was agreed that the Registrar would prepare a proposal to refresh the title.

ACTION: Review the use of the 'Lay Member' term and put forward a proposal to the Chair to revise the job title for the role.

DECISION: Council members agreed to send any further comments to the Registrar and Secretary for revision of the Council statements and share views on amending the Lay Member job title. All documents were then to be reissued for final approval at the December meeting.

16.102 COUNCIL SELF-ASSESSMENT REVIEW – CNL (16) 103

Summary: Council discussed a paper outlining the results of the Self-Assessment Review 2015-16 members had completed over the summer period. The paper suggested a set of next step recommendations for discussion.

- i. Results of the self-assessment had been largely positive but challenges were identified in ensuring objectivity where members were required to assess their own performance. An independent review was discussed with the Chair requesting that it be undertaken by someone with industry experience.

[Secretary's note: The next full effectiveness review of Council is due to take place in autumn 2017].

- ii. Council's relationship with Senate and the diversity of Council's membership were highlighted as priorities for Council to address. The Chair commented that much effort had been put into bringing more clarity to Council's relationship with Senate in seeking assurance on the quality of academic provision, although there continued to be room for improvement. She noted that a joint meeting between Council and Senate had been added to the annual business cycle since 2015/16.
- iii. On diversity, the Chair asked that Council continued to search for new members who could offer a broad range of views. She called on all members to help to find potential candidates when necessary.
- iv. Paper length was discussed. The Chair asked that all future papers contain clear executive summaries detailing the paper's purpose and key points. Suggestion were welcomed about how to ensure more development time for Lay Members with the Executive, noting that dinners proved useful opportunities to fulfil this requirement.
- v. Council visibility within the wider University was discussed and it was agreed that an engagement plan would be produced. Ideas suggested included a programme of College visits, attendance at staff talks, aligning Lay Members to individual Colleges, inclusion of Council members in external and internal communications such as podcasts and short films and attendance at staff awards events.

ACTION: Produce an engagement plan to increase visibility of Council members and transparency of decision making at the University

DECISION: Council agreed collaborative effort was required in the recruitment process of new members to continue to increase the diversity of membership and views. It was agreed that Council would continue to build on improvements to its relationship with Senate through the Joint Meeting in May 2017. A stronger focus on producing shorter papers with clear executive summaries was required to enable more effective debate at meetings. An engagement plan designed to improve Council's visibility would also be discussed at a later meeting.

16.103 INTRODUCTION TO BOARDPACKS (PRESENTATION)

Summary: Jacqueline gave a presentation on Boardpacks, the new software application introduced to enable Council meetings to go paperless. The presentation explained how the system worked, what information would be available and support available for setting up and using the application.

- i. Boardpacks had started to be rolled out slowly, with papers also continuing to be distributed in the normal way until December to allow Council members time to familiarise themselves with the new process.
- ii. Feedback was received from members about how to use the software effectively for meetings.

16.104 REPORT FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROVOST AND DVCs – CNL/16/104 (COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE)

Summary: The Vice-Chancellor took questions on the contents of the latest report and developments within the sector.

- i. A request was made to see a differential for the KPI on alumni donations as a proportion of contactable alumni, noting University of Exeter scored poorly in comparison with other universities.
- ii. Brexit and TEF were noted as the biggest challenges. Widening Participation was discussed with a request made that the nationwide benchmark targets were included in future reports. The DVC (Education) committed to include Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN) student number data in future reports.
- iii. The Vice-Chancellor and Provost shared recent announcements and led discussion on developments within the sector.

Recent Successes

- v. The Business School had undergone its three yearly EFMD Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) review and received a new five year accreditation. Matthew Davey, College Registrar was praised for his work towards this achievement.
- vi. South West Environment and Economy partnership had been successful in its bid for £4m of funding to work with businesses in the South West for the next five years. The partnership was expected to add £21m to the South West environmental economy.
- vii. Measurement of research grant awards had found that the University's academics had achieved the highest success rate of all UK universities when applying for research grants. The communication of successes was discussed and it was acknowledged that this was an area where there was still room for improvement.

Brexit

- viii. The impact on international students, access to the student loan book and existing EU funding and staff wellbeing were discussed.

Gold, Silver and Bronze Rankings

- ix. Plans proposing Gold, Silver and Bronze ranking of universities based on TEF and REF scores were discussed, with the Vice-Chancellor sharing thinking on the University's position and aspirations.

16.105 LEAGUE TABLE REPORT – CNL/16/105 (COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE)

Summary: Dr Michael Wykes, Director of Policy, Planning and Business Intelligence, joined the meeting to present a paper to update Council on the latest league table rankings following the release of new

data from the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide, THE World rankings and QS world rankings in September.

16.106 UNIVERSITY STRATEGY (PRESENTATION)

Summary: The Provost shared a promotional film, produced to launch the University's new strategy 'Our Strategy' and requested feedback from Council members.

- i. Comments focused largely on clearly identifying the target audience for promotional material, ensuring the student voice was heard and how to equally reflect social sciences alongside traditional science subjects.

16.107 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S EXECUTIVE GROUP (VCEG) RESIDENTIAL REPORT CNL/16/106 (COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE)

Summary: Council considered a report detailing discussions held at September's VCEG residential awayday.

- i. The Chair explained that the outcomes of these discussions would be the focus of Council's November awayday.
- ii. Council members shared concerns that impact was not articulated clearly. Mark explained that it was being normalised into processes and work was currently ongoing to review over 350 impact case studies.

16.108 PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE EU REFERENDUM IMPACT WORKING GROUP CNL/16/107

Summary: The Provost and Registrar and Secretary presented a paper which noted progress to date on mitigating the impact of changes since the result of the EU Referendum was announced.

- i. Paper detailed successful EU recruitment to 2016 and steps taken to support EU staff.
- ii. The paper outlined measures which had been put in place and it was agreed that the group would report back again following the Government's November statement.
- iii. The Registrar informed Council that there had been some instances of hate-related incidents in the region, but not on campus, following the result. The major impact of the Brexit result to date had been felt by EU staff and the university had been pro-active in providing a suite of support measures to individuals dealing with the uncertainty the decision has created.

16.109 ADMISSIONS REPORT 2016/17 – CNL/16/108 (COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE)

Summary: Council received an update on the University Admissions position for taught programmes for 2016/17.

16.110 WIDENING PARTICIPATION – CNL/16/109 (COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE)

Summary: The DVC (Education) presented a paper to Council, outlining the progress made against recommendations set by the Task and Finish Group established to lead work to widen participation in education at the University.

16.111 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF AUDIT COMMITTEE – CNL/16/110 (COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE)

Summary: A draft document detailing the activities of the Audit Committee during 2015/16 was provided to Council for comment prior to its inclusion in the Annual Assurance Report to HEFCE.

- i. The Chair of the Audit Committee, Nicholas Bull, introduced the context of the written report; noting that Council was required to review the work of the Audit Committee on an annual basis. He explained the committee met four times per year and outsourced its internal audit activities to BDO, who had spent two hundred person days over the year reviewing areas of the university's work.
- ii. He explained that Internal Audit undertook a three year rolling programme with recommendations produced following each review. Work over the previous year had focused on clearing a backlog of recommendations, which had been reduced significantly since the arrival of Mike Shore-Nye, Registrar and Secretary.
- iii. It was explained that Audit Committee had no management or policy role, rather provided a check and balance. Culturally, its role was to address and understand red risk. Nicholas noted that Dr.Sarah Buck had just stepped down from the Committee to take up the Pro-Chancellor role. Alison Reed had replaced her as Council Lay Member. Judy Hargadon and Richard Hughes plus two non-Council Lay Members Nick Swift and Nick Caiger completed the committee membership.
- iv. Chris Lindsay added that the report was a key accountability document that was required as part of the wider assurance return to be submitted in December to HEFCE.

16.112 EXETER SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT TASKFORCE – CNL/16/111 (CONFIDENTIAL)

Summary: The Provost introduced a paper outlining work undertaken by the Sexual Violence and Harassment Taskforce at the University. She asked for Council's approval of recommendations on awareness raising, dealing with disclosures, internal investigatory/disciplinary procedures and data capture and management. The Director of Education and Student Experience joined the meeting to take questions and discuss a proposed new policy for dealing with incidents.

- i. Ian Blenkharn, Director of Education and Student Experience explained the background to the establishment of the Taskforce. The university had a legal duty to protect from harm and the group had met four times across the year to look at the different aspects of this responsibility. The group had focused on positive behaviours and decided that key messages would be delivered most powerfully to students if they came from the FXU and Guild.
- ii. The aim of the recommendations put forward was to create space for disclosures; establishing an appropriate balance between breaches of confidentiality and responsibilities towards victims, survivors and accused. Taskforce meetings discussed investigations and disclosures and considered available data. It was noted that criticism had been raised at the university sector for lack of data in this area. This was being addressed however it was observed that increased reporting would produce higher levels of disclosures. Council were asked to view this increase through the lens that more disclosures equated to helping more people.
- iii. Ian explained that it had been necessary to commence some activities at the start of the academic year. This included the positive behaviour campaign led by the Guild and FXU, working closely with the Student Experience team, called #neverOK. The campaign called on

students to sign a pledge to raise awareness about sexual harassment and educated around consent. Subsequently the Guild had been working with Ian's team on specific issues that came to light as part of the campaign.

- iv. Point 3.5-3.6 of the draft Sexual Assault Support and Investigation Policy were highlighted. Ian noted that it demonstrated a change to guidance, with the university taking more steps to take action in the event of an incident. Previously if the police had not taken action, the University had not either, so the policy demonstrated a change in approach.
- v. Council discussed the draft policy, offering support on the specific points raised. Questions were raised about appeal provisions and it was explained that these relied on standard disciplinary procedures as with any other offence.

DECISION: Council approved the recommendations made in the report, including the Sexual Assault Support and Investigation Policy.

16.113 SENATE ANNUAL REPORT – CNL/16/112

Summary: Council received a report from the Mike Shore-Nye, Registrar and Secretary detailing discussions held at Senate over the preceding academic year and priorities for the year ahead.

- i. The Registrar and Secretary explained that the Annual Report had been introduced following the 2012 review of Senate. Produced in the form of a digest, the document was designed to describe to Council what Senate had done. It was a separate document to information submitted as part of the Annual Quality Assurance Return to HEFCE.
- ii. It was explained that the format was to evolve for the next report to include terms of reference, highlighting how each element had been delivered. Case studies and introductions to Senate members were also to be introduced to illustrate what Senate does and how members use the forum to develop their thinking.
- iii. The constituted membership of Senate and its role as a key point of contact for the VC, Provost, DVCs and other senior managers to engage with academic leaders was explained. Additionally, Senate dealt with a large volume of process around the appointment of key academic positions and informed discussion on significant changes to management structures. It also provided a forum to new ideas to be introduced, such as debate on lecture capture.
- iv. The Vice-Chancellor commented that Senate meetings had become increasingly constructive as a body to discuss academic provision and quality assurance since the arrival of the Registrar and Secretary and more common ground had been established between academics and senior management.
- v. Council members questioned whether having sixty nine members reduced the effectiveness of the meeting. The Executive shared the view that despite its size, the membership balance worked well and it would be difficult to identify where numbers could be reduced. The Registrar and Secretary committed to asking members at a future meeting of Senate for views on whether there should be any changes to the size of membership.

DECISION: Council noted the report and changes planned for the 2016-17 version. It was agreed the size of membership would be discussed at a future Senate meeting.

16.113 FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2015/16 (AND DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS) – CNL/16/113 (COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE)

Summary: Andrew Connolly, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), provided commentary on financial performance during the 2015-16 academic year and shared the draft unaudited financial statements for discussion ahead of approval by Council in November.

16.114 GLOBAL SYSTEMS INSTITUTE (GSI) – CNL/16/114 (COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE)

Summary: Astrid Wissenburg, Director of Research, provided Council will a progress update on the Global Systems Institute project ahead of discussion of the full business case at the next meeting of Council.

16.115 PARTICIPATION IN EXETER ENERGY NETWORK – CNL/16/115 (COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE)

Summary: The Registrar and Secretary presented a paper which outlined a capital investment (ESCo) in a district heating scheme as a shareholder alongside Devon County Council, Exeter City Council, Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Trust and Teignbridge District Council.

16.116 CORNWALL CAMPUS 2020 PROJECT PROGRAMME – CNL/16/116 (COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE)

Summary: The Registrar presented a paper requesting Council's approval for capital investment to finance projects consisting of a new building, refurbishment of an existing building, new car parking facilities and below ground service facilities at the Penryn Campus. The investment was to be match funded by Falmouth University.

20 MATTERS BOUGHT FORWARD – CNL (16) 117

Summary: Council discussed papers provided under Part II which required approval.

DECISION: Council approved affixing of the seal to the contracts detailed in paper CNL/16/124 and membership of Council Committee and the Dual Assurance Portfolio 2016/17.

21 CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

Summary: The Chair updated Council members on plans for the November awayday at the Science Park.

PART II PAPERS

The following papers were approved/noted:

- Report from the Remuneration Committee Meetings of 13th July 2016 and 26 September 2016 – noted
- Report from Nominations Committee: Membership of Committees and Dual Assurance Portfolio 2016/17 – approved subject to a correction to Judy Hargadon's term on Audit Committee, correcting this to end in 2019 not 2017 as stated in the paper.
- VCEG Governance Framework 2016/17 – noted
- Affixing the Seal - approved