



University of Exeter

**COUNCIL**

**MINUTES AND ACTIONS – APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

29 February 2024

10.00am-2pm

Masters Suite, Penryn Campus (Cornwall) and online via Microsoft Teams

NB text in BLACK for publication; text in BLUE has been redacted for publication.

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Council Meeting

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**Attendees:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Quentin Woodley	Pro-Chancellor and Chair
Professor Lisa Roberts	President and Vice-Chancellor
Professor Tim Quine	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience)
Professor Dan Charman	Senior Vice-President and Provost
Sir Richard Atkins	Pro-Chancellor and Deputy Chair
Sally Cabrini	Pro-Chancellor and Senior Independent Governor
Damaris Anderson-Supple	Independent Member

Nicholas Cheffings	Independent Member
Andrew Greenway	Independent Member
Karime Hassan	Independent Member
Salam Katbi	Independent Member
Professor Malcom Skingle	Independent Member (online via Microsoft Teams)
Tim Weller	Independent Member
Alison Reed	Independent Member
Glenn Woodcock	Independent Member
Professor Barrie Cooper	Senate Representative
Professor Sue Prince	Senate Representative
Shades Chaudhary	Professional Services Representative
Connie Chilcott	President Exeter, Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union
Alex Stanley	Education Officer and Representative of the Exeter Students' Guild

**SECRETARY**

Mike Shore-Nye	Senior Vice-President and Registrar & Secretary
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**MEMBERS APOLOGIES**

Professor Karen Knapp	Senate Representative
Sarah Matthews-DeMers	Independent Member

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE**

Dave Stacey	Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Executive Divisional Director of Finance, Infrastructure and Commercial Services
Alison Chambers	Chief Executive Officer, University of Exeter Guild of Students
Imelda Roberts	Executive Divisional Director of Human Resources
Dr Jeremy Diaper	Assistant Director, Governance (minutes)

**Minute item 69-70**

Professor Richard Follett	Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement)
Alicia O'Grady	Executive Divisional Director of External Engagement and Global

**Minute item 70**

Peter Clack	Director Exeter Global
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**63. Chair's Welcome and Declarations of Interest**

63.1 the Chair welcomed Council members to the annual Council business meeting on the Penryn Campus (Cornwall).

63.2 the Chair noted that apologies had been received from Professor Karen Knapp and Sarah Matthews-DeMers and that Professor Malcolm Skingle was joining the meeting online via Microsoft Teams.

**64. Minutes from the meeting held on 12 December 2023 (CNL/87/23-24 and CNL/87a/23-24 Strictly Confidential)**

64.1 the minutes of the meeting of 12 December 2023 were **APPROVED**.

**65. Action Log (CNL/88/23-24 and CNL/88a/23-24 Strictly Confidential)**

65.1 Council received the Action Log for information and noted the status of the actions.

65.2 a query was raised in relation to action 14 to provide an update to Council on the digital solutions that would be used to minimize potential for additional workload on staff as a result of the Voluntary Severance Scheme;

65.3 it was highlighted that it was not possible to have absolute clarity around all elements of Enabling Strategy 2030 at this juncture and there would not be a clear sense of the overall quantum of the outturn of the Voluntary Severance Scheme until July 2024 at the earliest. It was also highlighted that whilst the digital solutions would be an enabler to allow the University to function effectively with a reduced workforce, consideration of the optimal digital solutions would need to be undertaken alongside assessment of the emerging picture of the Voluntary Severance Scheme;

65.4 that consultation and engagement had been undertaken with Faculty Teams and Faculty Executive leads (including Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Education and Student Experience). Faculties were in process of preparations for the next Academic Year 2023-24 and there would be a series of comprehensive mitigations in place as part of the process for any individuals who chose to leave the University;

**AGREED:** that Council would receive a further update on Enabling Strategy 2030 in July 2024 and there would be additional consideration in due course regarding the enhanced digital solutions that could be utilised to minimize administrative workload on academic staff in due course.

**66. Business Schedule AY 2023-24 – Verbal Update**

66.1 the Assistant Director (Governance) advised that the Business Schedule for the Academic Year 2023-24 would be presented to Council in May 2024 once it had been revised and refreshed to incorporate the prioritised projects within the Capital Plan as endorsed by Council;

66.2 that the format of the Business Schedule was being updated in response to Council feedback to ensure it was user-friendly when uploaded to Diligent and to incorporate additional thematic assurance dashboards;

66.3 that the update on implementation of the Digital Strategy had been deferred to the Council strategic update session on 22 May 2024 to enable the Dual Assurance Digital and IT lead to attend and contribute to feedback and discussion.

**67. Chair's Business and Matters Arising**

67.1 the Chair provided the following updates to the Committee:

**a) Appointment of the Dean of Postgraduate Research and the Doctoral College**

67.1.1 following a competitive external selection process and recommendation to Council via email on 9 January 2024, Professor Stacey Hynd had been appointed as Dean of Postgraduate Research and the Doctoral College and commenced the role at the end of January 2024;

67.1.2 reporting to the Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Impact), the Dean of Postgraduate Research and the Doctoral College is responsible for leading the development and delivery of the University's Doctoral College Strategy 2030.

**b) Chair's Action: Amendments to the Ordinances for the Doctor of Forensic Psychology**

67.1.3 the President and Vice-Chancellor and Chair of Council approved via Chair's Action the new award of the Doctor of Forensic Psychology for inclusion within the Ordinances to enable the Programme to start in September 2024 and commence advertisement and recruitment by January 2024;

67.1.4 this new programme/award had already been endorsed by Education Board, Postgraduate Research Board and the Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) via the Programme Amendment or Approval Form Process, which included signatures across Professional Services, Senior Leadership and the relevant Faculties and Departments);

**c) Chair's Action: Amendments to Ordinances 24**

67.1.5 following endorsement by UEB and Education Board, the Chair of Council and President and Vice-Chancellor approved via Chair's Action on behalf of Senate and Council a minor amendment to the wording of Ordinances 24.1.1 and 24.1.4 to enable further strengthening of the Education Leadership Team at Dean level within the University through the creation of the following new roles:

- i) the Dean of Online and Postgraduate Education
- ii) the Dean of Professional Education and Partnerships

67.1.6 the Dean for Taught Students would retain the roles and responsibilities described in the Charter, Statutes and Ordinances, and be the 'first among equals' in relation to the operation of the Education Board and the delivery of its functions and lead on all aspects of Undergraduate provision;

67.1.7 all three Deans would report directly to the Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) and the Dean for Professional Education and Partnerships would have a dotted-line reporting to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Business Engagement).

**d) Student Panel Sessions**

67.1.8 the Chair extended a sincere thanks to the President Exeter (Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union) for arranging an engaging and informative student session and asked for thanks and appreciation to be extended to all students involved in the session on behalf of Council.

**e) Council Paper Circulation**

67.1.9 the Chair of Council noted that there had been a late circulation of papers to Council in advance of the meetings on 28 and 29 February 2024 and provided assurance that all papers

for Council meetings would be circulated 7 working days before meetings of Council.

**f) Update on the term of office of Sir Richard Atkins**

67.1.10 Sir Richard Atkins (Deputy Chair of Council and Pro-Chancellor) would be stepping down from Council at the end of next academic year (31<sup>st</sup> July 2025). Odgers Berndtson had been engaged to assist with the search for an Independent Council member to succeed Sir Richard Atkins with sufficient knowledge, experience and understanding of education and the student experience. The aim would be to appoint the individual to Council from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 so that there was a clear succession plan in place;

**AGREED:** that a paper would be presented to Nominations Council and Council to approve the appointment of a new Independent Member to Council by July 2024.

**68. Vice-Chancellor and President's Report (CNL/90/23-24 Confidential)**

68.1 the President and Vice-Chancellor's report presented a summary of recent developments at the University and across the wider Higher Education sector:

68.1.1 the University had welcomed the Rt Hon Robert Halfon (MP, alumnus and Minister of State for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education) as part of National Apprenticeship Week. As part of the visit discussions had been held regarding our Degree Apprenticeship provision and plans for the future;

68.1.2 Susan Lapworth (Chief Executive, Office for Students) was scheduled to visit the University on 7 March 2024 and would meet with the President and Vice-Chancellor and a number of other senior colleagues;

68.1.3 the University was a partner in a new United Nations-backed centre which would develop new approaches to the circular economy in areas such as metals, construction and critical minerals. The International Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Resource Management in the Circular Economy was the first centre of its type in the world and had been established in recognition of the world-leading expertise in circular economy at Exeter and other UK institutions.

**69. Admissions Update Report (CNL-91-23-24 Confidential)**

*The Chair welcomed Richard Follet (Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Global Engagement) and Alicia O'Grady (Executive Divisional Director of External Engagement and Global) to the meeting;*

69.1 Council noted and discussed the Stage 2 Admissions Report, including an update on late acquisition and early conversion as of February 2024. The report provided an overview of the status of applications (including Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught, Postgraduate Research, Online and Degree Apprenticeship) and the strategic approaches for different student demographics for the 2024 admissions cycle following the primary UCAS application deadline on 31 January 2024;

69.2 there had been a noticeable increase in the number of home Undergraduate applications, which was c. 12% higher than last year as of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024. This compared to a 1% sector-wide decline;

- 69.3 applications from the PGT international market had contracted significantly across the UK as a result of increased volatility due to economic factors; uncertainties around post-study work and dependents visas and increased competition from Australia and America;
- 69.4 Council welcomed the new format of the Admissions Update Report and noted that it was very much improved and beneficial for Council to be sighted on both the number of online and degree apprenticeship applications and wider recruitment trends;
- 69.5 the concerns surrounding an increasingly volatile international student recruitment market were noted and it was highlighted that the reprofiled international student numbers would be presented to Council later this academic year and had been based on the latest market intelligence, including the number of applications and acceptances in current cycle. A wider range and variety of potential conversion rates had also been considered in order to avoid potential optimism bias and ensure the University's student number plans were aligned with current levels of volatility in the international student market;
- 69.6. the planning process with Faculties had been revised to ensure this was driven by the latest market insights and to ensure the University was able to respond in a dynamic and agile fashion to current recruitment challenges and emerging trends, including potential for worst case scenarios.

#### Closed Minute – Strictly Confidential

#### 70. Transnational (TNE) Partnerships (CNL/92/23-24 and CNL/92a/23-24 Confidential)

*The Chair welcomed Peter Clack (Director of Exeter Global) to the meeting*

- 70.1 TNE activity incorporated a range of diverse and varied modes of delivery including: overseas campuses, distance learning, online provision, joint and dual degree programmes, double awards, 'flying' faculty and mixed blended models;
- 70.2 TNE remained critical to diversifying international student recruitment routes and mitigating the risks of decline in direct student recruitment and was not impacted by changes to UK government policy changes, such as the post-study work visa. Other benefits included enhancing brand recognition and profile overseas, increasing student diversity and expanding international education partnerships.

#### Closed Minute – Strictly Confidential

**AGREED:** to proceed with the scoping, due diligence and completion of the feasibility study in relation the TNE opportunity, including full consideration of opportunities and risk analysis;

**AGREED:** that the scoping, due diligence and feasibility study would inform the future development of an Outline Business Case (including opportunities and risk analysis) for Council consideration.

*The Chair thanked Professor Richard Follett, Alicia O'Grady and Peter Clack for their contribution to the meeting and invited them to leave.*

**71. Second Forecast for 2023/24 (CNL/93/23-24 Confidential)**

- 71.1 Council noted the second financial forecast prepared in January 2024, based on actual results to the end of December 2023;
- 71.2 since the last forecast, all Faculties had improved their operating surplus which was partially due to the redistribution of the reduction in employer contribution for the USS pension scheme;
- 71.3 The Faculty of ESE was forecasting to be above the revised budget due to savings in staff and operating costs, as well as an increase in the expected January intake than previously forecast;
- 71.4 that the majority of mitigations being deployed to bring this year's forecast in line with the budget were non-recurrent in nature and the financial challenges in future years would be more significant, especially in light of the continued sector-wide challenges being experienced in relation to international student recruitment.

**Closed Minute – Strictly Confidential****72. Revolving Credit Facility (CNL/94/23-24 Confidential)**

- 72.1 it was proposed that the University should seek to enter into a revolving credit facility for up to c. £75m (the 'RCF') to fund the general university and corporate purposes, including capital expenditure of the University. The entry into the RCF is the 'Transaction';
- 72.2 the RCF would replace the existing £50m revolving credit facility agreement dated 30 November 2017 between the University and Barclays Bank plc as amended from time to time (the 'Existing RCF') which matured in November 2024;
- 72.3 it was noted that the University had engaged the following firms in connection with the RCF and Transaction:
- 72.3.1 Ernst and Young LLP ('EY') to act as financial advisor to the University; and
- 72.3.2 Mills & Reeve LLP ('M&R') to provide legal advice on the debt documentation and related matters, including governance issues
- 72.4 the Chair noted that the Council Financial Review Sub-Committee had, at its meeting of 29 January 2024, recommended that Council approve:
- 72.4.1 in principle the proposal that the University should enter into a financing of up to £75m by way of an RCF;
- 72.4.2 the delegation of authority jointly to Dave Stacey (Chief Financial Officer and Executive Divisional Director of Finance, Infrastructure and Commercial Services) and Mike Shore-Nye (Senior Vice-President and Registrar & Secretary) (the "Authorised individuals") to:
- i. engage with prospective lenders;
  - ii. select a lender or lender(s) to provide the RCF;

- iii. progress the transaction;
- iv. negotiate a draft revolving credit facility agreement and any ancillary documentation required to provide the RCF; and
- v. sign the final form revolving credit facility agreement;

72.5 the delegation of authority set out in paragraph 72.4.2 was recommended for approval subject to the following parameters:

- i. the financial covenants negotiated as part of the Transaction shall not be more onerous than those the University must comply with as part of their existing financial arrangements;
- ii. the terms of the RCF shall not prevent the University from incurring additional long-term borrower during the term of the RCF;
- iii. the RCF shall be for an amount of up to £75m;
- iv. the term of the RCF shall be for 7 years, or, should a 7-year term be either unavailable or offered on terms materially less advantageous to the University, a term of 5 years;
- v. the RCF shall be unsecured;
- vi. the financial covenants shall align with the University's existing lending arrangements;
- vii. the term of the RCF shall commence on or around the termination date of the Existing RCF, or earlier if the terms of such an offer are more advantageous, (together, the "Authorised Parameters");

72.6 the paper, prepared by Jemma Tolly (Head of Finance), entitled "Revolving Credit Facility (RCF) tender and renewal", setting out the proposal together with background, context and financial implications (the "RCF Paper");

72.7 the obligations of the University pursuant to the Pension Schemes Act 2021 (and other pensions legislation) as a participating employer under the Universities Superannuation Scheme ("USS") and the ERBS arising as a result of the proposed Transaction;

72.7 it was noted that if the Transaction were to proceed, a revolving credit facility agreement ("the RCF Agreement") would be entered into between the University and a lender(s), and this would set



out the terms on which the RCF would be available to the University. The RCF Agreement had not yet been prepared;

72.8 The Council noted that:

72.8.1 amounts under a revolving credit facility can be borrowed, repaid and reborrowed throughout the term of the RCF Agreement;

72.8.2 amounts under a revolving credit facility can be borrowed, repaid and reborrowed throughout the term of the RCF Agreement;

72.8.3 the RCF Agreement would include express drafting the sums advanced under the RCF Agreement could be repaid on a cashless rollover basis (i.e so that advances could be rolled over by book entry, without any cash payment);

72.8.4 the financial covenants would be tested in line with the annual financial budgeting and forecast cycle;

72.8.5 there would be certain restrictions on, among other things, disposals and providing security to third parties during the term of the RCF;

72.8.6 the RCF would be used to fund general university and corporate purposes of the University including capital expenditure;

72.9 that the provisions in paragraph 72.8 represent the general features of a revolving credit facility and may not necessarily reflect the final legal terms of the RCF following engagement and negotiation with the chosen lender(s);

72.10 it was noted that in order to progress the Transaction within the proposed timetable of the University signing the RCF Agreement on or before 31 July 2024, authority would need to be delegated to the Authorised individuals to prepare and negotiate any documents necessary in connection with the RCF and the Transaction;

72.11 it was noted that the University is a participating employer in the USS and ERBS. In agreeing to the terms of the Transaction, the University must have regard to its obligations under the Pensions Scheme and, in particular, to the provisions of the Pensions Act 2004 and the Pensions Schemes Act 2021, and the obligations on the University when entering into new financial arrangements to consider the impact of such arrangements on the beneficiaries of the USS and ERBS;

72.12 the Council considered the terms of the Transaction and was of the view that:

72.12.1 the proposed Transaction does not constitute a deliberate act or failure to act that is materially detrimental to the USS or that results in a debt due to the USS not being recovered or reduced as the aim of the Transaction is to enable the University to continue as a going concern;

72.12.2 the Transaction does not materially reduce the level of a section 75 Pensions Act 1995 employer debt recovery on a hypothetical employer insolvency that occurs immediately after the Transaction is agreed;

72.12.3 the proposed Transaction does not materially reduce the value of the University's resources;

72.12.4 the main purpose of agreeing to the Transaction is not, in respect of the University's status as a participating employer in the USS, to prevent the recovery of all or part of a debt from the University under section 75 of the Pensions Act 1995 or to prevent, reduce or compromise such a debt from becoming due; and

72.12.5 the purpose of agreeing to the Terms of the Transaction could not be regarded as detrimentally affecting in a material way the chances of accrued benefits in the USS being received or being regarded as a course of conduct that detrimentally affects in a material way the likelihood of accrued benefits in the USS being received;

72.13 after due and careful consideration of the proposed Transaction and taking into account their duties and obligations as charity trustees pursuant to the Charities Act 2011, their obligations under the Pensions Act and all other relevant legislation and the University's constitutional documents and considering the best interests of the University, it was duly resolved by the Council that the recommendation of the Council Financial Review Sub-Committee be endorsed.

72.14 that the following be and are hereby **APPROVED**:

72.14.1 the recommendations of the meeting of the Council Financial Review Sub-Committee held on 29 January 2024, as set out in the RCF Paper;

72.14.2 the Transaction in principle;

72.14.3 all powers, authorities and discretions of the Council be delegated to the Authorised

individuals as may be necessary for the authorisation of all acts, matters or documents in

connection with the Transaction, including, but not limited to:

- i. authority to engage with prospective lenders;
- ii. authority to select a lender or lenders who would provide the RCF to the University;
- iii. authority to negotiate the RCF Agreement and any other ancillary documents required to give effect to the Transaction, subject to paragraph 72.15;
- iv. authority for any one of the Authorised Individuals to execute and deliver the RCF Agreement (upon approval of the terms of the RCF Agreement by both Authorised individuals, and subject to paragraph 72.15, by signing for and on behalf of the University);
- v. authority for any one of the Authorised Individuals to do all such things including the execution of documents, certificates and notices in such form and including such amendments as they (acting jointly and severally), in their absolute discretion, see fit and to provide further confirmation to any party involved with the Transaction as is necessary or desirable to give effect to the Transaction;

72.15 in the event that the proposed terms of the Transaction are outside the Authorised Parameters, the Authorised Individuals will seek the endorsement of the Council Financial Review Sub-Committee and the approval of the Council for the revised terms.

### **73. Strategy 2030 Target (CNL/95/23-24 Confidential and CNL/95a/23-24 Confidential)**

73.1 Council had previously been updated on the Strategy 2030 delivery plan and associated Targets. An updated version of the Strategy 2030 targets (CNL/95a/23-24 Confidential) was tabled for information and has been filed with the record of the meeting;

73.2 Council noted the full set of Strategy 2030 Targets, including 'People' and 'Business Engagement and Innovation Growth' which had previously been marked as 'to be confirmed';

73.3 the Performance Framework would provide a mechanism for consistent target setting across the institution in alignment with Strategy 2030 and establish a process by which the University could cascade targets across Faculties, Departments and Professional Service divisions;

73.4 in discussion:

73.4.1 that it would be useful to have a clearer breakdown of the targets on a year-by-year basis up until 2030, so there was clarity across Council of the annual targets;

### **Closed Minute – Strictly Confidential**

**AGREED:** that the Draft Performance Framework and set of KPIs would be presented to Council for initial discussion and review in May 2024, prior to final approval in July 2024.

**74. Update on Enabling Strategy 2030 (CNL/96/23-24 Strictly Confidential)**

- 74.1 the Enabling 2030 Group (co-chaired by the Senior Vice-President and Provost and the Senior Vice-President and Registrar & Secretary) had responsibility on behalf of UEB to oversee and support efficiency initiatives across Faculties and Professional Services in the areas of research, education, workforce planning and non-pay costs, as well as for the delivery of strategic efficiency enabling transformation programmes;
- 74.2 following constructive engagement and discussion in meetings with Heads of Department and Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellors, it had been agreed that the proposed announcement of the Voluntary Severance Scheme would be brought forward from the previously planned date of 17 April 2024, to announce the scheme on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to provide academic staff community with an opportunity to reflect over the Easter break.

**Closed Minute – Strictly Confidential**

**AGREED:** that a series of meetings would be held with the recognised Trade Unions to elicit their feedback and input.

**AGREED:** that Audit and Risk Committee would review and consider the risk register for the Enabling Strategy 2030 programme and Voluntary Severance Scheme in a closed session at their next meeting in March 2024.

**75. Environmental Sustainability Annual Report (CNL/97/23-24 Confidential)**

- 75.1 the format of the Annual Sustainability Report had been enhanced to capture the sustainability activity across the University as well as providing data demonstrating progress in 2022/23 against our commitments and was open and transparent about the challenges faced;
- 75.2 the University was 18<sup>th</sup> in the World in THE Impact Rankings 2023, including first in the world for Sustainable Development Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and first in Europe for Sustainable Development Goal 13 on Climate Action;
- 75.3 the University was 48<sup>th</sup> in the World in the QS Sustainability Rankings 2023 and ranked 30<sup>th</sup> overall in the QS Sustainability Ranking 2024;
- 75.4 the Scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions had risen by 11% since the 2018/19 baseline year. Our bought goods and services made up 56% of our total footprint and had seen a 24% increase since the baseline year and the University was working closely with supply chains to improve the greenhouse gas emissions;
- 75.5 a number of initiatives were underway to reduce scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions, including installation of PV solar panels across the University's campuses, installation of a heat pump at Byrne House and similar conversions were underway for Cornwall House and the Biosciences greenhouse; continuation of a programme of work to improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings, through lighting replacements, building management system improvements and fabric upgrades;
- 75.6 the University was updating its carbon baselined and trajectory based on aligning reporting with the Standardized Carbon Emissions Framework to help ensure consistency in environmental data reporting. The updated carbon baseline and trajectory would be informed

by decisions around the capital programme and modelling the impact of Strategy 2030 initiatives (including cohort rebalancing and globalisation).

### Closed Minute – Strictly Confidential

**AGREED:** that Council would return to a strategic consideration of the Net Zero 2030 Target as soon as possible in the Academic Year 2024-25, including modelling of the impact of Strategy 2030 initiatives, defining a science based target and developing the University's Offsetting Strategy to better understand how the University will offset and associated costs.

### **76. Wellbeing Services Provision Statement and Framework for Consideration and Management of Risk (CNL/98/23-24 Confidential)**

76.1 the University remained committed to a whole institution approach to support all students to effectively manage their wellbeing and to provide an environment where students can achieve their education and research goals;

76.2 the University's Review of Student Mental Health and Wellbeing, independently chaired by the Deputy Chair of Council and Pro-Chancellor, recommended that a 'Provision Statement and Framework for Consideration and Management of Risk' be developed;

76.3 the proposed Provision Statement and Framework (Appendix 1) had been developed in consideration of the University-wide offering across all campuses and modes of study and had been informed by advice and input from Student Wellbeing Services, legal considerations and feedback from Wellbeing Culture and Inclusion Group and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Group, both of which sought student representative input;

76.4 the document explained the present context of wellbeing in Universities and made clear our institutional objectives, principles and the wellbeing support provision and consideration and management of risk. It emphasized the importance of the stepped care approach, including prevention and wellness as part of the broader institutional approach, including wellness creation;

76.5 the following was noted in discussion:

76.5.1 the Deputy Chair of Council and Pro-Chancellor had been provided with regular termly Updates on progress against the recommendations of the Review of Student Mental Health and Wellbeing;

76.5.2 that the cross-institution suicide awareness training was welcomed and it was noted that this was being developed, piloted and rolled-out across the academic and professionals services staff community;

76.5.3 the work underway to roll out an enhanced model of student academic support, including departmental pastoral mentors and other student-facing support at departmental level was also commended. It was noted that in one of the current pilots there was already evidence that c. 74% of students had been reached out to and this had resulted in improvements in attendance. That further consideration should be given to whether it was possible to fund 2 pastoral mentors per Department to help enhance the overall levels of student support.

**AGREED:** to approve the Wellbeing Services Provision Statement and Framework for Consideration and Management of Risk.

**ENDORSED:** the Wellbeing Services Provision Statement and Framework for Consideration and Management of Risk to Senate (13 March 2024).

### **77. Draft University Terms and Academic Calendar (CNL/99/23-24 Confidential)**

77.1 the draft version of the University Terms and Academic Calendar for the Academic Year 2024-25 was presented to Council for discussion and feedback, prior to onward consideration by Senate;

77.2 in response to feedback received on the previous committee cycle in the Academic Year 2022-2023 and continued reflection on the optimal frequency of Council meetings, a number of enhancements had been incorporated as part of the Academic Year 2024-25, including:

77.2.1 scheduling the Council Strategy Away day on 30 October 2024 and immediately before the October Business meeting on 31 October 2024 to ensure Council is sighted on key strategic issues and priorities at an earlier juncture and as soon as possible following the UEB residential;

77.2.2 that the November away day meeting of Council would be removed from the formal schedule of business to ensure a longer gap between the October and December meetings of Council;

77.2.3 that the April away day meeting of Council would be removed from the formal schedule of business to reduce the number of separate diary engagements for Council members, but a provisional diary hold would be held as a contingency in case of the need to call an urgent meeting.

**AGREED:** that the final schedule of sub-committee meetings would be updated in response to feedback;

**AGREED:** that the Council meeting in December 2024 would be held in person in light of the decision removal of the November meeting.

### **78. Matters brought forward from Part II (For Approval)**

78.1 in accordance with the standard Council practice, the Chair confirmed that the following items in Part II For Decision, had been formally **APPROVED** by Council, including:

78.1.1 Procedure for investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct (CNL/100/23-24)

### **79. Part II (For Information)**

79.1 the following items were received by Council for information:

79.1.1 Capital Management Group Report (CNL/101/23-24)

79.1.2 Strategic Investment Committee Report (CNL/102/72a/23-24)

79.1.3 University Compliance with OfS Conditions of Registration (CNL/103/23-24)

79.1.4 Long-Term Maintenance 2022/23 Outturn Report (CNL/104/23-24)

79.1.5 Arts and Culture Annual Report (CNL/105/23-24)

79.1.6 Draft Student Guild and Student Union Accounts (CNL/106/23-24)