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Council Minutes: 18 May 2023

PRESENT: Rt. Hon. Alistair Burt (Pro-Chancellor) (in the Chair); Professor Andy Schofield (Vice-Chancellor); David Barron (lay member); Rt. Hon. Hazel Blears (lay member); Professor Steve Bradley (Deputy Vice-Chancellor); Alun Branigan (lay member); Anthony Carey (lay member); India Ellis (Students' Union President); Adrian Jonas (lay member); Claire Leitch (Senate representative); Alison Mullan (Senate representative); Baroness Neville-Jones (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Victoria Phillips (student member); Marcia Reid Fotheringham (lay member); Professor Ella Ritchie (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Professor Jo Rycroft-Malone (Senate representative); His Hon. Phillip Sycamore (lay member); Maureen Whilby (lay member).

IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Allen (Head of Philanthropy) (*for item 7*); Phill Dixon (Director of People and Organisational Effectiveness) (*for item 12*); Nick Fragel (Director of Philanthropy, Alumni and Supporter Engagement) (*for item 7*); Claire Geddes (Committee Clerk); Professor Simon Guy (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global)) (*for item 10*); Simon Jennings (Director of Strategic Planning and Deputy Secretary); David Myers (Chief Information Officer) (*for item 10*); Rachel Newbury (Head of Alumni Engagement and Development Services) (*for item 7*); Nicola Owen (Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) and Secretary); Sarah Randall-Paley (Director of Finance).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Hanah Burgess (lay member); Professor Sir Ian Diamond (lay member).

INTRODUCTION

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1.1 Council noted the apologies for absence received for this meeting.

1.2 The Chair, on behalf of Council, expressed thanks to India Ellis and Vic Phillips for their invaluable contributions over the year, as both were due to finish their terms of office at the end of June 2023 and congratulated all involved in the Roses 2023 away victory in York.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: 24 MARCH 2023 PAPER A

3.1 Council approved the minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 March 2023.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 There were no matters arising.

5. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE AND QUESTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE
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6. PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENTS' UNION: REPORT **PAPER B**

6.1 The President drew attention to the following.

(i) The historic away win by Lancaster at Roses 2023, recording her thanks to all the student athletes, the Vice-President Sport, Students' Union officers and staff, and the University for making the win possible.

(ii) Her concern that it was probable cost of living issues for many students would persist and it was unlikely there would be an uplift in government support. She noted that the cost of living was a priority issue for the incoming full time Students' Union Officers.

(iii) The Students' Union's response to the UCU marking boycott, ensuring that students had the information required regarding the disruption and how it was being managed.

(iv) Her desire to see the Curriculum Transformation Project progress, ensuring that the student voice was embedded within the process.

(v) The more effective working relationship developed between the Students' Union, Council and Executive over her term of office, which had been in the spirit of partnership and co-operation and which she hoped would continue.

6.2 Council noted the report from the President of the Students' Union.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

7. ANNUAL FUNDRAISING AND ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT REPORT **PAPER C**
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8. THE RUSKIN MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTRE: AN APPRAISAL **PAPER D**
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9. REPORT ON COMPUTER SCIENCE AND CYBER SECURITY PROJECT AND RELATED OFFICE FOR STUDENTS BID **PAPER E**

9.1 The Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) and Secretary introduced the rationale for the uplift in budget for the Computer Science and Cyber Security Project to supplement the £3.893M secured in a recent Office for Students (OfS) capital funding round.

9.2 Council noted that the development of a Decision Theatre aligned with the University's strategy in relation to cyber and would give the University a world leading teaching and research facility with the potential to provide a future income stream from industry.

9.3 Council approved an additional budget of £899k be added to the Computer Science and Cyber Security project budget, with the addition to be identified and managed within the next Capital Programme update.

10. IT STRATEGY PHASE 1 DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION **PAPER F**
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11. RISK REGISTER REVIEW **PAPER G**

11.1 The Director of Strategic Planning and Deputy Secretary presented the Risk Register to Council for its biannual review, summarising the ongoing dynamic risk environment and the rationale for changes in score and control measures. He gave a précis of discussion at the Audit Committee and its encouragement of the University to use future risk appetite exercises to embrace risk where this might represent opportunity to deliver on the ambition outlined in the Strategic Plan, and its reflection upon whether some revisions to the distribution of red, amber and green risks by score should be considered.

11.2 The Chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that in the Committee's view it was satisfied that on the whole risks were well described in the risk register, but advised that it may be helpful to explore whether any peer comparison regarding risk evaluation and scoring was possible.

11.3 Council noted the updated University risk register.

12. SUPPORTING COUNCIL'S OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PEOPLE-RELATED MATTERS **PAPER H**

12.1 The Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) and Secretary and the Director of People and Organisational Effectiveness presented the report drawing attention to breadth of information received at sub-committee level to provide assurance to Council of its alignment with the CUC Higher Education Governance Code elements relating to people, as well as its effective discharge of responsibilities derived from the Charter and Statutes. The Director of People and Organisational Effectiveness outlined the planned next phases of work ultimately intended to enable Council to have a coherent and collective view of the staff experience, primarily through the reinstatement of a staff survey.

12.2 Council welcomed the proposed actions to focus on the staff experience and noted the report and that a further assurance paper regarding staff experience and people data would be received in the Autumn 2023.

13. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT **PAPER I**
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14. RECOMMENDATION FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE CONTRACTS OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDITORS **PAPER J**
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*** ITEMS NOT FOR DISCUSSION UNLESS REQUESTED IN ADVANCE TO THE CHAIR**

15.* WRITTEN REPORTS OF MEETINGS **PAPER 1**

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15.1 Council noted the following written reports of meetings:

- Audit Committee, meeting of 3 May 2023
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, meeting of 19 January 2023
- Senate, meeting of 26 April 2023

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

16. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF COUNCIL BUSINESS **PAPER K**

16.1 Council noted the Forward Schedule.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 There was no other business.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

18.1 The next meeting will be held at 13:00 on Friday 8 July 2023.