

COUNCIL – MINUTES

24 January 2020

PRESENT: Pro-Chancellor, Lord Liddle (in the Chair); Professor S. Bradley, Interim Vice-Chancellor; Professor Sir Ian Diamond (lay member); Mrs R. S. Georghiou (lay member); Professor S. C. Guy (Senate representative); Mr I. Johnson (lay member); Professor K. C. Jones (Senate representative); Ms B. T. Morgan (student representative); Ms A. M. Mullan (Senate representative); Baroness Neville-Jones (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Mr G. S. Nuttall (Students' Union President); Mr S. N. Reynolds (lay member); Professor E. Ritchie (lay member); His Hon. Judge P. Sycamore (lay member); Mrs V. Young (lay member).

IN ATTENDANCE: Professor P. M. Atkinson (Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology) (*attended for item 13*); Professor Dame S. M. Black (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Engagement)) (*attended for item 9*); Mr P. T. Boustead (Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development) (*attended for items 18-21*); Dr G. A. F. Carden (Director of Strategic Projects and Chief of Staff) (*attended for item 7*); Professor N. A. Davies (Interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development)) (*attended for item 10*); Mrs C. Geddes (Committee Secretary); Professor R. Haley (Deputy Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology) (*attended for item 13*); Professor S. R. A. Huttly (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and EDI)) (*attended for items 10 and 18-20*); Mr S. J. Jennings (Director of Strategic Planning and Governance); Professor A. W. Laing (Dean, LU Management School) (*attended for item 14*); Ms N. C. Owen (Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary); Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley (Director of Finance) (*attended for items 11-15*).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Lord Price (lay member).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1.1 Council **noted** apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 Professor Diamond declared an interest in relation to item 7. He reported that he was chairing the Independent Commission on the College of the Future across the four nations.

2.2 Professor Ritchie declared an interest in relation to item 19 regarding her involvement with the Realising Opportunities collaboration of universities.

3. MINUTES

PAPER A

3.1 Council **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2019.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 There were no matters arising discussed.

5. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE AND QUESTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE

5.1 Professor Steve Bradley reported on:

- (a) the proposed interim arrangements for the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and EDI) role. These had been discussed with both the Chair and incoming Vice-Chancellor;
- (b) *Restricted and Commercial in Confidence*
- (c) strong applications compared to the sector and previous years. Both undergraduate and postgraduate applications were significantly higher particularly with overseas students. A small number of courses had now closed to further applications and it was anticipated that fewer courses would enter into UCAS Clearing and Adjustment;
- (d) a successful strategic away day with the University Leadership Group. Discussion had centred on emerging themes for the strategy as well as values, growth and its dimensions, the digital shift and sustainability;
- (e) the change in the Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary's role and job title to Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) reflecting changes in role including the transfer of a number of duties from the previous Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the increase in corporate and statutory scope of responsibilities. She would retain the role of the University Secretary. This had been agreed by the Strategic Reward Committee and Council **noted** its support;
- (f) *Restricted and Commercial in Confidence*
- (g) the Coronavirus outbreak in China and its potential impact on the University. The Director of Strategic Planning and Governance, Simon Jennings, updated Council on the response being taken based on WHO advice and close liaison with external agencies.

5.2 Council offered congratulations regarding application levels to date and **commented** on the need to maintain a world class student experience including for postgraduate taught students in particular teaching facilities, and the priority placed on campus accommodation for first years.

6. PRESIDENT OF LU STUDENTS' UNION: REPORT

PAPER B

- 6.1 The President of the Students' Union, George Nuttall, introduced the report and highlighted issues of: the democratic decision regarding the Sugarhouse and the Trustee Board's decision not to continue any negotiations for a sale, the election of a new Vice-President (Activities), Victoria Hatch, and the proposed vote of no confidence in the Vice-Chair of the Trustees. The President reported the Vice-Chair had the full support of the Trustees.
- 6.2 Council sought clarification from the President regarding issues raised in his report around bullying and harassment noting University and Students' Union initiatives to tackle inappropriate student behaviours.

6.3 It was agreed that concerns raised around the impact of student growth would be discussed under item 10.

7. THE POST-ELECTION POLICY LANDSCAPE

PAPER C

7.1 The Director of Strategic Projects and Chief of Staff, Giles Carden, gave an overview of the paper and updated Council as to further emergent agendas. It was highlighted to members:

- (a) the Government's strong political ambition for STEMM and the announcement of potential a MIT of the North. There was an increased commitment to research and development funding and the intention to create a British Advanced Research Projects Agency (BARPA);
- (b) a focus on the civic projects and infrastructure spend. There was a drive to regenerate the North with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs) to develop an industrial strategy;
- (c) a strong push on value for money in Higher Education;
- (d) an emphasis on the skills agenda, particularly education at levels 4 and 5 and the opportunity for Lancaster to strengthen links with further education providers; and
- (e) the need for the Council to track areas which the Office for Students was likely to subject to further scrutiny.

7.2 Council **commented** on the emergent implications and opportunities in relation to the Government's agenda and the University's research capabilities, partnerships with colleges and civic engagement projects and **noted** the report.

8. REPORT TO UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ON COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS (UK AND OVERSEAS)

PAPER D

8.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global), Simon Guy, introduced the report, which had come to Council to provide assurance about partnership activity. Collaborative partnerships were of increased significance in terms of student numbers and contribution to the overall University's strategy. The paper sought to set the context around the partnerships including the quality assurance arrangements for teaching.

8.2 He explained that the number of students at collaborative partners was growing. Each partnership had a different operating model which made it challenging to achieve process coherence. In addition Lancaster had never taken on the responsibility for any physical infrastructure in a partnership ensuring the collaboration is lower risk.

8.3 Members **commented** that further thinking could be done to develop regional partnerships recognising that this work was already in progress.

- 8.4 The Academic Registrar, Alison Mullan, was asked to comment on the processes to assure academic quality and standards. She explained the need to ensure comparability of experience across the different contexts, accepting different national legal frameworks and cultural differences. With regards to student representation, a suitable local model was built into each agreement. However, work needed to be done to explore and strengthen the linkages between partner student representation arrangements and Lancaster's Students' Union, as appropriate.
- 8.5 The Council **noted** the report.
- 9. EDEN PROJECT UPDATE** **ORAL UPDATE**
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- 10. STUDENT GROWTH AND THE IMPACT ON THE WIDER STUDENT EXPERIENCE** **PAPER E**
Restricted and Commercial in Confidence
- 11. ORAL REPORT FROM ESTATES COMMITTEE** **ORAL UPDATE**
- 11.1 The Chair of Estates Committee, Simon Reynolds, reported that there had been discussion regarding potential sustainable energy projects including a solar photovoltaic farm. The University had been energy self-sufficient during periods of 2019 but there were further opportunities for energy and carbon reduction. A presentation on digital developments had also been received which dovetailed with the University's strategic imperative to improve operational efficiency.
- 11.2 Committee members had received an update regarding the Government's response to fire safety/shields in student accommodation. An assessment of all University owned and/or managed accommodation had been undertaken and none was built using cladding akin to the affected buildings in Grenfell or Bolton.
- 11.3 The Committee had also considered the Engineering project which was viewed as giving design value and multifunctionality. The additional allocations proposed for Management School lecture theatres were viewed as pragmatic and sensible. The Chair confirmed the Committee was unanimously recommending to Council both the Engineering and Management School capital projects.
- 12. ORAL REPORT FROM FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** **ORAL UPDATE**
- 12.1 The Chair of Finance and General Purposes, Valerie Young, reported that excellent presentations had been received regarding the Engineering and Management School capital projects. There had been substantial discussion and scrutiny regarding the business cases and the Committee was satisfied that in the longer term Engineering would be self-sustaining. The Committee recommended both projects to Council. It was reported that the TRAC data return had also been approved.

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| 13. | ENGINEERING PHASE 2
<i>Restricted and Commercial in Confidence</i> | PAPER J |
| 14. | MANAGEMENT SCHOOL PHASE 2
<i>Restricted and Commercial in Confidence</i> | PAPER K |
| 15. | DISTRICT HEATING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT | PAPER L |
| 15.1 | The Council approved the district heating improvement project with an allocation of a further £750k from the existing budget of the Capital Programme. | |
| 16. | PRO-CHANCELLOR SEARCH COMMITTEE
<i>Restricted and Confidential</i> | PAPER M |
| 17. | MANAGING OFFICE FOR STUDENTS (OfS) COMPLIANCE MATTERS | PAPER N |
| 17.1 | The Director of Strategic Planning and Governance, Simon Jennings, introduced the paper explaining how the University was intending to demonstrate it was meeting OfS requirements. A multi-faceted approach was being taken to create a framework to manage all aspects of compliance, and the increased level of communication and consultation requests. This area was due to be subject to an internal audit and a further paper would come through to the March Council. | |
| 17.2 | The Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary, Nicola Owen, raised that, as part of the OfS ongoing conditions for registration, the Council would need to demonstrate that it was meeting the CUC Higher Education Governance Code. A revised version was currently out for consultation. A suggested response would be included at the March Council meeting. | |
| 17.3 | The Council noted that the Chair had received a letter of apology from the Chair of the OfS Board apologising for their communications regarding payments. | |
| 17.4 | The Council noted the report. | |
| 18. | UPDATE TO COUNCIL ON THE RECENT PERIOD OF INDUSTRIAL ACTION
<i>Restricted and Confidential</i> | PAPER G |
| 19. | EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19 | PAPER F |
| 19.1 | The Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, Paul Boustead, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and EDI), Sharon Huttly, presented papers F and H in tandem as the EDI Report was the public facing retrospective of the year's progress against the EDI strategy and Paper H reported on work in progress against key objectives. | |
| 19.2 | The Council noted that the EDI strategy was now five years old and near completion. Challenging targets had been set but this had been important to drive through change. The critical path for the next five years needed to be set alongside the new strategic plan. | |

19.3 The Council **noted** the report and requested that the Universities widening participation and social mobility work and outcomes should be amplified in future reports.

20. ATHENA SWAN AND GENDER PAY GAP TASK GROUP UPDATE PAPER H

20.1 The Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, Paul Boustead, reported that to meet the principal targets set out for the Council, the University management would need to take different approaches. Time had been spent discussing targets and resourcing with the Deans. The introduction of the Dean of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion had been positively received.

20.2 The Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development further reported that addressing gender issues in the Professoriate in STEMM subjects would produce the most significant results in terms of the academic gender pay gap. It was considered that a strong submission had been made for consideration of the Athena SWAN Bronze award and EDI issues should be an important aspect of the future strategic thinking.

20.3 The Council **noted** the report.

21. ANNUAL REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE REPORT PAPER I

21.1 The Council **noted** the report.

22. UNIVERSITY RISK REGISTER PAPER O

22.1 The Director of Strategic Planning and Governance, Simon Jennings, introduced the Register in its new format and explained the changes which had been made since the Council last approved it. This included reviewing all risk owners and the likely impact of industrial action.

22.2 With a minor amendment to a date in risk 15 the Council **approved** the Register and requested that it should be published on the Knowledge Section of BoardPacks for Council and Audit Committee.

23. ORDINANCE 8: AMENDMENT PAPER P

23.1 The amendment to Ordinance 8 to align with the revised raising Serious Concerns Policy was **approved**.

24. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS PAPER Q
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25. COUNCIL CHAIR'S ACTIONS PAPER R

25.1 The Council noted the decisions taken by the Chair since the last meeting.

26. WRITTEN REPORTS OF MEETINGS PAPER S

26.1 The Council noted the written reports.

27. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF COUNCIL BUSINESS PAPER T

27.1 The Council noted the proposed forward schedule of business.

28. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

28.1 Members noted that the next Council meeting will be held at 9.00 a.m. on Friday 13 March 2020 in the Private Dining Room, County College, and will be preceded by the Lancaster Exchange the night before.