

**MINUTES OF A COUNCIL MEETING**

**Held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO
1.	<p><b><u>Apologies &amp; Absences</u></b>            For a record of attendance, apologies and absences, see attached list.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Tim Forman (new lay member) and Jessica Okoro (Governance Apprentice) to their first meeting.</p> <p><b>Council observed a minute’s silence to reflect on the death of Queen Elizabeth II.</b></p>		
2.	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b>            All the staff members of Council and all the staff attendees declared that they were members of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). Lesley Thompson declared that her husband was also a member of USS.</p>		
3.	<p><b><u>Student Story</u></b>  <i>Item confidential</i></p>		
4.	<p><b><u>Minutes and Actions</u></b>            (i) <u>Minutes</u>            Council received and approved the minutes of the Council meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Actions List</u>            Council received and noted the actions.</p>		
5.	<p><b><u>Matters Arising</u></b>            None.</p>		
<b>PART A – REPORTS &amp; APPROVALS</b>			
6A(i).	<p><b><u>Reflections from the new Chair</u></b>            The new Chair of Council took a few moments to provide</p>		

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	<p>some initial reflections at the start of his term of office and the start of the new academic year.</p> <p>He focused on the following three areas:</p> <p>Strategy – he stressed the importance of the need for clarity on where we were and a clear direction of travel. The need to grow, the importance of partnerships and ensuring that time and energy was spent wisely gaining different perspectives (including the collective perspective of Council members) before making decisions.</p> <p>Assurance – he noted that this was essential and both internal and external stakeholders needed to play a key role. Council needed to ensure its primary focus was University strategy and being forward-looking and that the time spent on assurance was proportionate.</p> <p>Culture – he emphasised that the University at all levels needed to be inclusive, diverse, ensure equality of voice, values-driven and demonstrate kindness. This should be set at the very top of the institution and it was the role of the Chair to facilitate this.</p> <p>The challenge ahead was noted but the Chair reported that he wished to make the most of the vast range of skills around the table and that he was very much looking forward to his term as Pro-Chancellor and working with Council and the executive.</p>		
6A(ii).	<p><b><u>Draft Council Annual Plan 2022-2023</u></b> The draft Council Annual Plan for 2022-2023 was presented.</p> <p>It was noted that it was a draft and that there was a need to be flexible throughout the year to respond to issues as they arose.</p> <p>It was noted that greater focus was required on research.</p>	To include further items on research	Secretary to Council
7A.	<p><b><u>Vice-Chancellor's Update</u></b> Members received an update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Item commercial in confidence</i></li> <li>▪ The University had received formal notification from national UCU that they would be balloting for strike action in September on two matters; pay and pensions. Both ballots would be aggregated, meaning that 50% of turnout at a national level would be required rather than local membership. If this threshold was met, all UCU branches could take action, even if the turnout</li> </ul>		

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	<p>locally was less than 50%. A minimum of 14 days' notice was required before any industrial action could take place. The University would of course do everything it could to minimise the impact and disruption on students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Universities UK (UUK) asked in August for contributions from the sector for an independent review of Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) governance. This was one of the commitments made by USS employers as part of the package of measures put forward to conclude the 2020 valuation. UUK were continuing to seek to find low-cost alternatives for early career and lower paid staff.</li> <li>▪ The University has appointed a professional Trustee to the Keele Superannuation Scheme (KSS) Board to improve the governance and direction of the Scheme. The individual Trustees have been replaced by a corporate Trustee and they have become directors of the new company, Keele Pension Trustee Limited.</li> <li>▪ On 19<sup>th</sup> August 2022, the University wrote to staff to advise them of the outcome of the 2022-2023 pay negotiations, which were conducted nationally by the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) on behalf of 145 institutions, including Keele. UCEA had been unable to reach an agreed position with the trade unions regarding the pay award and had exhausted the dispute resolution process. The employers' final offer had been implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 with a pay increase of 3% for colleagues on pay point 20 and above on the Keele pay spine, and higher percentages, ranging from 3.1% to 9% for those on pay points three to 19. The University had also agreed through local pay negotiations with Unison to pay the Voluntary Living Wage for staff on the lowest pay point, currently £9.90 per hour, which represented a 4.2% increase.</li> <li>▪ <i>Item commercial in confidence</i></li> <li>▪ Education priorities for 2022-2023, including a new engagement dashboard, implementation of a new attendance and engagement policy, Global Challenge Pathways, enhanced induction and plans for a dedicated induction/reinduction week for all student cohorts in 2023-2024. Building on the establishment of our framework for learning, teaching and assessment, Keele Learning Principles, we would further review and</li> </ul>		

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	<p>refine our approach to understanding the optimal balance of digital and in-person learning and assessment design. A cross-institutional international student experience review would identify key areas of risk and need for enhancement across the student lifecycle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keele was preparing for the next Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission. The timelines and ‘rules’ were yet to be announced by the Office for Students (OfS) but these were expected to be released shortly. The final submission would be submitted to both Senate and Council.</li> <li>▪ It was reported that a new Pro Vice-Chancellor International role would be established with a view to appointing in the new year.</li> <li>▪ Access and Participation Plans (APP) set out how higher education providers improve equality of opportunity for under-represented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education. If providers wanted to charge higher level tuition fees, their plans must be approved by the OfS’s Director for Fair Access and Participation. In February 2022, the OfS announced that it would be asking all providers to submit variations to their APPs to take effect from 2023-2024 and to respond to three new priorities around completion rates, regional inequalities and growing enrolment onto skills and flexible learning courses. Keele’s variations were submitted ahead of the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022 deadline.</li> <li>▪ The University’s updated key performance indicators were presented.</li> </ul> <p>Council had a brief discussion on the cost of living and the impact on both students and staff and it was noted that there would be a substantive discussion at the next meeting.</p> <p>Council also discussed energy costs and it was reported that costs were currently £3.5m-£4m per annum and were expected to increase to £5m this year, with a worst-case scenario position of £8m. The University bought energy in advance, so costs were protected until April 2023, and 50% of electricity was generated on campus, which further lessened the potential increase.</p>	<p>To include an item on cost of living on the agenda for the next meeting</p>	<p>Secretary to Council</p>
<b>8A.</b>	<b><u>Recruitment &amp; Admissions Update</u></b>		

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	<i>Item commercial in confidence</i>		
9A.	<p><b><u>Draft Undergraduate Recruitment Strategy</u></b></p> <p><i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p>		
10A.	<p><b><u>Finance Report</u></b></p> <p><i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p>		
11A.	<p><b><u>Secretary's Report</u></b>  The Secretary to Council presented her report as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council approved the Annual Report of Council to Senate</li> <li>▪ It was noted that Council was invited to make nominations for an honorary degree</li> <li>▪ It was noted that a reportable event had been notified to the OfS</li> <li>▪ The University's responses to OfS consultations were noted</li> <li>▪ It was noted that three documents were signed under Seal since the previous meeting.</li> <li>▪ Council was presented with information on training and some useful resources.</li> </ul>		
12A.	<p><b><u>Student Reports</u></b></p> <p>(i) <u>Report of the Students' Union (SU)</u>  The Union Development &amp; Democracy (UDD) Officer presented her report, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Officer team update</li> <li>▪ Strategic Plan</li> <li>▪ Welcome Week</li> <li>▪ Report from the CEO</li> <li>▪ Cost of living – It was reported that, although Keele was seen as a good place to study for affordability, the SU was concerned for its students and doing all it could to support them. As noted in the Vice-Chancellor's Report, it had been agreed that there would be a substantive discussion on the cost of living at the next meeting.</li> </ul> <p>(ii) <u>Report of the Keele Postgraduate Association (KPA)</u>  The new President of the KPA presented his report, which included:</p>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New President introduction</li> <li>▪ KPA events</li> <li>▪ Constitutional review update</li> </ul>		
<b>PART B – ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>			
<b>13B.</b>	<u><b>Any Other Business</b></u> None.		
<b>14B.</b>	<u><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></u> The date of the next meeting would be 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2022		

## ATTENDANCE LIST – 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022

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Mike Farrar	Pro-Chancellor
Richard Barnes	Deputy Pro-Chancellor
Sally Bucknell	Deputy Pro-Chancellor
Richard Callaway	Deputy Pro-Chancellor
David Hall	Honorary Treasurer
Professor Trevor McMillan	Vice-Chancellor
Professor Mark Ormerod	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost

### MEMBERS OF UNIVERSITY STAFF

A	Dr Abbie Rutter	Senate Member
	Dr Masi Noor	Senate Member
	Dr Shalini Sharma	Senate Member
	Emma Colley	Appointed by the Professional Services Staff

### LAY MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE COUNCIL

	Ruth Bagley
	Tracy Bullock
	Jane Burns
	David Brown
	Tim Forman
A	Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal
A	Manali Lukha
	Andrew Macleod
	Sherree Schaefer
	Dr Lesley Thompson

### STUDENT MEMBERS

	Jade Cioffi	Union Development & Democracy Officer, SU
	Abdelrhman Rayis	President, Keele Postgraduate Association

### SECRETARY TO COUNCIL

	Clare Stevenson	Secretary to Council
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### IN ATTENDANCE

	Dr Mark Bacon	Chief Operating Officer
	Frances Hewison	Director of Human Resources
	Tim Collier	Assistant Director of Finance
	Lucy Robinson	Governor Apprentice
	Jessica Okoro	Governor Apprentice

### SECRETARIAT

	Fiona Dumbelton	Governance Manager
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Key A = Absent