

MINUTES OF A COUNCIL MEETING

Held on 1st December 2022

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO
1.	<p><u>Apologies & Absences</u> For a record of attendance, apologies and absences, see attached list.</p>		
2.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u> 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><u>Student Story</u> <i>Item confidential</i></p>		
4.	<p><u>Minutes and Actions</u></p> <p>(i) <u>Minutes</u> Council received and approved the minutes of the Council meeting held on 15th September 2022.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Actions List</u> Council received and noted the actions.</p>		
5.	<p><u>Matters Arising</u> None.</p>		
PART A – REPORTS & APPROVALS			
6A.	<p><u>Statutory Returns</u></p> <p>(i) <u>Part I: Draft Statutory Accounts</u> <i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p> <p>(ii) <u>Part II: OfS Financial Forecasts</u> <i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p> <p>(iii) <u>Part III: Prevent Return</u></p>		

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	<p>As part of the annual accountability and data return, Keele was required to comply with the Prevent monitoring duty. The OfS revised the requirements for the return each year, this year's changes were not particularly significant and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A requirement of the actual rather than estimated numbers for the external event and speaker dataset, except for the first question asking for the total number of events and speakers approved through the external speakers process, where they continued to allow an estimate to the nearest 10. ▪ A requirement for further information about the reasons for all events and speaker rejections through the external speaker process, rather than just those rejected for reasons related to Prevent risks. 		
7A.	<p><u>Vice-Chancellor's Update</u></p> <p>Members received an update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There had been a number of developments with regard to industrial relations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work to implement the proposals agreed with Keele University and College Union (UCU) relating to matters of pay, other benefits, job security, international colleague support, workload and governance had begun, and a summary of progress was presented. ○ Negotiations had begun with Unison to bring forward implementation of the Real Living Wage. ○ Nationally, the University and College Employers Association (UCEA) had started to consider the coming year's pay negotiations, which would be conducted against a backdrop of continued employee unrest and industrial action. Keele's position was a continued commitment to national pay bargaining, an understanding of the current challenges for colleagues presented by cost of living, and a strategic commitment to offering the best affordable reward package that supported us in recruiting and retaining required skills and the best talent. However, the University must recognise the tensions that existed between the discussions on pay, organisational performance and our infrastructure investment plans, which were designed to ensure that we remained competitive in the market. 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UCU had had a national level mandate for three days of strike action over the previous two weeks. There was also a mandate for action short of a strike until further notice. The local impact of this was not yet clear but the University had done all it could to ensure the disruption to students was minimised. ○ The next Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension valuation was due in March 2023, and it was anticipated that it would show an improved position, due to the changes made to the Scheme and the change in the markets. Universities UK (UUK) was to commission an independent review of the Scheme so had asked each member institution to contribute £15k, which Keele had agreed to. ▪ The University was close to confirming the appointment of an interim Chief Financial Officer for a January 2023 start and then would progress the substantive appointment. ▪ The University was in the process of appointing a Pro Vice-Chancellor International and there had been a high level of interest in the role. Interviews would take place in January 2023. ▪ An update on ministerial appointments was provided after a period of numerous changes. It was noted that the Financial Statement on 17th November 2022 reassuringly maintained the commitment to the increase in research and development spending to 2025 but it was noticeable that there was no further financial offer for universities. ▪ <i>Item commercial in confidence</i> ▪ <i>Item commercial in confidence</i> ▪ The Vice-Chancellor had given an all staff address on 10th November 2022. ▪ Keele had increased its sector involvement with a number of appointments of senior staff to national boards. ▪ <i>Item commercial in confidence</i> ▪ <i>Item commercial in confidence</i> ▪ The University's league table performance in the Times and the Guardian were reported, which were a mix of positive and negative results for Keele. Keele had seen an impressive rise of 16 places to 32nd in the Guardian, which was our highest ranking for many years. The Sunday Times Good University Guide, however, placed Keele 64th overall, which was a drop from 48th last year. 		

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	<p>Council noted that it would be useful to have a discussion on our league table performance, to review the metrics that really mattered, in conjunction with our key performance indicators, and how they impacted on our growth strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The latest version of the University Risk Register, which had previously been considered by the University Executive Committee (UEC) and the Audit & Risk Committee was presented. It had been updated to reflect the current risks and identify the implications and controls, contingency plans and assurance mechanisms that had been or would be put in place. ▪ The University's updated key performance indicators were presented. 		
8A.	<p><u>Academic Delivery Plan</u></p> <p><i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p>		
9A.	<p><u>Recruitment & Admissions Update</u></p> <p><i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p>		
10A.	<p><u>Finance Report</u></p> <p>(a) <u>Transfer of Assets from KUSBPL to the University</u> <i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p> <p>(b) <u>Policy Approval</u> Council received the (a) Cash & Liquidity Policy, (b) Treasury & Investment Management Policy and the (c) Gifts & Hospitality Policy for approval.</p> <p>The former two had been reviewed by the Business Review Committee and the third by the Nominations & Governance Committee.</p> <p>It was noted that the new Gifts & Hospitality Policy would need to be communicated to all staff.</p> <p>Council approved all three policies as recommended.</p>	To publicise the new policy to all staff	Associate Director of Finance
11A.	<p><u>Secretary's Report</u></p> <p>The Secretary to Council presented her report as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council approved the re-appointment of Lesley Thompson and David Brown for a second term, 2023- 		

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	<p>2027 on the recommendation of the Nominations & Governance Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council received a recommendation to amend Statute Section 16 to reduce the maximum time permitted on Council from 12 to 10 years, following the recommendation in the recent Governance Effectiveness Review. Council requested that paragraph three be amended as well as paragraph four to include the sentence “but not exceeding 10 years in total”. Council recommended approval of the amendment to the Privy Council by order of a Special Resolution of an affirmative vote of no less than three-fourths of members present and voting. ▪ Council approved an amendment to Ordinance A5. ▪ Council noted the progress update with the 2021-2022 annual review of Council members. ▪ <i>Item commercial in confidence</i> ▪ The University’s responses to OfS consultations were noted. ▪ It was noted that four documents were signed under Seal since the previous meeting. ▪ Council was presented with information on training and some useful resources. 	<p>To amend the wording prior to submission to the Privy Council</p>	<p>Governance Manager</p>
<p>12A.</p>	<p><u>Student Reports</u></p> <p>(i) <u>Report of the Students’ Union (SU)</u> The Union Development & Democracy (UDD) Officer presented her report, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Union general meeting ▪ Officer review ▪ Officer aims and policy updates ▪ CEO Update ▪ Results of the Student Concerns & Issues Survey 2022 <p>It was noted that the SU would be moving from five full-time officers to four and that the position on Council would no longer automatically go to the Union Development & Democracy Officer but that a selection process would take place.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Report of the Keele Postgraduate Association (KPA)</u> The President of the KPA presented his report, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elected officer update ▪ Constitution and Bye-Laws update ▪ Cost of living 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KPA events ▪ Trustees' and Officers' Report 2021-2022 <p><i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p>		
PART B – COMMITTEE REPORTS			
13B.	<p><u>Committee Reports</u></p> <p>Council received updates on the recent meetings of the Business Review Committee, Audit & Risk Committee, Nominations & Governance Committee and Senate.</p>		
PART C – THEMED DISCUSSION ITEMS			
14C.	<p><u>Cost of Living</u></p> <p><i>Dan Lay (SU Welfare & Diversity Officer) attended the meeting for this item.</i></p> <p>Council received a presentation from the Welfare & Diversity Officer and a two-part paper from the SU and the University.</p> <p>The SU presented the results of a cost of living survey it had conducted to investigate the impact on the lived experiences of students and how the SU and the University could support students during this crisis. The survey highlighted that a significant number of students were concerned and struggling. A list of recommendations had been passed to the University's Cost of Living Working Group, which was chaired by the Director of Student Services & Success. A second survey was in the process of being conducted.</p> <p>The University had undertaken a formal risk assessment process to consider a range of impacting and anticipated risks as a result of the prevailing levels of inflation. Council was presented with the approach taken to address these risks, through the implementation of mitigating measures, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employee Pay Award ▪ A new colleague assistance programme ▪ Enhanced Postgraduate Research Student Stipends ▪ Funds and Food vouchers for students in hardship ▪ Student Employment and Exceptional Circumstances ▪ Providing on-campus spaces, facilities and activities in the evening 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to good quality, low-cost cooked food on campus ▪ Subsidised bus travel ▪ Retail outlet discount programmes <p>An investment of up to £700k additional spend during 2022-2023 was to be made to support staff and students.</p> <p>The potential implications on the institutional finances resulting from the increasing costs of borrowing, energy, maintenance and research were also presented.</p> <p>Council noted that a staff pulse survey would be conducted shortly and that the University and the SU would continue to meet regularly to review the actions being undertaken.</p> <p>It was agreed that the SU and KPA reports to Council would continue to include an item on the cost of living for the foreseeable future and that the University should consider including examples of what the University is doing to support students in recruitment activity.</p> <p>Council welcomed the opportunity to discuss this critically important subject and was extremely supportive of the actions taken to support our students and staff.</p>	<p>Continue to include the cost of living in the SU & KPA reports</p> <p>Consider including actions the University is taking in recruitment activity</p>	<p>SU & KPA</p> <p>Director of GSRA</p>
15C.	<p><u>Education Update</u> <i>Kris Spellman Miller (Pro Vice-Chancellor Education) attended the meeting for this item.</i></p> <p>Council received a presentation providing an update on education priorities in 2022-2023, which included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of delivery model ▪ Welcome/induction ▪ Global Challenge Pathways ▪ Academic mentoring ▪ Student attendance and engagement <p>Council noted the importance of student feedback and making good use of it, ensuring that students attended their lectures and other contact points, reviewing modes of engagement, introducing personal dashboards for students and a focus on wellbeing.</p>		

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PART D – ANY OTHER BUSINESS			
16D.	<u>Any Other Business</u> None.		
17D.	<u>Date of Next Meeting</u> The date of the next meeting would be 9 th February 2022		

ATTENDANCE LIST – 1st December 2022

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

	Dr Abbie Rutter	Senate Member
	Dr Masi Noor	Senate Member (attended from item 10 onwards)
A	Dr Shalini Sharma	Senate Member
A	Emma Colley	Appointed by the Professional Services Staff

LAY MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE COUNCIL

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

STUDENT MEMBERS

	Jade Cioffi	Union Development & Democracy Officer, Students' Union
	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	Chief People Officer
	Tim Collier	Associate Director of Finance
A	Lucy Robinson	Governance Apprentice
	Jessica Okoro	Governance Apprentice

SECRETARIAT

	Fiona Dumbelton	Governance Secretariat Manager
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Key A = Absent