



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL

Held on Thursday 4th July 2019

The Chair welcomed Amy Holden (SU Union Development & Democracy Officer) and Katie Charlton (KPA President) to their first meeting. She also welcomed Natalie Simpson (Head of HR – Operations) and Simon Rimmington (Director of the Foundation Year) to the meeting as observers.

For a record of attendance, apologies and absences, see attached list.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Harris declared an interest as he is a consultant to a law firm whose clients include USS and Mr Clark declared an interest as a Trustee of Caudwell Children.

2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS

(i) Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd May 2019 were approved and signed.

(ii) Actions List

Council received and noted the actions list.

PART 1 – REPORTS & APPROVALS

1A. INSTITUTIONAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR FRAMEWORK

The Director of Strategy Delivery attended for this item.

Council received the approach to monitoring institutional key performance indicators (KPIs).

It was noted that further work was required to the KPIs relating to student wellbeing, equality diversity and inclusion and environmental sustainability, as well as the aesthetics of the report, which would be completed over the summer. It was also noted that all of the ideas provided by Council during the development of the new framework had been considered.

The report aimed to provide Council with both a brief summary of Keele's overall performance and a detailed view of specific areas where a greater level of scrutiny was desired.

The framework set out four main KPIs (i) size and reputation, (ii) research, (iii) resources and (iv) people, within which were a number of sub-measures. Performance was measured on a scale of 1 to 3 with 1 = under-performance, 2 = performance on track and 3 = exceeding performance.

Council made a number of observations:

- Other metrics to be considered relating to student numbers, e.g. Foundation Year and CPD
- Estates metrics are too focused on energy use – consideration of measuring progress in achieving the targets/ambitions in the Estates Strategy
- Financial health – not just cash for capital expenditure
- Separate the KPIs for staff and students as they are two very different groups
- Consideration of what ‘exceeding performance’ looks like
- Reflect on putting numbers to qualitative measures
- Reflect on the scoring mechanism to ensure that sufficient weight is given to particularly important metrics – e.g. NSS
- Inclusion of a glossary
- Reflect on the usefulness of the single score on the left hand side of Annex C as it was felt that it would always be amber
- Inclusion of a simple arrow up, down, across to show direction of travel
- Consider ways of visualising/summarising the report so as to highlight the most important metrics

Council **resolved:**

That the framework be approved, noting that further work would be undertaken over the summer and that the Council briefing session in September 2019 would focus on KPIs.

1B. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN & PROJECT EXECUTIVE GROUP UPDATE

The Director of Strategy Delivery attended for this item.

Item commercial in confidence

1C. FINANCE REPORT

(i) 3 Year Budget

Item commercial in confidence

(ii) Pensions

Council received an update on the current position regarding the pension scheme reviews and the potential cost impact on the University.

Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS)

- It was reported that current data assumed that employer contributions would rise from 19.5% to 22.5% in October 2019 and that discussions were ongoing to mitigate a further rise in April 2020.
- A contingent contribution scheme had been discussed between Universities UK (UUK) and USS.
- The preferred option amongst employers was an increase in employer contributions to 21.1% from October 2019 and a valuation in March 2020. If there was no agreed rate acceptable to USS at that stage, an increase to 23.7% in October 2021 would be implemented.
- The ongoing cost increases had raised affordability/membership issues for staff.

- The University & Colleges Union (UCU) had affirmed its opposition to any further increases by members and was to ballot for strike action over both pensions and pay in the autumn.

Keele Superannuation Scheme (KSS)

- KSS was a closed scheme with a £31m deficit and assets of c£31m – a deficit recovery scheme was in place over a 16 year period and the University was paying an annual contribution of £1.3m.
- The Pensions Regulator would like to see a shorter recovery period but a ‘covenant test’ would be commissioned in early 2020 and the Trustees were likely to push for a higher deficit contribution payment from the University. Whatever was agreed, it must be affordable.

NHS

- 59 members of staff are members of the NHS pension scheme.
- The University’s annual contribution was likely to rise by £75k per annum.

1D. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S REPORT – COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

(i) Vice-Chancellor’s Report

Council received a report from the Vice-Chancellor, which provided an overview of major issues and activities since the previous meeting, including:

- The National Student Survey (NSS) results had been announced the previous day and Keele was placed 2nd of all broad-based universities in England, with Loughborough just ahead in 1st place. This was still an absolutely fantastic achievement and it was noted that Keele had been placed in the top three for seven of the last eight years and that no other institution could rival that. It was also noted that Harper Adams University had done well, which was great news for the joint Vet School.
- Council received an update on student recruitment - Item commercial in confidence
- A presentation regarding accommodation strategy that had been made at the meeting of the Business Review Committee on 13th June 2019 was annexed to the Vice-Chancellor’s Report for information. Council noted that the accommodation project executive group, including Mr Barnes, would be re-established to develop proposals. A decision on how the University wished to proceed would be required in the next 18 months and that opportunities off-campus were being explored.
- The Corporate Risk Register was annexed to the report and it was noted that it would be reviewed over the summer to map it onto the new Strategy.
- Keele has been awarded the Race Equality Charter (REC) Bronze Award by Advance HE, which reflects the University’s ongoing commitment to providing equal opportunities for all staff and students.
- It was reported that Keele had moved up four places to 32nd in the 2020 Guardian University League Table and 52nd in the Complete University Guide.
- The Treasury and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy had launched a £10m fund for universities to bid to develop proposals for up to 10 new University Enterprise Zones in England. Keele had proposed and submitted a bid entitled “The Keele Growth Corridor University Enterprise Zone”. The zone sought to

repurpose the Smart Innovation Hub to create dedicated facilities for business incubation, develop new additional grow on accelerator facilities and to build on the priority in the Local Plan to realise the potential future economic impact of Keele and the Science Park. The outcome would be announced in July 2019.

- Council was asked to consider and approve the international fees for the BVetMS programme at £33,000 for 2020 although it was not anticipated that there would not be any Tier 4 students in the first year. It was noted that the proposed fees were in line with Nottingham and Surrey Universities who had new Vet Schools.

Council **resolved:**

That the proposed fees be approved.

(ii) Staff Survey

It was reported that an institutional-wide staff survey had been undertaken in February 2019 to give all staff with the opportunity to provide their views and feedback on a range of issues. The survey had received an 81% response rate and had been conducted by an independent research organisation with HE sector experience, allowing benchmarking data to be provided.

A high level report was provided, which included:

- The positive feelings of community and working on a beautiful campus were cited by staff as strengths.
- Staff were very happy to recommend Keele as a place to study.
- It was the view of the majority of staff that poor performance was not dealt with properly by managers.
- Access to training was well perceived
- A significant number of staff didn't feel that there were sufficient opportunities at Keele for career progression.
- Staff felt respected.
- Staff didn't feel there was free-flowing information between leaders and staff.
- Many didn't feel 'safe' to speak up and challenge.

More detailed analysis was in progress to identify where in the University and at what level the issues raised were more prevalent and appropriate action would be taken to address the concerns.

Council suggested that a survey every two years was not sufficiently frequent and that year on year results were more meaningful than benchmark information and that pulse tests could be a more efficient way of achieving this. It was noted that free text boxes were important and that the People Strategy would be reviewed against the results and the new University Strategy.

1E. SECRETARY'S REPORT – COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

Council received a report from the Secretary to Council, which included the following:

- Following the introduction of a new set of University Regulations last year, a revised set of Ordinances had been drafted, which had:

- Restructured into four sections (i) Corporate Officers & Governance, (ii) Academic Structures & Governance, (iii) Students' Unions and (iv) Grievances & Discipline;
- Removed of Ordinances that were no longer relevant, for example, Resident Tutors;
- Updated of Ordinances that used out of date terminology, for example, research institutes;
- Ensured consistent use of the titles Executive Deans, Deans of Education & Deans of Research;
- Ensured gender neutral language;
- Removed of the Students' Union Code of Practice and the Keele Postgraduate Association Code of Practice, to instead have stand-alone Codes and use the Ordinances to describe the high level requirements of the University in relation to the SU and the KPA. The wording of the Codes has not changed – these would be reviewed separately with the SU and KPA in the coming months;
- The terms of reference of the Senate and Council Committees had been removed from the Regulations and the list of Committees was now included in the Ordinances; the terms of reference themselves were now on the Governance webpages;
- Introduced Emeritus Readers to mirror Emeritus Professors.

Council resolved:

That the proposed new Ordinances be approved and come into effect at the start of the 2019-2020 academic year.

- **Council resolved:**

That amendments to the terms of reference of the Business Review Committee be approved.

- **Council resolved:**

That the Anti-Money Laundering Policy be approved.

- It was noted that at the Council Away Day in May 2019 an overview of the requirements of and approach to the production of a new five-year Access and Participation Plan (APP), covering the years 2020-2021 to 2024-2025 had been presented. The APP was required by the Office for Students (OfS) as one of our ongoing conditions of registration. The new APP was submitted to the OfS by the 24th May deadline and we are now waiting OfS approval.

The APP had been the subject of broad consultation, including consultation with students and through the Education Committee and its sub-groups. Senate received and endorsed the APP at its meeting on 19th June 2019. The Plan was also considered and positively received by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Oversight Group at its meeting on 14th May 2019.

Council would play a key role in the monitoring and oversight of the APP, as required by the OfS. This would include regular progress updates via the University KPIs, strategy updates and VC's Report, monitoring by the EDI Oversight Group and annual review of the 'Impact Report' that we are required to submit to the OfS.

The University's Access & Participation Plan was annexed to the report and the detailed appendices were available online.

- Council noted the Office of the Independent Adjudicator Annual Statement 2018.
- Under the Education Act 1994, Council is required to satisfy itself that the elections to elect the student officers in the Students' Unions are fairly and properly conducted. Council received assurance at the previous meeting with regard to the SU but the KPA elections were still ongoing. Following the meeting, voting in the KPA elections was halted and restarted due to process issues with the email addresses used to ensure that members eligible to vote were identified. The election was re-run and a lessons learned exercise would take place to ensure the same problem didn't occur next year.
- Council approved the promotions presented.
- Council noted that 56 documents had been signed under seal since the previous meeting.

PART 2 – COMMITTEE REPORTS

2A. COMMITTEE REPORTS – COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

The Committee noted the reports from the following meetings:

- Business Review Committee - meeting held on 13th June 2019
- Senate – meeting held on 19th June 2019
- Audit & Risk Committee – meeting held on 20th June 2019

PART 3 – STUDENTS

3A. STUDENTS' UNION BUDGET 2019-2020

Item commercial in confidence

3B. KEELE POSTGRADUATE ASSOCIATION BUDGET 2019-2020

The Keele Postgraduate Association (KPA) had not been in a position to submit their budget so Council delegated authority to the Director of Finance to approve it and to report back to Council at its next meeting.

PART 4 – OTHER BUSINESS

4A. OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair noted that it was the last meeting for the following members and extended her thanks on behalf of Council for their time, commitment and contribution:

- Andrew Harris
- Simon Ramery
- Vanessa Hooper
- Tom Snape
- George Blake

Mr Hashmi also passed on his sincere gratitude to staff for their hard work and contribution in what had been a very difficult and challenging year, which was endorsed by Council.

COUNCIL ATTENDANCE – 4th July 2019

	Dame Jo Williams	Pro-Chancellor
	Richard Barnes	Deputy Pro-Chancellor
	Sally Bucknell	Deputy Pro-Chancellor
A	Richard Callaway	Deputy Pro-Chancellor
	Professor Alistair Ulph	Deputy Pro-Chancellor
	David Hall	Honorary Treasurer
	Professor Trevor McMillan	Vice-Chancellor
	Professor Mark Ormerod	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost

MEMBERS OF UNIVERSITY STAFF

	Professor Nicholas Forsyth	Senate Member
	Dr Rebecca Leach	Senate Member
A	Professor Peter Andras	Senate Member
	Vanessa Hooper	Appointed by the Non-academic Staff

LAY MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE COUNCIL

	Ruth Bagley
	Paul Clark
	Andrew Harris
	Sajid Hashmi
	Manali Lukha
A	Simon Ramery
	Sherree Schaefer
	<i>Vacancy</i>

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

	Amy Holden	Union Development & Democracy Officer, KeeleSU
	Katie Charlton	President, Keele Postgraduate Association

SECRETARY TO COUNCIL

	Dr Helen Galbraith	Secretary to Council
--	--------------------	----------------------

IN ATTENDANCE

	Paul Buttery	Director of Finance
	Rachel Adams	Director of Human Resources
	Dr Mark Bacon	Director of Strategy Delivery (item 1A and 1B)
	Lisa Fallon	SU Finance Manager (item 3A)
	Tom Snape	Former Union Development & Democracy Officer, KeeleSU

SECRETARIAT

	Fiona Dumbelton	Governance Manager
--	-----------------	--------------------

Key

A = Absent