

**MINUTES OF A COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Held on 8 July 2021 (held virtually)**

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO
1.	<p><b><u>Apologies &amp; Absences</u></b></p> <p>For a record of attendance, apologies and absences, see attached list.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the new President of the Keele Postgraduate Association, Elisia Narbett to her first meeting. She also welcomed Andrew Macleod who will be joining Council as a lay member on 1 September 2021 but was attending this meeting as an observer.</p>		
2.	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>Lesley Thompson declared that her husband was a member of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). Shalini Sharma, Lisa Dikomititis and Peter Andras declared that they too were members of USS and also the University and Colleges Union (UCU). Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal declared that she was an employee of the Department for Education.</p>		
3.	<p><b><u>Student Story</u></b></p> <p><i>Item confidential</i></p>		
4(i)	<p><b><u>Minutes</u></b></p> <p>Council received and approved the minutes of the Council meeting held on 20 May 2021.</p>		
4(ii)	<p><b><u>Actions List</u></b></p> <p>Council received and noted the actions.</p>		
<b>PART A – REPORTS &amp; APPROVALS</b>			
5A.	<p><b><u>Vice-Chancellor's Update</u></b></p> <p>Members received an update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keele had won the prestigious “Global Sustainability Institution of the Year” award at the International Green Gown Awards the previous day. Building on our success</li> </ul>		

	<p>at the UK and Ireland Green Gowns earlier this year, the University was delighted to have now been recognised as a world-leading institution for its efforts to embed sustainability across all its operations. Council applauded this fantastic news and recognised the work of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost who had led the University's extensive work in this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The latest version of the University Risk Register, which was considered by the University Executive Committee (UEC) and the Audit &amp; Risk Committee in June 2021 was presented. It had been updated to reflect the latest impact of the Covid-19 pandemic to outline the significant increase in our risk profile at present, and identify the implications and controls, contingency plans and assurance mechanisms that had been or would be put in place.</li> <li>▪ Council approved the establishment of a new Digital Society Institute to harness the knowledge and understanding that existed across the University to enhance our education, research and support for public and private sector partners. Approval was granted on the recommendation of Senate. It was noted that the interim lead would be the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research &amp; Innovation).</li> <li>▪ The University received an inspection from the Health &amp; Safety Executive (HSE) on 18 and 19 May 2021, which focused on the CL3 bio-containment laboratory in the Huxley Building but also our general approach to Covid-security on campus. The inspection was complimentary of our Covid-secure arrangements but identified four issues with the CL3 lab, which resulted in an enforcement letter being issued to the Vice-Chancellor as Chief Executive Officer. One matter had already been resolved and the other three would be resolved well in advance of the HSE deadline of 30 September 2021. The Occupational Health &amp; Safety Oversight Group would be kept informed of the matter.</li> <li>▪ Keele had been subject to a monitoring visit from Ofsted in relation to its apprentice provision on 29 and 30 June 2021, which was led by the Dean of Medicine &amp; Health Sciences. The University scored the highest grade in all three areas of leadership and management, quality of education and safeguarding. It was noted that for an HE institution to receive 'significant progress' in safeguarding on the first visit was rare. Council commended this result.</li> <li>▪ The process to recruit a new Chief Financial Officer was</li> </ul>		
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	<p>underway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The University had seen a small improvement in its position in the Complete University Guide, rising three places to 53<sup>rd</sup> (41<sup>st</sup> in England). There were some very strong subject performances, for example, Forensic Science, Nursing and Medicine.</li> <li>▪ It was reported that the final allocation from the Office for Students (OfS) for Hardship Funding was c£80k. This was in addition to the £400k already received and distributed to c1,000 students.</li> <li>▪ On 29 June 2021, the Princess Royal formally opened the new Veterinary Education Centre at Harper Adams University.</li> </ul> <p><u>Covid-19</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The government had allowed the return of all students on 17 May 2021. This was of course very late in the academic year so the numbers that returned to campus were quite low. Arrangements had been put in place by Schools for in-situ sessions for those that did return, which provided a welcome opportunity to re-socialise and familiarise themselves with campus.</li> <li>▪ The number of cases of Covid on campus remained extremely low.</li> <li>▪ The University was seeking to learn as much as possible from online learning, including that some students preferred it.</li> <li>▪ Vaccinations were offered to all students on campus via the GP surgery on campus and over 1,200 students took part, which was a great success. The campus remained Covid-secure for the time being until decisions on the further lifting of restrictions had been announced.</li> <li>▪ It was anticipated that restrictions would be eased on 19 July 2021 but that there would remain a certain level of social distancing, face coverings and hygiene/hand washing requirements.</li> <li>▪ A clear steer would be provided to staff shortly and Council would be kept informed.</li> </ul> <p><u>One Keele</u> <i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p>		
6A.	<p><b><u>Recruitment Update</u></b> <i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p>		

7A.	<p><b><u>Finance Report</u></b></p> <p>(i) <u>Draft Three Year Budget</u> <i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p> <p>(ii) <u>Pensions Report</u> <i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p> <p>(iii) <u>Financial Regulations</u> The Financial Regulations had last been updated in 2016 so a comprehensive review had taken place.</p> <p>The key changes related to the change in regulator from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to the OfS and organisational restructures at Keele.</p> <p>The Financial Regulations were approved by Council on the recommendation of the Audit &amp; Risk Committee and the Business Review Committee.</p>		
8A.	<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>▪ The Freedom of Expression Code of Practice was approved by Council on an interim basis on the recommendation of Senate. Concerns had been raised by Senate regarding the robustness of the Speaker Approval Procedure so this along with the fact that the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill had not yet progressed through Parliament meant that the Code was only being approved on an interim basis, pending further review and any necessary changes.</li> <li>▪ The terms of reference of the Business Review Committee were approved by Council on the recommendation of the Committee.</li> <li>▪ James Rushton was re-appointed for a second term as an independent member of the Nominations &amp; Governance Committee on the recommendation of the Committee.</li> <li>▪ An amendment to Ordinance B1: Academic Structures of the University was approved by Council on the recommendation of Senate.</li> <li>▪ Council noted the new OfS condition of registration C4, which had been introduced on 1 April 2021. The new condition had been introduced to enable the OfS to intervene more quickly and in a more targeted way when it considered there to be a material risk that a registered provider may cease the provision of higher education.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The University had responded to two consultations from the Office for Students on (i) Recurrent Funding for 2021-2022 and (ii) Distribution of Capital Funding for 2021-2022. The University's responses were provided for information.</li> <li>▪ It was noted that 8 documents had been sealed since the previous meeting.</li> </ul>		
<b>9A.</b>	<p><b><u>Student Reports</u></b></p> <p>(i) <u>Report of the Students' Union (SU)</u> The Union Development &amp; Democracy Officer presented her report, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Part-time officer and committee elections</li> <li>▪ Climate emergency declared</li> <li>▪ Data Charter student principles</li> <li>▪ Women's safety statement</li> <li>▪ Student awards</li> <li>▪ Ramadan</li> <li>▪ Be Better Do Better Campaign</li> <li>▪ Students' Union building re-opening</li> <li>▪ New Co-op store on campus</li> </ul> <p>(ii) <u>Report of the Keele Postgraduate Association (KPA)</u> The President of the KPA presented her report, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Handover</li> <li>▪ Bob Beattie Postgraduate Recognition Awards</li> <li>▪ Commitment to postgraduate wellbeing</li> <li>▪ Election update</li> <li>▪ Student casework</li> <li>▪ Appointment of a new external trustee</li> <li>▪ KPA Clubhouse Activity</li> </ul>		
<b>10A.</b>	<p><b><u>Student Accommodation Options Paper</u></b> <i>Item commercial in confidence</i></p>		
<b>PART B – COMMITTEE REPORTS</b>			
<b>11B.</b>	<p><b><u>Committee Reports</u></b></p> <p>(i) <u>Senate</u> The Vice-Chancellor reported on the meeting of Senate held on 23 June 2021 at which the following items were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vice-Chancellor's update</li> <li>▪ Educational principles</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Decolonising the Curriculum update</li> <li>▪ Workload Allocation Model guidance</li> <li>▪ Student office updates</li> <li>▪ Educational matters</li> <li>▪ Research matters</li> </ul> <p>Council noted the report.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Business Review Committee</u></p> <p>The Chair reported on the meeting of the Business Review Committee held on 18 June 2021, in which the following items were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Investment portfolio review</li> <li>▪ Annual review of investment managers</li> <li>▪ Management Accounts</li> <li>▪ Draft 3 year budget and OfS forecasts</li> <li>▪ Capital expenditure forecasts</li> <li>▪ External audit non-assurance services</li> <li>▪ Financial Regulations</li> <li>▪ Vet School Equipment</li> <li>▪ Capital project update report</li> <li>▪ Transformation of the Chancellor's Building refectory</li> <li>▪ Student accommodation investment</li> <li>▪ SU management accounts and budget</li> <li>▪ KPA management accounts and budget</li> <li>▪ HE financial benchmarking</li> <li>▪ End of year review</li> </ul> <p>Council noted the report.</p> <p>(iii) <u>Nominations &amp; Governance Committee</u></p> <p>The Chair reported on the meeting of the Nominations &amp; Governance Committee held on 18 June 2021, in which the following items were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chancellor appointment</li> <li>▪ Pro-Chancellor appointment</li> <li>▪ Re-appointment of independent member</li> <li>▪ Governance Apprenticeship Programme</li> <li>▪ OfS Regulatory Framework Compliance Review</li> <li>▪ Declarations of interest and fit and proper persons</li> <li>▪ Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education Annual Statement 2020</li> <li>▪ End of year review</li> </ul> <p>Council noted the report.</p> <p>(iv) <u>Audit &amp; Risk Committee</u></p> <p>The Chair reported on the meeting of the Audit &amp; Risk Committee held on 8 June 2021, in which the following</p>		
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	<p>items were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One Keele Phase 2 implementation risk analysis</li> <li>▪ Financial Regulations</li> <li>▪ University Risk Register</li> <li>▪ Education Act Compliance annual report</li> <li>▪ External audit non-assurance services</li> <li>▪ Internal audit progress report</li> <li>▪ Internal audit progress programme 2021-2022</li> <li>▪ External audit plan 2020-2021</li> <li>▪ End of year review</li> </ul> <p>Council noted the report.</p>		
<b>PART C – OTHER BUSINESS</b>			
<b>12C.</b>	<p><b><u>Other Business</u></b></p> <p>The Chair reported that it was the last meeting for Sajid Hashmi and Peter Andras. She thanked them both for their invaluable contribution.</p>		
<b>13.</b>	<p><b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b></p> <p>The date of the next meeting was Thursday 16 September 2021.</p>		

## ATTENDANCE LIST – 8 JULY 2021 – VIRTUAL MEETING

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Dame Jo Williams	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

Professor Lisa Dikomitis	Senate Member
Professor Peter Andras	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  
Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal  
Peter Harris  
Sajid Hashmi  
Manali Lukha  
Sherree Schaefer  
A Dr Lesley Thompson

### STUDENT MEMBERS

Holly Brooks	Union Development & Democracy Officer, SU
Elisia Narbett	President, Keele Postgraduate Association

### SECRETARY TO COUNCIL

Clare Stevenson	Secretary to Council
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### IN ATTENDANCE

Dr Mark Bacon	Chief Operating Officer
Rachel Adams	Director of Human Resources
Paul Buttery	Director of Finance
Phil Butters	Director of Estates & Development (item 10A only)
Andrew Macleod	Incoming lay member of Council

### SECRETARIAT

Fiona Dumbelton	Governance Manager
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Key A = Absent