

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL WEBINAR

Held on 14th May 2020 (held virtually)

| ITEM | DISCUSSION | ACTION | WHO |
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| 1. | <p><u>Virtual Meeting Etiquette & Guidance</u></p> <p>The Secretary to Council displayed a slide on virtual meeting etiquette and guidance, which had also been circulated to members in advance of the meeting.</p> | | |
| 2. | <p><u>Apologies & Absences</u></p> <p>For a record of attendance, apologies and absences, see attached list.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, that it was great to see everyone, and she hoped that they were all keeping well and their families too.</p> <p>The Chair also welcomed Peter Harris (formerly a co-opted member of the Audit & Risk Committee) to his first meeting and Mari Chappell (SU Education Officer), who had replaced Amy Holden on Council. She was also delighted to report that Katie Charlton had been re-elected as President of the KPA for a second term so would remain on Council for another year.</p> | | |
| 3. | <p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>None.</p> | | |
| 4. | <p><u>General Update</u></p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor began by applauding the magnificent efforts of all staff to get the University to the position it was in. He recognised the difficulties staff faced, especially those with caring responsibilities. He also thanked Council for their support.</p> <p>He provided a general update on the University's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, in which he noted that the country was facing the greatest recession ever and that</p> | | |

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| | <p>Keele had never had significant reserves to fall back on. The University had already made some hard decisions and in reality it was only going to get harder.</p> <p>The number of students registering in September 2020 would be critical in determining future financial sustainability. The University's former Interim Director of Marketing & Communications from four years ago, Caroline Dowler, had been appointed as an External Consultant to lead the new Directorate of Global Student Recruitment & Admissions. She had already begun to develop an integrated approach to the marketing, recruitment and admissions campaigns for 2020 and 2021.</p> <p>The government had increased the cap on student numbers by +5%, which would provide some protection for institutions like Keele to recruit additional students, despite the Russell Group also focusing heavily on the home market as they could no longer rely on international recruitment.</p> <p>Universities had been able to access business support schemes, for example, furloughing of staff, which had been extremely helpful, but it was not yet known whether they could access the government loan system due to the constitution of chartered universities. The government's support package for the HE sector was seen as a first good step, however, it was felt that the funding would not stretch much beyond the early payment of existing funds that had already been announced. The sector needed to show the government that it was doing all it could to mitigate the effects of Covid-19 in order to be in a better position to argue for additional support.</p> <p>The University had published a first and second response paper and a third was in preparation, which would focus on finance, support for staff and students and academic delivery for next year. Academic delivery would inevitably include a combination of online and face-to-face teaching with social distancing. It was critical that, whatever the mode of delivery, applicants were reassured that the University was agile enough to carry on teaching and able to guarantee academic standards.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor reported that he would be holding virtual drop-in sessions for Council members and would be in touch with the details shortly.</p> | To arrange drop-in sessions. | Vice-Chancellor |
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| 5. | <p><u>Webinar 1: Finance</u></p> <p>Item commercial in confidence</p> | | |
| 6. | <p><u>Webinar 2: Staff & Student Wellbeing</u></p> <p>The second webinar was focused on ensuring staff and student wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic</p> <p><u>Staff Wellbeing</u></p> <p>The Director of HR presented to Council on the University's approach to the Covid-19 situation in which she noted that the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of the Keele community were a priority.</p> <p>Early planning in February 2020 had enabled the University to be agile and in line with daily government directions on social distancing from 16th March 2020 and to minimise campus operations from that point. Currently, less than 10% of students who normally resided on campus were still in student accommodation and c50 members of staff were working on campus, carrying out essential services. The week of 23rd March 2020 had seen a significant shift to home working for staff and to remote learning for students. The rapid transformation of the working and learning environment had required specific support measures to be put in place for both staff and students.</p> <p>The presentation included an overview of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Our approach ▪ Supporting staff ▪ Holistic assessment of staffing during lockdown ▪ Feedback from staff ▪ Next steps – staff welfare considerations <p>The staff members of Council commended the communication of information and guidance from the University.</p> <p>In response to a question regarding the health and wellbeing of staff, it was reported that absence levels were being recorded and would be analysed by HR</p> <p><u>Student Wellbeing</u></p> <p>The Director of Student Services presented to Council on the University's approach to supporting students, including:</p> | | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supporting students – early response ▪ Supporting students still on campus ▪ Financial support ▪ Other student services ▪ Understanding support needs ▪ Communications ▪ Development of resources ▪ Virtual wellbeing events ▪ Working final year Nursing students ▪ Supporting Student Services staff ▪ Next steps <p>The two student members of Council talked about the work the SU and the KPA had been doing to support students both independently and in collaboration with the University. The Chair asked that the SU share the results of its student survey with Council.</p> <p>Members noted the fantastic work being done to stay connected to students in a bespoke way, the innovative ideas for maintaining engagement and keeping a sense of community.</p> <p>Concern was expressed that we might see an impact from student 'disengagement' with learning following a move to online teaching.</p> <p>It was noted that a new fundraising campaign would be launched in June 2020 to replenish student hardship funds.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Director of HR and the Director of Student Services for their insightful presentations. She reinforced that staff and students were central to the University and that maintaining a high level of safety on campus was critical. She was pleased that the return of staff and students to campus would be slow and very carefully managed in-line with government guidelines. She didn't underestimate the challenges ahead but recognised that the University was doing all it could, and that the positive and supportive comments received by members today supported that view.</p> | | |
| 7. | <p><u>Other Business</u></p> <p>The Chair thanked members for their contributions and patience during the virtual meeting and invited any comments on the proposals by email.</p> | | |

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| 8. | <u>Date of Next Meeting</u> The date of the next Webinar will be 12 th June 2020 at 11.00 am. | | |

COUNCIL WEBINAR

ATTENDANCE LIST – 14th May 2020 – VIRTUAL MEETING

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 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

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| Professor Nicholas Forsyth | Senate Member |
| Dr Rebecca Leach | Senate Member |
| Professor Peter Andras | Senate Member |
| Emma Colley | Appointed by the Non-academic Staff |

LAY MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE COUNCIL

Ruth Bagley
David Brown
Paul Clark
Peter Harris
Sajid Hashmi
Manali Lukha
Sherree Schaefer
Lesley Thompson
Professor Alistair Ulph

STUDENT MEMBERS

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| Mari Chappell | Education Officer, KeeleSU |
| Katie Charlton | President, Keele Postgraduate Association |

SECRETARY TO COUNCIL

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| Dr Helen Galbraith | Secretary to Council |
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IN ATTENDANCE

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| Rachel Adams | Director of Human Resources |
| Dr Mark Bacon | Chief Operating Officer |
| Paul Buttery | Director of Finance |
| Tim Collier | Associate Director of Finance (items 1 to 5 only) |
| Katie Laverty | Director of Student Services (item 6 only) |
| James Rushton | Independent Member of Nominations & Governance Committee |
| Neil Clatworthy | Co-opted Member of Audit & Risk Committee |

SECRETARIAT

Fiona Dumbelton

Governance Manager

Key

A = Absent