

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL WEBINAR

Held on 18th December 2020 (held virtually)

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO
1.	<p><u>Apologies & Absences</u></p> <p>For a record of attendance, apologies and absences, see attached list.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the three new lay members of Council to their first meeting, Tracy Bullock, Jane Burns and Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal.</p>		
2.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>None.</p>		
3.	<p><u>Vice-Chancellor's Update</u></p> <p>Members received an update on the following:</p> <p><u>Recruitment & Admissions</u></p> <p>Item commercial in confidence</p> <p><u>Other Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The joint meeting with Senate on 19th November 2020 was deemed a success and it was reported that a date for all Council members to undertake allyship training was being arranged. ▪ The Covid Response Team at Keele had been working tremendously hard, including setting up the asymptomatic testing centre in the sports centre. Approximately 2,500 students had been tested twice prior to returning home for Christmas in line with government guidance and only one had been tested positive. The staggered return of students in January 2021 was welcomed and lateral flow tests would commence on 4th January 2021 and students had been advised to return three to five days before their first timetabled face to face event. In-house testing for staff had also been taking place on campus and had been taken up by around 400 members of staff with a very 		

	<p>low number of positive cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A proposal was under consideration to withdraw all programmes in Music & Music Technology due to evidence that given student recruitment trends, uncompetitive facilities and a highly unfavourable balance of income and costs, they were no longer sustainable. The proposal had been due to be considered by Senate at its meeting on 2nd December 2020 but had been postponed until the March 2021 meeting. There has been a national and international reaction to the proposal, including an online petition and a large number of letters. ▪ The University Chapel hosted a beautiful carol service, which could be viewed via Facebook. ▪ The University had been giving consideration to the request from the Secretary of state for Education to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism. Previously it had not been felt that the University needed to adopt it as existing documents already provided an appropriate definition and made the same commitment but, as a definition, the one provided by the IHRA was useful. It had been considered by Senate at its meeting on 2nd December 2020 but agreed that further exploration of the issues raised would take place, including by the EDI Steering Group and that it would be brought back to Senate in March 2021 and Council in May 2021. 	Bring back to Council in May 2021	Vice-Chancellor
4.	<p><u>Financial Sustainability Plan Update</u></p> <p>Item commercial in confidence</p>		
5.	<p><u>The Keele Student Experience</u></p> <p>Council received a presentation from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students), the Chief Executive Officer of the Students' Union, the Union, Development & Democracy Officer from the SU, the President of the KPA and the Academic Registrar.</p> <p>In advance, Council had received the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University Student Experience Vision ▪ SU Strategic Plan ▪ SU Behaviours Framework ▪ Report from the SU Union Development & Democracy Officer, ▪ Report from the President of the KPA 		

	<p>The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) presented the new Student Experience Strategic Vision, which had been developed around six themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community and values: <i>respectful, inclusive & tolerant community</i> ▪ Student voice and partnerships: <i>SU/KPA partners; co-design</i> ▪ Student support: <i>mental health; disability; hardship</i> ▪ Student journey: <i>supporting transitions into, through and out of university</i> ▪ Achieving your best: <i>education strategic vision</i> ▪ Onwards and upwards: <i>careers and employability</i> <p>She also presented the 16 fictional student personas that had been developed to represent Keele's 10,784 students that included demography, study mode/level, residence, personal characteristics & personality, family circumstances and interests and issues.</p> <p>It was reported that the University had undertaken two Covid-impact surveys in week four and week nine and that 2,000 students had responded. The priority action areas were in relation to academic support (more tutor contact, more 'live' sessions, more leniency for deadlines and an acknowledgement that online study takes longer), more opportunities for social interactions and more mental health support.</p> <p>The CEO of the SU presented the new SU Strategic Plan & Behaviours Framework, which included the organisation's values (Supportive, Friendly, Putting Students First and Creative) and the five key aims for the SU (Anti-racism, Mental Health, Accessibility, Climate Emergency and Value for Money). She also presented the three strands to the SU's staffing strategy, which were to Empower, Support and Communicate.</p> <p>Council heard from the two student members who reflected on the work their organisations had been doing to support students through the pandemic.</p> <p>The Academic Registrar presented to Council on the Start to Success Programme, which was a whole community approach to improving mental health. The programme, which was led by Keele and Staffordshire Universities, had received an OfS grant of £750k over a two year period.</p> <p>The programme identified the following three mental health outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student transitions ▪ Early intervention ▪ Step change in support 		
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	<p>A huge amount of support and resources had been developed, including training in partnership with North Staffs Mind for staff on mental health awareness in HE and suicide awareness and prevention and a direct line of communication between both universities and the NHS.</p> <p>Council commended the work that had been undertaken and noted that the practices needed to be embedded in order that their benefits were felt beyond the lifetime of the project.</p>		
6.	<p><u>Other Business</u></p> <p>It was noted that it was the last meeting for Helen Galbraith as she would be leaving the University at the end of January 2021 to take up a new role at the University of Chester. Council wished to record its thanks for the huge contribution she had made to both Council and the University as a whole. She had made significant improvements to the governance of the University and had always been there to provide support and guidance. Council wished her every success in her new role.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor noted that Anne Loweth would shortly be stepping down from her Pro Vice-Chancellor role and would return full time to the School of Life Sciences. He thanked her for her work in championing students and providing a vital link between the University and the SU and the KPA.</p>		
7.	<p><u>Date of Next Session</u></p> <p>This was the final Council webinar and the next interaction would be a full Council meeting (albeit virtually) on 11th February 2021.</p>		

COUNCIL WEBINAR

ATTENDANCE LIST – 18th December 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

Professor Lisa Dikomitis	Senate Member
<i>Vacancy</i>	Senate Member
Professor Peter Andras	Senate Member
Emma Colley	Appointed by the Professional Services Staff

LAY MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE COUNCIL

Ruth Bagley
David Brown
Tracy Bullock
Jane Burns
Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal
Peter Harris
Sajid Hashmi
A Manali Lukha
Sherree Schaefer
Dr Lesley Thompson

STUDENT MEMBERS

Jack Karimi	Union Development & Democracy Officer, SU
Katie Charlton	President, Keele Postgraduate Association

SECRETARY TO COUNCIL

Dr Helen Galbraith	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

SECRETARIAT

Fiona Dumbelton	Governance Manager
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Key A = Absent