



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL

Held on Thursday 19th September 2019

The Chair welcomed Dr Lesley Thompson (new lay member), Mr David Brown (new lay member) and Mrs Emma Colley (new member of professional services staff) to their first meeting.

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

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Clark declared an interest as a Trustee of Caudwell Children.

2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS

(i) Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2019 were approved and signed.

(ii) Actions List

Council received and noted the actions list. It was noted that the student accommodation project executive group, of which Mr Barnes was a member, had been re-established and would meet in October 2019.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Keele Postgraduate Association Budget

Item commercial in confidence

4. STUDENT STORY

Council heard from an Article 26 student who was about to begin her second year studying Law. Article 26 is a national project aimed at supporting students who had sought sanctuary in the UK to access and succeed in higher education. She described her emotional journey since arriving in the UK and what she had overcome. She explained that she preferred seminars to lectures as they were more interactive and engaging, that she was a Student Ambassador and that staff at Keele had been helpful and motivating, particularly in Student Learning & Development. Council was overwhelmed by her achievements, both personal and academic and was confident that she would achieve her ambition of being an immigration lawyer.

PART 1 – REPORTS & APPROVALS

1A. UPDATE ON DELIVERING ‘OUR FUTURE’ & THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Item commercial in confidence

1B. FINANCE REPORT

(i) Year End Position Update

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.

It was reported that the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) had instigated a short consultation on a new schedule of contributions, which ended on 9th September 2019.

Agreement on this new schedule would conclude the USS March 2018 valuation and lessen the contribution increase for employers and members that had been previously planned for October 2019 and avoid a further increase in April 2020.

The University had budgeted 3% for the October 2019 increase that would now be 1.6% (and 0.8% for employees) but had not budgeted for the April 2020 increase.

The University and College Union (UCU) would shortly ballot its members on taking industrial action against the increase in employees' contributions and a worsening of benefits. This would put the University in a very difficult position because it was not an issue that Keele as an individual institution could resolve.

Council noted the update.

1C. 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:

- Item commercial in confidence
- The Corporate Risk Register was annexed to the report and it was noted that activity was underway to support the development of a new approach as a result of the new Strategy 'Our Future'. Council approved the amendments to the Risk Register.
- A Council Pensions Group had been convened consisting of Dame Jo, Mr Callaway, Mr Barnes and Mr Hall to represent Council in consideration of pension scheme developments as they arose. Council would continue to receive updates at meetings.
- The Denise Coates Foundation building and Smart Innovation Hub building, which would be the new home of Keele Business School and the extension to the Lennard-Jones to create the central Science Laboratories would be open to receive students from this September.
- UCU had commenced two separate but concurrent ballots for industrial action, one for pay and one as previously reported on USS. Unison had also indicated that they intended to run similar ballots, though no formal notification had yet been received.

- The Times Higher Education (THE) supplement had published its inaugural Universities with Impact league table this summer that ranked universities against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Keele landed at 57th place out of 450+ universities worldwide, which was an excellent result and showed that, despite our small size and relatively low ranking in the THE World league tables, could demonstrate our ability to make great impact in relation to sustainability and sustainable development.
- The University had moved up 14 places in the 2019 People and Planet University Green League table to 18th out of 154 universities. Keele was the highest ranked campus university.
- In July 2019, Lord Sandy Trees hosted an evening reception in the House of Lords for the new joint Veterinary School between Harper Adams and Keele Universities. The event was attended by 130 members of the veterinary profession, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and members of both houses of parliament.
- In August 2019, Keele signed up to the Social Mobility Pledge. The pledge was a scheme launched by Justine Greening MP to encourage businesses to play their role in improving social mobility in the UK by providing opportunities for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to succeed in the world of work.
- Keele had received a Silver Employer Recognition Scheme award from the Ministry of Defence in recognition of its work to support the armed forces community.
- In July 2019, Keele received its annual grant letter from Research England outlining the total research and knowledge exchange funding that had been allocated to the University. The letter confirmed that the maximum capped increase of 10% in Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) funding of £121k would be received, taking the University's total HEIF income to £1.33m per annum. The letter also confirmed that the University's allocation of quality-related (QR) research funding had also increased by 4.1% (£290k).
- The OfS completed its transition from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and received full regulatory powers from 1st August 2019. In addition to their current regulatory powers, the OfS have the power to impose considerable financial penalties on universities where they are deemed to not be acting in the best interests of students. The maximum they could fine was £500k or 2% of income, as well as imposing tuition fee caps. The OfS was a significant move away from the oversight of HEFCE to a much more regulatory authority.
- Council **resolved:**
 - That** the following Heads of Schools be appointed:
 - Professor Matthew Jones – Head of the joint Veterinary School
 - Professor Dawn Scott – Head of Life Sciences
 - Professor Christian Mallen – Head of Primary, Community & Social Care
 - Professor Susan Bruce – Head of School of Humanities
 - Professor Robert Ladrech – Head of School of Social, Political & Global Studies
 - Professor Anne O'Brien – Head of School of Allied Health Professionals

1D. SECRETARY'S REPORT – COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

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

- The annual report of Council to Senate, which summarised the work of Council to enhance Senate's understanding of its role was approved.
- Council **resolved:**
That the revised Information Security Policy be approved.
- Council **resolved:**
That the revised Data Protection Policy be approved.
- Council **resolved:**
That the revised Freedom of Information Policy be approved.
- Council noted that the Access & Participation Plan had been approved by the OfS, without a requirement for enhanced monitoring.
- Council received and noted the draft schedule of business for Council for 2019-2020, which included the reports and briefing sessions required in order that Council can review performance against the new Strategy. Members asked for more student-related items and student contact. Members were again encouraged to attend a meeting of Senate.

PART 4 – OTHER BUSINESS

4A. OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair reported that, in order to assist in reviewing Council's effectiveness, the time taken on each item in meetings would be captured in order to review at the end of the year whether we were making good use of time and adding value. Council members requested opportunities to meet with staff in small groups, that the student consultation box on the cover sheet always be completed and that the University facilitates communications between Council members outside of meetings.

COUNCIL ATTENDANCE – 19th September 2019

A	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 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
Sajid Hashmi
Manali Lukha
Sherree Schaefer
Lesley Thompson
Professor Alistair Ulph
Vacancy

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

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

SECRETARY TO COUNCIL

Dr Helen Galbraith	Secretary to Council
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IN ATTENDANCE

Rachel Adams	Director of Human Resources
Tim Collier	Associate Director of Finance

SECRETARIAT

Fiona Dumbelton	Governance Manager
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Key

A = Absent