



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL

Held on Thursday 21st November 2019

The Chair welcomed Sarah Ellis (Chief Executive of the Students' Union), Nick Dawson (Head of Planning & Analysis), Mat Bailey (IT Network Manager) and Ann Pittard (Associate Director for Engagement & Partnerships) to the meeting as observers.

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 19th September 2019 were approved and signed.

(ii) Actions List

Council received and noted the actions list. It was noted that a paper on the student accommodation project would be presented to the next meeting with various options regarding scale and funding. Council expressed the need to seek the appropriate expert advice.

3. STUDENT STORY

Council heard from a Level 5 Politics student who has a disability and is a Keele Ambassador. He commended the support he had received from Disability & Dyslexia support, both pre-arrival and since he's been at Keele. He also said the staff in his School were very accessible. He had attended the Questions to the Vice-Chancellor session that had taken place last year and asked the Vice-Chancellor whether he would be holding another, which he said he would.

PART 1 – REPORTS & APPROVALS

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

Item commercial in confidence

1B. STATUTORY RETURNS

(i) Part I: Finance Returns

Item commercial in confidence

(ii) Part II: Accountability

Annual Assurance Return – this was a signed statement, which confirmed that we had not identified any risks with compliance with the OfS's terms and conditions of funding. An additional column was added for Council's benefit to include the assurance processes, which would be removed for submission to the OfS.

Research Return – this was a signed statement, which confirmed that we had not identified any risks with compliance with the concordat to support research integrity and with the research capital investment funding being spent within the year for the purposes intended. This return was required as Keele had been in receipt of funding from UKRI or Research England during the 2018-2019 academic year. An additional column was added for Council's benefit to include the assurance processes, which would be removed for submission to the OfS.

Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report 2018-2019 – the report covered the financial year and up to the date of signing the report and the consideration of the financial statements for the year. The report included the Audit Committee's opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Provider's arrangements for:

- risk management, control and governance
- economy, efficiency and effectiveness (VFM) management and
- quality assurance of data submitted to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, the Student Loans Company, the OfS, Research England and other bodies.

Internal Audit Annual Opinion 2018-2019 - the internal audit service produced an annual report, which included their opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Provider's arrangements for:

- risk management, control and governance
- economy, efficiency and effectiveness (VFM).

External Audit Management Letter and the provider's response to this – the External auditors issued a report, which recorded accounting issues and control deficiencies arising from the audit. It was noted that this fell under the accountability return but would be considered by Council along with the statutory accounts under item 1B(i).

Council **resolved:**

That the annual accountability returns be approved and submitted to the OfS.

(iii) Part III: Prevent Annual Return

Council received the annual return required by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. It required us to '*have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism*' (the *Prevent duty*). The Act required that we provide the OfS with any information they may require for the purpose of monitoring compliance with *Prevent duty*.

Council **resolved:**

That the Prevent Annual Return be approved and submitted to the OfS.

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:

- The Secretary of State for Education had sent a letter to universities regarding fire safety on campus in light of the recent fire in university accommodation in Bolton. A response was being prepared and would be shared with Council.
- Keele had the previous day launched its third Keele Deal, with a focus on working with local partners to address regional and national healthcare priorities. Keele Deal|Health would build on existing relationships that the University had with key public and private sector healthcare organisations across Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire and Wolverhampton.
- On the advice of the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) we implemented the nationally agreed pay award with effect from 1st August 2019, which was a 1.8% increase across all pay points with the exception of the lowest pay points, which received between 1.82% and 3.65%. The pay award was not agreed by the trade unions and UCU and Unison conducted a ballot of their members for strike action in the 147 institutions covered by national pay bargaining. Separately, but at the same time, UCU conducted a second ballot of its members employed at institutions where USS is offered. A turnout of 50% was required in order to achieve a mandate. The ballot results at Keele were a turnout of 46.4% in relation to pay and conditions and a turnout of 47.1% in relation to USS. Across the sector, UCU secured a mandate for strike action in 57 institutions with regard to pay and conditions and 46 institutions with regard to USS. Unison balloted on USS and the turnout was 17.6%. Neither UCU or Unison at Keele secured a mandate as they did not meet the required turnout threshold of 50% of eligible voters.
- Keele had been one of the first universities in the UK to sign up to The Voter Registration Pledge to encourage young people to register to vote in the general election on 12th December 2019.
- Keele took part in the biennial Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), which is run by AdvanceHE. Keele's overall satisfaction score was 86%, which was 5% above the sector average and is up on all previous scores. This scores Keele in the top 10% of all participating institutions.
- Over the summer all Schools and Directorates held meetings with staff to discuss local findings from the staff survey and to develop action plans. These have been collated centrally and a progress report would be presented to UEC in February 2020. The key themes were (i) health and wellbeing, (ii) performance management, (iii) creating an environment where staff feel safe to speak up, and (iv) career development/progression. The Chair suggested that regular bulletins were circulated to all staff on "you said, we did". A new Staff Voice Group had also been established to provide a forum for staff to express views and ideas on topics related to the staff experience at Keele.
- Following extensive consultation led by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Health & Wellbeing, a new Health & Wellbeing Strategy was presented for approval. The document was intended to be a framework which set out five strategic themes under which priority actions had been identified: (i) people and communities, (ii) positive environment, (iii) curriculum and learning, (iv) policies and practice and (v) culture and behaviours. The Strategy would be launched in January 2020 with a programme

of events and activities for staff and students and a Healthy University Group would be established to oversee and review the Strategy and key performance metrics. The Director of HR was asked to consider how Council would be kept informed, including whether to add a Council member as a critical friend to the group.

Council **resolved:**

That the Health & Wellbeing Strategy be approved.

- The new Risk Management Policy was annexed to the report, which set out the University's approach to risk management following the introduction of the new Strategy 'Our Future'. The Risk Register was also presented in the new format. The University had moved away from separate corporate and management Risk Registers and amalgamated them into one, moved from a 3x3 to a 5x5 matrix and included the direction of travel. The Risk Register would be reviewed and updated three times a year to coincide with meetings of the Audit & Risk Committee and Council. A substantive discussion would take place at UEC each year in September as part of the annual planning cycle.

Council **resolved:**

That the Risk Management Policy be approved;

And that the Risk Register also be approved.

- The first formal key performance indicator (KPI) report under the new KPI framework was presented. Some of the scores had been updated since the previous meeting and an arrow against each measure had been included to identify the direction of travel, which was well received by Council. It was agreed that the new framework would be kept under review and that further reflections would be welcome.
- Item commercial in confidence

1D. SECRETARY'S REPORT – COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

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

- Council **resolved:**
That the Honorary Degree nominations be approved.
- Council **resolved:**
That the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual report be approved.
- Council **resolved:**
That the Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement be approved.
- Council **resolved:**
That the Students' Union and Keele Postgraduate Association Codes of Practice be approved.
- Council **resolved:**
That the Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement be approved.

- Council **resolved:**
That the Charging & Payment of Fees Policy be approved subject to a minor amendment to the heading of section 7 to read Complaints Process.
- Council **resolved:**
That amendments to the terms of reference of the Business Review Committee be approved.
- Council **resolved:**
That amendments to Ordinances B1 and B6 be approved.
- Council **resolved:**
That the senior appointment presented be approved.
- Council **resolved:**
That the promotions presented be approved.
- Council received and noted an update on the University's compliance with the Office for Students' ongoing conditions of registration. The OfS had published a number of updated Regulatory Advice notes and related guidance over the past few weeks. These included updated advice on reportable events and on OfS monitoring and intervention arrangements, as well as updated accounts direction. A series of briefing events had been run in parallel, which the Secretary to Council had attended. On the basis of this latest advice, and also informed by a UNIAC audit of OFS regulation earlier in the year, the University had reviewed its compliance with all ongoing conditions of registration and an overview was provided, utilising a RAG-rating approach and commentary to highlight the current status of compliance and any actions required. Responsible officers and sources of governance and assurance were listed against each condition. It was noted that a training session was planned for Council members later in the year and that the Audit & Risk Committee was also regularly updated on OFS developments and played a key role in overseeing compliance and assurance arrangements.
- Council received the student casework annual report and documents signed under seal.

PART 2 – COMMITTEE REPORTS

2A. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committee noted the reports from the following meetings:

- Senate – meeting held on 16TH October 2019
- Audit & Risk Committee – meeting held on 17th October 2019
- Business Review Committee - meeting held on 24th October 2019

It was noted that the meetings of the Senior Remuneration Committee and Nominations Committee that were scheduled for 24th October had been postponed so the reports would be presented to the next meeting.

PART 3 – STUDENTS' UNIONS' ACCOUNTS

3A. KEELE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION ACCOUNTS

Council received and noted the statutory accounts for the Students' Union for the year ended 31st July 2019.

The Chief Executive of the SU reported that she regularly met with the Vice-Chancellor and Director of Finance and passed on her thanks to the University for its support with the HMRC issue.

3B. KEELE POSTGRADUATE ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS

Council received and noted the statutory accounts for the Keele Postgraduate Association for the year ended 31st July 2019.

PART 4 – THEMED DISCUSSION ITEM

4A. SUSTAINABILITY

Council received an extremely interesting and stimulating presentation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost and the Director of Education for Sustainability on the University's work in the area of sustainability.

COUNCIL ATTENDANCE – 21st November 2019

	Dame Jo Williams	Pro-Chancellor
	Richard Barnes	Deputy Pro-Chancellor
A	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
A	Sajid Hashmi
A	Manali Lukha
	Sherree Schaefer
	Lesley Thompson
	Professor Alistair Ulph
	<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
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IN ATTENDANCE

	Rachel Adams	Director of Human Resources
	Dr Mark Bacon	Chief Operating Officer
	Paul Buttery	Director of Finance

SECRETARIAT

	Fiona Dumbelton	Governance Manager
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Key

A = Absent