

Council Minutes:
24 September 2021
(hybrid meeting)

PRESENT: Rt. Hon. Alistair Burt (Pro-Chancellor) (in the Chair); Professor Andy Schofield (Vice-Chancellor); Mr David Barron (lay member) (online); Ms Hanah Burgess (lay member) (online); Mr Anthony Carey (lay member) (online); Mr Ian Johnson (lay member) (online); Ms Alison Mullan (Senate representative); Ms Marcia Reid Fotheringham (lay member) (online); Professor Ella Ritchie (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Mr Oliver Robinson (Students' Union President); Mrs Valerie Young (lay member).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Paul Boustead (Director of People and Organisational Effectiveness) (*for item 11*); Ms Claire Geddes (Committee Secretary); Professor Simon Guy (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global)) (*for item 8*); Dr Paul Harness (Director of Information Systems Services) (*for item 8*) (online); Mr Simon Jennings (Director of Strategic Planning and Governance); Andrew M (National Cyber Security Centre) (*for item 8*) (online); Ms Nicola Owen (Deputy Chief Executive (Operations)); Mrs Sarah Randall-Paley (Director of Finance).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Professor Steve Bradley (Deputy Vice-Chancellor); Professor Sir Ian Diamond (lay member); Baroness Neville-Jones (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Ms Gayatri Shewani (student member); His Hon. Phillip Sycamore (lay member).

INTRODUCTION

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1.1 Council noted the apologies.

1.2 The Chair welcomed new Senate appointed members, Professor Claire Leitch and Professor Jo Rycroft-Malone.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: 9 JULY 2021

PAPER A

3.1 Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2021.

4. MATTERS ARISING

5. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE AND QUE^ ¢

UPDATE AND QUEQ

A

- (i) the University's declining position in the domestic league tables, the reasons for this and that remedying the position to ensure that Lancaster was a destination of choice for applicants would be an Executive priority;
- (ii) the continued planning for a more normal return to campus life and teaching for the start of the new academic year;
- (iii) the intention of UCU to ballot its members for industrial action on the basis of both pay and pensions and the potential implications of a successful mandate both locally and nationally;
- (iv)
- (v) the appointment of a new Secretary of State for Education, the Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP and his potential influence on Government policy direction.

5.2 Council noted the report from the Vice-Chancellor.

6. PRESIDENT, LANCASTER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION: REPORT PAPER B

6.1 The President of the Students' Union reported on the following:

- (i) his concerns regarding the general state of the Higher Education sector and the future resource and policy challenges it could face, including how these could manifest at Lancaster. He drew Council's attention to the Students' Union's intention to work collaboratively with other Students' Unions to defend the HE Sector, as well as working to ensure that Officers were aware of students' lived experience over the coming year to be able to represent them effectively on a local level;
- (ii) his support for blended learning as a way to enhance students' academic experience, but not as a substitute for in-person engagement;
- (iii) that the Students' Union would be holding a referendum on whether or not to support any industrial action by UCU (if the Trade Union secured a mandate);
- (iv) plans to recruit an External Trustee to the Students' Union Trustee Board with financial expertise; and
- (v) the purpose behind his short-term Students' Union strategy which was subject to discussion and approval by the Trustee Board.

6.2 Council noted the report and appendices and welcomed the increase in the number of student academic representatives.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

7. EXECUTIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2021/22 ORAL UPDATE

8. CYBER SECURITY

9. ORAL REPORT FROM ESTATES COMMITTEES

9.1 The Chair of the Estates Committee provided an oral report from the meeting of the 13 September 2021, drawing attention to its consideration of: revision of its terms of reference in light of post pandemic demands and focus; the Engineering Phase 2 capital project; a presentation regarding the University's digital futures; the Local Plan and potential implications for the University of the Bailrigg Garden Village and new M6 junction; and the complex issues surrounding the Ruskin Building capital project.

9.2 Council ~~4/6/21~~ considered the oral report from the Estates Committee.

10. ORAL REPORT FROM FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE (FGPC)

10.1 The Chair of FGPC provided an oral report from the meeting of the 23 September 2021, highlighting: the Committee's detailed review of the headline Draft Annual Accounts and the better than expected end of year position, the report received regarding the Students' Union's draft end of year financial position and financial challenges for 2021/22, debt write offs and concern regarding the current financial costs attached to the Ruskin Building capital project.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION