

Minutes

Meeting title:	Council	
Date:	Wednesday 16 March 2016	Time 3.00pm
Location:	Avenue Campus – Room 1097, Building 65	
Present:	Dr G Rider (<i>Chair</i>); Mr G Berruyer, Mr M Burrow, Mr P Greenish, Dr B Lwaleed, Professor M Niranjana, Mr T O’Brien, Dr D Price, Mr A Reyes-Hughes, Professor P Reed, Dr R Rivaz Hons DSc, Professor Sir C Snowden, Mr J Trewby, Professor J Vickers.	
In attendance:	Mr L Abraham (Clerk to the University Council), Mr I Dunn (Chief Operating Officer), Professor T Elliott (Pro Vice Chancellor – Research and Enterprise), Professor A Neill (Pro Vice Chancellor – Education), Ms S Pook (Director of Finance) and Professor M Spearing (Provost and Pro Vice Chancellor – International)	
Apologies:	Mr B Franklin, Ms S Kumar and Mr W Shannon	

Prior to the meeting, representatives from the University ENACTUS team made a presentation to the Council on their recent work and excellent achievements including winning the ENACTUS world cup in 2015.

58 Obituary

The death of Malaysian Campus foundation year student Daneishwar Punithavelan was noted by the Council.

59 Minutes

RESOLVED That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 20 January 2016 was agreed as a correct record and signed.

ACTION: Clerk to Council

60 Actions and Matters Arising

RESOLVED that the actions for forthcoming meetings be noted.

61 Declarations of Interest

With regard to minute 67, it was noted that Mr O’Brien and Ms Pook were PASNAS trustees.

62 **Publication of unrestricted papers**

RESOLVED That the papers circulated that were not deemed “Commercial in Confidence” or Restricted be published on the open access SUSSED site.

ACTION: Clerk to the University Council

63 **Vice Chancellor’s Report**

Council considered the Vice-Chancellor’s report, dated 16 March 2016.

The Vice-Chancellor introduced his report highlighting the following:

- The strategic outputs from the Council Awayday held in January;
- The positive feedback received following the VC all staff address adding that the University community was beginning to respond to the 4 key themes;
- The improving student recruitment situation and both applications and firm acceptances having risen;
- The Prevent self assessment had been submitted and accepted; and
- The risk register would be aligned to the new sharpened strategy with fewer, more focussed risks;

In response to queries from Council it was suggested that the upturn in applications was due to the University having risen slightly in the rankings and had achieved an improved NSS score.

Council was provided with a brief update on matters relating to freedom of speech conferences.

RESOLVED that the Vice Chancellor’s report be noted.

64 **Student Residences Strategy**

Council considered a report by the Director of Estates and Facilities which provided an update on the long term funding of the University’s halls of residence.

The report outlined a recommendation which would result in a private sector partnership agreement to provide one third of University student accommodation. This would result in a shift of policy as currently accommodation was provided entirely by the University. The report set out key strategic priorities to be considered as part of the developing five year plan to deliver the sharpened strategy.

Council noted that the student accommodation in question had received little refurbishment investment. Private sector involvement and investment was suggested as the most prudent solution to secure not only a refurbished estate for Southampton students, but a capital receipt for the University. It was recognised that the partnership agreement process would be complex and take time and resources to achieve. Concerns were also raised regarding the future level and quality of service provided to students renting the new accommodation, the University reputation risks and branding. Council was assured that comprehensive legal and funding agreements would be in place to ensure that all risks were kept to a minimum and that the student experience would remain the key driver. Service level agreements would be negotiated, agreed and legally

binding to ensure that students would receive excellent service standards. It was further noted that there was a mature market for this type of partnership and that not-for-profit organisations would be encouraged to submit tenders.

It was noted that this action would be welcomed by the City Council as the University was taking proactive steps to improve its accommodation stock which may alleviate the loss of family housing in the vicinity to “houses of multiple occupation”. There were still many issues to overcome between the University, the City Council and local residents related to South Stoneham and the Stoneham Tower. The buildings would be visited by Council at the next meeting.

It was agreed that the Finance Committee aid Council in scrutinising the funding and legal partnership agreements as they were drafted and finalised ensuring Council have access to robust financial analysis.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the broad principle of the University entering into a long term agreement under which a private sector partner would operate, manage and maintain our Wessex Lane halls of residence (around 1,800 rooms of accommodation) be approved. The services to be transferred and the service standards would be subject to negotiation and expressly addressed in the formal documentation;
- (ii) the agreement would include an obligation to refurbish the existing Wessex Lane and Connaught Halls, the Grade II* listed South Stoneham House and to also build new accommodation on the site of the derelict South Stoneham Tower, which would be demolished;
- (iii) the reinvestment of any capital receipt into a major refurbishment programme for those halls which are not to be included within the agreement be supported in principle. This would extend to a major upgrading of facilities to improve the student experience in those halls such as common rooms, social areas and learning spaces. This would be part of the treasury management strategy to be developed to deliver the entire plan related to delivering the sharpened strategy.
- (iv) the early sale of St Margaret’s and Bencraft halls which have been identified in the Residential strategy approved by Council in January 2015 as not meeting the medium term residential strategy in terms of location and the quality of offer, be approved.

ACTION: Director of Estates & Facilities

65 Report for the President of the Students’ Union

Council received a report from the President of the Students’ Union which highlighted the continuing work on the Union and democracy rebranding together with an update on recent elections.

Council made the following comments to be noted by the Union President at the next meeting:

- The meaning and outcomes from the brand and democracy review?

- Could future reports contain more feedback from students on what was perceived to be key issues for them?
- It was noted that few SUSU election candidates were female. Could Council assist to improve this in any way?

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

ACTION: President of the Students' Union

66 Strategic Goals and Key Performance Indicators

Council received a report from Chief Operating Officer which informed of the University Executive Board's agreed strategic goals and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) based on the sharpened Strategy for the University. These built upon the President and Vice-Chancellor's presentation to Council at the awayday and all-staff address in January 2016.

The report also outlined to Council the outreach approach developed to engage the whole University and the process through which the strategy flows through into business planning.

Council welcomed the refocus and reduction of Key Performance Indicators adding that consideration be given to allotting indicators realistically and that in relation to staff satisfaction in particular, appraisal results, sickness absence and staff turnover should be examined.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

ACTION: Chief Operating Officer

67 Pensions Update

Council received a report by the Director of Finance which provided an update on PASNAS, the self administered pension and assurance scheme for non academic staff for the University of Southampton and its valuation (as at 31 July 2015), which was underway. The trustees met on 16 February 2016 and were now seeking the employer's input to the valuation assumptions. The Finance Committee considered the assumptions at the trustees' request at its meeting on 26 February 2016. It was recognised that the University could support the valuation assumptions proposed and the linked recovery plan over fifteen years on current employer contributions. However, it was agreed that reforms to the scheme were likely to be required for the 2018 valuation in order for it to continue and achieve its recovery plan. Many options would be available and these would need to be carefully considered, using expert advice in full consultation with scheme members.

RESOLVED that the initiation of a review of options for PASNAS to inform the 2018 valuation be supported.

ACTION: Director of Finance

68 Senate Matters

Council considered a report by the President & Vice Chancellor which updated Council on a number of matters which were discussed at Senate's meeting on 24 February 2016, in particular, the appointment of two members of Senate joining Council.

RESOLVED That the report be noted.

69 Nominations Committee Matters

Council received a verbal update from the Chair regarding nominations matters. Council were sad to note that this meeting will be last attended by Mr John Trewby as he was to step down as Southampton General Hospital Board of Trustees Chair on 31 March 2016. Council thanked Mr Trewby for his contributions to the University Council over the past 7 years.

It was noted that Mr Peter Hollins would be appointed as Chair of the Hospital Board of Trustees on 1 April 2016 for a period of 3 years.

RESOLVED That Mr Peter Hollins be appointed as a Class 2 Lay member of Council from April 2016 until 31 March 2019.

ACTION: Clerk to the University Council

70 Health and Safety Committee Structure

Council considered a report by the Chief Operating Officer which sought to rationalise the Health and Safety committee structure whilst improving risk management and decision making.

RESOLVED That the Safety & Occupational Health Committee be disbanded and the work of that committee be absorbed within the University Executive Board (UEB).

ACTION: Director of Health and Safety

71 Finance Committee Matters

Council received a verbal update from the Chair of Finance Committee on matters from the Committee's inaugural meeting.

Council were presented with one recommendation from the Committee which was considered and agreed.

RESOLVED

(i) Procurement Recommendation:

In advance of a full review of financial regulations to stream line them and a review of procurement as part of the Operating Model work, the following change to procurement limits at regulation 19.3 be approved as an early move to streamline processes:

- 1.1 Currently the regulations state that
- For items from £1,000 up to £2,000, two oral quotations or references to (trade) published prices can be sought; a note of the action taken should be kept.
 - From £2,000 up to £20,000 at least three written quotations (unless ordering on a call-off contract from a nominated supplier).
 - From £20,000 up to European Union Tender limit (approximately £173,934 at January 2012 for most classes of supply excluding Works) Official Tender in conjunction with Assistant Director of Finance - Transactions & Procurement.
- 1.2 It is suggested to change paragraph 19.13 to state:
- For items up to and including £5,000, one quotation must be obtained (it is advised that this is a written quotation)
 - For items over £5,000 and up to £25,000 – at least two written quotations must be obtained (unless ordering on a call-off contract from a nominated supplier).
 - For items over £25,000 up to the European Tender limit (£164,176 as at January 2016 for supply and service contracts) a competitive tender process in conjunction with the Procurement team is required.

ACTION: Director of Finance

72 January 2016 Management Accounts

Council considered a report which presented the management accounts for financial year 2015/16 as at January 2016. Faculties and Professional Services had produced full outturn forecasts for the year and the report focussed on variances between these forecasts and the full year budget.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

73 Sealing of Documents

RECEIVED and noted a report detailing the documents sealed since the last report to Council.

74 Chair's Actions

Council **NOTED** the following Chair's Actions taken since the last meeting:

(i) Deans

Chair of Council made the following appointments on behalf of Council:

- Professor Rachel Mills as Dean of Natural & Environmental Sciences from 1 March 2016 to 28 February 2021
- Professor Paul Whittaker as Dean of Business, Law and Art from 1 March 2016 to 28 February 2021
- Professor Mandy Fader as Dean of Health Sciences from 21 March 2016 to 20 March 2021

Chair of Council also reappointed:

- Professor Anne Curry as Dean of Humanities for a further two years from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2018

NB: As a result 50 % of Deans were female (versus 37.5% previously).

(ii) PVC

Chair of Council appointed Professor Tim Elliott as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) from 1 March 2016 to 30 September 2016.

(iii) Boldrewood Block D/G Overspend

Approve a £47k overspend required to complete Stage One.

Restricted Items

75 Restricted Human Resources Matters

Item 18 (i) on the agenda was withdrawn.

Council received a restricted report regarding a redundancy in the Faculty of Medicine.

RESOLVED that the recommendation be approved.

76 Heads of Academic Unit Appointments

Council received a restricted report outlining Heads of Academic Unit appointments.

RESOLVED that the recommendation be approved.

77 Restricted Senate Matters

Council received a restricted report setting out Senate matters.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be approved.

Council paid tribute and expressed thanks to Mr John Trewby as he attended his last Council meeting.

The meeting concluded at 5.52pm