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| **Meeting title:** | | | Council | | |
| **Date:** | | | Wednesday 13th January 2021 | **Time** | 1.00pm |
| **Location:** | | | Via Microsoft Teams | | |
| **Present:** | | | Mr P Greenish (Chair), Prof. Dame M Atkins, Ms F Barnes, Dr V Cardo, Mr R Cartwright, Mr G Hobbs, Mr P Hollins, Professor J Holloway, Dame J Macgregor (Vice-Chair), Ms H Pawlby, President & Vice-Chancellor, Dr D Price, Professor P Reed, Mr W Shannon, SUSU President, Vice-President (Education), Dr A Vincent, Mr T Whitmore and Mr S Young. | | |
| **In attendance:** | | | Clerk to the University Council & Senate, Chief Operating Officer, Executive Director - Finance & Planning and Vice-President (Research & Enterprise). | | |
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| **37** | **Apologies**  There were no apologies. | | | | |
| **38** | **Minutes**  **RESOLVED** That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th November 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed. | | | | |
| **39** | **Actions and Matters Arising**  Council noted the Annual Calendar of Business.  A full update on the outstanding actions was then noted as follows:  (i) 22/2021 – The Vice-Chancellor had pointed members to some web-based news outlets in order to keep up to date with HE news, policy and thinking. Further sites would also be recommended.  (ii) 25(iv)/2021 – Comparators – A deep dive would be held on comparators in May 2021.  (iii) 29(ii)/2021 – Degree Outcomes – A deep dive would be held on degree outcomes in May 2021.  (iv) 31/2021 – PREVENT – Following the last meeting it was noted that work was underway to develop systems to track speakers and guests who attended online hosted seminars and meetings. Both the PREVENT office in Government and software developers were being consulted on this action. There was, as yet, no specific guidance from PREVENT advisors on this matter.  Council was reminded that with regard to the International Strategy, papers on the now separated issues (International strategy for the Asia-Pacific region and Developing the Southampton approach to transnational education) would be presented in May 2021.  Discussion also included a request from Council to have dashboard performance information presented at each meeting. It was suggested that the information perhaps already existed and was used by the Executive. The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer undertook to review this. **ACTION: VC/COO** | | | | |
| **40** | **Declarations of Interest**  It was noted that with regard to the USS pension, a number of staff members present were members of the scheme. | | | | |
| **41** | **Publication of unrestricted papers**  RESOLVED That only papers deemed not commercial in confidence be released. | | | | |
| **42** | **President and Vice-Chancellor’s Report**  Council noted highlights from the December 2020 edition of the Vice-Chancellor and Executive report together with more current information from the last 2 weeks.  The Vice-Chancellor highlighted:   * Congratulations to University staff recognised in the Queen’s New Year’s Honours. * The previous plans to bring students back to campus in a staggered way that had been abandoned following the UK-wide lockdown that was introduced following the winter break. It was noted that no on campus in-person teaching would be undertaken with the exception of some exempt groups in Medicine, Nursing and Education. * All other teaching was now online. * Rent for our Halls accommodation not being taken up as students had not returned was being refunded back to students against future accommodation fees for the academic year. * Some students had returned to Southampton, or indeed had not left their accommodation over the winter break, both in Halls and private rented and were being well supported during the lockdown. * “No Detriment” policy had been requested by students and this was being considered by UEB. It was clear that the policy used in 2020 could not be reused in an identical way. Online teaching and resourcing had improved hugely since. The Russell Group was developing a position which would be a balance of quality assurance and qualifications against student expectations. * PGT intake was still uncertain, current visa take up is suggesting better outcome than the principal scenario whilst below the original base case.   Richard Cartwright was thanked for his work in helping the University achieve the Disability Confident Leader accreditation which was granted by the DWP.  In response to a query the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that there was no immediate worry with regard to the University financial situation.  **RESOLVED** that the update be noted. | | | | |
| **43** | **Report from the President of the Students’ Union** | | | | |
|  | Council considered a report by the President of the Students’ Union which provided an update on recent SUSU activity.  The President highlighted:   * The welcome move to offer rent rebates to students not returning immediately. Private landlords were still a concern. * The consideration of a new “No detriment” policy was welcomed and it was recognised that there was much work to do in this area. * Reminded Council of the continuing mental health issues facing students. * With regard to tuition fee reductions during the pandemic, it was noted that a campaign at national level was being co-ordinated. * The President thanked both the University and SUSU staff for their continued hard work during difficult times.   In response to a query it was noted that overall student satisfaction levels were low, but this was not a reflection on Southampton being common across the majority of students throughout the UK.  **RESOLVED** that the report be noted. | | | | |
| **44** | **Student Recruitment**  Council considered a report by the Vice-President (Education) which provided an update on 2021 entry admissions cycle and 2021 Student Resource Plans.  It was noted from the data in the report that some comparators were out-performing Southampton with their applications during this time. It was agreed that Council should receive information on why this had occurred and what measures should be implemented to mitigate this. A deep dive session on comparators was already scheduled for May 2021 and this could be used to review both subjects. **ACTION: VP (Education)/Exec Dir of Student Exp**  **RESOLVED** that the update be noted. | | | | |
| **45** | **Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2020**  Council considered a report by the Vice-President (Research & Enterprise) which set out the University’s progress towards embedding equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) throughout its activities in 2019/2020.  It was noted that Council would receive more detailed information on EDI during the Council awayday that would follow the Council meeting.  **RESOLVED** that the report be noted. | | | | |
| **46** | **Progress Against the Bridging Strategy KPIs**  Council considered a report by the Vice-Chancellor which set out performance of the Bridging Strategy’s Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and targets.  It was noted that following the recent pulse survey taken at the end of 2020, while staff satisfaction had been recorded as good, this was not the case with student satisfaction. It was also noted that response rates from students needed to be improved and it was suggested that social media channels be used for future data gathering. The open answers from the survey were yet to be fully analysed and would provide more detail to help with making improvements.  RESOLVED that the report be noted. | | | | |
| **47** | **Pensions Report**  Council considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance & Planning which provided an update on the progress of the USS 2020 valuation and the potential next steps. A minor amendment was suggested to the terms of reference to include valuation pricing, covenant support and sustainability.  **RESOLVED** that the establishment of a Pensions Committee with the amended terms of reference set out in the report be approved. | | | | |
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| **48** | **Nomination to reappoint the Deans of Environmental & Life Sciences and Arts & Humanities**  Council considered a report by the Vice-Chancellor which set out the information concerning the reappointment of two Deans in accordance with the University ordinances.  **RESOLVED** that the reappointment of Professor Rachel Mills as Dean of Environmental and Life Sciences and Professor Paul Whittaker as Dean of Arts and Humanities for a further three years, from 1 March 2021 to 29 February 2024 be approved. | | | | |
| **49** | **Management Accounts – Nov 2020**  Council received a report by the Executive Director, Finance & Planning which presented the management accounts for financial year 2020/21 as at November 2020. At that stage in the year, the focus was on variances between actual results and the year to date budget, as well as reporting on research grant applications and awards, and cash flow.  The management accounts would include comprehensive forecasts from January 2021 onwards. As long as good levels of cost control can be maintained, there are no indications at present that the savings included in the final budget will not be made.  **RESOLVED** that the report be noted. | | | | |
| **50** | **Sealing of Documents**  Council received and noted a report detailing the documents sealed since the last report to Council. | | | | |
| **51** | **Chair’s Actions**   1. 7 December 2020 – approval the appointment of Dr Jane Prichard as Interim Head of Health Sciences, in the Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences until 30 April 2021. 2. 21 December 2020 - approve the appointment of Professor Sara Demain as Head of Health Sciences, in the Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences from 1 May 2021.   **RESOLVED** that the actions be noted. | | | | |
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| **52** | | **Committee Minutes**  **RESOLVED** that the minutes be noted. | | | | |
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**The meeting concluded at 1.57pm**

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**Actions**

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| **Min No./Year** | **Minute Title** | **Action Summary** | **Owner** | **Report Back Date** |
| 25(iv)/2021 | KPIs Retrospective | Report back/deep dive on career outcomes comparator | VP (Education), Executive Director of Student Experience | May 2021 |
| 29(ii)/2021 | Degree Outcomes | Deep Dive on Degree Outcomes matters for Spring 2021 | Academic Registrar | May 2021 |
| 39/2021 | Dashboard | VC and COO to consider a dashboard of relevant performance information to be presented to each Council meeting | Vice-Chancellor/Chief Operating Officer | May 2021 |
| 44/2021 | Student Recruitment | Deep dive on comparator success in recruiting during the 2020 pandemic. Measures Southampton are taking to improve against comparators. (include with deep dive on career outcomes above at 25(iv)/2021) | VP (Education), Executive Director of Student Experience | May 2021 |

