

UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2017 at 10.30 am, TC004, Francis Close Hall

Membership:

Ms Johanna Anderson	✓
Ms Emily Andrews	✓
Mr Peter Bungard (from C.17.126)	✓
Mr Matthew Burgess	✓
Professor Julian Crampton (Chair)	✓
Mr Paul Davies	✓
Ms Nicola de longh	✓
Mr Chris Fung	✓
Ms Vicki Hatton	✓
Mr Dai Jones	✓
Mr Martin Jones	✓
Mr Stephen Marston	✓
Mr Allen Mawby	✓
Mr Stephen Maycock	✓
Mrs Karen Morgan	✓
Professor Andrew Parker	A
Ms Mehjabeen Patrick (until C.17.132)	✓
Mrs Pam Sissons	✓
The Venerable Robert Springett	✓
Mr Angus Taylor	✓

Board Apprentices:

Mr Prince Kamalaneson	✓
Ms Christine Walwyn	✓

In attendance:

Ms Andrea Chalk (for C.17.128)	Director (Quality and Academic Services)
Mrs Ruth Davies	Director (Human Resources)
Mr Stewart Dove (for C.17.130)	Director (Student Support)
Ms Danielle Fitzgerald (for C.17.129)	Director (Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment)
Professor David James	Dean (Academic Development)
Mrs Maxine Melling	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Operations)
Dr Richard O'Doherty	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Mrs Camille Stallard	Director (Finance and Planning)
Dr Matthew Andrews (Officer)	University Secretary and Registrar
Mrs Penny Gravestock (Minutes)	Assistant Secretary to Council

C.17.118 Prayer

The Rt Revd Robert Springett opened the meeting with a prayer.

C.17.119 Council Membership

Received and noted: that Mr Dai Jones had been reappointed to Academic Board, and would therefore continue as a member of Council until 31 October 2020.

C.17.120 Apologies

Received: apologies for absence from Professor Andrew Parker.

C.17.121 Business of the AgendaNoted:

- that no requests had been received to unstar any item on the agenda, and that therefore papers C/90/17 to C/99/17 would be approved or noted as stated;
- a concern raised that papers had not been received in a timely fashion and that the executive summaries contained within the papers were of variable quality.

C.17.122 Declarations of Interest

Noted: that there were no declarations of interest.

C.17.123 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2017

Resolved: the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting held on 3 October 2017.

C.17.124 Matters Arising (C/74/17)C.17.124.1 [C.17.103.1] *Vice-Chancellor's Report*

Noted: that the paper outlining plans for the next recruitment cycle would be considered under agenda item C.17.130.

C.17.124.2 [C.17.105.3] *National Student Survey (NSS) 2017: Results, Analysis and Follow-up*

Noted: that work was underway to investigate NSS results from the Social Work strand and would be presented to a future meeting of Council.

ACTION: Deputy Vice-Chancellor

C.17.124.3 [C.17.108.3] *UoG Internationalisation Strategy*

Noted: that an update on the Internationalisation Strategy had been added to the Schedule of Business for the meeting to be held on 2 October 2018.

C.17.124.4 [C.17.109.3] *Estates Strategy*

Noted: that the additional information requested by Finance and General Purposes Committee regarding the five year capital programme had been considered at its meeting held on 24 October 2017, and was presented to Council under agenda item C.17.145. It was also confirmed that the Estates Strategy had been updated to take account of the comments made at Council in October 2017.

C.17.125 Chair's Business

Noted: that, since the previous meeting, there had been no uses of the Company Seal, no decisions made by circulation, and no exercise of delegation

C.17.126 Vice-Chancellor's Report (C/75/17)C.17.126.1 Received and noted: a paper updating Council on major developments affecting the University since the previous meeting in October 2017. The following key elements were highlighted:

- a. Government plans to introduce a new Knowledge Exchange Framework;
- b. the new regulatory framework that the Office for Students would operate from April 2018. Council noted in particular the list of things that the University would need to do, including documentation for submission;
- c. the dataset released by HEFCE for the Teaching Excellence Framework metrics for the University against sector benchmarks;
- d. details of the University's research priorities for 2017/18 as agreed by Research Committee at its meeting in October 2017;
- e. the University's achievements in sustainability, including coming second in the People and Planet league table, recommendation for registration under the new standard for ISO14001 environmental management audit, and success in the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) Green Gown awards. Dr Alex Ryan and her team, and those involved in the initiatives from across the institution, were congratulated for their work;
- f. the formal opening on the University's new Cyber Security Centre at the Berkeley Science and Technology Park on Friday, 10 November 2017;
- g. the University's leading work with partners across the County to develop a long term, shared strategic vision known as Gloucestershire 2050. Members of Council were invited to the launch event to be held at the Centaur, Cheltenham Racecourse on 1 February 2018;
- h. the independent evaluation report assessing the first three years of the operation of the Growth Hub at Oxstalls;
- i. a report of a student's death at Pittville at the start of the academic year. It was noted that the Students' Union and Student Services had worked extremely well to support students and staff. Concern was raised that Council and members of staff in other departments with involvement with students had not been informed at the time (and that many members had learnt about it through reports in the media). It was reported, however, that the University's approach was to minimise the number of people informed and to keep such incidents out of the media in respect to the student's family. Members discussed work undertaken by the University to address issues with student mental health and the responsibility to safeguard.

- C.17.126.2 Resolved:
- a. that options for communication in the event of a student death would be discussed with the Director (Student Support) in light of concerns raised, noting the need for careful balance in difficult circumstances;
 - b. that a report would be presented to Council on the outcomes of a consultation being undertaken by Student Services around student wellbeing, including mental health.
- ACTION: Pro Vice-Chancellor (Operations)**
ACTION: University Secretary and Registrar

C.17.127 Students' Union Update (C/76/17)

- C.17.127.1 Received and considered: a report from the Students' Union (SU), giving a RAG rated update on action related to its Operational Plan (as considered by Council in October 2017). The President of the Students' Union highlighted in particular the new approach to getting student feedback, its success, and how the responses would be analysed and fed into relevant discussions.
- C.17.127.2 Considered: concerns raised that the Union was undertaking too much activity, and whether it was getting credit for work it had achieved. It was confirmed that the Union had prioritised its services over the previous few years, and that staff were highlighting 'SU wins' where appropriate. In response to a query regarding plans to launch an independent academic advice service, it was confirmed that the Union was investigating opportunities to employ a part time member of staff to provide additional resource to underpin existing activity to support the student complaints and appeals processes.

C.17.128 CONFIDENTIAL: Report on Academic Appeals, Student Complaints, and Fitness to Practise (C/77/17)

This item was discussed under Confidential Business.

C.17.129 Annual Statement from Academic Board (C/78/17)

- C.17.129.1 Received and noted: the annual statement from Academic Board for 2016/17 and the associated action plan. This was presented to provide confirmation that the University's quality assurance systems worked effectively during the year to enable Council to make the annual assurance statement on academic standards and quality. The report comprised:
- a. themes emerging from the work of the University's external examiners;
 - b. a summary of the validation and review activity undertaken during the year;
 - c. reflection on the first complete cycle of the Course Enhancement Review (CER);
 - d. a summary of student achievements at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in comparison to the previous year;
 - e. the action plan following 2016/17 and an update on the 2015/16 plan.
- C.17.129.2 Noted:
- a. aims to encourage consistent feedback from external examiners;
 - b. the new process of school periodic review;
 - c. actions relating to the CER, including the continued development of the course portal, and the need to embed staff training;
 - d. the percentage of 'good degrees', noting the effect that students at collaborative partners had on the data.

- C.17.129.3 Considered:
- a. the staff time and associated cost of producing the report. It was noted that, although it was a considerable amount of work, it was important for the University and Council to be assured of academic standards and quality;
 - b. the sector's concerns around the proportion of 'good degrees', noting plans for that data to be one of the new Government indicators. It was reported that the University compared satisfactorily against benchmarks;
 - c. the progress made to involve Council in the academic life of the University.

- C.17.129.4 Resolved: Council received and endorsed the paper and action plan.

C.17.130 2017-2018 Recruitment Cycle (C/79/17)

- C.17.130.1 Received and noted: a summary of the current position of the University's student recruitment cycle leading to enrolments in Autumn 2018, and detail of the further actions proposed to achieve recruitment targets. The paper included background information around issues faced

by the sector, including increased competitiveness due to the combination of higher fees, the removal of the student number cap, and the increasing array of league tables. The current adverse demographic trend was also noted. The Director (Communications, Marketing, and Student Recruitment) reported that all universities were now engaging in the clearing process, and that student behaviour was changing as they were applying much later in the cycle. Particular note was made of the University's approach to maximising conversion of applications, and to focus on specific markets.

C.17.130.2 Considered:

- a. that despite concerns regarding application rates, some indicators, such as attendance at open days, were positive;
- b. the University's successful conversion rates compared with benchmarks, and the work undertaken by the Student Recruitment team to understand why students chose this institution. It was reported that the passion of lecturers came across well at open days, and that the University's sense of community was very appealing to some potential students;
- c. the personalised approach to engaging with potential students which gave them a sense that they 'knew' the University, which helped increase conversion rates;
- d. the appointment of a new alumni manager to develop that area of activity to support recruitment;
- e. the importance of tailoring recruitment strategies for different markets (for example, the importance of the University's website for attracting international students who were unable to attend open days). It was noted that the development of different marketing approaches for the new apprenticeship programmes was essential;
- f. the need for the University to be flexible in its recruitment strategy to meet the ever changing sector challenges.

C.17.131 **Prevent Strategy/Duty: Annual Report 2016/17 (C/80/17)**

- C.17.131.1 Received: a report updating Council on Prevent-related work during 2016/17. It was noted that as part of the HEFCE compliance monitoring framework for the Prevent Duty, the University was required to submit an annual report from the previous academic year by 1 December 2017. The report outlined the progress made, and the general approach taken through the year, as well as highlighting key aspects that HEFCE had specifically requested, including:
- a. student 'Prevent referrals';
 - b. student welfare;
 - c. staff training.

It also included a declaration from Council to confirm that it was content with the report and the University's management of Prevent in 2016/17.

- C.17.131.2 Considered: detail within the report regarding the purchase of a web filtering system to log content identified as Prevent related as well as other sensitive themes (which was the same approach seen across the majority of the sector). A concern was raised regarding the privacy of individuals undertaking appropriate research as part of courses such as criminology, which could be flagged by the system. It was noted that individuals would be notified if they had requested web resources that had been categorised as sensitive, and that the Director (Learning Technology and Innovation) would be informed if an individual continued to visit sites after the warning, with a decision then being made as to whether an investigation was required. It was intended that the system of prompts would not block those genuinely visiting such webpages for legitimate work or study, but would deter those who had not intentionally set out to visit such sites.

- C.17.131.3 Resolved: Council approved the Prevent Annual report ahead of submission to HEFCE by 1 December 2017.

C.17.132 **2016/2017 KPI Performance Report (C/81/17)**

- C.17.132.1 Received: a paper summarising 2016/17 performance against actions and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as set out in the Annual Operating Plan. It was noted that it was the final report against the previous 2012-2017 Strategic Plan with progress under each of the strategic goals:
- a. To provide students with excellent learning experiences through outstanding teaching and support for learning;
 - b. To promote enterprise, employability and wider economic, social and cultural benefit for the community;
 - c. To embed research, scholarship, practice and consultancy in all our activities;

- d. To build strong relationships with selected partners for mutual benefit;
- e. To be a successful and sustainable organisation.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Operations) highlighted in particular the summary of areas that had progressed well and those that were not fully resolved.

C.17.132.2 Considered:

- a. data related to students meeting with their personal tutors. It was reported that, whilst there may be instances when students had not attended meetings, there were also occasions where staff had not registered on the system that a meeting had taken place;
- b. a concern that much of the action under 'People and Culture' focussed on academic staff with little reference to those in the professional departments. It was confirmed that workforce planning had been prioritised in the Schools, but that professional departments would be included;
- c. that KPIs were critical for monitoring performance, but that more qualitative detail was included in the narrative of the report.

C.17.132.3 Noted: the 2016/17 performance.

C.17.133 **Financial & Operating Performance Report (C/82/17)**

C.17.133.1 Received: a report reflecting the University's financial performance for the first three months of the year, together with staff and student numbers. It was noted that the University's net surplus at the end of October 2017 was £2.2m (before the exceptional items) which was marginally adverse to the year to date budget of £2.3m. This was mainly due to the higher non-pay cost driven by the timing differences and higher marketing spend, partly offset by the reduction of pay cost and increased income.

C.17.133.2 Noted: the financial performance to the end of October 2017.

C.17.134 **Internal Audit Report for 2016/17 (C/83/17)**

C.17.134.1 Considered: the internal audit annual report for 2016/17 from RSM, which was required under the terms of the HEFCE Memorandum of Assurance and Accountability, and set out the opinion that the University had 'an adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance, internal control and economy, efficiency and effectiveness'. It was noted that this was the second highest level of opinion, as it also stated that the auditors' work had identified further improvements to the framework 'to ensure that it remains adequate and effective'.

C.17.134.2 Received: the Internal Audit Report for 2016/17.

C.17.135 **Annual Financial Statements for y/e 31 July 2017 (C/84/17)**

C.17.135.1 Noted: the University's financial statements presenting the results for the year ended 31 July 2017. It was reported that, following consideration by both the Finance and General Purposes Committee and Audit Committee, there had been some minor updates to the statements. The audit work was complete and no major control issues or material adjustments to surplus had been raised. The report comprised:

- a. key financial highlights for the year;
- b. the full financial statements, including the Operational Financial Review which was linked to the four objectives of the Strategic Plan 2017-2022, and gave narrative detail on the main trends and factors underlying the development, performance, and position of the University for the year and those which were likely to affect future performance;
- c. the Bank Covenants compliance schedule, included in response to a concern raised by Finance and General Purposes Committee;
- d. an assessment of Going Concern for the University;
- e. a letter of representation to the auditors acknowledging the responsibilities of Council in respect of the financial statements and disclosure of information;
- f. the Annual Sustainability Assurance Report for submission to HEFCE.

The Director (Finance and Planning) summarised the key financial highlights for the year, including details of the final surplus for the year.

C.17.135.2 Considered:

- a. confirmation of the level of bank borrowings, which had not been included in the covenants schedule;
- b. the improvements being made to the University's estate;
- c. the diversification of revenue through commercial activity;

- d. the detail included in the report regarding senior staff salaries. It was noted that the new Office for Students would require institutions to report this information and that it was particularly important to be transparent in light of recent media interest.

C.17.135.3 Resolved: Council approved:

- a. the consolidated Financial Statements for the University of Gloucestershire for the year ended 31 July 2017 which had previously been considered by the Audit and Finance and General Purposes Committees;
- b. the Letter of Representation to the auditors for the year ended 31 July 2017;
- c. the Annual Sustainability Assurance Report for submission to HEFCE.

C.17.136 External Audit Findings Report (C/85/17)

C.17.136.1 Considered: the external auditors' findings report from Grant Thornton, highlighting the key issues affecting the results of the University and the preparation of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2017. An unqualified audit opinion was issued on the financial statements (with one internal control deficiency identified in respect of journal descriptions).

C.17.136.2 Resolved: Council received and noted the External Audit Findings Report for the year ended 31 July 2017, and recommended its submission to HEFCE as part of the Annual Accountability Returns.

C.17.137 Audit Committee Annual Report 2016/17 (C/86/17)

C.17.137.1 Considered: the Audit Committee's annual report to provide assurance to Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of institutional arrangements for:

- a. risk management, control and governance (risk management including the accuracy of the statement of internal control provided with the annual financial statements);
- b. economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money).

The report included details of the appointment of internal and external auditors, the programmes of work, and a review of assurances received from management and other significant providers. It also provided a summary of the development of the University's revised approach to risk management. The Chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that members had checked the Committee's terms of reference against HEFCE's code of practice and had provided ratings for the work of both the internal and external auditors.

C.17.137.2 Resolved: Council received and approved the Annual Report from Audit Committee, and agreed that it should be submitted to HEFCE.

C.17.138 Risk Management Update (C/87/17)

C.17.138.1 Received: the updated Risk Register and Action Plan for 2017/18. The University Secretary and Registrar reported on the outcomes of the Risk Workshop held in September 2017 and highlighted the summary table in the paper outlining the changes made to the Register and Plan. It was noted that there had been an overall reduction in the number of risks, and that only actions related to red or amber risks had been included in the Action Plan.

C.17.138.2 Considered: in response to a query about whether there should be a risk around the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union (EU), it was agreed that it would be preferable to include that issue under other risks where it would have impact (for example, recruitment of EU students, or research funding).

C.17.138.3 Resolved: Council considered and approved the updated University Risk Register and Action Plan for 2017/18.

C.17.139 Review of Recruitment to Pathway Joint Venture (C/88/17)

C.17.139.1 Received and noted: an update on recruitment to courses provided by the Joint Venture (JV) with INTO, covering both Academic Pathway courses, and English Language programmes. It was noted that, as the JV operated two primary start dates during the year, a further update would be presented early in 2018. The Director (Finance and Planning) highlighted details of recruitment compared with targets, and that progression rates to University programmes were quite strong. Members noted the work of INTO agents to establish new markets for Pathway students.

- C.17.139.2 Noted: the latest recruitment position onto Joint Venture Programmes, and that a further update will be provided after the January 2018 start date.
ACTION: Director (Finance and Planning) / Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- C.17.140 Council Schedule of Business (C/89/17)**
- C.17.140.1 Considered: the draft schedule of business for Council. No changes were made.
- C.17.140.2 Noted:
- a. that a workshop session for members of Council to participate in the development of the Academic Strategy and the Information Strategy was being arranged for 13 December 2017;
 - b. the plans for the joint meeting with Academic Board on 6 February 2018, which would be followed by a lunch at the Pittville campus to meet with local artist PJ Crook to thank her for her generous donation of artwork to the University, and to see the newly commissioned sculpture from an alumnus;
 - c. the development of the programme for the Council away day on 9 and 10 April 2018 to be held at Jurys Inn in Cheltenham, where there would be accommodation provided for those who would like it.
- C.17.141 HEFCE Annual Accountability Returns* (C/90/17)**
Resolved: Council approved the submission of the HEFCE Annual Accountability Returns.
- C.17.142 Re-Appointment of External Auditors* (C/91/17)**
Resolved: Council approved the reappointment of Grant Thornton UK LLP as the Company's external auditors for 2017/18 and for remuneration to be agreed by the Audit Committee.
- C.17.143 Modern Slavery Act 2015 – Annual Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement* (C/92/17)**
Resolved: Council considered and approved the Annual Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for publication.
- C.17.144 Register of People with Significant Control* (C/93/17)**
Resolved: Council considered the report and confirmed that its register with Companies House would remain the same, i.e. that the University had no People with Significant Control (PSCs) within the meaning of the PSC Regulations.
- C.17.145 5 Year Capital Plan* (C/94/17)**
Received and noted: details of the five year capital programme.
- C.17.146 Internal Audit Strategy and Operational Plan 2017/18* (C/95/17)**
Received and noted: the Internal Audit Strategy and Operational Plan for 2017/18.
- C.17.147 Health and Safety Annual Report 2016/17* (C/96/17)**
Received and noted: the Health and Safety Annual Report for 2016/17.
- C.17.148 Value for Money Annual Report* (C/97/17)**
Considered: the annual Value for Money report for 2016/17.
- C.17.149 CONFIDENTIAL: Procurement Annual Report – 2016/17* (C/98/17)**
This item was considered under Confidential Business.
- C.17.150 CONFIDENTIAL: Insurance Manager's Annual Report 2016/17* (C/99/17)**
This item was considered under Confidential Business.
- C.17.151 Minutes from Council Committees and Academic Board***
Noted: the minutes from the following meetings would be available from <https://infonet.glos.ac.uk/departments/registry/committees/Pages/default.aspx>
- a. Academic Board, 18 October 2017
 - b. Finance and General Purposes Committee, 24 October 2017
 - c. Audit Committee, 28 October 2017
- C.17.152 Any Other Business**
Noted: that it was the last meeting of Council for Mrs Maxine Melling, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Operations). It was noted that her role had encompassed a broad range of activity, with achievements including the development of the new Strategic Plan, managing relationships with developers through the construction of the Pittville student village, developments within

sustainability, employability, libraries and information technology, and working with communities and local councils within Cheltenham to be the 'face' of the University. Council members expressed their thanks to Mrs Melling for her work and support.

C.17.153 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 6 February 2018 (FW015, Fullwood House, Park).

Refreshments from 8.30 am, Joint Meeting with Academic Board at 9 am, Council meeting starts at 11 am. Meeting to be followed by a trip to Pittville for lunch to thank PJ Crook for her gift of artwork to the University.

**UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
Action list for the meeting held 28 November 2017**

Minute number	Action	Responsibility
C.17.124 C.17.124.2	<i>Matters Arising</i> [C.17.105.3] <i>National Student Survey (NSS) 2017: Results, Analysis and Follow-up</i> <u>Noted:</u> that work was underway to investigate NSS results from the Social Work strand and would be presented to a future meeting of Council.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
C.17.126 C.17.126.2	<i>Vice-Chancellor's Report</i> <u>Resolved:</u> a. that options for communication in the event of a student death would be discussed with the Director (Student Support) in light of concerns raised, noting the need for careful balance in difficult circumstances; b. that a report would be presented to Council on the outcomes of a consultation being undertaken by Student Services around student wellbeing, including mental health.	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Operations) University Secretary and Registrar
C.17.139 C.17.139.2	<i>Review of Recruitment to Pathway Joint Venture</i> <u>Noted:</u> the latest recruitment position onto Joint Venture Programmes, and that a further update will be provided after the January 2018 start date.	Director (Finance and Planning) / Deputy Vice-Chancellor