

# Council

MINUTES AND ACTIONS
FOR PUBLICATION
19 NOVEMBER 2020 – 10:00-15:30hrs, Via Microsoft Teams

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# **ACTIONS**

Action	Progress	Owner	Deadline
Circulate the BAME Network book reading list to Council members	Completed	Secretariat	January 2021
Reciprocal mentoring opportunities to be discussed at the next meeting of Council in February	Update to be provided under matters arising	Provost/Exec utive Lead for EDI	Feb 2021

# **DECISIONS**

Item	Decision	Paper No.
Minutes of the 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	Approved	CNL/20/132
Annual Report and Financial Statements	Council approved the signing of the Letter of Representation to KPMG and the University's Annual Report and Financial Statements to 31 July 2019	CNL/XX/XX

The following papers were also approved at the meeting but not discussed:

- Reappointment of the DVC Education and PVC Business School (CNL/20/145 & CNL/20/146)
- Affixing the Seal (CNL/20/150)
- Ordinance Approval: Redundancy Procedures (CNL/20/153, CNL/20/153A & CNL/20/153B)
- Ordinance Approval: Faculty Board Terms of Reference and Membership (CNL/20/154, CNL/20/154A &CNL/20/154B)

#### **Attendees**

#### **Present**

Sarah Turvill Pro-Chancellor and Chair

Professor Lisa Roberts Vice-Chancellor Sir Richard Atkins Pro-Chancellor

Jo Binding Independent Member
Sunday Blake President, Students' Guild
Gerry Brown Independent Member

Dr Sarah Buck Pro-Chancellor

Alison Chambers Chief Executive Officer, Students' Guild

Cara Chittenden Exeter President, Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union

Graham Cole Independent Member
Nicholas Cheffings Independent Member
Alexandra Gerbasi Senate Representative
Andrew Greenway Independent Member

Professor Mark Goodwin Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement)

Professor Andrew McRae Senate Representative Amoetsoe Mkwena Independent Member Salam Katbi Independent Member

Professor Janice Kay Provost

Professor Caroline MacEwen Independent Member Sir John O'Reilly Independent Member Alison Reed Independent Member

Alison Rose Professional Services Representative

Dr Anni Vanhatalo Senate Representative Glenn Woodcock Independent Member

#### **Apologies**

#### Secretary

Mike Shore-Nye Registrar and Secretary

#### In attendance

Jane Chafer Director, Communications, Recruitment and Marketing

Andrew Connolly Chief Financial Officer

Professor Neil Gow Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Impact)
Jacqueline Hodges Deputy Secretary to Council (Minutes)
Professor Tim Quine Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Imelda Rogers Director, Human Resources

Rhiannon Brobyn Committee Secretariat Administrator
Maria Rose Committee Secretariat Administrator

Tina Verhaeghe Project Manager- Imagining Futures (for item 3)

Gill Preston Programme Manager (for item 6)

Professor Rob Freathy Academic Dean for Students (for items 5 and 6)
Alan Hill Chief Information and Digital Officer (for item 7)

Joe Wall Assistant Director of Finance (for item 9)

Chris Lindsay Director of Compliance, Governance & Risk for (item 10)

Dr Emma Page Head of Sustainability (for item 11)

#### 1. CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed Council members to the meeting.

Declaration of interest was noted for two Council members in relation separate papers on the agenda where conflicts arose from their substantive roles.

#### - COUNCIL FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Chair welcomed Council members to the meeting and noted that since the last meeting, the Council Finance Sub Committee had met once and the minutes would be circulated via Boardpacks once approved.

The proposed agenda for the upcoming Council awayday and an additional session for Council members on risk and health and safety in January were also highlighted.

### 2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 15 OCTOBER 2020 AND MATTERS ARISING (CNL/20/132)

#### - PULSE SURVEY

Following discussion at the previous meeting, the Registrar provided an update to confirm that a Pulse survey was to be undertaken of staff feedback, the results of which would be shared with Council at its next meeting.

DECISION: The minutes of the meeting of 15th October were approved

# 3. EDI PRESENTATION - ALLIES AND PARTNERSHIP

#### - EDI TERMLY REPORT (CNL/20/134)

Tina Verhaeghe, founder of the University's Black and Minority Ethnic Network Staff, Students and Ally's Network (BME Network) and Linda Peka, Executive Lead for EDI joined the meeting to discuss work being undertaken within the University to support allyship and partnership.

The presentation had been prepared earlier in the year for a debate led by Advance HR which had been prompted by findings from research led by the Halpin Partnership of the strong need to do better for the HE sector and in society to tackle racism and it had since been shared across the University including to the Senior Management Group (SMG).

The impact of race on careers and as a barrier to success was highlighted and it was explained that the network had been established to provide support and give strength of voice to the issues experienced by its members in order to make a positive difference for the future.

Council members heard the compelling reasons for the importance of having built ally relationships between members of the university's BME community and senior management. Trust formed the basis of these relationships, from which the strength, genuine commitment and accountability had been gained to drive forward action to create a culture of zero-tolerance to racism at every level of the institution.

The presentation reflected on the challenges and the reasons for the need to establish the network and the barriers experienced in driving change. Achievements such as the creation of the Diversifying Leadership Programme were described, with the opportunity to openly engage with and influence senior leaders and staff was marked as a key attribute of the Network's continuing impact. Its success had helped lift the burden off individual members of the BME Network to be the force for culture change and it was stressed that it was everyone within the university's responsibility to move the dial on racial inequality. To achieve this, it was explained that it was necessary for all members of the university's community to recognise personal privilege and use it as a force for good.

Council expressed enthusiasm and praise for the inspiring work undertaken and discussed the issues raised within the presentation. The need to frame racism as a human rights issue was noted and acknowledgment given to the fatigue experienced by members of underrepresented groups who had long fought hard to have their voices heard. Privilege, white fragility and the perceived awkwardness around language of race issues were discussed, with the Network's book club reading list recommended as a source of further background reading to support greater understanding of the issues raised.

## **ACTION: Circulate the BME Network book reading list to Council members (Secretariat)**

Council members discussed the need to for more ethnically diverse role models within the university and the importance too of how anti-racism work could affect change within the region. A programme of reciprocal mentoring was discussed and Council members were invited to participate.

# ACTION: Reverse mentoring opportunities to be discussed at the next meeting of Council in February (Provost/Executive Lead for EDI)

#### **Dual Assurance EDI Report**

The broader work of the Dual Assurance group on EDI was discussed, with praise also given for the team involved. Focus was being placed on how the initiatives identified within the report could achieve maximum impact to ensure they were engaged with and heard across the university.

It was explained that whilst positive progress had been made, there was further still to go. Council members raised the opportunity to look at social mobility and widening participation within the EDI lens as a further critical point of inclusion. It was explained that a deep dive had been undertaken within Education leadership to discuss the overlapping themes of Success for All within the Education Strategy, access and WP initiatives and from this joint planning had been layered up to measure and identify themes. An action plan had been put in place and the new role of Associate Academic Dean for Racial Equality and Inclusion had been appointed to lead the bringing together of this work.

Discussion was held about the challenge of communicating the issues raised across the University and how to reach different audiences.

The Chair concluded the debate by sharing thanks with those involved, commenting that she had be hugely impressed when she had attended the initial Advance HE presentation and that tackling racism was one of the most important issues for the University to address.

# 4. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BRIEFING (CNL/20/133)

The Vice-Chancellor presented her report and noted several updates from the previous week. It was highlighted that the report outlined plans for the Christmas period, noting that travel plans for students had rapidly been put in place in response to the recently announced government lockdown restrictions.

Council was also made aware of a consultation launched by the OfS on quality and standards within HE. Its aim was to protect high quality provision in the UK by tackling low value course issues, with the VC part of the group working on how this was defined. The consultation was due to end in late January.

The VC reported she was continuing to attend all-staff meetings across academic and professional service departments. The key themes arising from the sessions were staff wellbeing and workload, the impact of the pandemic, and questions around staff presence on campus. She noted that levels of staff engagement with the plans for the future of the university had been inspiring.

Workload and wellbeing were highlighted following a report released by Mind which had been conducted on nine universities and found that 35% of all staff had reported poor mental health. Contributing factors were increased workloads, lack of down time, uncertainty, social disconnection from colleagues and efforts to continue to do everything perfectly in challenging times. In response, the university had made some quick changes and implemented an email and meeting light week, which had received positive feedback.

# 5. DEGREE OUTCOMES STATEMENT (CNL/20/135)

The DVC (Education) introduced the statement and shared slides showing the data underpinning the report.

## 6. PROJECT RESTART, ENHANCE AND EXPERIENCE UPDATES (CNL/20/136)

# Project Enhance

The DVC (Education) presented a paper summarising the next phase of Project Enhance to demonstrate the progress made based on the experience of students and staff following the move to a hybrid, blended learning approach. A short film was shared to demonstrate the journey undertaken and trends solicited from student feedback were discussed. Links had also been circulated under part ii of the meeting papers to resources created to support the Enhance work.

# Project Experience

The Provost provided an update on work being undertaken to protect the student and staff experience through the challenges that had emerged from the pandemic. She noted that the priority had been to maintain social contact and on campus learning as much as possible and themes being addressed through the work included pressures of increased workload, lack of downtime, social isolation, not feeling part of a community, diminished hope and this had all presented significant well-being challenges.

#### **Project Restart**

The Registrar provided an update on Restart plans, noting that a significant amount of work had been undertaking since Council's last briefing. It was highlighted that at the time of the last Council meeting, there had been high levels of positive cases within the student community and focus had been on containing the outbreak. Considerable community engagement activity had been undertaken and Public Health England (PHE) had paid credit to the university's response in its handling of the outbreak in Exeter. Regular collaboration was also ongoing with PHE in Cornwall and a community newsletter produced for local residents, with communications also being shared with local news outlets.

It was explained that PHE had now stepped down its involvement with management of the outbreak, through which 5.5k tests had been undertaken, of which circa 1.5k positive cases identified. As of 17<sup>th</sup> November, no positive tests had been recorded and testing was down to 30-50 tests per day.

Since PHE has stepped down earlier in the month, the University had reverted to its Halo testing facilities and this had enabled instant data on case numbers. Help had been received to put in place testing facilities at St Lukes for staff, students and members of the community.

Lateral flow testing facilities remained on campus with capacity to undertake testing for up to 1200 students per day and this was being made available to any student wanting to return home for Christmas.

The Government guidance on student travel at Christmas was discussed with confirmation given that all teaching was to be stopped by 9<sup>th</sup> December, with students then being encouraged to travel home at that point. Work was ongoing on the process to support this, with most teaching due to finish on 4<sup>th</sup> December, although some subjects would continue until 8<sup>th</sup> December. The incident management team was working on plans to ensure enough transport was in place to support students' return home and more students were expected to remain in the area over the Christmas period due to travel restrictions, so work was ongoing to provide increase 24/7 support including provision for a socially distanced Christmas lunch for students in halls. The decision had already been taken to run exams online in January with anyone returning to Exeter at this time being required to take a test on their return.

Praise was given to the vast majority of students who had adhered to the rules and helped support the goal of rapidly reducing levels of infection spreading amongst the university and local community. A small number of cases of poor behaviour and conduct issues were discussed, with the Outbreak management team meeting daily to manage operations. Meetings were ongoing with Public Health England on a weekly basis with regular communications going out to students and staff about Here to Help services.

Council discussed the briefing and praised the efforts of all the teams involved in the ongoing management of the University's response. The return to campus in January was discussed with an update provided on lobbying being undertaken by UUK to provide support for universities to run testing facilities on campus and the hope was that testing kit would be made available for use on campuses.

In January it was hoped to be able to run more sport and activities for students and efforts were underway to support deliver of this in a straight forward way.

7.	CYBER SECURITY (CNL/20/156)
	The Registrar and Chief Information and Digital Officer shared a presentation with Council members to illustrate the key drivers of cyber risk.
8.	ADMISSIONS UPDATE (CNL/20/137)
	The DVC (Global) and Director, Communications, Recruitment and Marketing and provided a briefing on the key points from the latest admissions data.

# 9. APPROVING THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY FOR THE YEAR 2019-20 (CNL/20/138)

AUDIT HIGHLIGHTS MEMORANDUM FROM KPMG (CNL/20/138A)

MANAGEMENT LETTER OF REPRESENTATION (CNL/20/138B)

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE (CNL/20/138C)

**ANNUAL REPORT OF INTERNAL AUDITORS (CNL/20/138D)** 

The CFO presented a suite of papers, most of which had been considered previously by Council in draft form at its Council meeting and scrutinised at the previous two Audit Committee meetings. Since these initial drafts, it was reported that no substantive changes had been made beyond the incorporation of feedback received. Some typographical errors existed within the final versions circulated but these had already been collated and reviewed for incorporation into the final published version.

Attention was drawn to Council's role as the accountable body for the annual report was noted and it was explained that amongst the documentation received, reports from the Internal and External Auditors and the Audit Committee had been included to provide assurance of the accuracy of report to inform the approval decision. The CFO explained that both sets of auditors had been thorough in their auditing of the accounts and statements and KPMG had given its clearance earlier in the week that it was satisfied with what had been produced, a copy of the email confirming this to be the case had been shared with the Chair of Council and Audit Committee Chair to substantiate this.

The Dual Assurance lead for Finance and Audit Committee Chair offered praise for the work undertaken by the team to maintain a sound financial position.

Council was reminded that due to the financial circumstances caused by Covid, the five-year plan had not been presented to Council for approval in July as normal, with financial planning instead being undertaken as a five year top down budget planning exercise.

Decision: Council approved the signing of the Letter of Representation to KPMG and the University's Annual Report and Financial Statements to 31 July 2019

# 10. PREVENT RETURN (CNL/20/139 & 139A)

The Director, Compliance, Governance and Risk joined the meeting to present the Annual Prevent Assurance Report, noting that the OfS had been designated as the monitoring body for Prevent within the HE sector. He explained that the report had been designed to provide a statement of assurance on the University's Prevent activities and risk register. He highlighted incidents on campus recorded in the documentation and provided assurance that the University had attempted to identify issues as early as possible. Examples of how partnerships had worked together were provided.

Discussion was held about the difficulties of identifying prevent-related behaviours.

## 11. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY UPDATE

The Registrar and Secretary welcomed Dr Emma Page to the meeting and introduced the Environment and Climate Emergency report.

# 12. AUTUMN TERM STUDENTS REPORTS (CNL/20/142 AND CNL/20/143)

#### Falmouth and Exeter SU

The Exeter President of the SU presented her report, highlighting the biggest concern amongst the student community as being wellbeing and loneliness. A campaign was underway to connect with students through the second lockdown and this would remain a priority into the next term.

#### **Exeter Guild**

The President of the Guild provided an update and confirmed that the biggest issue since the last term's report was a student petition which had attracted 800-900 signatures voicing concern about the decision to not apply the No Detriment Policy within the current year. Discussions had been held with the DVC (Education) and a report subsequently produced by the Guild. The issue had arisen following email communications from the university to students confirming that the safety net policy would not apply which has divided opinion within the student community.

It was reported that an officer of the Guild had resigned, resulting in capacity issues for other officers. Considerable work had been undertaken externally by the Guild to reach out to bodies and government to lobby for protection for the students during the pandemic and the Presidents and Registrar had spoken to a government taskforce on the subject. Work had also been undertaken in partnership with the Provost to work with the sector on issues around Freedom of Speech.

The DVC (Education) responded to the issues raised about the No Detriment Policy by explaining that it had not been possible to apply as there were no existing records of pre-covid marks for the current year and explained that instead protections were being put in place at cohort level looking across modules rather than a blanket policy being applied across the board. Assurance was provided that protections were in place for individual students and Guild officers had met with the petitions' authors and would work with those students to review the mitigation and appeals process to make recommendations on how it can be as emphatic as possible.

#### 13. DUAL ASSURANCE (VERBAL UPDATE)

Independent members provided updates from work undertaken within their Dual Assurance groups.

## MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD FROM PART II (CNL/20/144)

No were matters bought forward from part II.

The following papers were approved:

- Reappointment of the DVC Education and PVC Business School (CNL/20/145 & CNL/20/146)
- Affixing the Seal (CNL/20/150)

- Ordinance Approval: Redundancy Procedures (CNL/20/153, CNL/20/153A & CNL/20/153B)
- Ordinance Approval: Faculty Board Terms of Reference and Membership (CNL/20/154, CNL/20/154A &CNL/20/154B)
- Ordinance Approval: Redundancy Procedures (CNL/20/153, CNL/20/153A & CNL/20/153B)

The Director, HR provided a briefing on discussions with the unions regarding the redundancy procedures and Council member discussed the latest position with regards to the USS pensions scheme. It was confirmed that a consultation was ongoing, with UUK's response sent on 12th November.

# **CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS**

The Chair reminded Council members of plans to hold an additional session in January dedicated to discussion on risk and health and safety. The latest reports from both areas would be circulated as pre-reading for the session.

#### **PART II PAPERS**

The following papers were noted:

- Degree Classification Summary Report (CNL/20/148)
- Audit Committee Minutes of 22nd September (CNL/20/149)
- Annual Report from Senate (CNL/20/151)
- Academic Promotions (CNL/20/152)
- Ordinance Approval: Redundancy Procedures (CNL/20/153, CNL/20/153A & CNL/20/153B)
- Ordinance Approval: Faculty Board Terms of Reference and Membership (CNL/20/154, CNL/20/154A &CNL/20/154B)
- Lloyds Bank Covenants (CNL/20/155)
- Admissions Update PGT Campaigns 2020-21 (CNL/20/137A)

# Appendix 1

# COUNCIL & COMMITTEES

# REGISTER OF INTERESTS 2020/21

# Members

Sarah Turvill	Willis Towers Watson (Director of UK Subsidiary; Pensioner);
	Yarmouth (IOW) Harbour (Commissioner); Grays Inn (Bencher)
Professor Lisa Roberts	Russell Group (Board Member); Heart of the South West Local
	Enterprise Partnership (Board Member)
Sarah Buck	BSW Consulting (Former consultant to BSW Consulting; staff
	now transferred to Bailey Partnership); Institution of Structural
	Engineers (Ethics Committee member); Joint Board of
	Moderators (Accreditation Visits)
Richard Atkins	Department for Education (Engaged as FE Commissioner)
Professor Janice Kay	Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust (Non-Executive
,	Director); Advance HE (Board Member); South West Institute
	of Technology (Board Member (Deputy Chair)
Professor Mark Goodwin	Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP (Board Member)
Jo Binding	The Student View (Chair of Trustees)
Sunday Blake	Exeter University Students' Guild (President)
Gerry Brown	NovaQuest Capital (Chairman); IQVIA (Shares)
Nicholas Cheffings	Hogan Lovells International LLP (Senior Counsel); PRIME
	Commitment Ltd (Chair); Making the Leap (Trustee); CareTech
	Charitable Foundation (Trustee); International Lawyers Project
	(Trustee); British Paralympic Association Parallel Club (Chair)
Cara Chittenden	Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union (Employer); Green Party
	(Paying Member)
Graham Cole	None
Professor Alexandra Gerbasi	None
Andrew Greenway	Public Digital (Director)
Salam Katbi	Department for Education (South West Regional Co-ordinator
	for Prevent)
Professor Caroline MacEwen	Tayside Health Board (Consultant Ophthalmologist); Scottish
	Government/CMO (Clinical Lead); NHS Education for Scotland
	(Associate Postgraduate Dean); NHS Improvement (Clinical
	Lead GIRFT Programme); Moorlands Eye Charity (Trustee)
Professor Andrew McRae	None
Amoetsoe Mkwena	Hogan Lovells International LLP (Employee, Associate)

Sir John O'Reilly	A*STAR (Board Member and Chairman of the Science and Engineering Research Council); ERA Foundation Ltd (Board Member); University of Huddersfield (Royal Academy of Engineering Industrial Visiting Professor); Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 (Board Member); UCL (Visiting Professor); Royal Academy of Engineering (Member, Enterprise Committee & Selection Committee for Enterprise Fellowships); Khalifa University (Board member)
Alison Reed	British Airways plc (Director); NewDay Ltd (Director); CGI Group Inc (Director)
Alison Rose	None
Anni Vanhatalo	None
Glenn Woodcock	Centre for Science and Policy, University of Cambridge (Policy Fellow Alum); City Science Corporation Limited (Chairman and Shareholder); Cloudsoft Corporation Limited (Shareholder); Exeter City Futures Community Interest Company (CEO and Founder); Exeter College (Governor); Global City Futures Limited (Director); Grenadier Paternoster Limited (Director); Low Carbon Limited (Director); Low Carbon Foundation (Director); Oxygen House Group Limited (Director); Oxygen House Limited (Employee); Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce (RSA) (Fellow); Sparx Limited (Director); Dartington Hall Trust (Trustee of Board); The South West Food Hub Community Interest Company (Director)

# In attendance

Andrew Connolly	None
Neil Gow	Sainsbury Laboratory (Trustee Director, Head of Scientific Advisory Board); Westerdijk Institute (Member of Scientific Advisory Board), Elsevier The Cell Surface (Editor in Chief); Wiley Cellular Microbiology (Editor); CIFAR Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee member)
Vic Langer	New Economy Organisers Network (Chair of the Board); RECLAIM Project (Trustee); Atkinson HR (Associate)
Professor Tim Quine	Tianjin University (Honorary Professor); Russell Group PVC Education Group (Chair); Exeter College (Member of Governing Body)
Imelda Rogers	None
Mike Shore-Nye	Exeter Science Park Limited (University nominated Board Director); Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust (University nominated Member); Northcote Theatre (University nominated Board member); Association of Heads of University Administration (Deputy Chair and Executive Board member, OFS liaison, Home office Liaison)

# Other Committees

Bettina Rigg	Browne Jacobson LLP (Partner); Writtle University College (Governor)
David Dupont	Diabetes UK (Member of Clinical Studies Group researching Type 1 Diabetes); Operation Imprezza (Charity Trustee Director); Pennon Group Plc (Shareholding)
Simon Enoch	Jurit LLP (Consultant); Nescot (Governor and Chair of Audit Committee); 100% IT Ltd (Director)