

New-look Council sets out ambitions for University's future with new Chair

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The University of Birmingham's Council met for the first time this academic year, with a new ambitious Chair at the helm, to set out its position to become a leading global university.

Ed Smith, the former Global Assurance COO and Strategy Chairman of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) has been appointed as the new Chair of Council, the University's supreme governing body responsible for setting the strategic direction and policies governing all aspects of the University's activity.

Ed is a highly experienced strategic leader who has worked for over 25 years at non-executive level advising many Boards both within education and across a broad range of commercial interests. Ed's strong experience of higher education includes six years as the Deputy Chair of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). He is also the current Chair of WWF-UK – the leading independent environmental organisation.

Ed Smith, who is also the University's Pro-Chancellor, says, 'The University has the financial strength to invest in world class research, teaching and facilities. This will help drive its ambition to be a leading global university despite the challenging times in which we operate. We have the ambition, the intent, and the resources to make this happen. We have a strong dedicated executive team, the University is professionally managed and is on a journey to excel.'

He continues, 'The UK has a strong research base and is frequently at the leading edge of knowledge and this is because of its academic expertise. My early observations are that staff at Birmingham are engaged and willing to take on the challenges facing us in the sector at the moment.'

'I am a strong believer in universities being an integral part of their communities and of local people being part of university life. Good universities ought to play a key part in the living organism of their host city.'

Notes to Editors

A portrait photograph of Ed Smith is available. For further information about Ed Smith and all members of Council on their profiles pages visit: <http://www.council.bham.ac.uk/membership/profiles/> (<http://www.council.bham.ac.uk/membership/profiles/>)

The University of Birmingham:

The University of Birmingham is a truly vibrant, global community and an internationally-renowned institution. Its work brings people from across the world to Birmingham, including researchers and teachers and more than four thousand international students from nearly 150 different countries.

The University is home to more than 30,000 students. With more than 7,500 postgraduate students from across the world, Birmingham is one of the most popular universities for postgraduate study in the UK.

The University is the eighth largest employer in the Birmingham/Solihull sub-region and plays an integral role in the economic, social and cultural growth of local and regional communities; working closely with businesses and organisations, employing approximately 6,000 staff and providing 10,000 graduates annually.

The University contributes £662 million to the City of Birmingham and £779 million to the West Midlands region, with an annual income of more than £388.6 million.

For further information

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