

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

COUNCIL

1st February 2023 at 9.00a.m.

MINUTES OF MEETING

Members present: Mr Mervyn Walker (Pro-Chancellor and Chair); Professor Helen Abbott; Professor David Adams (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Ms Lucy Baldwin; Ms Deborah Cadman OBE; Ms Lisa Fretwell; Mr Tim Gardam; Professor David Hannah; Ms Rosie Harris; Dame Lin Homer; Professor Stephen Jarvis (Provost); Mr Harjinder Kang; Professor Pam Kearns; Mr Mick Laverty; Mr Anthony Lilley OBE; Ms Tianjie (Alice) Liu, Guild International Officer; Professor Catherine Mangan; Ms Acacia Matthews, President of the Guild of Students; Mr Richard Swann; Ms Jacqueline Taylor; Professor Adam Tickell (Vice-Chancellor and Principal).

Also present: Professor Hugh Adlington (Interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Transfer)); Professor Richard Black (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor William Bloss (Interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Ms Ailsa Chambers, Director of Birmingham Global - for Minute 23/08; Dr Catherine Cochrane, Director of Research Strategy and Services - for Minute 23/08; Ms Erica Conway (Chief Financial Officer); Ms Cathy Gilbert, Director of External Relations - for Minutes 23/07 & 23/08; Professor Deborah Longworth (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)); Professor Robin Mason (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International)); Mrs Colette McDonough (Head of Governance); Dr Emma Robinson (Academic Registrar) - for Minute 23/10; Mr Lee Sanders (Registrar and Secretary); Mr Mark Senior (Chief of Staff); Professor Mark Sterling (Interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor Andrew Stockley (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Mr Colin Townsend, Principal of University of Birmingham School - for Minute 23/09.

Apologies: Dr Clive Hickman OBE; Mr Steve Hollis.

Papers: The minute book contains copies of all written papers or reports to which reference is made below unless indicated otherwise.

23/01 Declarations of Interest

Noted: that no changes to the Register of Interests or interests were declared in relation to any item on the agenda.

23/02 Minutes

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 30th November 2022 be approved (CO.23.02.01).

23/03 Matters Arising from the minutes not addressed elsewhere on the agenda(1) Approval of Annual Report and Accounts

Noted: that the University's Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st July 2022 had been signed off and submitted to the Office for Students in accordance with

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their submission deadline. An external review of the annual process for preparation and external audit of the Accounts was under way to identify any further opportunities for improving and streamlining the process in preparation for the 2022/23 Accounts later this year.

23/04 Pro-Chancellor's Items

(1) Appointment of Lay Member of Council

Reported that:

- (a) Council was invited to consider the recommendation of the Membership Committee that Dame Cilla Snowball be appointed as a Lay Member of Council for four years with effect from 20th April 2023;
- (b) Dame Cilla's biographical summary had been provided to members of Council on Board Intelligence. Having graduated from this University and had a long career in advertising, including 26 years at the creative agency AMV BBDO, where she was Group CEO and Group Chairman, Dame Cilla was currently a member of the Board of Governors for Wellcome, Director of Genome Research Ltd and a Non-Executive Director at the property investment and development company, Derwent London plc. **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (c) the Pro-Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor had both met with Dame Cilla to discuss her re-joining the Council and were extremely enthusiastic about the experience and expertise which she would contribute to Council and the University.

Resolved: that Dame Cilla Snowball be appointed as a Lay Member of Council for four years with effect from 20th April 2023.

(2) Co-opted Member of Audit Committee

Reported: that, following interviews with the Chair of Audit Committee and Head of Internal Audit, and on the recommendation of the Pro-Chancellor as Chair of Membership Committee, it was recommended that Council appoint Steve Connors as a co-opted member of the Audit Committee from 1st February 2023 to 31st July 2024. **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

Resolved: that Steve Connors be appointed as a co-opted member of the Audit Committee from 1st February 2023 to 31st July 2024.

(3) Appointment of Next Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College of Medical and Dental Sciences

Reported: that the final interviews for the next Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College of Medical and Dental Sciences were scheduled for 17th March 2023 and the Pro-Chancellor had approved, on behalf of Council, the membership of the Appointment Committee as follows: Professor Bill Bloss, Professor Stephen Jarvis, Professor Deborah Longworth, Gillian McGrattan, Lee Sanders, Professor Adam Tickell, Mervyn Walker.

[Following the meeting, the Pro-Chancellor also approved the appointment of two Professors from the College, Phil Newsome and Shakila Thangaratnam, as members of the Appointment Committee].

23/05 Vice-Chancellor's Items

Considered: the report of the Vice-Chancellor (CO.23.02.02).

(1) UCU Industrial Action

Reported: that, further to the report at Paragraph 5 of the Vice-Chancellor's Report, UCU had now confirmed the remaining 17 days of strike action as follows:

Thursday 9th and Friday 10th February

Tuesday 14th, Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th February

Tuesday 21st, Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd February

Monday 27th and Tuesday 28th February and Wednesday 1st and Thursday 2nd March

Thursday 16th and Friday 17th March

Monday 20th, Tuesday 21st and Wednesday 22nd March

(2) Teaching Excellence Framework Submission

Reported: that the University had made its submission to the Teaching Excellence Framework by the deadline of 24th January 2023. **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

The results of the TEF were expected in September 2023 and a further update would therefore be provided to Council thereafter.

[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]

23/06 National College for Advanced Transport and Infrastructure (NCATI)

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[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]

23/07 Recruitment and Admissions Update

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Reported that:

(a)-(c) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

23/08 Managing Risks in Internationalisation: Security-related Issues

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Considered: the second annual assurance report to Council to update on work to manage and mitigate security-related risks associated with international activity and report on progress against actions from the last report to Council (CO.23.02.04).

Reported that:

(a) during the reporting period, work had been proactively taken in recognition of the rapidly shifting international environment. A new International Risks Oversight Group (IROG) had recently been established to monitor actively the external environment and the University's management of international risks, to give even greater resilience and assurance;

(b) a bespoke online international risks training course had been rolled out to all staff who directly or indirectly engaged with international work. **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

(c)-(d) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

(e) commitments made in the last report to Council had been largely completed, with work on the remaining areas ongoing in the context of the dynamic international environment;

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- (f) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (g) the discussion focused on:
 - (i)-(iv) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

Resolved: that the Annual Assurance Report on the University's approach to the management of security-related risks in Internationalisation be approved as set out in Paper CO.23.02.04.

23/09 Annual Report of the University of Birmingham School

Considered: the Annual Report of the University of Birmingham School (CO.23.02.07).

Reported that:

- (a) the School had now completed its seventh full year of operation;
- (b) the Summer 2022 session had been the first point in the School's operation where GCSE outcomes had been determined by public examinations rather than teacher assessment;
- (c)-(g) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (h) the Principal had been appointed to the Department for Education Head Teachers' Reference Group, a small group of 20 head teachers that provided advice to the Department;
- (i) members of Council commended the progress of the School. Their discussion covered:
 - (i) the continued partnership working of the School with Birmingham City Council to share good practice in relation to education provision across the City;
 - (ii) the links between the School and the University's School of Education, including the new educational equity initiative being led by Professor Chris Millward, Professor of Practice in Education Policy, which was bringing academic researchers together with leaders and policy makers from all parts of the education system;
 - (iii) the opportunity for the University and the School to share experience of delivering student wellbeing support;
 - (iv) the focus on academic excellence, character education and wider enrichment and personal development and how this had been embedded in the culture of the School;
- (v)-(vi) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

Resolved: that the Annual Report of the University of Birmingham School be approved as set out in Paper CO.23.02.07.

23/10 Annual Assurance Report on Student Wellbeing

Considered: the Annual Assurance Report on the approach, systems and support for student wellbeing at the University (CO.23.02.05).

Reported that:

- (a) this report covered the 2021-22 academic year, which was notable as including a period of ongoing Covid-pandemic restrictions; additional (Home undergraduate) student numbers; escalation of the war in Ukraine; and the beginnings of cost-of-living pressures impacting the student community;
- (b) the University continued to invest in its wellbeing services, including increasing the number of Wellbeing Officers in Schools; fully establishing the UB Heard 24/7 mental health listening service (accessible by all students and in multiple languages); extending the innovative Pause@UoB NHS mental health drop-in

- service; and increasing the Student Support Fund in anticipation of greater levels of financial hardship;
- (c) through strong and effective partnership, the University increasingly drew on its academic expertise (particularly in the Institute of Mental Health), as well as a wide range of regional and national partners and agencies, particularly in the NHS and key support charities, to support service development. It also continued to invest in people, training and development across the University community to provide an integrated network of support for students;
 - (d) student use and positive feedback on the range of services continued to grow, and the University's ability to monitor and report service usage had developed further in the last year. For the first time this year College-based support provided was reported. This showed high levels of extension and extenuating circumstance requests, due to a more flexible approach through the Covid pandemic. These processes had been tightened for 2022/23 and the notable variability across Colleges was being further considered. For personalised therapeutic support, reporting had changed to capture all presenting issues, not just primary reasons, which accounted for some of the increases in reporting this period;
 - (e) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
 - (f) service analysis increasingly highlighted who student support users were, including the improving diversity of service users; the breadth and complexity of issues, challenges and life experiences; and an increasingly rich and positive view of student feedback and satisfaction of services provided. The University continued to develop its ability to capture, report and use key data to shape its services and develop student support more generally;
 - (g) finally, there had been further national guidance (UUK) and increased expectations (OfS and new Student Support Champion), all of which the University was fully aligned with, and indeed the University's experts often informed development of. Our work within the sector, particularly through the Russell Group, provided confidence that our offer and level of investment was towards the leading edge, but work continues to innovate and develop it further. **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
 - (h) the discussion covered:
 - (i) the opportunity to share the University's good practice on student wellbeing with Birmingham City Council;
 - (ii) the measures in place to identify vulnerable students, particularly noting the role of Personal Academic Tutors in this;
 - (i) the Academic Registrar was thanked for the impressive and comprehensive assurance report and the exemplary work on student wellbeing;
 - (j) the Guild of Students was thanked for its work in partnership with the University on student wellbeing.

Resolved: that the Annual Assurance Report on Student Wellbeing be approved as set out in Paper CO.23.02.05.

23/11 Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee

Considered: the report from the meeting of the Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee held on 18th January 2023 (CO.23.02.06).

(1) Q1 Financial Outturn

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Reported that:

(a)-(c) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

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23/12 Report to Council on the work of Council-approved Panels during 2022

Noted: the report to Council on the work of Council-approved Panels during 2022 (CO.23.02.08).

23/13 Capital Projects over £10m

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Noted: the progress update on Capital Projects over £10m (CO.23.02.09).

23/14 Affixing of the University Seal

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Received: a report noting the transactions which had required use of the University Seal since the last meeting of Council (CO.23.02.10).

23/15 Any Other Business

Reported: that there were no items of Any Other Business.

23/16 Programme of Meetings

Noted: the programme of meetings of Council for the remainder of 2022/23:
Thursday 20th April 2023, 9.00am, Council Strategy Day and Dinner
Tuesday 27th June 2023, 5.00pm, Council Presentation and Dinner
Wednesday 28th June 2023, 9.00am, Council Meeting