

Council

Open Minutes

Date of meeting: **Monday, 10 July 2017**

Duration of meeting: **4.00pm to 6.00pm**

Location: **Missenden Abbey, Great Missenden**

Attendance

Name	Role	Category of membership
Michael Hipkins	Chair	Independent
Jenny Newton	Deputy Chair	Independent
Rebecca Bunting		Vice-Chancellor
Gurdeep Chadha		Independent
Baljit Dhillon		Independent
Maggie James		Independent
Irene Kirkman		Independent
Ken McCrea		Co-opted
Tim Marshall		Co-opted
Hilary Mullen		Elected Academic Representative
Anthony Murphy		Independent
Ben Parmar		SU President
Susan Rosser		Independent
Bob Shennan		Independent
Terri Teasdale		Independent
Phil Wood		Senate Nomination
Sue West		Senate Nomination

Officers

Name	Role	Category of membership
Ellie Smith	Secretary	Clerk to the Council
Marcus Wood	Minute Secretary	Senior Registrar: Governance
Kam Ahumibe		Registrar: Governance

In attendance

Name	Role
Sean Mackney	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Tim Middleton	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise)
Steve Dewhurst	Director of Strategic Development & Planning
Rod Mercer	Director of Finance

Apologies

Name	Role	Category of membership
Jo Boardman		Elected PSE Representative
Lise Llewellyn		Independent

Committee Business

Welcome of members

17.53 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

Declaration of potential conflicts of interest

17.54 No conflicts of interest were declared.

Minutes and Action Sheet of the previous meeting

17.55 The Open minutes of the meeting of 20 March 2017 were approved and signed as an accurate record. All Actions were either on the agenda or noted as completed.

17.56 Council also received the notes from the Strategy Day held on 6 June 2017.

Matters Arising

17.57 The Chair reported that a new Facilities Management Contract had been signed by the University that morning.

Chair's Action

17.58 One Chair's Action had been taken, to sign the new Facilities Management Contract (see above) on behalf of Council.

University Matters

Vice-Chancellor's Report (Paper C/17/20)

17.59 The report was received. It was noted that this was restricted to sector-wide issues given the update on the Transformation Programme also on the agenda. The report focused on the following areas:

- a) Actions taken by the University to address possible issues arising from the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy;
- b) Measures to raise awareness of and protect the University against a 'Ransomware' cyberattack. It was confirmed that the University had not been the subject of an attack to date;
- c) The University's outcome from the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), where a Bronze award had been achieved. The University had been granted formal leave to appeal the decision and was preparing the text of the appeal;
- d) Priorities of the new Office for Students following the recent announcement of both the body's Chair and Chief Executive;

- e) An update on the current Voluntary Severance Scheme (VSS);
 - f) HEFCE visit on 26 June 2017.
- 17.60 The Vice-Chancellor reminded members that the University's graduation ceremonies would be taking place during the week commencing Monday 4 September 2017 and encouraged them to attend if possible.

Key Performance Measures

- 17.61 The updated KPMs were also received. Members noted the sharp reduction in applications received during 2016-17 versus the target (KPM7). The Vice-Chancellor explained that this measure related to applications rather than acceptances and the deviation from target acceptances may not be as pronounced – since some areas (e.g. nursing) had been previously oversubscribed.

Transformation Programme (C/17/21)

This item was considered under Reserved Business.

Students' Union President's Report (C/17/22)

- 17.62 The SU President's report was received. A response was tabled by the University addressing the questions identified by the Students' Union and filed with the papers (C/17/22A).
- 17.63 It was noted that the report contained thoughtful and reflective comments on the challenges facing the University. The Vice-Chancellor asked that in future this should be presented to VCSG first so that there was time for a response to be circulated to members with other papers.
- 17.64 It was noted that Council would also like to hear through the SU report:
- Positive actions and initiatives being taken forward by the SU;
 - The President's priorities for the forthcoming year.

European Standards and Guidance (Paper C/17/23)

- 17.65 Council noted the updated mapping statement which would support and inform Council's ongoing annual assurance statement to HEFCE. The paper had also been considered by Senate and it was confirmed that the University was compliant with requirements.

Minutes from University Committees (Paper C/17/24)

- 17.66 The following minutes from University Committees were received:
- Senate (22 March 2017 and 7 June 2017)
 - Quality & Standards Committee (3 May 2017)
 - Education Committee (17 May 2017)
- 17.67 The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the following:
- a) Updates on the Transformation Programme contained within the various sets of minutes;
 - b) The renewed Student Engagement & Retention Steering Group to support retention activities.
- 17.68 Members asked about the proposal to discontinue the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (Senate minute 17.66). It was reported that equality and diversity considerations had now been embedded in the terms of reference of all relevant committees and so a dedicated committee was no longer required. Specific

reporting requirements, such as the annual EDI report and Action Plan, which formed part of the University's Public Sector Equality Duty would be transferred to Senate.

Amendment to the Student Disciplinary Procedure (Paper C/17/25)

17.69 The proposed amendment was noted and approved. This related to the temporary suspension of students for misconduct and included clarification over those senior members of the University authorised to take such action.

Missenden Abbey Update (Paper C/17/39)

This item was considered under Reserved Business.

Use of the University Seal and Coat of Arms (C/17/26)

17.70 The report was received.

Council Committee Matters

Resources Committee

Minutes from the meeting of 27 June 2017 (Paper C/17/27)

17.71 The Open minutes were received.

Financial position and forecast 2016-17 (Paper C/17/28)

This item was considered under Reserved Business.

Budget for 2017-18 and forecast for 2018-19 and 2019-20 (Paper C/17/29)

This item was considered under Reserved Business.

HEFCE Five-year forecast (Paper C/17/30)

17.72 Council considered the Annual Accountability Return – July 2017 as recommended by Resources Committee. This presented the same figures as previously approved for the budget (see above and Reserved minutes) but in a format required by the Funding Council. It was confirmed that the forecast had passed all HEFCE validation checks required.

17.73 The forecast was approved and the submission would be uploaded to HEFCE in due course.

Tuition Fees for 2018-2019 for all non-controlled provision (Paper C/17/31)

17.74 Council approved the uplift for non-controlled provision as noted in the paper and recommended by Resources Committee.

Students' Union draft Budget and funding package (including Block Grant allocations) for 2017-2018 (Paper C/17/32)

17.75 Council considered the SU Budget as recommended by Resources Committee. It was noted that there was no change to the SU's standard affiliations with figures similar to those from previous years.

17.76 The budget showed overall savings of £130k as agreed with the Senior Management team. These included some redundancy savings and new posts not being filled although overall the SU's staffing budget was £1m.

- 17.77 The SU President highlighted the Union's concerns over the impact of the additional savings requested on the overall student experience, which the SU had sought to protect as a priority. In particular, the SU were concerned that this may impact on recruitment and retention to University programmes.
- 17.78 The Vice-Chancellor offered to work with the Students' Union to continue to review the impact of the savings and to protect key front-line services and the overall student experience. It was noted that the SU, like all budget holders, was facing a challenge following the University's reduction in size. Given the falling numbers, expenditure per student had increased over the previous 3 years by 48% and budget savings would rebalance this.
- 17.79 The budget and affiliations were approved.

Audit Committee

Minutes from the meeting of 13 June 2017 (Paper C/17/33)

- 17.80 The Open minutes were received.

HEFCE Assessment of Institutional Risk and Annual Provider Review 2016-17 (Paper C/17/34)

- 17.81 Council noted the outcome of the Annual Provider Review 2016-17 that:
- a) Financial sustainability, good management and governance matters were **not at higher risk** and no action was required;
 - b) Quality and standards matters **meets requirements** and no action was required.
- 17.82 It was noted that the ratings are the highest that can be achieved in both cases.

Governance Committee

Minutes from the meeting of 23 May 2017 (Paper C/17/35)

- 17.83 The Open minutes were received.

Council Terms of Reference and Constitution (Paper C/17/36)

- 17.84 Council approved the amendments to the terms of reference and constitution as noted in the paper and recommended by Governance Committee.

Committee memberships for 2017-18

- 17.85 Council received a verbal update from the Chair of Governance Committee.
- Members were thanked for their prompt response for an indication as to which committee they would like to be involved with. Requests will try to be accommodated as much as possible.
 - One member of Council is being recruited to and would be allocated to a committee depending on their skills and background.
 - Council performs well on gender equality of its membership, but less well on other factors such as its ethnic mix. Comments were welcomed on how the Committee could be more pro-active in recruiting from a wider ethnic mix in future.
- 17.86 It was agreed that Chair's Action would be taken to approve the final allocation of members to committees in due course.

Annual Single Equality Scheme Report and Action Plan (Paper C/17/37)

17.87 Council approved the equality, diversity and inclusion action plan and objectives to April 2018.

Calendar of meetings for 2017-18 (Paper C/17/38)

17.88 Council noted the calendar of meetings. One change was expected to the meeting of Resources Committee on 24 October as the Chair would be abroad at that time.

Date of next meeting

17.89 The next meeting was confirmed for 10 October 2017 at 4pm in G5.05 at the High Wycombe Campus.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Michael Hipkins (Chair of Council)

Drafted (Minute Secretary): 17-Jul-2017
Checked (Clerk to the Council): 19-Jul-2017
Confirmed for circulation (Chair): 20-Jul-2017