

October 2018 at 2.30 pm in
ST102/103

Present:

Mr Jonathan Day
Mr Glen Alexander
Mr Tom Ashford

Dr John Carlisle
Professor Scott Davidson
Rev Canon David Evans
Ms Deirdre Finucane
Ms Karan Gilmore
Dr Karen Graham
Mr Colin Harris
Mr Stephen Kenny
Mr Phillip Lennon
Ms Elizabeth McGrath QC
Professor Femi Oyeboode
Mr Richard Wallace

Chair of the Council

President, Newman Students' Union
(NSU)

Vice-Chancellor

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She noted that the revised Standing Orders would be published on the University website. In discussion of the change to the terms of reference and status of the Remunerations Committee, the Chair advised that it had been made a stand-alone committee because the remuneration of senior post holders' pay was not just a financial matter but was a strategic decision affecting the University as a whole. Requirements for increased transparency on the pay of senior post holders were noted, as was the requirement that the University disclose the pay ratio between the median and highest paid employees.

The Council noted the revised version of the Standing Orders.

4. Governance and Council Matters

4.1 Appointment and Re-appointment of Council Members

The Clerk reminded the Council that succession planning had already been put in place for Ms Julie Jones, currently a co-opted member, to succeed Dr Mark Goodwin at the end of November 2018 when his term of office finished. The Nominations and Governance Committee at its meeting earlier today had recommended that Ms Jones now be given full membership with effect from this meeting. The Committee had noted that Dr Goodwin had been happy with the succession plan and it was not felt to be disrespectful to his memory to move full membership forward for Ms Jones.

Resolved UC 13/2018

That Ms Julie Jones become a full member of the Council with immediate effect.

Action: the Clerk to notify Ms Jones.

4.2 Report from the Vice-Chancellor

The Council received an oral summary from the Vice-Chancellor on matters arising since his report at the last meeting on 6th September 2018.

The OfS had not yet communicated a decision on the University's application for registration. One hundred and twenty-two providers had so far been registered and some had had conditions attached to their registration.

There was a threat of industrial action over pay. This was a national pay dispute but UCU had run separate institutional ballots rather than one aggregated national ballot. In some institutions the 50% turnout threshold might be passed, but not in others. Whilst there might not be a national dispute, there could be local disputes. The University had undertaken contingency planning in case there was a local dispute. The Council noted the high UCU membership at the University (60% of academic staff). The Vice-Chancellor outlined the lines of communication with UCU, including a formal joint negotiation council which met on a regular basis and meetings

with the branch Chair should any particular issues arise which a conversation could help to stop escalating to a formal level.

The Vice-Chancellor had attended a meeting between the Chief Executive and the leader of Birmingham City Council and the Vice-Chancellors of Aston, Birmingham, Birmingham City and University College Birmingham.

The meeting had been called to discuss the city's current position, its plans and how the local universities

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annual report this year but assurance had to be signed off in a slightly different way than previously. The main aspect of this was for Council members to provide a short statement (max 300 words) outlining the mechanisms to which they have been assured that they are able to sign the declarations satisfactorily. The Clerk did not have any concerns about the mechanisms that were already embedded within the University to enable Council members to be assured, but wanted Council members to be aware of the difference in expectations.

University would receive an additional £3m income. It was felt that a session for the Council on retention and learning analytics should be arranged for a future meeting.

Action: Clerk to the Council

The Council commended the University's new website which was felt to be a great improvement on the previous website.

The report was noted.

5.3 2018/19 Financial Update

The Council was provided with a paper giving a financial update for the 2018/19 financial year. The Chief Financial Officer advised that although student enrolment was not yet complete, if the final figures were as now predicted, income would be as expected. He reported that there were no particular concerns over non-pay costs. Capital expenditure had largely been spent for the year on the finalisation of the Darwin refurbishment. The £2.5m cash balance requirement would be met.

The only area of some concern was the need to reduce pay. Pay costs assumed significant vacancy savings, including a saving of £250,000 which had yet to be identified. The recruitment pause would continue for all but essential posts.

In response to a question, the Vice-Chancellor explained how the University assessed the impact of vacancy savings. Outstanding vacancies were reviewed monthly, and the review took into account reports from line managers: priority was given to posts which had a direct impact on the student experience. The University was working towards a full sustainability plan for the Council before the end of the calendar year and it was intended to devolve resources to line managers so that they could make decisions within their own area of autonomy.

The Vice-Chancellor reported that resources released would be used to invest in areas where market research had shown that there were large numbers of applicants; new programme proposals included the development of an LLB, a Computer Science degree and an Arts and Humanities liberal arts degree with a strong employability strand.

The Council discussed approaches to cost analysis and what research was available to inform

6. Reports from the Council Sub Committees

9.2 Rev Canon Evans led prayers in thanks for the life and work of Dr Mark Goodwin. The Council noted his generosity, kindness and calmness and the great contribution he had made to the Council.

10 . Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on Thursday 22nd November 2018.

The Council
Action Plan from the meeting held on 4th October 2018

Minute	Agenda Item	Action to be Taken	Person Responsible
4.1	Appointment and re-appointment of Council members	To notify Ms Jones of the Council's decision	Clerk to the Council
4.3.3	Prevent	To arrange for training for new Council members	Clerk to the Council
5.2	2018/19 Recruitment Update	Item on retention and learning analytics on a future agenda	Clerk to the Council
8.2	Estates Strategy Update	To arrange a tour of Darwin	