



Minutes for Meeting Book - 229th Meeting of Council, 19th October 2022

19/10/2022 | 10:00 - 00:00 - (GMT+00:00) Edinburgh

Room 402, Eastern Gateway/Teams

Attendees (20)

Prof Stuart Palmer (Chair); Prof Andrew Jones; Ms Amanda Rowlatt; Mr David Kennedy; Prof Hua Zhao; Prof Trevor Hoey; Mr Mark Garrett; Ms Lucinda Hunt; Prof David Delpy; Dr Peter Thomas; Dr Kevin Thomas; Dr Vineta Bhalla; Mr Mukhtar Ahmed; Mr Chris Maw; Ms Tone Rosingholm; Dr Rosa Scoble; Prof Paul Hellewell; Prof Geoff Rodgers; Ms Gemma Bailey; Ms Chiluba Musukuma

Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Andrew Murphy, Ms Josie Mangan and Ms Anne Waltham.

Declaration of Interests

Dr Vineta Bhalla declared that she had been appointed to The Hillingdon NHS Foundation Trust and The Northwest London Acute Collaborative.

Minutes of the 228th Meeting held on 7th July 2022 and EGM held on 3rd October 2022

In the minutes of the 228th meeting, two grammatical errors were noted in Para 4212.1, in respect of the first and last paragraphs.

The minutes of both meetings was approved.

Matters Arising

None.

Chair's Action to Report

Chairs action was taken in respect of approving the UBS Election Report, confirming the election of only the three new sabbatical officers to the UBS. Chairs action was also taken to re-appoint Dr Kevin Thomas to the Nominations Committee.

Council approved both actions.

The Chair used this opportunity to thank Council for inviting him to the Chair of Council and provided members with an overview of the next 12 months and what Council is looking to achieve.

In the first instance, the effectiveness review from John Rushforth and the recommendations made

The Deputy Chair, as Chair of the Nominations Committee, provided members with a brief update on the recruitment of a new Chancellor. The current Chancellor, Sir Richard Sykes has indicated that he would like to retire at the end of the year. The search agents, Minerva, were appointed to assist with the process of recruiting his replacement and a short list was settled on from the long list they provided. A good potential candidate was identified who is a member of the local community and he possesses a good understanding as to where the university is coming from. There has been a series of meetings and site meetings that have already taken place. The Chair of Council

The VC offered the members some clarity in respect of those committees that had been disbanded and the work that was being undertaken by the new strategic advisory groups.

It was recognised that a conversation with the Chair would be useful regarding how independent members could be engaged more effectively that would enable their expertise to be used whilst providing them with the right level of oversight on the direction of travel the university was undertaking.

Addressing the student engagement will necessitate a deeper reach into the student body, beyond the union, to understand their needs and requires a comprehensive continual engagement.

the university's income had increased last year, but it had not anticipated a similar increase of its bad debt provision. This year the bad debt provision has been matched with the level of increased income. However, it was noted that the figure provided was a prediction and not based on any specific bad debt that the university is aware of.

Estates Update

Apologies of absence had been received from the COO. Questions from members would be taken from the meeting and passed on to him.

It was commented that it would be helpful if the estates update was aligned to the strategy. It was acknowledged that as it currently read, it appeared to be three master plans that were concerned with reorganising what was currently in place.

The VC anticipated that a new strategy should be in place by the summer of 2023. A new working group chaired by the new PVC Enterprise and Employment is designed to make the estates approach strategic in relation to the planning process.

The VC was asked what the timetable was for moving professional staff from the Eastern Gateway building to St Johns. He explained that i

Audit Committee meetings now include specific deep-dive presentations on specific risks, which to date has included research income, international risk and cyber update.

Mention was made of the backlog of student misconduct cases, with many students approaching the end of their visa deadlines. There was a risk that some students may not end up receiving a degree.

A current big issue concerned teaching space and the room booking system. Reference was made to the first-year integrated engineering cohort and the desire for in-classroom teaching, rather than the course being run online.

A data protection audit had been conducted by an external expert, which the committee found extremely useful. The audit recognised the work that had been undertaken by the external expert brought in by the CGO to plug some of the gaps and ranked the university just below middle in terms of other HE providers. However, the auditor also highlighted the need for stronger systems for wider information governance, the need to look at data protection and information security and making sure that people understand the governance around it. The committee will be looking at the recommend-4.013 (secu)2.998 13.995

checks and balances take place and this includes the health and safety of the students, staff and the animal unit too.

The Chair of the Remuneration Committee informed Council that the committee had required to review a number of requests for compensation, particularly for new hires. It is anticipated that the ad hoc reviews will disappear as the organisation beds down. In the longer term, a review of the banding and hiring process together with understanding how that aligns with industry would be welcome.

The Chair of the Nominations Committee informed members that the committee had received an update on the recruitment of the Chancellor role, referred to earlier in the meeting. It was looking more strategically at how it could align the terms of members appointments with the terms on the committees. It also engaged in a discussion on appraisals for independent members.

The Chair informed members that there were plans to make the committee peripatetic, holding meetings at different locations across campus in order to meet staff and students in the process.

Date of Next Meeting

23rd November 2023