



Minutes for Meeting Book - 231st Meeting of Council

15/03/2023 | 14:00

Hamilton Building and on Teams

Attendees (27)

Ms Gemma Bailey; Prof David Delpy; Prof Andrew Jones; Mr David Kennedy; Ms Josie Mangan; Mr Chris Maw; Mr Andrew Murphy; Prof Geoff Rodgers; Dr Kevin Thomas; Ms Amanda Rowlatt; Prof Peter Thomas; Ms Tone Rosingholm; Dr Vineta Bhalla; Mr Suraj Shaw; Ms Chiluba Musukuma; Dr Nicola Rogers; Ms Lucinda Hunt; Mr Mukhtar Ahmed; Ms Anne Waltham; Prof Claire Turner; Prof Stuart Palmer (Chair); Prof Stephen Langdon; Prof Paul Hellewell; Dr Rosa Scoble; Ms Maddie McGowan; Mr Eliot Glover; Ms Jo Barry (Notes)

Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed members to the 231st meeting. Apologies were received from Prof Thomas Betteridge, Mr Mark Garrett, Prof Trevor Hoey, Ms Wiktoria Swoboda and Prof Hua Zhao.

Declaration of Interests

The Chair declared that he had been asked to join the Board at UCEA.

Minutes of the 230th Meeting held on 23rd November 2023

A member proposed one amendment to the minutes. The word 'REF' to be changed to 'TEF', under the item in the Vice Chancellor's Business. Pending this amendment, the minutes were recorded as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

Matters Arising

The Chair reported that the university had taken the decision to not proceed with the appointment of a new Chancellor at this stage. The recruitment process would probably commence again in the autumn.

A member noted that the minutes refer to the recommendation by the Audit Committee that a presentation be made to Council on the 'current state of cyber, the risks and challenges'. It

was agreed that the Chief Digital Information Officer would be invited to present to Council at its meeting in July.

ACTION: To provide a presentation to the July Council meeting on the current state of cyber, the risks and challenges. (Assignee(s): CGO/CDIO; Due Date: 12/07/2023)

Chair's Action

No actions to note.

OfS Reportable Events

No items reported.

FOR DISCUSSION

Vice Chancellor's Business

Vice Chancellor's Report

The Director of Finance was attending her last Council meeting before leaving the university and the VC expressed his thanks to her for all her support during her time at Brunel.

The university was moving forward with the Deputy Vice Chancellor appointment and extended his thanks to staff and independent members for their support with the informal and formal interview process.

Vice Chancellor's Sector Update

The dispute with UCU was continuing, with discussions ongoing at ACAS. There is a degree of optimism in respect of finding a resolution and an appetite to try to reach a longer-term position to avoid the industrial action seen in recent years.

Reference was made to the OfS proposal to charge universities for covering the costs of investigations. The costs to the university will be difficult to calculate until after the consultation, when further details are made available.

A question was asked as to the status of Horizon Europe, post the Windsor framework. There was a lack of clarity in terms of the funding; t

The committee were also updated on the current issue with the government concerning immigration and the student visa scheme.

A recently published article that detailed the University of East Anglia's £45m deficit was brought to members attention. Discussions followed to identify key learnings from this and it highlighted the importance of strategic prioritisation for Brunel.

Update on the Executive Board

Executive Board Committee and Sub-committee Restructure

An overview of the proposed changes to the reporting lines of sub-committees was given to members. In summary:

The Health & Safety Committee will report to Executive Board

The University Research Ethics Committee and its sub-committees will report to Senate

The Honorary Degrees Committee will become a joint annual committee of Council and Senate

HR&EDI will report into the Executive Board solely.

Members acknowledged the importance of ensuring that Council continues to have oversight in particular of HR&EDI and the Health & Safety Committee. Council will have access to the reports/minutes of these committees

It was requested that Council papers and file names should contain a date, given that they can be presented to members multiple times.

The recommended changes to the committees were **APPROVED**.

ACTION: To produce a Committees and Boards structure chart that details the inter-relationships and lines of accountability between committees. (Assignee(s): VC/CoS; Due Date: 12/07/2023)

ACTION: To explore alternative ways of regularised reporting through committee

Lecture Centre Roof Refurbishment - The works will provide high-performance insulation and new roof covering and any mechanical and electrical works that need to be resolved as part of a multi-year plan of intense work activity to limit operational impact. Discussions highlighted the importance of ensuring that teaching space is appropriately designed and installed with systematic technical support that positively impacts the student experience. Council **APPROVED** the request to proceed with the proposed refurbishment works.

Purchase of 9 Church Road - The purchase will enable widened access to Site 4 that is located behind the property and in proximity to properties already acquired. Following discussions, members **APPROVED** the purchase of 9 Church Road.

John Crank Site - The proposal to landscape the John Crank site to a design which allows for 2 marquees to be erected is being tendered. The business case to request approval would be finalised once the project costs and timescales are known, following completion of the tender evaluation. Council was in favour of the hoardings being removed and for the landscaping works to be undertaken as soon as possible. To avoid delays, Council approval would be sought by circulation.

Given the range of estates challenges for the university, the Chair proposed the setting up of an Estates Committee to support the Finance Committee in driving these matters forward.

HR Matters

Annual EDI Monitoring Report - The report provides an update on progress against the university's EDI strategy and plans and provides information on the equality and diversity of BUL's workforce. One member commented that the report did not explain the statistical significance of the data. It was requested that the report provide further clarity where the numbers are small so that percentages do not give the impression of statistical significance when there may be none. Some of the benchmarking information that the university obtains from bodies such as HESA will assist it to generate socio-economic data. It was **AGREED** that a revised report would be circulated for approval.

Pay Gap Report Members were keen that ways were found to make sense of the numbers contained within the report, even if they were the subject to limitations with regards to their

None.

Senate Updates

Council **APPROVED** the new Code of Pr PfP ~~PD~~ 3etf