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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETING: 5th July 2022

PRESENT: Revd Canon Peter Winn (in the Chair), Mrs Jane Beever (Vice-Chair), Dr Edwin Djabatey, Ms Jean Ellis, Revd Canon Chris Fallon, Dr Penny Haughan, Very Revd Dr Sue Jones, Fr Chris McCoy, Ms Lesley Martin-Wright, Dr Arthur Naylor, Revd Canon Professor Kenneth Newport, Mr John Norbury, Professor Gerald Pillay, Ms Paula Raper, Mr Ultan Russell, Mrs Maggie Swinson, Professor Caroline Wakefield, HH Judge Graham Wood QC (18 members)

By invitation: Mr Derrick Dykins (Clerk to Council) and Ms Erin Meharry (SU President Designate)

No Conflicts of Interest were reported.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Ms Ann Marie Costello, Mr Tim Alderman, and Ms Clara Priestley

2. **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th April 2022 were **APPROVED** as a correct record.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that were not included elsewhere on the agenda.

4. **Vice-Chancellor's Notes to Council**

Members had received the Vice Chancellor's Notes to Council which were presented by Professor Pillay. He highlighted the positive outcome of the recent Ofsted reinspection and the successful bid for Initial Teaching Training (ITT) accreditation with the new Institute established by the DfE. Unlike the majority of applicants, the University's accreditation submission was successful without any need to amend or resubmit in the second round. The appointment of a new Dean for the School of Education was imminent which will enable ITT to better prepare for the accreditation. Related to this, the Vice Chancellor expressed growing concern over how universities were being regulated for political ends and the associated erosion of their autonomy.

Professor Pillay noted the success of the University's REF submission and the growing depth of research at the University. He also highlighted progress with the proposed new IQ Building; further details are supplied under item 7iv.

The Vice Chancellor said that some members had already been giving support to specific Schools where they have expertise (e.g. Mr Alderman and ITT) and requested that all

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members consider taking a special interest in one of the Schools where they feel they may be able to assist with networking and other expertise.

5. Clerk's Business

Mr Dykins had provided members with the following documents; Calendar of Meetings and Other Events; the Supply Chain Code of Conduct; the Equality & Diversity Annual Report and the Governor's Handbook. These do not require approval, but Mr Dykins asked for any comments on these to be given to him outside the meeting and before the end of the month.

6. Senate

- (i) Members had received the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2022 for information. There were no comments from members.
- (ii) Members had received the updated Fitness to Practise (FtP) Policy which Mr Dykins explained had been updated to reflect changes in the School structure and good practice from the OIA.

Members **APPROVED** the FtP Policy.

7. Finance and General Purposes Committee

- (i) Members had received the minutes of the meeting held on 7th June 2022. Mr Norbury highlighted the update on the current financial year, where the original 3% surplus had increased to 7%. He also highlighted the Committee's recommendation in the budget for next year that the surplus be set at 3%. He noted that, as with this year, the expectation would be that the University would exceed the surplus.

Members **APPROVED** the surplus of 3% in the 2022-23 budget.

- (ii) Mr Norbury also noted the discussion on the liquidation of Urban Hope, an initiative which began around 15 years ago but had drifted without any activity to the point where the company should be liquidated. Two options were outlined at the meeting and it had been agreed that these would be discussed further internally before a final outcome, which will be reported at the next Council meeting.
- (iii) Members had received the Carbon Reduction Plan, which had been recommended for approval at the FGP meeting last term but had not been presented to Council in April.

Members **APPROVED** the Carbon Reduction Plan.

- (iv) Members had received the request for formal approval for the IQ Building project with a budget of approximately £13m. This had not been ready to be signed off at the meeting in June, but in a subsequent meeting it was agreed that this be put to Council for approval. This will be a major infrastructure development for the University and will benefit the University for years to come. There is a mechanism within the contract to keep abreast of costs.

Members **APPROVED** the IQ Building Project.

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8. Audit and Risk Management

- (i) Members had received the minutes and addendum of the meeting held on 23rd June 2022. They had also received two documents on the Access & Participation Plan (APP). Dr Naylor highlighted the presentation given by Dr Haughan at the meeting on the APP, OfS Condition B3 (the Student Experience) and the TEF, all of which are conditions the University has to meet in order to maintain its registration with the OfS. The APP had been reviewed at Audit Committee in January, but since then there had been a change of Director at the OfS who requested some different criteria. These variations are summarised in the Variations document provided to Council, and require approval. There is also a summary document for public display on the University's website.

Dr Naylor noted that there are areas in the APP around attainment and continuation which the University had concerns about and these had entered the Risk Register in fourth and fifth positions last month; amongst other sanctions there are concerns that the University will not retain its Gold TEF award. Dr Haughan explained that key metrics for all three areas (APP, B3 and TEF) were provided by the OfS with thresholds which had to be met; this amounted to over 1,000 metrics that have to be addressed and was causing a significant amount of additional work for the University. The University was capturing these metrics in bespoke tables for each Department where the subject is below a threshold, with a requirement for a detailed action plan which will be monitored via the University's Annual Review & Enhancement (ARE) exercise.

Dr Naylor said that it was clear that the burden of regulation from the OfS had increased significantly with a requirement to meet 131 conditions of registration in 7 different areas. He said it was also clear their behaviour was increasingly more akin to Ofsted in that failure to meet thresholds could result in an inspection. However, the Committee had been impressed with the analysis and approach of such a daunting task and is confident that the University is doing everything in its power to address all areas of concern. Dr Naylor noted that the APP is on next year's Internal Audit Schedule.

Members **APPROVED** the APP Variations document, and the APP summary.

- (ii) Dr Naylor noted that of the four Internal Audit reports received, three gave substantial assurance. The Students' Union Governance report provided reasonable assurance but the SU were already working on the actions; the Committee felt these were attainable over the coming months. He also noted that Mr Dykins had presented a snapshot of University Policies and Regulations which highlighted ongoing work, and demonstrated how the University was monitoring updates to policies.
- (iii) Members had received the Scheme of Delegation and the Statement of Primary Responsibilities. There had been minor amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to include reference to the management of the Investment Portfolio and other cosmetic changes to role titles. The Statement of Primary Responsibilities now included reference to this, as well as sustainability and the OfS.

Members **APPROVED** the Scheme of Delegation and the Statement of Primary Responsibilities.

- (iv) Members had received the Email Policy, which had been updated to reflect the risk that email poses to cybersecurity.

Members **APPROVED** the email policy.

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- (v) Reserved Business item, Appointment of Internal Auditors: Members had received the addendum to the minutes. Dr Naylor described the procurement process and noted that despite being invited to bid, the main suppliers in the sector did not submit a tender. Three tenders were received, but one withdrew leaving just two suppliers. Both were interviewed by members of the Committee (minus Ms Suchoparek who had declared an interest in one of the parties) and both performed well. On the balance of quality and cost, the Audit Committee recommended the re-appointment of RSM as the internal auditors for the University for the next three years.

Members **APPROVED** the appointment of RSM as internal auditors for the next three years.

9. Staffing Committee

Members had received the minutes of the meeting held on 31st May 2022 and the Chair's Notes from that meeting. Ms Swinson highlighted the successful Ofsted inspection and the achievement of accreditation against the new criteria for the provision of initial teacher training from 2024. She also noted that, on industrial action, the Committee received a report indicating that the most recent ballot had not reached the necessary 50% of members voting and there was therefore, currently, no threat of Action Short of a Strike. The Committee was also advised that some institutions were making individual pay arrangements with their staff, and that the most recent pay offer for support staff had been rejected by Unison. On Gender Pay the median had dropped because students had not been used as much as in previous years.

10. Council Standing Committee on Health and Safety

- (i) Members had received the minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2022 which were presented by Fr Fallon. He noted that this Committee gave a level of scrutiny to the work of the Health & Safety Consultative Committee ensuring that items are actioned and followed through. Fr Fallon also highlighted the changing Covid situation and the current relaxation of regulations; the Committee acknowledged that these may need to be reintroduced at some stage later this year. Overall, the Committee was satisfied that the situation was being managed effectively and there had been no significant outbreaks amongst staff or students.
- (ii) Members had received the Animals on Campus Policy.

Members **APPROVED** the Animals on Campus Policy.

11. Students' Union

Members had received the President's Report for information. Council wished to formally thank Ms Priestley for her leadership and services to the Student body, and for her support for the University.

12. Recruitment of the New Vice Chancellor

Canon Winn updated members on today's Selection Committee long-listing meeting which had involved the Committee reviewing extensive documentation for 30 applicants. He explained that Perrett Laver had put applications into three categories: those in the first category met the essential requirements of the post; the second category met some of the requirements, and had experience or background that the Selection Committee may think

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worth considering; the third category of applicants did not meet requirements. 11 applicants were agreed for the long-list, and Perrett Laver's next task will be to meet each of those with a view to ascertaining more about their suitability for the role, and explore specific aspects of their application that the Committee requested. They will then suggest a shortlist of candidates to the Committee on 7th September 2022 for consideration; the Committee can then decide whether they wish to go ahead with Perrett Laver's suggestions, or whether they would like to amend the shortlist. Final interviews with stakeholders and the Committee will take place in October. Canon Winn noted that, as per good practice, the University had appointed Professor Joy Carter, the recently retired Vice Chancellor of the University of Winchester, as the external member of the Committee.

13. Any Other Business

- (i) Ms Swinson noted that she had met an acquaintance attending the Edmonton Area Clergy Conference which is currently taking place at the University and they had commended the work of the Events Team on the level of service they had been providing. Members agreed that the Team were to be formally congratulated.
- (ii) Dr Haughan reminded members that graduation ceremonies would take place on 19th, 20th and 21st July in the Metropolitan Cathedral and encouraged members to attend. She noted that all ceremonies had reverted to the pre-Covid model.
- (iii) Members requested that the Chaplaincy Report be received at the next Council meeting.

Action: Mr Dykins to arrange for the next meeting

- (iv) Post-Covid, members queried the format of examinations, particularly the use of online assessment and possible incidents of plagiarism. Dr Haughan said that this summer the University had returned to standard examinations in the Sports Hall using pre-Covid protocols. In response to a request from students who had not experienced such examinations due to Covid, the University had allowed Level H to continue with online examinations. Ms Raper said that such examinations were timed with only a short window so it would be almost impossible for a student to engage the services of an essay mill.
- (v) Mr Dykins updated members on progress with nominations for a co-opted FGP Committee member and made a request for nominations to replace Fr Michael O'Dowd who has announced that he is stepping down from Council.