

CONFIRMED

LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETING: 26th April 2022

PRESENT: Revd Canon Peter Winn (in the Chair), Ms Ann Marie Costello, 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, Fr Michael O'Dowd, Ms Clara Priestley, Professor Gerald Pillay, Ms Paula Raper, Mr Ultan Russell, Mrs Maggie Swinson, Professor Caroline Wakefield, HH Judge Graham Wood QC (19 members)

By invitation: Mr Derrick Dykins (Clerk to Council)

No Conflicts of Interest were reported.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Mr Tim Alderman, Mrs Jane Beever (Vice-Chair) and Mr John Norbury.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2021 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 strike action and noted that the recent ballot for *action short of a strike* did not succeed. There will be no further strike action for the University this academic year; teaching continues for a further five weeks after Easter and there will be a push to ensure all students have as good an end to the year as possible.

Professor Pillay said that the Islington building had been mothballed due to planning permission issues and a spike in costs related to the supply and demand of materials; it was noted that in the meantime the site would be covered up so as not to distract from the aesthetics of the Campus.

5. Clerk's Business

Mr Dykins noted that CERG had met on 28th February 2022 to re-start the work of the Group. The Group discussed progress on the action plan, and plans to do an effectiveness review once the new Vice Chancellor is installed. Currently Mr Dykins is working on updating the mapping document using the latest CUC Code of Governance.

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6. Senate

Members had received the minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2022, which were presented by Professor Pillay in his capacity as Chair of Senate. He noted that the University was focussed on the accreditation of Initial Teacher Training (submitted in February 2022) and preparations for the Ofsted follow-up inspection which will take place sometime between now and the end of June. Professor Newport noted that every institution has to apply for accreditation from Sept 2024 and the outcome of the University's bid will be released in May 2022. He said that several HEIs who had submitted bids were contacted last week and asked to revise some sections of their application, suggesting they would not get through the process without this, though the University has not been contacted. Without accreditation the University will not be able to deliver ITT from September 2024. Even if accreditation is granted there will still be a major project to prepare for 2024 and maintain the accreditation. The project will involve a significant enhancing of the mentoring system. Mr Russell suggested raising the matter with the Bishop in the House of Lords as the Cathedrals group will be disproportionately affected by ITT and the current changes.

Action: Canon Winn and Professor Pillay to discuss further the possibility of involving the Bishop.

7. Finance and General Purposes Committee

- (i) Members had received the minutes of the meeting held on 24th March 2022. Fr McCoy highlighted that in 2019-20, 32% of HE providers were in deficit, and that this is likely to have increased (and to continue increasing) in subsequent years. The University is therefore in a relatively healthy position financially. The most recent forecast noted that the surplus had increased from 3% to 7% for the current academic year, as a result of careful budgeting. In 2022-23, the projected surplus starts again at 3%, though this is expected to increase as the year unfolds.
- (ii) Barclays Bank Letter of variation: members had received the letter and the explanatory document which advised that the University will receive approximately £80k back from Barclays as they had miscalculated part of the rate. In order to facilitate the repayment, the terms of the contract require a slight variation. This is a minor technicality to ensure that the Bank of England rate, rather than that based on Libor, is used.

Members **APPROVED** the Letter of Variation.

- (iii) Sustainability Policy: Members had received the Policy.

Members **APPROVED** the Sustainability Policy.

8. Audit and Risk Management

Members had received the minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held on 25th January 2022 and the Addendum to the minutes. Dr Naylor noted the Committee had focussed heavily on Ofsted-related matters, particularly on subject review and mentor training where progress had been made, particularly in evidencing tracking using University-developed IT solutions. They had also focussed on cybersecurity.

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He said that the OfS had set up their own schedule for reporting on the TRAC return which had meant that, for the last three years, a January meeting was required making an uneven balance of Audit Committee meetings throughout the year. However, this year they had changed the schedule meaning that future meetings could be more evenly scheduled.

Dr Naylor noted the Internal Audit reports on data quality (for staff records) and sustainability (carbon management) both of which gave substantial assurance. Members were pleased that the sustainability agenda was being taken seriously. The Access and Participation Plan (APP) is also monitored by the Committee and Dr Haughan will be invited to the next meeting to update Council on developments in this area as the OfS are in the process of, once more, changing their approach to the APP. On the OfS, it was noted that tracking conditions of registration is a challenge due to constant changes and often a confusing range of online documentation. The latest challenge is a highly data-based approach looking at a number of factors. Universities have been given a set of thresholds which each HEI is expected to meet. The University has been sent 1,045 different metrics which it is required to meet by September around retention, employability and success. This will be very much a deficit model in that the OfS will only be interested in thresholds that the University hasn't met. Currently there are approximately 40 data sets which pose a risk. Areas that the OfS deem to be of concern means they can insist on an inspection, a fine or remove registration for certain subjects.

Dr Naylor also highlighted the process for the recruitment of internal auditors.

9. Staffing Committee

Members had received the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2022 for information. Members queried what action had been taken in relation to the crisis in Ukraine. Professor Pillay said that the University had reached out to staff from both Ukraine and Russia to ensure their wellbeing. It was noted that vice chancellors have formally broken relations with Russia and committed themselves to Ukraine. There has been only one student issue when a student went back to Ukraine to help a friend.

Professor Newport noted the recent UCU ballot and ongoing discussions around the national dispute and confirmed that the University was still actively engaging with UCU.

10. Council Standing Committee on Health and Safety

Members had received the minutes of the meeting held on 1st March 2022. On Covid, it was noted that the data does not seem to align with government regulations, but staff at the University were commended for dealing with Covid regulations so effectively.

11. Nominations Committee

Members had received the minutes of the meeting held on 16th February 2022. It was noted that Canon Winn's term as Chair of Council ends in July 2023 and Canon Winn left the meeting to allow a frank discussion about the possibility of extending his term by one year to allow a smooth transition with the new Vice Chancellor in 2023.

Members **APPROVED** the proposal unanimously to extend the Chair's term by one year.

12. Students' Union

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Members had received the President's Report which was presented by Ms Priestley. She highlighted the elections for the new sabbatical officers for 2022. She noted that the SU had lost two members of staff and they were currently recruiting to replace these. The budget reforecast has been completed and is now within the required level of surplus. RSM have also their conducted audit.

On 30th November, the SU was involved in city-wide protests to highlight the "spiking" issues (including drink spiking and the use of injections) within the city, and other initiatives to tackle issues with the city's nightlife. The SU have also secured a partnership with the Tender charity, which acts to prevent abuse and SU personnel have been trained by them, as well 30 students in sports and other societies. The Student Opinion panels are running well and feedback has been given to Dr Haughan on views on running exams. Ms Priestley thanked Mr Alderman for approaching her to speak to his students about university life and staying safe as a female.

In March, there was a student-led awards ceremony with 15 awards going to staff and students. Targets have been exceeded and the University is winning leagues and being represented across the country.

Currently there is work on a Disclosure handbook which gives students a step-by-step guide on making a disclosure, and gives information on support and how to be a good "bystander". There will be a graduation ball for Level H students to celebrate their time at the University, particularly during the pandemic.

Ms Priestley noted that she had supported over 100 students on a one-to-one basis, including incidents of sexual violence against students, enabling them to get closer to justice. There were also issues with landlords which the SU were able to support students with.

13. Recruitment of the New Vice Chancellor

Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Council held on 22nd March 2022 were received. Canon Winn explained that, following the tender process, Perrett Laver (PL) had been appointed as the executive search firm at a cost of £32k. There had already been several meetings with PL personnel, and the Selection Committee had met with them today to discuss approaches and had been impressed with their understanding of the University and their active engagement in the process. A schedule has been drafted which includes meetings with stakeholder groups. Mr Catterall will set up times when Council members can meet with PL.