

COUNCIL

28 July 2021 at 14:00

James Clerk Maxwell Building conference rooms and Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

Sections marked Commercial in Confidence are claimed as exempt from publication under Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act on the grounds of commercial sensitivity.

Members:	Chair – External member	Mr Michael Queen
	Joint Vice-Chair – External member	Mr Vib Baxi
	Joint Vice-Chair - External member	Ms Rachel Hubbard
	Treasurer - External member	Mr Robert Napier
	President & Vice-Chancellor	Prof Max Lu
	Provost & Executive Vice-President	Vacant
	Vice-Provost, Education	Prof Osama Khan
	Vice-Provost, Research & Innovation	Prof David Sampson
	Chief Operating Officer	Mr Andy Chalklin
	Vice President, External Engagement	Mr Patrick Degg
	President, Students' Union	Ms Lizzie Rodulson
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Esat Alpay
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Amelia Hadfield
	External member	Mr Elliot Antrobus-Holder
	External member	Ms Judith Eden
	External member	Mr Charlie Geffen
	External member	Dr Mike Goodfellow
	External member	Ms Pam Jestico
	External member	Mr Nigel Jones
	External member	Mr Peter Maskell
	External member	Ms Pam Powell

In attendance: Ms Ros Allen, Head of Governance Services
Ms Martine Carter, Vice-President - Strategy, Planning & Performance
Mr Phil Grainge, Chief Financial Officer
Ms Sarah Litchfield, University Secretary & Legal Counsel

By invitation: Mr Alan Sutherland, CEO of USSU (Items 21/060 and 21/062c)
Professor Jim Al-Khalili (item 21/069.2)

A INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

21/053 Preliminaries

- .1 Judith Eden, Rachel Hubbard and Pam Powell sent apologies.
- .2 Ajay Ajimobi, the incoming USSU president, had hoped to attend the meeting but was unfortunately not available.
- .3 It was noted that Esat Alpay was attending the meeting virtually.

21/054 Declarations of Interest

- .1 None

21/055 Minutes

- .1 The minutes of the meetings held on 11 May 2021 were **adopted** and agreed for publication on the website.

21/056 Matters Arising

- .1 The updated actions log was **noted**.

21/057 Chair's Items

- .1 Council **ratified** the acceptance of the John Templeton Foundation philanthropic grant which was approved by Convene resolution on 20 July.
- .2 Council **ratified** the Chair's action to extend the terms of the current Senate representatives on Council to the end of October 2021 to allow time for Senate to select new representatives.

21/058 Vice-Chancellor's Report and Performance Monitoring

- .1 The VC presented the report.
- .2 Council noted the following highlights:
- The contribution of the whole Surrey community to the strong NSS results were recognised. Thanks were particularly noted to OK, the CSO and the USSU.
 - This year's NSS scores will be used for the forthcoming Guardian league table alongside last year's Graduate Outcome and it was anticipated the combined improvements would increase Surrey's standing significantly.
 - Graduations had gone very well and been appreciated by attendees.
 - Whilst research awards remained behind prior years the University was aware of a number of awards to be announced shortly which would help to narrow the gap.
 - The OfS had announced that there would be a competitive process for accessing teaching capital grants this year rather than an automatic allocation as in prior years.
 - With respect to staff, actions in response to the staff surveys were continuing and the appraisal round would start shortly.
 - Six applicants had been shortlisted for the role of FEPS Dean.

B ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR APPROVAL

21/059 Education and Student Experience Business

a) Education Report

- .1 Osama Khan presented the paper.
- .2 Council welcomed the new report, recognising the value of the clear presentation of KPIs and other matters on education and the student experience.

b) NSS outcome and key highlights

- .1 Osama Khan gave a presentation.
- .2 There was discussion of the possible 'depressing' effect of the pandemic on scores, whilst recognising that Surrey's strong performance in responding to the pandemic had contributed to the University's increase from 111 to 25 in the ranking. While the NSS questions specifically on the pandemic did not contribute to the ranking, the scores did correlate with overall satisfaction.
- .3 There had been some improvement in the Assessment and Feedback score, but further work was needed, particularly in ensuring consistency across all academic areas. The Curriculum Design Review Programme should also bring significant improvements to assessment and feedback.
- .4 It was recognised that improvements to the SSR over the next few years should contribute to satisfaction as there was a correlation between lower SSRs and overall satisfaction.
- .5 It was noted that eight students had been recruited to carry out qualitative analysis of the student experience of hybrid learning. The University was focused on keeping any benefits of hybrid education, whilst providing students with the valued face to face learning. The University needed to maintain its edge on innovation in education using technology and would carry forward with the best of hybrid education.
- .6 It was recognised that the University would need to continue to work hard to improve its scores and maintain its ranking in the top quartile. The 85 Plan would continue as it was effective with its three aspects: hearts and minds, assessment and feedback and excellence in teaching (including performance management). The KPIs for NSS 2022 included MEQ (Module Evaluation Questionnaire) KPIs: overall satisfaction 85%, Assessment and Feedback 75% and Organisation and Management 80%.

c) Degree outcomes report

- .1 Osama Khan presented the paper.
- .2 It was noted that there had been some negative comments in the NSS responses regarding the reduction in the proportion of good degrees. Council recognised that the quality of the education and the value of a Surrey degree must always be the highest priority.
- .3 Council **approved** the Degree Outcomes Statement for publication on the University website.

d) Senate Report

- .1 Council noted the paper.

21/060 USSU Annual Report

- .1 Alan Sutherland and Lizzie Rodulson presented the paper.
- .2 The USSU were working with departmental student societies to engage with more student views and experiences. It was recognised that some groups of students (particularly mature, PGR and PT) were less likely to engage with the USSU and less likely to have a high level of

satisfaction with USSU services. The USSU were working more with the Doctoral College to engage more with PGR students.

- .3 It was noted that the Chief Student Officer was leading a project to examine the reasons behind differential results for students on the same programme. As part of the project, focus groups were being used to understand the experiences of groups such as mature and disabled students.
- .4 It was recognised that there was a wide range of student views on online learning, and it would not be possible to satisfy all students. It was suggested that online lectures should be professionalised and retained, and the staff time saved used to provide more seminar contact time with students.
- .5 The University executive team were thanked for their hard work and collaboration with the USSU. The USSU had been particularly impressed with the speed and confidence of University decision making over the previous 18 months.
- .6 Council recognised LR as an outstanding president and thanked her for her hard work and great approach.

21/061 2021/22 University budget and subsequent years financial plan

- .1 Martine Carter and Phil Grainge gave a presentation.
- .2 Council noted that the budget and financial plan had been to Finance Committee and noted the focus of discussions at that committee.
- .3 Progress against the strategic KPIs and the financial plan would be monitored, recognising that they were mutually dependent. Each Strategic Workstream would be measured against its KPIs which in turn have been mapped to the University's agreed strategic objectives. Achieving the plan as set out in the papers would indicate success of the workstreams and is therefore the benchmark against which we will measure our performance.
- .4 It was noted that, with the end of the pandemic, the University was confident it would be able to increase international student numbers as per the plan, particularly given its improved NSS and expected improvement in the league tables and the reintroduction of the post study work visa in the UK.
- .5 Council **approved** the 21/22 budget and **noted** the future years' financial plan.

21/062 Governance

a) Audit and Assurance Committee Terms of Reference

- .1 Michael Goodfellow presented the paper. It was noted that interviews were taking place in August to fill the co-opted member vacancy.
- .2 Council **approved** the Terms of Reference.

b) Amended Ordinances

- .1 Sarah Litchfield presented the paper. It was noted that the rationale behind the move to

select the Senate representatives on Council from amongst its non-Executive Board members was to ensure there was a heightened academic voice on Council.

.2 Council **approved** the amendments.

c) Quinquennial Review of the Students' Union

.1 Sarah Litchfield presented the paper with Alan Sutherland in attendance.

.2 Council noted that the recommendations mostly concerned minor matters.

.3 It was important to ensure that positive momentum was passed to the next team of sabbatical officers.

d) Sale of Shares Policy

.1 David Sampson presented the paper. It was noted that the University was well placed to do more in the development of potential spin outs in areas such as animal health and space. It was suggested that there should be consideration of establishing a commercialisation committee, including lay Council members experienced in this area.

Action: DS to consider.

.2 Council **approved** the policy.

e) Approach to annual contracting authority status under public contracts regulations

.1 Sarah Litchfield presented the paper.

.2 Council **approved** the approach.

21/063 Subcommittee reports

a) Student Experience Committee

.1 Council noted the report from the Committee chair. Particular thanks were noted to the student and academic representatives on the committee.

b) Finance Committee

.1 Council noted the report from the Committee chair.

c) Audit and Assurance Committee

.1 Council noted the report from the Committee chair.

21/064 Emeritus nominations

.1 Max Lu presented the paper.

.2 Council **approved** the two recommendations

C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

21/065 Health and Safety report

Council **noted** the report and asked for further information regarding the implications of the 'moderate' risk rating assigned to buildings from the Fire Risk Assessment programme.

Action: AC and SL to provide clarification of level of risk.

21/066 Blackwell Park Ltd annual report

Council **noted** the report.

21/067 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion annual report

Council **noted** the report.

21/068 Executive Board report

Council **noted** the report.

D CLOSING ITEMS

21/069 Any Other Business

.1 Noting that it was their last Council meeting, Peter Maskell, Lizzie Rodulson, Patrick Degg and David Sampson were thanked for their contributions to Council and the wider University. In particular, Peter Maskell's six years on Council and chairmanship of the Surrey Sports Park Board were recognised.

.2 Council received a presentation from Professor Jim Al-Khalili on his research.

21/070 Date of next meeting

28 September 2021

Mr Michael Queen
Chair