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UNIVERSITY OF KENT

MEETING OF COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2023
Rochester Boardroom, R2-09, Medway Campus**

Present: The Chair of Council, Dame Ursula Brennan; The Deputy Chair of Council and Chair of Finance & Resources Committee, Andrew Newell; Chair of Audit Committee, Mark Preston; The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Karen Cox; Professor Richard Reece, Deputy Vice Chancellor Education and Student Experience (ESE); Zaid Mahmood; Professor Iain Wilkinson; Ben Bradley; Gabriel MacGregor; Michael Crick; Xian Chan; Dan Cook; Dr Will Norman; Neil Davies; Colin Carmichael.

Via MS Teams: Professor Georgina Randsley de Moura, Deputy Vice Chancellor Strategy and Performance (S&P); Kim Lowe; Alex Perkins; Mima Osmani.

In attendance: Chief Financial Officer (Jane Higham); Director of Governance and Assurance (Secretary to the Council) (Dr Sinéad Critchley); Head of Secretariat (Natasha Neill); Governance Support Officer (Clare Cockerell), Professor Ben Hutchinson (for item 8).

Apologies for absence: Mayuri Lakhani, Chris Barron, Peter Pentecost.

5560 Chair's Introduction

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies for absence.

No new declarations of interest were noted.

5561 Minutes for approval

C2022/059 Minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2023 were approved with one amendment: Minute 5556 "Reputational Risk" heading amended to "Reputational Risk Mitigation".

5562 Matters Arising

C2022/060 Action Log was noted and action due dates were confirmed.

5563 Vice Chancellor and President's Communications

The Vice Chancellor welcomed Council to Medway and thanked the student representatives for giving a tour of the campus. Kent's footprint on the historic dockyard and the Docking Station project were highlighted.

Council noted a verbal update on the following items

- Docking Station
- Windsor Framework
- Inflation
- The Budget
- Sustainable Funding Models
- Life-Long Learning Entitlement (LLE)
- Industrial Relations

- Financial update
- Size and Shape

[confidential]

5564 Strategic Plan and Current Performance Dashboard report C2022/061 Dashboard report was noted.

[confidential]

5565 KPI Deep Dive: C2022/062 Education - Academic Quality & Standards and Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) was noted.

Academic Quality & Standards

The update outlined the changes to quality and assurance processes in response to the Office for Students Conditions of Registration, in relation to quality, reliable standards and positive outcomes for all students (the B-conditions). The DVD ESE explained the metrics for the B-conditions and the implications for Kent.

Council noted that the B-Conditions redefined quality and standards for the HE sector in England. Provision at The University of Kent satisfied the numerical thresholds set in Condition B3 and indicated that our courses were delivering successful outcomes for our students, meaning that Kent could be considered as compliant with this key measure. This would be a key metric for the future but there was no present cause for concern.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The paper also updated Council on the Provider and Student submissions to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). These were submitted to the OfS in January 2023 and outcomes were expected in August. The submissions outlined the issues around quality of experience and what Kent had been doing as an institution since 2017 to show a continuation of excellent provision. There was no intimation that the quality of the experience had deteriorated, although submission documents highlight that NSS scores have declined since the last TEF exercise in 2017.

Lecture assessments were discussed as well as how student feedback was reflected. Professor Iain Wilkinson, Academic Staff Representative gave an overview of the process; students were able to feedback and assess their lecturer along with qualitative feedback which was then fed back to Directors of Division. The student voice was noted as essential to hone assessments alongside an understanding of what is feasible for academics and to drive continual improvement. Council noted the importance of undertaking feedback and review for staff, and the value of a light touch process that could be immediately enacted.

Council noted the need to keep academic quality and standards on the agenda, given their responsibilities regarding providing academic assurance to the regulator.

Alex Perkins left the meeting.

Professor Ben Hutchinson, Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience, joined the meeting.

5566 Size and Shape: Arts and Humanities structure C2022/063 Arts and Humanities Structure was noted by Council.

[confidential]

Following discussion Council **Approved** and **Ratified** 'Structure 1' as the proposed new Arts and Humanities structure.

Professor Ben Hutchinson, Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience, left the meeting.

5567 University of Kent Brussels School of International Studies

Following recent consideration and recommendation by the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC), the DVC S&P presented the proposal for closure of The Brussels School of International Studies (BSIS), **Paper C2022/064** which was noted by Council.

[confidential]

Following discussion Council **Approved** Option 4 to allow the lease to lapse in Summer 2024 and wind-down the University's operations at BSIS.

**5568 Appointment of the Chair of Council
C2022/065 Recommendation from Lay Nominations Committee** was noted.

[confidential]

Following discussion, Council unanimously **Approved** the appointment of Mark Preston as Chair of Council.

5569 Any Other Business
No further items of business were raised.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked those present for their contributions to the discussion and closed the meeting.

5570 Dates of Future Meetings (including the meeting schedule for 2023/24) were noted.

5571 Below the Line items

Council **approved and/or noted** as appropriate the following papers:

- **C2022/066** Council Committee Meeting Schedule 2023/24
- **C2022/067** Minutes of Audit Committee meeting of 20 February 2023
- **C2022/068** Report from the Honorary Degrees Committee of 1 March 2023
- **C2022/069** Report of Senate meeting of 8 March 2023
- **C2022/071** Minutes of Finance & Resources Committee of 10 March 2023
- **C2022/072** External Auditor for a five-year contract from year ended 31 July 2023 onwards
- **C2022/073** Report on Kent Union Elections (Lead Kent)
- **C2022/074** Council Forward Programme 2022/23

The Proposed Terms of Reference for the Joint Standing Committee on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression (SCAFFE), **C2022/070** was deferred and agreed to go before Ethics Committee for further review.

Notes

1. Papers

Copies are available on the Council eboard portal (Diligent Boards) or on request from the Secretary. Approved Minutes and many of the papers are published on the University SharePoint site at <https://livekentac.sharepoint.com/sites/council>.

2. Queries

Any queries should be addressed to Dr Sinead Critchley, Director of Governance and Assurance (Secretary to Council), (email: S.Critchley-2002@kent.ac.uk).