

20/46 A meeting of the Council was held online on Monday 6 July 2020 at 2.15 pm.

The President	
The Vice-Presidents	(Mr R.E.R. Evans and Mrs K. Owen)
The Vice-Chancellor	
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor	
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor	(Professor M. Fellowes)
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor	(Professor E.M. McCrum)
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor	(Professor D. Zaum)

Professor J. Board
Mr K. Corrigan
Mrs P. Egan
Professor C.L. Furneaux
Mrs H. Gordon

It was reported that, consequent upon the Students' Union elections, the following would be members of the Council in the Session 2020-21:

Members:

Miss Rachel Osbourne RUSU President
Miss Bandana Barki RUSU Welfare Officer.

20/49 Documents sealed and to be sealed (Item 4.1)

The Council received a list of documents sealed and to be sealed.

'That the Council approve the action taken by the Officers and Members in affixing the University Seal to documents sealed since the last Ordinary Meeting of the Council and authorise the Seal of the University to be affixed to the documents to be sealed as now reported.'

20/50 Declarations of Interest Register 2019-20 (Item 4.2)

The Council received the Declarations of Interest Register 2019-20.

20/51 Diversity and Inclusion (Item 5)

The Council received the Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2018-19 and a presentation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Dr A. Laville, Dean for Diversity and Inclusion, explaining the background to the report and providing an update on more recent developments.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Dr Laville outline7loutel(e)5.8 (o)-8.7 (n)0.5 (m)2.3 (o)2.2 (r)-2 0.[o]-14 0 0 1-0.00

in the attainment gap, gave an account of those groups supporting progress in this area, and spoke of the continuing work on disability awareness training. Dr Laville explained that the University's work on equality, diversity and inclusion was rooted in the University's values and beliefs and in the experiences of its community, but was also a business imperative offering a competitive advantage. It was not simply a matter of legal and regulatory compliance.

In response to questions, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Dr Laville spoke of the challenges of normalising conversations across the various characteristics and overcoming the discomfort many felt in discussing these issues. Working towards the various charter marks helped to develop awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion across the University, to embed further these values in the University's culture, and to normalise conversations around these matters. The University was also successful in engaging the public with equality, diversity and inclusion issues through its public lectures series, seminars, and participation in networks.

The Council thanked the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Dr Laville for their presentation, and commended the University's progress in this area.

'That the Diversity and Inclusion Report, now submitted, be received.'

20/52 Oral Report on RUSU Priorities (Item 6.1)

Miss Osbourne and Miss Barki reported that the new sabbatical team was currently refining its priorities for the coming year, based on ~~the~~ their manifesto commitments and drawing on the experience and expertise of the RUSU management team. Key themes would include: improvements in feedback to students on assessed work; student support; study space; and the maintenance of a high quality student experience notwithstanding restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic and actions taken to mitigate the pandemic's financial consequences. The officers would report to Council at its next meeting on the progress of their work.

In response to questions, Miss Osbourne and Miss Karki indicated that students' reactions to the University's response to the pandemic had been mixed: some had had a positive experience of online delivery of teaching and assessment, others less so; and, while many students had been disappointed by the University's rejection of a 'no detriment' policy, the safety net and other measures had generally been seen as a reasonable compromise.

The Council joined the President in wishing them an enjoyable and productive year.

20/53 Report of the Student Experience Committee (Item 6.2)

adaptations and others with the potential for adoption in the longer term. There was a

In response to a question from Mr Milhofer, the Vice-Chancellor indicated that, while the government was willing to invest in research ~~in~~ and areas related to health and directly relevant to the economic recovery, it was sceptical about the value of some undergraduate education and about the size and shape of the sector. Its priorities were the discontinuation of 'low value' degree programmes (defined in terms of graduate salaries) and the promotion of skills-based education serving the needs of local economies. It was therefore unrealistic to expect the government to provide a general support package for the sector.

'That the Report of the Vice-Chancellor, now submitted, be approved.'

20/55 Report of the Senate (Item 8)

The Council received the Report of the meeting of the Senate held on 25 June 2020.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that the amendments to the Ordinances replaced gendered with gender-neutral language, and renamed the Department of Art as Reading School of Art.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor explained that the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, published in October 2019, provided a framework for good research conduct and governance. The Concordat introduced a requirement that the governing body consider and, if appropriate, approve an annual statement of compliance.

'That:

1. the draft revisions to the Ordinances, now submitted, be approved;
2. the annual statement of compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity 2019-20, now submitted, be approved;
3. the Report of the meeting of the Senate held on 25 June 2020, now submitted, be approved.'

20/56 Report of the Strategy and Finance Committee (Item 9.1)

The Council received a Report of the meeting of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 8 June 2020.

In relation to the proposed terms of usage of the RET, t0.006 Tn404 Tc 0.004 Tw 0.739 0 Td(Ju)2.7 (tt)10.92 0.

'That:

1. the Financial Report 2019/20 Quarter 3 Forecast, now submitted, be received;
2. the Report of the meeting of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 8 June 2020 relating to items for report, now submitted, be received.'

20/57 Approval of the University budget 2020/21 (Item 9.2)

The Council received the proposed University budget 2020/21.

The Chief Financial Officer explained that the budget had been developed initially as part of the Sustainable Planning Process, which had concluded in late February 2020 (before the onset of Covid-19 in the UK) and had reported to the Strategy and Finance Committee. At that stage, the budget indicated a deficit of some £7m. The University budget, now submitted, factored in the potential impact of Covid-19 to reflect the worst case scenario which had been modelled and its impact. As part of the process to meet the demands of this abnormal time, Council was invited to note and approve the University Group budget which was planned to deliver a deficit of £52m. She noted that the budget had necessarily been constructed on the basis of assumptions which would, in due course, prove to be incorrect. She assured the Council that the budget would be reviewed and revised in early autumn in the light of student numbers.

The Council discussed the budget at length. Lay members noted that the budget as it stood included a reduction in income amounting to £52m and a reduction in costs amounting to only £1m, expressed concern about this disparity, and asked whether further reductions in costs could be achieved during the period of the budget, and, in particular, over the next four or six months. The Vice-Chancellor and the Chief Financial Officer explained that: the University had already discontinued most of its capital projects; the continuing operational cost controls which had been successful to date would be offset by the substantial additional expenditure associated with adaptations to the campus; and that substantial longer term savings would be achieved through the Phase 2 restructuring work. The Vice-Chancellor indicated that it would be possible to reduce some relatively small cost factors, but that such measures would cause long-term damage to research and the student experience which would be disproportionate to the short-term gain. Given the internal and external requirements around major restructuring, there were limited opportunities to reduce costs in the short term. The University's phased approach to restructuring was designed to achieve the

20/60 Report of the Appointments and Governance Committee (Item 12)

The Council received the Report of the meeting of the Appointments and Governance Committee held on 9 June 2020.

The President noted that the Council had previously agreed that increasing the diversity of its membership

paid tribute to their outstanding contribution to the work of the Council, which, in the case of Mr Evans and Ms Woodman, included terms as Vice-President. He was pleased to announce that the University had agreed to confer on Mr Evans and Ms Woodman the title of Distinguished Fellow of the University. Mr Evans and Ms Woodman thanked the

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