

Senate – Minutes **24 September 2020**

PRESENT: Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair); Dr M. Anderson; Professor P. Ashwin; Ms F. Askari; Professor P. M. Atkinson; Professor P. Barker; Professor A. Belton; Ms J. Bennett; Professor Dame S. Black; Professor S. Bradley (*except for item 10*); Mr T. Buckley; Professor K. Cain; Dr P. Chakraborty; Professor P. Connolly; Professor N. A. Davies; Professor A. Friday; Professor M. George; Professor A. Gillespie; Dr K. Grant; Professor I. Gregory; Professor S. C. Guy; Dr Claire Hardy; Professor Niall Hayes; Professor L. Hendry; Dr D. Hird; Dr W. Hollmann; Dr G. Hopkinson; Dr A. Jarvis; Professor R. W. L. Jones; Professor A. W. Laing; Professor C. Leitch; Mr S. Maesschalck; Ms V. Mathews; Dr J. McDowell; Dr P. McKean; Ms B. Morgan; Professor J. Mottram; Professor C. Paoloni; Professor U. Papan; Professor Efthymios Pavlidis; Professor G. Pawlina; Ms P. Pickles; Mr O. Robinson; Professor S. Ruston; Professor J. Rycroft-Malone; Professor J. Sweeney; Dr W. Tych; Professor Catherine Walshe; Dr N. Watson; Professor J. Wild; Dr K. Wright.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms M. Ashraf; Mr A. Barker; Mr J. S. W. Dickinson, Mr S. Franklin; Mr S. J. Jennings; Ms H. Knight; Ms A. Mullan; Ms N. C. Owen; Mr R. Quigley (*for* Mr P. T. Boustead); Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Mr P. T. Boustead; Dr C. Boyko; Mr A. Burgess; Professor A. L. Heathwaite; Professor M. Piacentini; Professor R. Pickup; Professor J. E. Taylor; Professor I. Tyler.

INTRODUCTION

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 Senate noted the apologies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 No new declarations of interest were made.

3. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

No questions had been received for the current meeting.

4. UNIVERSITY SENATE: ACTIONS AND DECISIONS BY CORRESPONDENCE PAPER A

4.1 Senate noted the actions and decisions by correspondence.

5. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: 15 JULY 2020 PAPER B

5.1 Senate approved the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2020.

6. REPORT OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

6.1 The Vice-Chancellor provided an oral report, including the following.

- (i) The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged and thanked everyone for the considerable work that had been undertaken over the summer to manage the local impact of the Covid-19 national emergency.
- (ii) Student admissions were in a relatively positive position with Home/EU numbers up, but overseas down. Overall numbers were on target but the different balance would have a financial implication. This was still subject to registrations being completed and future retention. The financial assumptions taken in the budgeting processes, it was noted, were still deemed to be reasonable.
- (iii) Following national guidance, the government was indicating that they were expecting Universities to stay open, operating on a blended-learning model. A University outbreak management plan had been submitted regionally and nationally.
- (iv) OfS was operating on a reduced budget and was under instruction to reduce bureaucracy in the sector. Details were not yet available, but the OfS had indicated that there would be a review of the National Student Survey.
- (v) The Vice-Chancellor welcomed the appointment of the Rt Hon. Alistair Burt as the new Pro-Chancellor.
- (vi) Lancaster had retained its position in the top ten of the three national league tables. It had also risen to =135th in the THE global rankings.

6.2 Senate noted the report.

7. ORAL UPDATES FROM THE EXECUTIVE

7.1 Members of the Executive provided oral reports, including the following.

- (i) The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development) reported on the preparations to teach and support students for the new term, recording his thanks for all involved.
- (ii) The Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) reported that research grant awards remained healthy despite the national emergency and, whilst research spend in the current academic year had inevitably slowed as a result of the reduced activity on campus and deferral of some work, this indicated the continued positive progress against this strategic objective.

- (iii) The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global) (Digital, International, Sustainable and Development) reported that recruitment to the international campuses had been sustained with each operating under conditions as required by Covid-19. There had been a positive reaction to the University's 'embrace digital' approach. Finally, environmental sustainability planning was continuing well.
- (iv) The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) reported the development, in partnership with the NHS, of a portal for local business resilience. The 'Connecting Kids' initiative with civic partners was bringing the local education community together and closer ties continued to develop with Morecambe. KEF narratives would be submitted shortly. Finally, an outline business case for the Eden North project was being submitted to government with strong initial feedback.
- (v) The Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) reported that work was continuing to ensure a safe return to campus, including the development of a 'ready for university' preparatory module and a Connect Lancaster app for students. Technical work had been completed to ensure smooth admissions and registration processes. Finally, Covid-19-related respite of deadline requirements from bodies such as the ICO had ended. Members were encouraged to support requests should these be forthcoming.
- (vi) The Vice-Chancellor reported on behalf of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and EDI) on EDI-related matters, including the work being undertaken by the Race Equality Advisory Group.
- (vii) The Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported on planning work being undertaken in relation to student populations as well as to the UK's departure from the EU, including the transition period.

7.2 Senate noted the oral updates.

8. SUMMARY OF UMAG BUSINESS RELEVANT TO SENATE PAPER C

8.1 Senate noted the report.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

9. BRIEFING OF THE 2020 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS) RESULTS PAPER D
Restricted and Commercial in Confidence

10. SENIOR OFFICER APPOINTMENT PAPER E
Restricted and Confidential

11. FACILITATING FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF REMUNERATION OF THE ROLE OF PRO-CHANCELLOR

PAPER F

- 11.1 The Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) introduced a proposal to enable the University's governing instruments to facilitate future consideration of remuneration of the role of Pro-Chancellor, noting this was not a consideration for the newly appointed Pro-Chancellor. Council had not taken the view at this current time that the role should be remunerated in the future either. However during the process of search and appointment, Council had discussed whether the context for considering remuneration of the role in the future was likely to change and it had been noted that the current definition of the role in Statute may hinder timely consideration and inhibit the ability of Council to activate a choice about remuneration at the point of future decision making.
- 11.2 She reported that there were a small number of universities in the sector who had this facility although there was an active debate about it within the sector, and legal advice had confirmed that Lancaster could enable consideration of remuneration following a modification to University governance instruments. The paper set out a number of the issues discussed by Council reflecting different perspectives about future remuneration of the role.
- 11.3 Some members of the Senate voiced reservations, noting the current financial pressures, the potential reputational impact and a general sense that remuneration did not feel in line with the ethos of Lancaster University as a charity. It was noted that this reflected similar perspectives aired in the Council discussion. As a counterpoint, it was noted that the role, accountabilities and time commitment required of the Pro-Chancellor had grown considerably in recent years and the lack of remuneration for the role would limit potential candidates to solely to the independently wealthy. The potential to diversify and broaden any future target pool was welcomed so long as this commitment was reflected in the recruitment process.
- 11.4 It was noted that Council would be discussing the principle again at its next meeting and that Senate's comments would be passed on. It was also noted that Senate requested to Council that its views were sought in relation to any future specific proposals in this area.
- 11.5 Senate noted the proposal for Council in principle to have the facility to enact remuneration of the Pro-Chancellor role and the associated proposed changes to Statute 1 Definitions (subject to Privy Council approval) and agreed that its comments would be passed to Council to support its decision-making.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

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| 12. | SENATE CHAIR'S ACTIONS | PAPER G |
| 12.1 | Senate <u>noted</u> the Chair's actions made on its behalf since the last meeting. | |
| 13. | WRITTEN REPORTS OF MEETINGS | PAPER H |
| 13.1 | Senate <u>noted</u> the reports. | |
| 14. | NEW AND REVISED PROGRAMMES | PAPER I |
| 14.1 | Senate <u>noted</u> the report. | |
| 15. | FORWARD SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS | PAPER J |
| 15.1 | Senate <u>noted</u> the Forward Schedule. | |
| 16. | DATE OF NEXT MEETING | |
| 16.1 | The next meeting will be held at 1.00 p.m. on Friday 4 November 2020. | |