

COUNCIL
**Loughborough
University**

Minutes of the meeting of 31 March

COUN22-M1

Attendance

Christine Hodgson

Penny Briscoe
Prof. Malcolm Cook
Dr Marcus Collins
Graham Corfield
Andrea Davis
Prof. Claudia Eberlein
Andrew Fisher
Prof. Lisanne Gibson

Sally-Ann Hibberd
Prof. Nick Jennings
Prof. Chris Linton
Pauline Matturi
Jennifer Maxwell-Harris
Freya Mason
Peter Saraga (ab)

Oliver Sidwell
John Sinnott
Charlotte Style
Steve Varley
Tony Williams
Mike Wedderburn (ab)

In attendance: Caroline Glendenning-Platt; James Henry; Dr Jennifer Nutkins; Prof. Steve Rothberg; Richard Taylor; Prof. Rachel Thomson; Luke Vulpiani

Apologies received from: Peter Saraga, Mike Wedderburn

22/1 Minutes & Matters Arising

COUN21-M6

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2021 were confirmed.

SECTION A – Items for Discussion

22/2 Chair's Report

The Chair gave a report of the dinner held 30 March which preceded the Council meeting, extending thanks to the University catering team and London campus colleagues who made it a success. Informal discussion around the enabling projects to support the strategy would be incorporated as part of the strategy discussion.

The Chair outlined Council's role in approving the new University strategy.

22/3 University Strategy

22/3.1 Strategy Approval

COUN22-P1

The Vice Chancellor presented the new University strategy for consideration and approval.

In addition to substantial discussion at previous meetings of Council, detailed discussions took place with the Academic Leadership Team and the Professional Services Leadership Team to develop the content of early versions of the strategy.

Over 1000 staff, students and alumni engaged with the draft strategy through a series of Vice-Chancellor's briefings. Staff, EDI and other networks have been a particular focus for consultation. Senate was engaged in a half-day event on the strategy in January 2022. Feedback from these events has shaped the content and wording presented to Council today.

A key part of the delivery of the strategy will be the four Enabling Projects. Council supported the importance of the Enabling Projects, emphasising in particular that Project Enable was critical to the success of the strategy and should be well resourced from the start to deliver the capacity and headspace required for the other themes and strands.

In line with the CUC's Code of Governance's recommendations for Council's strategic responsibility, discussion focused on the following topics linked with governance, risk, and success:

- a. Council members stressed the importance of effective, targeted communications to the success of the strategy. Communications should be well resourced and have a clear and compelling pitch to be immediately understood by the University community. Communications should be tailored to different audiences, and the executive should reflect on how stakeholder groups are listed and prioritised in communications. Passionate student voices could be a compelling way of bringing the strategy's narrative to life, and articulate the value created by the strategy's themes.
- b. As part of Project Enable, Council members encourage the University to be bolder about stopping some activity, particularly internally driven outputs, and focusing on quality rather than quantity.
- c. To achieve advances in our international reputation, a step change in activity and approach is needed. The University will need to use its strongest influencers to amplify its voice and invest in reputation building activities.
- d. Particularly linked with Project Compliance and Expectations, the University needs to systematically reinforce model behaviours, considering the balance of rewarding teams and rewarding individuals, and ensure that its reward practices are aligned with the strategic aims.

- e. When considering revised KPI framework, focusing on a smaller number of KPIs may be preferable so that headlines are clear. There should be quarterly milestones for KPI review. Consideration should be given to finding moments to celebrate, which was seen as particularly important given the long-term nature of most of the strategy's aims.
- f. Council particularly **NOTED**, as emphasised by the Executive, that the strategy is being launched at a time where there are notable issues around the wellbeing for staff. This remains one of the top items on the Health, Safety and Environment Committee agenda at present. It is a challenging environment to ask people to do more, which is why the University needs to focus so clearly on clarifying expectations and clearly telling staff where they can do things differently. Project Enable has a part to play in this as well, in ensuring that staff have the capacity to implement strategic changes without being overloaded. Council requested regular updates on the point of well-being and work-life balance in any future updates on strategy delivery.

Based on the discussion noted above, Council **APPROVED** the strategy with thanks to the wider University team who led on its creation and all staff, students and alumni who contributed to its development.

22/3.2 Key Performance Indicators

COUN22-P2

Council **NOTED** the KPIs for the current strategy (Building Excellence) that have been updated for this meeting for monitoring purposes. The Provost highlighted that some RAG ratings have improved, notably Financial Stability and Health and Safety where the rating has moved from amber to green. The overall KPI RAG rating remains at amber.

A proposal for KPIs linked to the new strategy will come to the 30 June Council meeting.

22/4 National Rehabilitation Centre Partnership

COUN22-P3

Council was asked to **CONSIDER** early plans for a strategic and transformational partnership with the National Rehabilitation Centre at Stanford Hall.

The National Rehabilitation Centre (NRC) will integrate world leading research, innovation, education and training alongside clinical practice to drive excellence in rehabilitation. The new 70 bed NHS facility with space for postgraduate teaching, research and innovation is to be built on the Stanford Hall Rehabilitation Estate near Loughborough - 400 metres away from the

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Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC) - and is scheduled to open in November 2024. The Dean of SSEHS, former Director of Finance and Deputy Director of Finance have been working on the development of the NRC proposal, as one of the two Lead Academic Partners along with the University of Nottingham (UoN), since 2015. The project is funded via the New Hospitals Programme (NHP) and is sponsored by the Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust (NUH).

Council reviewed the financial implications of the partnership. Council confirmed that any overspend costs would fall to the Nottingham Hospital Trust, rather than to Loughborough.

There are clear links to the University strategy around sport, health and wellbeing, as well as delivering against our EDI objectives and the parasport agenda. There is also a clear opportunity to integrate the partnership into plans for reputation building.

Given the broader reputational risks and risks inherent in projects with multiple partners, Council requested a framework to review project risks on an ongoing basis. Council **NOTED** that whilst there is a risk of a shift in government policy, the New Hospitals Programme is a flagship government initiative and the NRC is one of the earliest, smallest projects under that banner, meaning the risk is small.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research emphasised that the NRC represented one of the most significant opportunities to grow research ambitions in some time, and that the positioning as a lead University alongside the University of Nottingham is significant.

Given the assurances around risk mitigation and financial exposure, Council was supportive to **ENDORSE** the proposed collaboration; formal approval will be sought in June.

22/5 University Finances

22/5.1 University Budget 2022/23 and Financial Forecasts 2022/23 to 2026/27

COUN22-P4

Council **RECEIVED** an update regarding performance against the approved budget for 2021/22, **NOTED** the forecast out-turn for the current year, and **NOTED** planning parameters for the forecast period 2022/23 to 2026/27

The University is projecting a year-end cash balance of £114.6m and a surplus on the Statement of Comprehensive Income of £10.8m. This represents a £9.2m improvement to surplus resulting from the release of contingency, a strong January PGT intake and higher than expected vacancy levels in a challenging employment market.

The University's cash projection of £114.6m is an improvement of £22.3m, reflecting the higher surplus and a reduction in capital spend as the institution recommences capital programme spend post covid amid on-going supply chain challenges. Council **NOTED** that the £10M cash surplus will be a deficit as a result of the significant deficit in the USS valuation, however that is a non-cash movement, is excluded from our covenant and will have a minimal impact on finances as a whole.

Regarding the forecast figures: static regulated fees set against a rising costs base, and continuing challenges arising from the Covid-19 pandemic continue to present significant financial challenges. Inflationary pressures present a new significant challenge, with utilities costs expected to rise by 50%+.

The forecast presented has been endorsed by Finance Committee as a basis for detailed budget planning in April and May. Following this work, further discussion will take place at Finance Committee in June 2022 and the revised forecast will be recommended to Council in July 2022.

(Secretary's note: The Meeting adjourned on 31 March 2022 and the remainder of the items were approved, noted, and considered via circulation.)

22/6 Governance and Nominations Committee

22/6.1 Appointments & Reappointments

COUN22-P5

Council **APPROVED** the appointment of Surinder Sharma as a co-opted member of Council for an initial period of three years, from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2025.

22/6.2 Effectiveness Review

COUN22-P6

Council **RECEIVED** an update on the Council Effectiveness Review

22/6.3 Terms of Reference for Approval

COUN22-P7

Council **APPROVED** by circulation revised Terms of Reference and a change in name to Nominations and Governance Committee.

22/7 Audit Committee

22/7.1 Report of meetings

COUN22-P8

Council **RECEIVED** a report from the meetings of the Audit Committee held on 10 February.

22/7.2 Risk Management Update

COUN22-P9

Council **REFERRED** an update on risk management back to Audit Committee to return to Council in June.

22/7.3 Strategic Risk Appetite

COUN22-P10

Council **REFERRED** a proposal on strategic risk appetite back to Audit Committee to oversee any immediate changes. The substantive item would return to Council in June.

22/8 Office for Students

22/8.1 Regulatory update

COUN22-P11

Council **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** an update regarding changes to regulatory requirements with the Office for Students

22/9 Health, Safety and Environment Annual Report

COUN22-P12

Council **NOTED** a summary of the strategic issues contained within the Annual Health, Safety and Environment Report.

22/10 Revolving Credit Facility

COUN22-P13

On the recommendation of the Finance Committee, Council **APPROVED** a one-year extension to the University's revolving credit facility and **DELEGATED** authority to the Director of Finance to complete such legal documents as may reasonably be required on behalf of the University.

22/11 Honorary Degrees

COUN22-P14

Pursuant to Statute XVIII, on the recommendation of Senate, and with the advice of the Honorary Degrees and University Medals Committee, Council **APPROVED** the issuing of invitations to persons to receive Honorary Degrees at Graduation Ceremonies.

SECTION B – Starred Items for Approval

22/12 *Human Resources Committee

22/12.1 *Annual Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Compliance Report

COUN22-P15

Council **APPROVED** the Annual Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Compliance Report for publication.

22/12.2 *Staff Code of Conduct

COUN22-P16

On the recommendation of HRC and Senate, Council **APPROVED** changes to the Staff Code of Conduct.

22/12.3 *Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Violence Policy

COUN22-P17

On the recommendation of HRC and Senate, Council **APPROVED** changes to the Sexual Harassment, Misconduct, and Violence Policy.

22/12.4 *Wardens Rest Break Collective Agreement

COUN22-P18

On the recommendation of HRC and Senate, Council **APPROVED** the Wardens Rest Break Collective Agreement.

22/12.5 *Capability Procedure

COUN22-P19

On the recommendation of Senate and Human Resources Committee, Council **APPROVED** changes to the Staff Capability Policy and Procedure (Ordinance XLI).

22/13 *Changes to Ordinances

COUN22-P20

Council **APPROVED** changes to University Ordinances to include updated gender-neutral terminology.

22/14 *Office for Students

22/14.1 *Reportable Events**COUN22-P21**

Council **APPROVED** the delegation of Council's responsibility to the VC on the advice of the COO.

22/14.2 *Degree Outcomes Statement**COUN22-P22**

On the recommendation of Senate, Council **APPROVED** a revised Loughborough University Degree Outcomes Statement for publication.

SECTION C – Starred Items for Information**22/15 *Matters for Report****22/15.1 *Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)****COUN22-P23****22/15.2 *Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education & Student Experience)****COUN22-P24****22/15.3 *Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise)****COUN22-P25****22/16 *Capital Framework Progress Report****COUN22-P26**

Council **RECEIVED** a progress report.

22/17 *Annual Report on Academic Partnerships**COUN22-P27**

Council **NOTED** the annual report on major academic partnerships.

22/18 *Annual Report on Philanthropy**COUN22-P28**

Council **NOTED** the annual report on philanthropic income 2020-21.

22/19 *Annual Report from the Radiation Protection Officer

COUN22-P29

Council **NOTED** the annual report from the Radiation Protection Officer.

22/20 *Senior University Appointments

Council **NOTED** that Professor Chris Rielly has been reappointed as Dean of the School of Aeronautical, Automotive, Chemical and Materials Engineering with effect from 1 August 2022 for a term of three years until 31 July 2025.

22/21 *Graduation Ceremonies

Council **NOTED** that summer Graduation Ceremonies will be held the week commencing 18 July 2022.

22/22 *Common Seal**COUN22-P30**

Council **RECEIVED** a list of documents to which the University Seal has been attached.

22/23 * Reports from Committees

Council **RECEIVED** reports from the following Committees:

COUN22-P31	Senate – 10 November 2021
COUN22-P32	Operations Committee - 8 November & 6 December 2021, 10 January, 7 February 2022
COUN22-P33	Finance Committee – 10 December 2021, 11 February 2022
COUN22-P34	Ethics Committee – 1 February 2022
COUN22-P35	Human Resources Committee – 2 February 2022
COUN22-P36	Health Safety & Environment Committee – 2 February 2022
COUN22-P37	Information Technology and Governance Committee – 27 January 2022

Date of Next Meeting

30 June 2022, 13:30-17:00

2022/23 Meetings (TBC in diaries)

- 13 October 2022, Council Away Day, Loughborough, Burleigh Court (all day, informal dinner the evening before)
- 23 November 2022, 9:00am, Online
- 30 March 2023, Allison Committee Room, London, 9:30am – 14:00
- 29 June 2023, Loughborough campus, 13:30-17:00

Author – Caroline Glendenning-Platt/Luke Vulpiani

Date – March 2022