

OPEN

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

COUNCIL

11th October 2023 at 4.30 p.m.

MINUTES OF MEETING

Members present: Mr Mervyn Walker (Pro-Chancellor and Chair); Professor Helen Abbott; Ms Lucy Baldwin; Ms Deborah Cadman OBE; Ms Amira Campbell, President of the Guild of Students; Professor David Hannah; Ms Rosie Harris; Dr Clive Hickman OBE; Mr Steve Hollis; Professor Stephen Jarvis (Provost); Professor Pam Kearns; Mr Harjinder Kang; Mr Anthony Lilley OBE; Ms Tianjie (Alice) Liu, Guild International Officer; Mr Nick Owen; Professor Catherine Mangan; Mr Richard Swann; Ms Jacqueline Taylor; Professor Adam Tickell (Vice-Chancellor and Principal).

Also present: Professor William Bloss (Interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Ms Nicolle Charlton, Deputy Finance Director - for Minute 23/65(3); Dr Catherine Cochrane, Director of Research Strategy and Services - for Minute 23/65(2); Mr Peter Cochrane, Deputy Director of Estates - for Minute 23/65(4); Professor Jo Duberley (Interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Ms Cathy Gilbert (Director of External Relations) - for Minute 23/65(1); Professor Neil Hanley (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor Deborah Longworth (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)); Professor Robin Mason (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International)); Mrs Colette McDonough (Head of Governance); Professor Rachel O'Reilly (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)); Dr Emma Robinson (Academic Registrar) - for Minute 23/64; Mr Lee Sanders (Registrar and Secretary); Mr Mark Senior (Chief of Staff); Professor Andrew Stockley (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor Marika Taylor (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College).

Apologies: Ms Lisa Fretwell; Mr Tim Gardam; Dame Lin Homer; Mr Mick Laverty; Dame Cilla Snowball; Ms Erica Conway (Chief Financial Officer).

Papers: The minute book contains copies of all written papers or reports to which reference is made below unless indicated otherwise.

23/58 Declarations of Interest

**Noted:** that no changes to the Register of Interests were declared.

23/59 Membership and Terms of Reference

**Noted:** the membership and terms of reference of the Council (CO.23.10.01).

23/60 Minutes

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 28th June 2023 be approved (CO.23.10.02).

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### 23/61 Matters Arising from the minutes not addressed elsewhere on the agenda

(1) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

**COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

(2) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

**COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

### 23/62 Pro-Chancellor's Items

(1)-(3) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

(4) Professor Richard Black

**Reported:** that Council thanked Professor Richard Black for his significant work and contribution to the University since April 2018. Professor Black, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Social Sciences, had left the University in the middle of September to take up his new role as Provost at the University of Liverpool.

(5) Search for the Next Chancellor

**Reported:** that the Chancellor Appointment Committee had met on 24th July 2023 to consider the outcome of the consultation on the search for the next Chancellor of the University and a progress report from Saxton Bampfylde on their work. A list of potential candidates was being taken forward by Saxton Bampfylde. A further progress report would be made to Council in due course.

(6) One to One Meetings

**Noted:** the summary of the annual one-to-one meetings between members of Council and either the Pro-Chancellor or one of the Deputy Pro-Chancellors (CO.23.10.03). These provided a formal opportunity for members to reflect on the workings of Council during the academic year.

**Reported** that:

- (a) the Pro-Chancellor and Deputy Pro-Chancellors had conducted 19 one-to-one discussions in respect of 2022/23. They had found the overall tenor of the feedback from these discussions to be very positive and the overall view was that Council worked well. The focus of the conversations was therefore on the opportunity to improve even further from a very strong base;
- (b) Paper CO.23.10.03 reported the common themes arising from the one-to-one meetings and actions that were proposed in response;
- (c) the proposed arrangements for the next effectiveness review of Council would be considered by Council in November 2023, noting that the feedback from the one-to-one meetings would be considered as part of this review.

### 23/63 Vice-Chancellor's Items

**Considered:** the report of the Vice-Chancellor (CO.23.10.04).

(1) Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Regional Engagement)

**Reported:** the proposal of the Vice-Chancellor to create a fourth thematic Pro-Vice-

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Chancellor role with the remit of Regional Engagement. This was approved by Council, noting that the appointment of the recommended candidate would be made by Council in due course.

### (2) ***[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]***

#### 23/64 2023 National Student Survey Performance Summary and Next Step Actions

**Considered**: the 2023 National Student Survey Performance Summary and Next Step Actions (CO.23.10.05).

**Reported** that:

#### (a)-(j) ***[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]***

**Resolved** that:

- (i) Council confirmed its support for the set of actions proposed to address the University's NSS performance in Paper CO.23.10.05;
- (ii) Council would be kept informed of progress in relation to the University's NSS performance and the actions being taken to improve it, noting that the next progress report would be made to Council in February 2024.

#### 23/65 Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee

**Considered**: the report from the meeting of the Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee held on 26th September 2023 (CO.23.10.06).

### ***COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE***

#### (1) Recruitment and Admissions Update

**Considered**: the Recruitment and Admissions Update (CO.23.10.07).

**Reported** that:

#### (a)-(e) ***[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]***

#### (2) Research Applications and Awards Performance 2022/23

**Considered**: the Research Applications and Awards Performance 2022/23 (CO.23.10.08).

**Reported** that:

#### (a)-(f) ***[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]***

- (g) members of Council congratulated the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and their team and colleagues across the University on this tremendous achievement for the University. The significant contribution of Professor Hugh Adlington to this achievement, whose leadership of this work had been exemplary during 2022/23, was also recognised.

#### (3) 2022/23 Financial Outturn

**Considered**: the 2022/23 Financial Outturn (CO.23.10.09).

**Reported** that:

#### (a)-(c) ***[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]***

- (d) the year end statutory audit with Ernst and Young (EY) had commenced in early

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September and the production of the statutory financial statements was ahead of schedule;

- (e) the timeline for submission of the audited financial statements to the OfS was the same as last year, being required by early January as part of the Annual Financial Return. It was planned for Council to approve these at its November meeting.

**Noted:** the draft financial outturn for the 2022/23 financial year as set out in Paper CO.23.10.09.

- (4) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

### **COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

#### 23/66 Audit Committee

**Noted:** the report of the meeting of Audit Committee held on 3rd October 2023, including:

- (a) the positive early progress which had been made in relation to the external audit of the 2022/23 Accounts;
- (b) the findings of the annual review of data assurance processes;
- (c) the positive outcome of the self-assessment of the Audit Committee which had been completed over the Summer.

#### 23/67 Academic Assurance Report

**Noted:** the requirements of Council in relation to academic assurance and, prospectively, what academic assurances members of Council would receive and when, as the academic year progressed as set out in the Academic Assurance report (CO.23.10.11). As these materials were then presented during the academic year, members of Council could refer to Paper CO.23.10.11 to remind themselves that they were part of the ongoing assurance to Council on academic matters, including on matters of academic quality and the student experience.

#### 23/68 Forward Programme of Business 2023/24

**Noted:** the Forward Programme of Business of Council for 2023/24 (CO.23.10.12).

#### 23/69 Code of Practice on Corporate Governance

**Noted:** that the Code of Practice on Corporate Governance had been updated (CO.23.10.13).

#### 23/70 Capital Projects over £1m

### **COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

**Noted:** the progress update on Capital Projects over £1m (CO.23.10.14).

#### 23/71 Affixing of the University Seal

### **COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

**Received:** a report noting the transactions which had required use of the University Seal since the last meeting of Council (CO.23.10.15).

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### 23/72 Any Other Business

**Reported** that there were no items of any other business.

### 23/73 Programme of Meetings

**Noted**: the programme of meetings of Council for the remainder of 2023/24:

Tuesday 28th November 2023, 5.00pm to 9.00pm, Council Presentation and Dinner

Wednesday 29th November 2023, 9.00am to 12 noon, Council Meeting

Tuesday 6th February 2024, 5.00pm to 9.00pm, Council Presentation and Dinner

Wednesday 7th February 2024, 9.00am to 12 noon, Council Meeting

Wednesday 24th April 2024, 9.00am to 9.00pm, Council Strategy Day and Dinner

Tuesday 25th June 2024, 5.00pm to 9.00pm, Council Presentation and Dinner

Wednesday 26th June 2024, 9.00am to 12 noon, Council Meeting