

MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL COUNCIL

MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM ON 26 MAY 2022

Present:	Carmel Booth, President of Council (in the Chair); Dr Paul Johnson, Vice-President; Professor Dame Janet Beer, Vice-Chancellor; Professor Gavin Brown, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education; Professor Anthony Hollander, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Impact; Bertie Woodcock, President of the Liverpool Guild of Students; Dr Kashmir Gill; Vanessa Griffiths; Helen Miller; Norman Molyneux; Dr Diana Walford; Professor Julia Balogun; Professor Hazel Scott; Professor Thomas Teubner; and Kieran O’Sullivan.
Apologies:	Cilla Ankrah-Lucas; Dr Carol Costello, Director of People and Services; Fiona Cullen; Ed Fishwick; Dr Roger Platt; and Hans van Mourik Broekman.
In Attendance:	Nicola Davies, Director of Finance; Kevan Ryan, University Secretary and Director of Legal and Governance/Clerk to Council; and Emma Leonard, Governance Manager, Secretary to Council.

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

COMMITTEE AND MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

1. Student Engagement

Council was joined by Benedict Oakes, a PhD Researcher in the EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training in Distributed Algorithms, who talked to members about his experiences as a student at the University, in particular focussing on: his journey at the University from undergraduate through to postgraduate studies; career aspirations; the application of research to real world problems and industry links; and the impact of the pandemic on students’ presence on campus.

2. Quorum

It was noted that there was not a lay majority present. The meeting would proceed and the Secretary would contact those members not present to seek their ratification of any decisions taken during the meeting.

[Secretary’s note: An email was circulated following the meeting and those not present ratified the following:

- Minutes/Notes of the February and April Away Day meetings
- Ernst Young External Audit Plan
- Health and Safety Policy Revision
- Process to be followed to appoint a new Chancellor.]

3. Disclosures of Interest

Members were asked to disclose any interest that could give rise to conflict in relation to any item on the agenda. No such interests were disclosed.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

4.1 Unreserved Minutes of the Meeting Held on 10 February 2022

AGREED:

- i. The unreserved minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2022 should be approved as an accurate record.

4.2 Notes of the Away Day Held on 7 April 2022

AGREED:

- i. The notes of the Away Day held on 7 April 2022 should be approved as an accurate record.

5. Report on Action Taken by the President on Behalf of Council and Business Dealt with Via Circulation

RECEIVED:

- i. A report on action taken by the President on Council's behalf since the last business meeting and business dealt with via circulation.

REPORTED:

- ii. The President had taken Chair's action as follows:

Honorary Fellowship (approved 7 March 2022)

To approve the recommendation of the Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees, endorsed by the Senate, that the University Librarian and Director of Libraries, Museums and Galleries, Phil Sykes, who would retire in May 2022, should be invited to receive an Honorary Fellowship of the University.

ULPF Consultation with the University on Investment Matters (approved 30 March 2022)

To approve a proposal agreed by the ULPF Trustee Board:

- To appoint a new long lease property investment manager, Aviva, and allocate 5% of the total Fund value to this manager
- To receive an updated version of the Statement of Investment Principles.

Chair's action had been requested as the Trustee wished to proceed with this property investment as soon as possible and given the queue length associated with such an investment.

Revised Ordinances 17 and 18 (approved 28 April 2022)

To approve changes recommended via Chair's action on behalf of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee and Senate to Ordinance 17 (The Academic

Organisation of the University) to reflect a preferred layout of the organisational structure of the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences.

To approve a change to Ordinance 18 (Assignment of Degrees to the Faculties and Affiliated Institutions) to include a new award (Doctor of Health (DProfHealth)) which had been recommended via Chair's action on behalf of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee and Senate and which was planned to start in January 2023.

Revised Ordinance 64 (Integrated PhD and MSc) (approved 28 April 2022)

To approve a revision previously recommended by the Senate to the Ordinance for the Integrated PhD and MSc programme delivered in collaboration with the University of Leeds, University of Manchester and University of Sheffield. The programme was of four years' duration but a change to the UoL regulations was required to include an automatic overtime/writing up year to the existing four-year registration period to ensure parity between candidates enrolled at UoL and the other partner Universities.

- iii. The following business had been dealt with via email circulation to members:

UCU Proposal to Conclude the USS 2020 Valuation

Members had agreed to reject the UCU alternative proposal to conclude the USS valuation.

The UUK proposal gave the scheme a more sustainable base from which the scheme stakeholders could work together and look to the future in a collaborative way. There was much work to do beyond the 2020 valuation – but delaying these inevitable and necessary benefit reforms would only bring higher costs and unmoderated scheme risk for employers, without any certainty about the outcome of a desired more favourable valuation – and most likely therefore a period of continued disagreement. The Senior Leadership Team was of the view that the UUK proposal remained the balanced, proportionate and most constructive response to the 2020 valuation.

Short Consultation on a Potential Modification to the Proposed USS Changes

Members had confirmed support of a modification to the proposed changes to future benefits to defer the application of the 2.5% cap up to and including the increase due in 2025. The USS Trustee had costed this transition at 0.3% of pay and, if this received the support of employers, the temporary cost would be met by an extra 0.2% contribution from employers, paid for two years, and the members' share of 0.1% would be met through a modest extension to the recovery plan.

AGREED:

- iv. The action taken by the President on Council's behalf as outlined in 5ii above should be endorsed.

6. President's Communications: Vice-Chancellor Recruitment Process Update

RECEIVED:

- i. A brief oral update on the recruitment of the next Vice-Chancellor.

REPORTED:

- ii. Dr Roger Platt had replaced Norman Molyneux on the Joint Committee as Mr Molyneux would be unable to attend the final selection interview date.
- iii. A field of candidates had been provided by Perrett Laver, which the panel had reduced down to 17 individuals for interview by Perrett Laver. The panel had then agreed a shortlist of candidates and was part way through online interviews with these individuals, with the final interviews to be held on 27 May 2022.
- iv. The final selection stage would include meetings with the Senior Leadership Team, one-to-one meetings with the Vice-Chancellor and the President of Council plus city and campus tours. There would also be a series of Focus Groups which would be conversational rather than interview based in style and would enable the candidates to be seen in a range of settings and cover a range of topics. The Focus Groups would take place on 10 June 2022 and would include members of staff and students relevant to the matters being discussed. All of these meetings and events would also provide an opportunity for the candidates to find out more about the University. Final interviews would take place in person on Friday 17 June 2022 at Greenbank Student Village
- v. The President remained confident that the University would make a high quality appointment in line with the timetable and that a recommendation would be able to be made to a specially convened Council meeting at the end of June/beginning of July.

7. Clerk to Council's Communications

RECEIVED:

- i. An oral report from the Clerk to Council, providing an update on some of the activity underway in relation to the Halpin Governance Review action plan.
- ii. Activity included:
 - The Privy Council had formally approved the revised Charter and Statutes.
 - The Clerk and Secretary had met recently with the Guild President and Chief Executive to take forward the recommendations relating to the Guild.
 - From the beginning of next session there would be two Guild Officers on Council. The new student representatives would receive an enhanced induction, including input from an external consultant.
 - The Clerk and Secretary were now meeting regularly with the Director of External Relations regarding raising the profile of Council and developing a stakeholder engagement plan.
 - A working group had been formed to review committee documentation – Dr Roger Platt and Kieran O'Sullivan were both serving on this group.

- iii. Members would be contacted soon in order to schedule the annual appraisals for Council members.

8. Vice-Chancellor's Communications

8.1 Summary of External Engagements

REPORTED:

- i. Since the last meeting of Council, the Vice-Chancellor had met with, hosted or attended meetings regarding the following:

22 February	AHRC Assurance Board
24 February	UUK VC Update on Current Issues
28 February	Joint Senior Leadership Team with LJMU
3 March	UUK Members Meeting Dinner with Nadhim Zahawi MP
4 March	UUK Members Meeting
15 March	UUK International (UUKi) Roundtable with Ukrainian Universities
	UUK/QAA Board Discussion
16/17 March	UUKi International HE Forum
18 March	N8 Board
25 March	Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital Mobile Unit Launch Official Opening Yoko Ono Lennon Centre
28 March	Queen's Green Canopy Project Tree Planting at Ness Gardens
30 March	UUKi Prospects for collaboration Between UK & Japanese Universities Webinar
31 March	UUKi International Strategic Advisory Board UUK VC Update on Current Issues
26 April	APPUG with Minister George Freeman MP – Gave Speech on Behalf of Sector
27 April	HEPI University Partners Policy Briefing Day Meeting with Minister Counsellor Zhang Jin (UUKi) FST Private Round Table Discussion: R&D Collaboration with China Followed by Public Meeting
28 April	UUK CEO Interviews
3-5 May	BC G7 + Partners IHE Summit, Berlin
6 May	UUK/USS VC Update
9 May	JISC/UUK Board
10 May	UUK VC Update on Current Issues
11 May	Formal Opening of Law and Social Justice Building
12 May	LCR LEP Board RG Board Discussion with Indro Mukerjee, CEO of Innovate UK
13 May	UUK Members Meeting
17 May	Glasgow Caledonian University VC Recruitment Panel
23 May	Digital Innovation Facility Formal Opening.
- ii. The University was one of 64 British universities that had signed up in recent weeks to 'twin' with a struggling Ukrainian university, with the University having been twinned with Sumy State University (SSU) in north-eastern Ukraine.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT/DISCUSSION/NOTE

9. Liverpool Guild of Students

RECEIVED:

- i. An oral update from the President of the Liverpool Guild of Students

REPORTED:

- ii. The Officer elections had recently been held, involving 12 candidates and over 5,000 students voting (although this was slightly down on pre-COVID times). An all female team had been elected, with Vasiliki Samuels as President.
- iii. A student wide referendum had been held on supporting Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions (BDS). No Officer campaigned for either side, both campaigns were wholly student led, and the Guild had worked towards ensuring that both sides of the debate felt supported. The results were close but decisive – students voted that the Guild should not take on a policy of supporting BDS. The vote was No – 820 to Yes – 748.
- iv. Students had campaigned on campus against the government’s decision to U-turn and not include a ban on transgender conversion therapy in their latest bill. The Guild had supported students on this.
- v. At the National Union of Students 100th annual conference held in Liverpool, Deputy President, Chloe Field, had been elected Vice President for Higher Education at NUS.
- vi. The recent Guild Awards had been a great success, highlighting the very best of the University’s students and teaching staff.

10. 100 Days Survey Outcomes and Next Steps

[The Director of Student Experience and Enhancement, Dr Paul Redmond, attended for this item.]

RECEIVED:

- i. A report setting out the key findings from the 2021 100 Days Survey, together with a presentation on the actions being undertaken in response to the findings.

REPORTED:

- ii. The 100 Days Survey had been completed earlier in the session and provided an insight into students’ attitudes and perceptions during the first semester. This year’s survey had been undertaken with 747 participants.
- iii. Key findings from the survey included:
 - Compared to 2020, students were feeling more positive about their University experience and were generally optimistic for the future

- Due to the effects of lockdown, returning students required similar levels of support and information as new students
- Making friends and building social networks remained key concerns for both first years and returning students
- The majority of students preferred to access support services via a blend of online and physical platforms
- More support was required to help disabled students and those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups develop a sense of belonging and inclusion.

iv. As a result of the 100 Days Survey:

- Welcome 2022/23 would be streamlined to focus on two core themes: belonging and inclusion, and making friends
- There would be a particular focus on disabled students and those from under-represented groups
- There would be Welcome and induction for each year group
- There would be closer alignment with Departments and the Guild to build cohort identity
- The Student Engagement Strategy was being developed to enhance the student experience at key 'touchpoints' e.g. Arrival, Welcome, first meeting with academic adviser, first assessment, first academic feedback, etc.

NOTED:

- v. 30% of students had indicated that they had not received feedback in the first term. Work was underway to ensure that students were able to recognise the different types of feedback given.
- vi. There were KnowHow modules aimed at helping students affected by the pandemic with exam preparation, but it was also important to note that some of the assessment methodologies introduced during the pandemic would be retained.
- vii. As soon as a student accepted an offer to study at the University they could begin to engage with a preparatory online module.
- viii. Specific events were provided for international students.
- ix. A lot of work had gone into enhancing the University's Welcome provision.
- x. Some of the lessons learned from the survey could also be applied to new staff who join the University.

11. Active Campus 2026 Strategy

[The Director of Sport, Andy Craig, attended for this item.]

RECEIVED:

- i. A paper and presentation presenting the proposed Active Campus 2026 Strategy, including an action plan for 2022/23.

REPORTED:

- ii. The Active Campus 2026 Strategy aimed to set a new ambition for the provision of sport and physical activity at the University and maximise the contribution it could make to student experience, personal development and general wellbeing.
- iii. Meeting the goals set would require a whole institution approach which could be facilitated by a new Sport and Active Campus Board, comprising stakeholders from across the University.
- iv. Some interventions could be introduced by refocussing existing resources, working differently, and developing new cross departmental collaborations, while others would require both capital and revenue investment to improve the quality of sports facilities and other amenities on campus and provide the capacity to deliver a broader range of activities and events.

NOTED:

- v. Free to access facilities were important in reducing barriers and encouraging engagement, as were active champions to promote the opportunities.
- vi. Competitive sport had recovered with almost a full season of fixtures.

AGREED:

- vii. The Active Campus 2026 Strategy should be endorsed, noting that opportunities would be arranged for Council members to participate in a campus walk etc.

12. REF – Performance and Next Steps

[The APVC Research and Impact for the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Georgina Endfield, the APVC Research and Impact for the Faculty of Science and Engineering, Professor Laura Harkness-Brennan, and the APVC Research and Impact for the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, Professor Claire Evers, attended for this item.]

RECEIVED:

- i. A paper presenting the University's results from the Research Excellence Framework (REF), together with a presentation providing an overview of the exercise and further detail about the results, including headlines from each Faculty.

REPORTED:

- ii. The University had made significant improvements in its sector and Russell Group position for every key university-level metric for 2021. This was a phenomenal achievement and indeed all the more impressive given the incredibly competitive nature of research in the UK higher education landscape, the changes in REF methodology and the broad range of units submitted.
- iii. The key highlights were as follows:

- 91% of the University's research was ranked as world leading (4*) or internationally excellent (3*). This was a significant jump from the 81% in 2014 and masked an even more substantial improvement, as the University had moved from returning 70% of its eligible research-active staff in 2014 to 100% for REF 2021
 - The University had improved from 33rd for overall 4* and 3* research in 2014 to 25th, and similarly, had moved from 48th in the sector for proportion of overall 4* research to 33rd
 - These 4* achievements had been matched by a significant reduction in 2* gradings for the submitted outputs in many research units
 - An area of particular success for the University was research impact, with a significant number of units achieving entirely 4* or 3* ratings and nine units featuring in the sector top ten for 4* impact
 - This saw the University rise a huge 30 places to 28th in the sector rankings for 4* impact.
- iv. The University had seen a 27.5% increase in market share of 4* research and this should translate into increased QR funding for each of the next seven years, although the exact outcome would depend on the funding formula, which Research England would announce at a later date.
- v. As new data becomes available from Research England (e.g. impact case database; sub-panel reports) the University would undertake a deeper analysis of performance relative to those universities with a higher ranking profile in REF2021. Once this full analysis had been completed, it would be possible to map out the changes to research strategy that would be needed to progress to an even higher level during the new REF cycle.
- vi. The institutional results were a great cause for celebration and represented an immense collective effort.

NOTED:

- vii. Much of the success followed the critical strategic decisions made following the previous REF exercise, and cultural change which included increased engagement in REF panels.

AGREED:

- viii. Council's congratulations should be formally recorded to all those involved for the incredibly impressive results.

13. Liverpool Online Update

[The Strategic Director for Liverpool Online, Lynn Evans, attended for this item.]

RECEIVED:

- i. A presentation providing a progress report on the development of the University's online portfolio, and partnership with Kaplan Open Learning, covering: the global online education market; sources of competitive advantage;

model of partnership and how this benefits the University; what had already been achieved as a new partnership; and next steps.

REPORTED:

- ii. The University had more than 20,000 online graduates in over 170 countries worldwide, and was recognised as a European leader in 100% online postgraduate education. The University's online business had contributed to internationalisation, extending its reach and reputation overseas, expanding the global community of students, faculty and alumni, and creating exceptional learning experiences and outcomes for students.
- iii. The global online education market was worth over \$250 billion USD, projecting a composite annual growth rate of over 10% over the next five years. The academic segment alone was expected to be worth \$314 billion globally by 2026. The US led the world in this market, followed by Europe, of which the biggest shareholder was presently the UK. Since the pandemic, the online education market had become intensely competitive, with many new entrants, and established providers investing heavily in expanding their online portfolios. The quality and types of learning experience that were being offered were quite variable.
- iv. The University and Kaplan had a shared vision and fit of culture and values. Contractual benefits to the University included: academic authority; exclusivity; a commercially appropriate financial arrangement; and protection of the University's IPR. Key contributions from Kaplan included: capital investment; flexible capacity; digital leadership; digitally enriched student experience; and global marketing capability.
- v. The partnership had to date enabled:
 - Effective collaboration across all areas of service design and delivery
 - A premium portfolio in areas of academic excellence
 - Alignment to University strategy and increased value capture
 - Strengthened governance and integration into University business
 - A suitable commercial arrangement and growth plan
 - Protection of existing students through the Laureate teach out and transfer of arrangements.
- vi. A range of programmes were currently offered across the following areas: Management, Computer Science, Health and Life Sciences, Education and Law. Owing to market conditions and competition, student number growth was slower than expected but the total student population as at May 2022 was 1500, of which around two thirds had transferred across from Laureate and about a third had been directly recruited. There was good global diversity with Africa and Asia dominating but growth in the Middle East.
- vii. The following phases of growth had been agreed:

Initiation Phase
2021/22
600 - 800 Enrolments Per Year

 - Establish Portfolio

- Create Digital Assets
- Establish Partnership Infrastructure
- Transition Route for Laureate Students

Development Phase

2022/23

800 - 1,000 Enrolments Per Year

- Refine the Value Proposition
- Refine our Practice
- Accelerate Recruitment
- Pipeline Development
- Develop Relationships

Maturity Phase

2023/24

1,200 - 1,500 Enrolments Per Year

- Encourage Innovation
- Pursue Wider Objectives
- Continuous Improvement.

- viii. Consideration was already being given to how to ensure the portfolio was responsive to global challenges, including the sustainable development goals, how the University could leverage the partnership to accelerate its ambitions around blended and on campus learning, and how it could continue to blur the boundaries between online and on campus education in order to enhance the total offer.

NOTED:

- ix. Provision was tailored for regions without access to reliable internet connectivity and sophisticated devices.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES

14. Audit Committee

RECEIVED:

- i. A report on the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 15 March 2022, covering:
- External Audit Provisional Planning Report Year Ending 31 July 2022
 - Internal Audit Progress Report
 - Moody's Updated Credit Opinion
 - Update on Risk Management Framework
 - Cyber Security Update
 - Annual Overview of the University's Statutory Reporting Requirements
 - Update on Asset Management Project.

AGREED:

- ii. The External Audit Provisional Planning Report Year Ending 31 July 2022 should be endorsed.

15. Education Committee

RECEIVED:

- i. A report on the meeting of the Education Committee held on 3 March 2022, covering:
 - Student Success Framework - Draft 12 Month Action Plan
 - Sector Developments
 - UUK Framework for Programme Reviews*
 - Office for Students (OfS) Consultations*
 - Lifelong Loan Entitlement Government Consultation*
 - Education Strategy: Strategic Projects Update
 - 100 Days Survey Outcomes
 - Q2 Performance Report.

NOTED:

- ii. The OfS had announced that the timetable for students and providers to make their written submissions into the new Teaching Excellence Framework was to be extended to early 2023. The timetable had become a key issue of contention in the consultation exercise over the revised framework, and the announcement meant that assessments would then be carried out in Spring 2023, with TEF outcomes available in time to inform prospective students for the 2024/25 recruitment cycle.

16. Finance and Resources Committee

RECEIVED:

- i. A report on the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on 22 March 2022, covering:
 - Quarter 2 and Financial Forecast 2 Report
 - Strategic Investment Principles and the Use of University Reserves and Endowments
 - 2020/21 Annual TRAC Return
 - Moody's Updated Credit Opinion
 - Capital Matters
 - ULEC Infrastructure – Quad Node Project*
 - Brett Garden Public Realm*
 - VC Lodge – Bid/Offer Acceptance Report.*

17. Health and Safety Governance Committee

RECEIVED:

- i. A report on the meeting of the Health and Safety Governance Committee held on 10 May 2022, covering:
 - Annual Review of University Health and Safety Policy 2022/23
 - Wood Park Farm Incident Review
Summary of Recommendations
Update from Faculty of Health and Life Sciences on Implementing Actions
 - Guidelines for Health and Safety Roles During Hybrid Working
 - Broadening the Terms of Reference of the Health and Safety Committee.

AGREED:

- ii. The revised University Health and Safety Policy 2022/23 should be approved, noting that the main changes arising from the annual review of the Policy related to.
 - Broadening of the Policy to 'other non-employees'
 - Removal of references to the HASMAP Implementation Group, following its disbandment
 - Further alignment to Strategy 2026
 - Removal of the requirement to receive annual reports from partner institutions
 - Reflection of the University's progress to HASMAP high level of compliance, and ongoing audit plans.

18. Research and Impact Committee

RECEIVED:

- i. A report on the meeting of the Research and Impact Committee held on 10 March 2022, covering:
 - Project RISE: Annual Assessment of Contributions
 - Consultation on the Design of the UK's Future Research Assessment System
 - Negotiations with Elsevier in the context of "Plan S".

19. Senate

RECEIVED:

- i. A report on the meeting of the Senate held on 30 March 2022, covering the following items:
 - Liverpool Online Update
 - TEF Consultation Response
 - Student Success Framework Action Plan
 - Securing Reasonable Prices from Publishers

- Reading Programme.

20. Process to Appoint the Next Chancellor

REPORTED:

- i. The Chancellor, Colm Tóibín, had indicated that he would step down from the role this calendar year. This would be communicated shortly to staff, students and alumni, and nominations would be invited for the University's next Chancellor.
- ii. It was proposed that a Committee to Nominate a Chancellor should be established (comprising representatives from Council) which would review the nominations received, carry out due diligence and make a recommendation to Council.

AGREED:

- iii. The approach outlined above should be approved.

21. Date of Next Meeting

NOTED:

- i. The next formal meeting would be held at 2pm on Thursday 14 July 2022.