

**NOTES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL COUNCIL  
AWAY DAY MEETING HELD AT  
GREENBANK STUDENT VILLAGE  
ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2023**

<b>Present:</b>	Carmel Booth, President (in the Chair); Hans van Mourik Broekman, Vice-President; Professor Tim Jones, Vice-Chancellor; Professor Richard Black, Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor; Cilla Ankrah-Lucas (morning only); Dr Alison Campbell; Dr Mark Carawan; Barry Flynn; Helen Miller (morning only); Mark Proctor; Matthew Reed; Dr Diana Walford; Professor Julia Balogun; Professor Hazel Scott; and Kieran O’Sullivan.
<b>Apologies:</b>	Vasiliki Samuels, President of the Liverpool Guild of Students; Fiona Cullen; Dr Kashmir Gill; Vanessa Griffiths; Professor Thomas Teubner; and Kathryn Manley, Deputy President of the Liverpool Guild of Students.
<b>In Attendance:</b>	<p>Professor Tariq Ali, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global Engagement and Partnerships; Professor Fiona Beveridge, Executive Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Humanities and Social Sciences; Professor Gavin Brown, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education; Dr Carol Costello, Director of People and Services; Nicola Davies, Chief Financial Officer; Professor Anthony Hollander, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Impact; Professor Louise Kenny, Executive Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Health and Life Sciences; Kevan Ryan, University Secretary and General Counsel/Clerk to Council; and Professor Wiebe van der Hoek, Executive Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Science and Engineering.</p> <p>Mike Edge, Governance, Compliance and Regulatory Manager; and Emma Leonard, Head of Governance and Deputy Secretary.</p> <p>Natalie Carpenter, Project Support Officer, Strategic Change; Phil Hopwood, Director of Strategic Planning (afternoon only); Rachel Parkes, Head of Project and Programme Management, Strategic Change; and Tim Seamans, Director of External Relations (morning only).</p>

## 1. President’s Welcome

The President welcomed those present and gave an overview of the day.

It was noted that other members of the Senior Leadership Team were in attendance, which was standard practice for Council Away Days.

The overarching objectives for the day were:

- To provide an overview of the final draft strategy and seek formal approval
- To discuss immediate priorities for implementation of the strategy
- To brief Council members on latest performance of the University
- To discuss the role Council members can play in supporting the success of the University

- To review plans for growth and discuss next steps in relation to this.

## 2. Disclosures of Interest

Members were asked to disclose any interest that could give rise to conflict in relation to any item on the agenda. Any disclosures are noted under relevant minute headings below.

## 3. Appointment of the Vice-President of Council

[Hans van Mourik Broekman was not present for this item.]

### RECEIVED:

- i. An oral update on the process to appoint the next Vice-President of Council.

### REPORTED:

- ii. At its meeting held on 11 July 2023, Council had agreed the proposed approach to the appointment of the next Vice-President of Council and the draft job description.
- iii. That approach had been followed and it had culminated in a sub-group of the Nominations Committee comprising the President of Council, the Vice-Chancellor and the President of the Liverpool Guild of Students interviewing Hans van Mourik Broekman for the role of Vice-President of Council on 27 September 2023. The sub-group had agreed that a recommendation should be made to both Nominations Committee and Council that Mr van Mourik Broekman should be appointed as Vice-President with immediate effect for the period to 31 July 2026. Nominations Committee members had supported this recommendation via email circulation.

### AGREED:

- iv. Hans van Mourik Broekman should be appointed as Vice-President of Council with immediate effect for the period to 31 July 2026.

## 4. Vice-Chancellor's Update

### RECEIVED and NOTED:

- i. A 'state of the nation' presentation from the Vice-Chancellor covering:
  - Global performance in the QS and Times Higher league tables
  - Research reputation
  - Domestic performance – UK league tables
  - Student recruitment
  - Research and financial KPIs
  - Some successes in 2023
  - External landscape
  - SLT objectives 2023/24.

## 5. Quarter 4 Performance Report and Year End Financial Results

### RECEIVED:

- i. A report providing details of quarterly performance and the year-end financial result for the financial year 2022/23.

### REPORTED:

#### *Q4 Performance Report*

- ii. Global: As described at Q3, QS had released their 2024 ranking where the University improved 16 places to 176<sup>th</sup>. This was the first release where the impact of interventions would be felt but it also featured a change in methodology to include global research networks and sustainability. Since Q3 the University had established that its improvement had been entirely due to performance improvement rather than benefiting from the change in methodology. At the time of writing, the THE tables had yet to be published. Again, there had been a change of methodology but the THE had indicated that these would have minimal impact on the University's ranking.
- iii. Education: The results from the 2023 NSS had been released during the quarter. This was the first year with a new methodology where the main changes were the dropping of the overall satisfaction measure and the shift from five to four option answers. Although this meant that the results were not directly comparable with previous years, evidence of progress could be seen from the ranking relative to other Russell Group institutions in the various perspectives. For the areas previously incorporated in domestic league tables, Teaching on my course and Assessment and Feedback, the University had improved from 19<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> respectively. Versus the wider sector, where it was more challenging to outperform, Teaching on my course (84.7%) was close to average and ranked 59<sup>th</sup> out of 131. However, even with the improvement against the Russell Group, issues with Assessment and Feedback remained with satisfaction at 72.7% to rank at 106<sup>th</sup>. Free text comments highlighted long turnaround times for marks exacerbated by the marking boycott though remedial activity to improve these was yet to fully embed at the time of the survey. Other substantial ranking improvements against the Russell Group were seen in Learning Opportunities (15<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>), Organisation and Management 18<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>. At the time of writing, it was uncertain whether these results would be viewed as sufficiently 'credible' to be used within the domestic tables due for publication in September. Also, TEF results had been released to institutions and, though embargoed until the end of September, the feedback indicated that the University's positive progress in enhancing the student experience and student outcomes had been recognised.
- iv. Research and Impact: CREATE ambitions remained on track. Overall year-end income stood at £118m, 3.9% higher than 2022 with the majority of this increase being in Health and Life Sciences. Award values were at circa £140m which was a little lower (-3.7%) than last year but still within the original target range for CREATE and similar to the three-year average (-1.2% or -£1.6m), noting that the previous year was above the CREATE trajectory. *[Sentence redacted due to commercial interest]*.

- v. Professional Services – Learning Resources: Reported using the ‘learning resources’ bank of questions within the NSS results and noting that the survey methodology changed this year, this metric had seen an increase in performance of 6.4% maintaining the upward trend seen over the last three years. Satisfaction with IT resources improved by 8.4% to 88.1%, satisfaction with library resources rose by 6.6% to 92.1% and satisfaction with subject specific resources increased by 3.7% to 88.3%.

#### *Year-End Financial Position Report*

- vi. The underlying operating surplus for the year (excluding non-cash pension adjustments) was £10.8m. Although £13.3m favourable to plan, this was adverse to prior year by £5.3m, with a £60m increase in income more than offset by additional investment within both pay and non-pay expenditure.

#### **AGREED:**

- vii. The Quarter 4 and Year End Performance Report should be approved.

### **6. Strategy 2031 Development – Recap**

#### **RECEIVED:**

- i. A presentation from the Vice-Chancellor covering:
- An overview of achievements from Strategy 2026 and key changes for Liverpool 2031
  - Recap of the strategy development process and how Council feedback had been incorporated
  - Showcase of the Liverpool 2031 web materials
  - Implementation approach and plans for ongoing reporting.

### **7. Liverpool 2031 Approval**

#### **RECEIVED:**

- i. The proposed new strategic framework – Liverpool 2031.
- ii. Presentations providing an overview of the pillars, themes and year one priorities for implementation.

#### **REPORTED:**

- iii. The core elements of the paper – the draft pillars and themes – along with the purpose, vision and values, had been subject to wider consultation with colleagues and external partners and feedback had been reflected in the final draft.
- iv. Next steps included:
- Detailed action planning to begin immediately following approval of the year one priorities

- Estates, IT/Digital and financial plans prepared for March 2024
  - Faculty focus on planning for growth informed by market insight data
  - Strategic reporting on progress twice a year (including success measures) in autumn and spring.
- v. The paper had been considered by the Finance and Resources Committee, Senior Leadership Team and Senate who had agreed to recommend Liverpool 2031 for approval.
- vi. A soft launch was planned for the Leadership Forum Away Day scheduled for 2 October 2023. The external launch was scheduled for 24 October 2023.

**AGREED:**

- vii. The new strategic framework should be approved.

**8. Strategy – Role of Council**

Members engaged in breakout groups to consider the role of Council in supporting the success of the University's strategy.

Key feedback to emerge from these discussions, which would be taken forward, included:

- The need for shorter papers, with background documents being accessible to those who want to see additional information.
- Agendas to have open discussion at the start and compliance issues second, reflecting that a lot of work is already undertaken on the latter in the committees. This would make time for proper discussion on strategic items and risk.
- Senior Leadership Team members should be open about challenges with members and be specific about where support from members is required.
- A session on establishing the KPIs should be arranged to ensure members understand the rationale, what they are aiming to demonstrate and have the ability to challenge. A session on league tables should also be arranged.
- Trust is vital so that people feel comfortable to give and receive challenge.
- Council members should be invited to share what is happening elsewhere, offering an external perspective and challenge.
- The roll out of the strategy should be broken down so that Council can focus on the phases at the right time.
- The league table requirements and actions should also be broken down so that members can support the progress to top 100.
- Elements of Liverpool 2031 should be prioritised over time with milestones to measure against – years 1, 3 and 7.
- Three year rolling averages should be reported rather than every twist and turn.
- Council member mapping should be undertaken – networks, funders, key specialisms aligned to Liverpool 2031 – emphasising members' advocacy role. To assist members in their advocacy role, bespoke information provided regarding key themes would ensure there were standard messages to convey.
- Executive/non executive buddying should be considered.
- Consistency of approach and understanding of risk appetite were important.

- Opportunities should be available for members to triangulate messages from the Senior Leadership Team with other UoL members.

## **9. Ambition – Size and Shape**

### **RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- i. A presentation from the Director of Strategic Planning on institutional size and shape and planning for growth and next steps in relation to this, covering: comparators; research reputation; student mix; modelling of growth; financial benchmarking; and next steps

### **REPORTED:**

- ii. Next steps included:
  - A top-down institutional plan for growth agreed by the Senior Leadership Team and presented to Leadership Forum
  - Faculties and Schools to develop bottom-up plans for research and student numbers throughout the 2023/24 planning round
  - Renewed focus on XJTLU numbers and accelerated growth of international PGT numbers
  - Strong focus on increasing research applications/awards and contribution
  - Development of infrastructure plans (physical and digital), including acquisition of land for expansion
  - Development of new risk register.

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

### **NOTED:**

- i. The next meeting would be held at 2pm on Friday 24 November 2023.