

Summary Report of Council 4: 8 July 2020

The University Council held a meeting via Skype for Business on 8 July 2020, and welcomed Mr Abdulraouf Abdussalam, the new UBU Education Officer to his first meeting of Council. Thanks were extended to the former Education Officer, Ms Ayman Malik.

Council noted that this was Ms Sarah Smith's final Council meeting. Council recorded its appreciation for Sarah's commitment to the work of Council and its Committees over an 11-year period.

The meeting focussed on the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic including the University's budget for 2020/21, current and planned mitigations to minimise the business risk of COVID-19 on student recruitment for the 2020/21 cycle and strategy development.

This paper provides a high-level summary of the business considered by Council, which will be published on the University website. This is not a formal record of the Council meeting but presents an update on matters discussed by the University's governing body.

Baroness Ann Taylor
Chair of Council

1 Report from the Chair of Council

On behalf of Council, the Chair recorded her continued appreciation for the work of the Executive Team, and the wider University community, in their response to the pandemic. Council noted the work that had been undertaken to date and was reassured that despite the disruption caused by COVID-19 the core business of the University was continuing; this included delivering on the University's strategic framework.

The Chair also provided a brief report on the volatile external environment and the challenges that continued to face the sector in the current unprecedented times.

2 Vice-Chancellor's Report

Council received a report from the Vice-Chancellor on the University's post COVID-19 campus recovery plans which were being developed to support a safe and gradual return to campus-based operations. Council noted the success of the University's first virtual Open Day on the 20 June and discussed two University league tables (Complete University Guide 2021 and the HESA Graduate Outcome 2017/18). An update on pay negotiations for 2020/21 was also provided.

Extensive internal and external engagement activities that had been undertaken by the Vice-Chancellor and the Executive Team during this period were also highlighted; this included staff, students, and local / City, regional and national engagement. Council noted that the University continued to play an important role in the local effort to mitigate and recover from the impact of COVID-19, and the Chief Executive of the Bradford Metropolitan District Council thanked the University for working in close partnership with the BMDC, the NHS and businesses during the pandemic.

3 Budget for 2020/21 and Future Years: Baseline and Variations

Council considered and **approved** the 2020/21 baseline budget for the University, noting that the budget and decision-making approach had been designed to enable the University to manage the significant risks and uncertainties of the pandemic, and to secure financial viability. Council noted that the draft budget had been subject to robust scrutiny by the Finance Committee and Executive Board during its development both of which concluded that the baseline budget was credible and robust.

In addition, the Chief Finance Officer reported that an application for finance under the Government's Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loans Scheme (CLBILS) had been submitted. In line with University governance, the CLBILS application had been considered and endorsed by Finance Committee at its meeting in June 2020.

4 Student Recruitment

Council considered a report from the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Academic Innovation and Quality on the current student recruitment position for 2020/21 entry, noting that contingency planning continued to be undertaken to ensure recruitment and marketing activities continued across all markets segments in order to minimise the business risks associated with the pandemic. Council noted the positive trajectory for undergraduate home students which placed the University in a good position for Clearing. Council was reassured that mechanisms were in place to deliver a resilient and fit for purpose service during the Clearing period. Council was also updated on the challenges facing all institutions in respect of overseas student recruitment.

5 International Foundation Project Update

Council considered and **endorsed** the approach to the next phase of the International Foundation Project that had been developed following detailed discussions at Executive Board, Finance Committee and Senate. Council noted that Executive Board had approved the selection of a preferred supplier to deliver an international foundation route on campus from 2021/22; this was part of a longer-term strategy to increase market share which would help to achieve the University's international recruitment targets. Further work was being undertaken with the preferred supplier to further define the detail of the proposed arrangements.

5 Strategy Development Update

Council received an update on the development of the supporting and enabling strategies, noting that while the pace of the strategy development had slowed down as the University focussed its efforts on the campus recovery, this work remained a priority for the Executive Team. Outstanding strategies (Business and Community Engagement, Estates and Infrastructure, People, Finance and Performance, and Brand, Communications and Marketing) would be presented to the Council in in 2020/21, along with KPIs and a new Performance Dashboard.

6 Learning Teaching and Student Experience Strategy 2020-2025

Council considered and **approved** the draft Learning Teaching and Student Experience Strategy 2020-2025, a sub-strategy of the new overarching University Strategy, which would ensure that the quality

of the student experience was enhanced, and that students were supported to succeed both in their studies and beyond. It had been developed in consultation with the Students' Union, the Executive Team, Senate, and Faculties and would ensure that learning and teaching continued to thrive within the context of a rapidly changing environment. Further work was ongoing to finalise specific targets for identified KPIs in line with the other sub-strategies.

7 Development Plan for the University Estate 2020-2025

Council considered and **approved** the draft Development Plan for the University Estate, which had been developed as part of the enabling Estate and Infrastructure sub-strategy. The plan set out the overarching, realistic ambition for the University property and building for the next five years, in support of the University's mission and strategic objectives. Further work was being undertaken in relation to the IT infrastructure at the University; this would be closely aligned with the Learning Teaching and Student Experience Strategy and the Research and Innovation Strategy.

8 Business and Community Engagement Strategy

Council considered the draft Business and Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025, a sub-strategy of the new overarching University Strategy noting that further consultation would be undertaken with Council members and trusted stakeholders during the summer. The strategy described a vision in which Bradford would be a university city that shared knowledge in order to strengthen health, wealth and confidence across the many communities in which students, staff and alumni participated. A final version would be presented to the Council in October / November 2020, for approval.

9 Corporate Risk Register and Board Assurance Framework

Council considered and **approved** the proposed changes to the University's Corporate Risk Register, noting that it had been endorsed by the Audit Committee at its meeting in June. The changes would be implemented by the Legal and Governance Department and overseen by the Risk Oversight Group and Executive Board.

10 Presentation on Gender Pay Reporting 2019

Council received an informative presentation on the Gender Pay Gap 2019, noting that the University was taking action to address and mitigate against gender pay issues. The University reaffirmed its commitment to developing an environment which promoted equality of opportunity and confirmed that it would continue to address gender imbalance and progress its University-wide equality, diversity and inclusion agenda; this was strongly welcomed by the Council. It was further noted that this would form part of the new People Committee work programme. Given the importance of this issue, Council requested a progress report in 2020/21.

Standing Items

11 Report from the University Secretary

Council received an update from the University Secretary which summarised ongoing work relating to areas of governance pertinent to the work of Council and the University. Following consideration of the report, Council **approved**:



- Revised Council Committee Terms of Reference.
- People Committee Terms of Reference.
- Proposed amendments to the UBU Constitution.
- Proposed amendments to Ordinance 10.
- Nominations for honorary awards.

Council noted that additional meetings of Council would be convened between August and October, if required, to address any matters arising from the University's recovery to campus or any further possible disruption caused by COVID-19.

12 Report from the UBU

Council received a report from the UBU Education Officer and UBU Student Affairs Officer on current issues and recent activities which included an overview of student engagement in 2019/20; plans for 2020/21; and the UBU cycle hire scheme, developed in partnership with the University.

13 Business from Committees of Council, and Senate

Council noted summary reports from Audit Committee, Ethics Committee, Finance Committee, Governance and Nominations Committee, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee and Honorary Degrees Committee, and Senate on issues discussed since the last meeting of the Council.

14 Council received the following reports, for information:

- Minutes from the Council meeting held on 20 May 2020.
- Annual Report: Academic Appeals and Students Complaints 2018/19.
- Prevent Duty update.
- Draft Council 1 agenda.
- Council terms of reference and membership 2019/20.
- Draft Council schedule of business for 2020/21.

15 Date of next Council meeting:

Wednesday 25 November 2020

Jacqui Holgate, Assistant Head (Governance)
9 July 2020