



University Council

Paper no: 2019-11-28-03a

Paper title: Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 October 2019 in Lecture Room 17, CMDC, Cranfield University.

Present: Ferguson, Mr Iain (Chair)
Atkinson, Professor Helen
Carter, Miss Caroline
Carey, Mr Anthony
Chen Davison, Lesley
Ehigiator, Mr Osas
Fairweather, Mr Paul
Gregson, Professor Sir Peter
Hill, Mr James
Hynes, Miss Alice
Mayhew, Dr Maxine
Rowlands, Mr Simon
Saggu, Mr Jaz
Thompson, Dr Christine
Young, Baroness Barbara

Apologies: Day, Mr Colin
Sparks, Professor Emma

Attending: Aspinall, Mr Philip, Chief Operating Officer
Bradley, Mr Paul, Head of Health and Safety (for item 3)
Douglas, Mr Gregor, University Secretary
Morris, Mrs Julie, Governance Officer
Perkins, Mrs Helen (for items 4 and 5)
Odedra, Mrs Hiran (for item 4a)
Stephenson, Professor Tom (for item 3)
Tyrell, Professor Sean (for item 7)

1. Introduction

The Chair welcomed members and attendees, in particular Mr Simon Rowlands, Mr James Hill and Professor Helen Atkinson who were attending their first meeting.

2. Minutes of the meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2019 were approved for publication on the University website.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Health and Safety

(a) Health and Safety Annual Report 2018-19

The Chair of the University H&S Committee and the Head of Health and Safety joined the meeting for this item.

It was noted that objectives for the coming year were:
extending the scope of the University's OSHAS 18001 accreditation to Cranfield Quality Services, the Conference Centre, the Airport, and then transitioning to ISO 45001;

- reviewing the role of the Nominated Safety Manager; and,
- the development of initiatives in relation to workload, work pressures and resourcing.

(b) Health and Safety Quarterly update

It was reported that the University was in discussion with the local council about road safety initiatives on the campus, including arrangements to support crossing College Road near the Sport Centre.

The Chair of the University H&S Committee and the Head of Health and Safety withdrew from the meeting.

4 Governance

(a) Diversity Monitoring Statement

The Director of HR and the Head of Diversity and Inclusion joined the meeting for this item.

The report provided a snapshot of the University staff and student data for 2018/19 and an update on actions undertaken since the previous report. It was reported that:

- On gender, there had been an increase in the proportion of female academics towards the University's 2022 target, reflecting an increase in female applicants and female offers;
- On ethnicity, overall there had been an increase in BAME staff across the University, though the Cranfield BAME population did not reflect the diversity in local communities, especially in professional services roles;
- On disability, Cranfield was now a "Disability Confident" level 1 employer. HR practices had been adapted, for example offering a guaranteed interview for disabled applicants who met the essential criteria for a role. It was hoped to attain level 2 status by the end of next year.

Council encouraged the Diversity team to look at material published by other universities and employers.

The Head of Diversity and Inclusion withdrew from the meeting.

Office note:

On student demographics, a number of differences were identified between the (small number of) student statistics included in the Annual Diversity Report and those in the Academic report. For clarity, it is proposed that the Annual Academic Report

will be the single source of student diversity statistics, and the Annual Diversity Report will be the single source of staff diversity statistics.

(b) Prevent Annual Report

The University's Executive Lead on Prevent introduced the item, noting that the University was deemed by the OfS to have demonstrated due regard to the Prevent Duty. The Prevent Standing Group maintained a summary action plan and risk assessment, which had input from external professional regional and police advisors, who confirmed that Cranfield was considered low. Council noted the staff training arrangements, the welfare aspects of the duty, escalation mechanisms, student engagement and the scale of cases escalated.

Council authorised the Chair to sign the Prevent declaration for submission to OfS.

5 People

(a) Remuneration Committee annual statement

Miss Caroline Carter had taken over as Chair of Remuneration Committee. Following discussion, Council approved the Annual Statement for publication within the University's financial statement.

(b) Conferment of the title of Emeritus Professor

In accordance with Ordinance 12.4, Council approved the recommendation from Senate that the title of Emeritus Professor be conferred on Professor Frank Horwitz, following his retirement.

The Director of HR withdrew from the meeting.

6 Chief Executive's Report

The Vice Chancellor drew attention to a number of areas, in particular:

- Initial indications were that student numbers from the October intake were up on the previous year and broadly in line with expectations. Thanks were recorded for the many staff involved in the recruitment process.
- The Chancellor's Dinner, bringing together Honorary Graduates and stakeholders from industry and government at the House of Lords, had been a great success.
- Following the confirmation of the new contribution rates from October 2019 to October 2021, the UCU would be holding a strike ballot in the autumn.

7 Education Briefing

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education joined the meeting for this item.

The PVC-Education presented selected themes from the Education Strategy in the areas learning environment, portfolio development and andragogy / academic practice.

While there was evidence of slow incremental improvement over time, Assessment & Feedback and Organisation & Management continued to require attention. Some

areas identified in PTES were being addressed immediately, whereas others which required longer term sustained intervention included:

- Structural aspects of courses, e.g. over-assessment, managing student workload
- Human factors, e.g. student support, face-to-face interaction with academics, career and networking assistant
- Cultural aspects, ensuring that students and their experience was prioritised for academic staff

Digital transformation initiatives would be taken forward over the next 2-3 years. The foundation for this was the identification of a single Virtual Learning Environment platform for the University. The migration of course materials would follow. Enhancement of these materials would be encouraged through processes of co-creation between academic staff and expert learning technologists. It was noted that in parallel work was ongoing on refreshing and improving teaching spaces, to ensure that the physical learning environment also met student expectations.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education withdrew from the meeting.

8 MK:U

The report “Cranfield University and MK:U – an overview” summarising the background to the development and providing links to all relevant documentation was received.

There was an oral report from the Joint Finance and Audit Committee (JFAC) earlier in the day. It was reported that the governance arrangements had now been settled. Final validated student number projections and financial model (including scenario planning on reduced student numbers, delays in the build project etc) would be considered at JFAC’s next meeting. Work was ongoing to obtain letters of support from businesses and to raise awareness with MPs, ministers and others.

Council noted that Government contribution was in effect a pre-requisite for a decision to proceed, and it was accepted that it was now highly unlikely that this would be secured by 28 November. It was anticipated that MK Council would commit an additional £4m at risk to allow the work necessary for the project to be delivered in 2023 to carry on until March 2020.

A recommendation on the stage gate decision would come from University Executive to JFAC. JFAC would present its recommendation at the next Council meeting.

9 Report from University Executive

(a) Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Council noted the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement which had been updated to incorporate progress against the 2018 plan and to highlight that the University’s centrally based Procurement staff involved in purchasing high risk categories were undergoing advanced training on identifying modern slavery risks in the supply chain.

(b) Flexible Working Policy

Council noted that the University Executive had approved the policy. While there were already areas across the University that operated flexible working

patterns successfully, the policy set out a framework to provide a more consistent approach.

10 Any other business

Council Effectiveness Review

The Chair reported that a review exercise would be undertaken in the new year. It was likely that Council members would be asked to complete a questionnaire on Council business and opportunities for improvement as part of the review.