



University Council

Paper no: 2021-10-20-03

Paper title: Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 21 July 2021 at 16.00-18.00 in Lecture Room 16, Cranfield Management Development Centre

Present:

Ferguson, Iain (Chair)	Hynes, Alice
Atkinson, Helen	Wainwright, James
Carter, Caroline	Mayhew, Maxine
Chen Davison, Lesley (<i>by video conference</i>)	Rowlands, Simon
Day, Colin	Saggu, Jaz
Fairweather, Paul	Sparks, Emma
Gregson, Sir Peter	Stokes, Claire
Hart, Ian	Thompson, Chris
Hill, James	Watkins, Peter

Attending:

- Aspinall, Philip, Chief Operating Officer
- Douglas, Gregor, University Secretary
- Pollard, Simon, PVC SWEE (for item 4)
- Sibbald, Ian, Director of Finance (for item 8)

1. Introduction

The Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council welcomed members and attendees to the first face to face meeting at Cranfield since December 2019. Particular welcome was extended to James Wainwright, CSA President attending his first meeting; congratulations were extended to Professor Dame Helen Atkinson DBE for her damehood.

2. Disclosure of interest

There were no disclosures recorded.

3. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Received: Paper 2021-07-21-03 setting out the minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2021.

Resolved: The minutes were approved.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Health & Safety update

Professor Simon Pollard joined the meeting (via video conference)

4.1 Quarterly Health & Safety Report

Received: Paper 2021-07-21-04a being the quarterly report to Council from the Cranfield Health & Safety Committee (CH&SC) covering the period 1 March 2021 to 31 May 2021.

Noted: The Council lead on Health & Safety introduced this item by welcoming Professor Simon Pollard as the new Chair of the Health & Safety Committee (HSC). The Chair of HSC presented the quarterly report and invited discussion. The following points were noted:

- (a) Council recognised that the University's hydrogen activities was at a point of material change. The Chair of HSC confirmed that training on the safe use and handling of transportable gases was offered to staff as appropriate.
- (b) Council sought detail on how health and safety activities of parallel companies was reported to Council.

[Post meeting note: CIC, CCCL, CQS and the Airport are part of the H&S management system with figures included in the Council report (the Airport is also subject to CAA scrutiny). CAeSL is not part of the University's H&S management system, having their own reporting structures and H&S management system.]

- (c) Council enquired about: the arrangements for home-based DSE assessments, in the light of the new hybrid working framework; causes of "unclassified" fire alarm activations in residences; and whether work on well-being was informing a new behavioural safety culture. Updates would be provided at the next meeting.

4.2 Development of the H&S System

Received: Paper 2021-07-21-04b setting out proposals for the development of Cranfield University's H&S management system.

Noted: The Chair of the HSC presented a paper on the proposed next phase of health and safety management at Cranfield; one that built on the compliance record and focused on promoting safe attitudes and behaviours.

Resolved: Council endorsed the next phase of health and safety management at Cranfield and encouraged Cranfield to invest in external benchmarking tools.

5. **Chief Executive & Vice-Chancellor's Report**

Received: Paper 2021-07-21-05 setting out the Chief Executive's report from May to July 2021; and a revised Masterplan 2014-2030

Noted: The Chief Executive and Vice-Chancellor introduced his report highlighting:

- 5.1 the combined efforts of staff from across different groups throughout the different phases of the Covid-19 pandemic, enabling the University to continue to provide services to its stakeholder groups;

5.2 the many events that had taken place over the past few months enabling Cranfield to open and showcase new buildings and facilities, and the success of the online graduation ceremonies;

5.3 development of the revised Masterplan 2014-2030;

Professor Sir Peter Gregson concluded his report by thanking members of Council for their tremendous support and counsel during his time as Chief Executive and Vice-Chancellor.

6. Report from University Executive

Received: Paper 2021-07-21-06 being the quarterly report from University Executive.

Noted: The report from University Executive was taken as read.

Resolved: Council noted:

- the new working arrangements pilot and associated communications;
- the latest update on activities related to MK:U; and
- the quarterly environment report.

7. Operating Plan 2021/2022

Received: Paper 2021-07-21-07 setting out the Operating Plan 2021/2022.

Noted: (a) The Chief Executive and Vice-Chancellor reported that since the Council discussion in April 2021 the Operating Plan and associated budget had been developed in consultation with the University Executive and the Senior Management Team.

(b) Council acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic would continue to impact on Cranfield but that the Operating Plan set out the key priorities and targets based on best assumptions at this time; as in the previous year, the budget would be reviewed in November 2021.

(c) Council noted that many industries were considering restructuring having faced huge financial losses during the pandemic. Cranfield had itself undertaken a restructure three years ago. The strategic decision was to use cash balances to maintain capability and capacity to enable the University to respond to opportunities as the economy recovered.

(d) There was a discussion of opportunities around UK student recruitment in particular, and of ED&I initiatives which might be reflected in future plans.

Resolved: Council approved the Operating Plan 2021/2022 on the understanding that the associated budget would be revised and re-presented in November 2021.

8. Report from Council Sub-Committees

8.1 Finance Committee

8.1.1 Management Accounts

Received: Paper 2021-07-21-08a and commentary from the Chair of Finance Committee and the Director of Finance

- Noted:
- (a) The financial statements covered the period to 30 April 2021.
 - (b) In the first nine months, income was £3.8M above budget due to increased tuition fees and research. The net operating deficit was £1.88M ahead of budget as a result of the increased income including a £1.2M interim insurance debtor payment for the Conference Centre.
 - (c) Income to April was £3.8M above budget and £6.3M below the previous year.
 - (d) Forecasted income for the year was £3.5M above budget.

Resolved: Council thanked the Chair of Finance Committee and the Director of Finance for the report.

8.1.2 University Budget 2021/2022

Received: Paper 2021-07-21-08b setting out the budgeted accounts for the University for the year ended 31 July 2022.

- Noted:
- (a) Similar to this time last year, the budget for 2021/2022 has been prepared from two scenario budgets and then one overarching budget presented based on best knowledge available at the end of May. There remained several 'unknowns' mainly around student numbers, but these would be clearer following registration in October and in time for the revised budget presentation to Council in November.
 - (b) In discussion the Director of Finance provided a breakdown of the funds drawn down from the bond.

Resolved: Council approved the budget for 2021/2022 on the understanding that it would be re-presented at the Council meeting in November 2021.

8.1.3 Airport Update

Received: Oral report from the Director of Finance

- Noted:
- (a) The Director of Finance reported that regular meetings with Marshall Defence and Security Group continued. The Chief Executive and Vice-Chancellor had ensured that transition meetings had taken place between the new senior executives at Marshall Group and his successor, Professor Karen Holford.

- (b) The South Cambridgeshire Plan was due to be issued in August 2021 and the expectation was that Marshall would be included in the plan.

Resolved: The Chief Executive and Vice-Chancellor, the Chair of Finance Committee, and the Director of Finance were thanked for their contributions to the Air Park negotiations.

8.2 Audit Committee

Received: Oral report from the Chair of Audit Committee.

- Noted:
- (a) At its meeting earlier in the day, Audit Committee had received a series of papers from the new Head of Internal Audit setting out a refreshed approach and attitude towards the internal audit strategy, annual audit plan and reporting. Audit Committee had encouraged the University to commission a Cyber/IT audit, appreciating that this would be a priority for the incoming Director of Information Services, and in the light of the continuing impact of Covid-19, to defer the Student Recruitment audit until 2022/2023.
 - (b) Audit Committee had also received the External Auditors' Audit Strategy Memorandum; the fees were currently under negotiation.
 - (c) Audit Committee would continue to monitor progress with CAeSL, but it was pleasing to note that their new Director of Finance was producing satisfactory reports on which the University and PWC could now rely. Audit Committee commented that the additional work over the last year on CAeSL had been extremely time consuming.
 - (d) Following the Risk and Resilience Workshop in March 2021, University Executive would present a new strategic risk framework to Audit Committee in October. This would come to Council in November.

8.3 Nominations Committee

Received: Paper 2021-07-21-08c setting out proposals for Council sub-committee membership and succession planning.

Resolved: Council approved:

- changes to Council Sub-Committee membership as follows:
 - Ian Hart from Audit Committee to Finance Committee
 - Peter Watkins joined Audit Committee
 - Caroline Carter from Finance Committee to Nominations Committee
- the creation of the Defence and Security Advisory Group to Council.

8.4 Remuneration Committee

Received: Oral report from the Chair of Remuneration Committee

Noted: The Chair of Remuneration Committee reported that the Committee had met earlier in the day for a broad discussion around the future hybrid working arrangements, including related health and safety aspects. The pilot programme was a great opportunity for enabling agility in the future and feedback would be received from all stakeholder groups.

9. Emeritus Professors

Received: Paper 2021-07-21-09 setting out proposals for the honorary title of Emeritus Professor

Resolved: Council approved the recommendation from Senate that the title of Emeritus Professor be conferred upon Professor Mark Saville and Professor Tom Stephenson.

10. Any other business

Council formally recorded its thanks to Professor Sir Peter Gregson, Chief Executive and Vice-Chancellor for his tremendous contribution to the University.

Julie Morris
Governance Officer
July 2021