



University Council

Paper no: 2022-04-07-03

Paper title: Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 November 2021 in Lecture Room 17, Cranfield Management Development Centre

Present:

Ferguson, Iain (Chair)	Hynes, Alice
Atkinson, Helen	Wainwright, James
Carter, Caroline	Rowlands, Simon
Chen Davison, Lesley	Saggu, Jaz
Day, Colin	Sparks, Emma
Fairweather, Paul <i>(by video conference from item 8)</i>	Stokes, Claire
Hart, Ian	Thompson, Chris
Holford, Karen	Watkins, Peter

Apologies: Hill, James; Mayhew, Maxine

Attending:

- Aspinall, Philip, Chief Operating Officer
- Douglas, Gregor, University Secretary
- Ellis, Gareth, Energy & Environment Manager *(for item 6d)*
- Morris, Julie, Governance Officer
- Odedra, Hiran, Diversity and Inclusion Manager *(for item 6a)*
- Perkins, Helen, Director of Human Resources *(for items 6a and 6b)*
- Radcliffe, Fran, Head of Student Support and Wellbeing *(for item 6b)*
- Sibbald, Ian, Director of Finance *(for items 6c; 7; 8a and 8b)*

1. Introduction

The Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council welcomed members and attendees to the meeting. Council recorded its thanks to Professor Chris Fogwill, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, and colleagues from the School of Water, Energy and Environment for hosting a Council visit.

2. Disclosure of interest

There were no disclosures recorded.

3. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Received: Paper 2021-11-25-03 setting out the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2021.

Resolved: The minutes were approved subject to minor amendment.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Health & Safety update

Received: Oral update

Noted: There had been no Health & Safety incidents to report. In terms of ongoing actions, the University had scheduled its programme of H&S visits across its sites and would be gathering benchmarking data to enable a review of its H&S culture with a view to enhancements.

5. Chief Executive & Vice-Chancellor's Report

Received: Paper 2021-11-25-05 setting out the Chief Executive's report from October to November 2021.

- Noted:
- (a) The report was taken as read. The CE&VC drew particular attention to the paragraphs on CoP26 activities through which Cranfield had received regional, national and international exposure.
 - (b) The partnership between Cranfield and Rabdan Academy, in Abu Dhabi, UAE had been signed; it was for delivery of a dual degree programme in MSc in Systems Engineering, specialising in Defence.
 - (c) Council was invited to comment on the content and nature of the CEO report. Council suggested that the report could helpfully include key operational matters; funding successes; concerns and opportunities; public relations; growth; and IT infrastructure in addition to physical infrastructure (where not captured elsewhere in the papers).

Resolved: Council thanked the CE&VC for her report.

6. Report from University Executive

Received: Paper 2021-11-25-06 being a report from University Executive including annual reports in appendices.

6.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Report

The Director of HR and the Equality and Diversity Manager joined for this item.

Received: Appendix A being the annual EDI report.

- Noted:
- (a) The Director of HR introduced the report and invited the Equality and Diversity Manager to highlight points of detail. The following was noted:
 - the report provided a snapshot of Cranfield's staff data for 2020/2021 and demonstrated the progress made against the seven strategic aims;
 - there had been an increase in activity related to the following areas: gender, ethnicity, disability, and LGBT. Local action plans had been developed; focus groups and networks established; and
 - Cranfield had access to a range of advisory services and networks including Stonewall, who were recognised across the sector for policy advice.
 - (b) Council discussed the challenges around gender balance through the workforce up to and including senior

management. The University was encouraged to undertake activities long term to develop a pipeline.

- (c) Council considered comments on the tone and language used in the report relating to those with disabilities. The Equality and Diversity Manager reported that she had been working with the Chair of the Cranfield Disability Network to finesse terminology going forward.
- (d) Council commented that there were multiple actions, some ongoing, and some new. It suggested it would be beneficial to include indicative timelines and prioritise actions. For future reporting, Council would find it helpful if the coversheet included an executive summary.

Resolved: Council approved the EDI report for publication.
The Director of Equality and Diversity withdrew from the meeting

6.2 Prevent Duty Annual Report

The Deputy Prevent Lead (Students) joined the meeting

Received: Appendix B being the Prevent Duty annual report for 2020/2021

- Noted:
- (a) The Office for Students (OfS) required Cranfield to submit an annual return on behalf of the governing body. In June 2021, OfS confirmed that it had concluded that during 2019-20 Cranfield had demonstrated due regard to Prevent Duty and that it was not at higher risk of non-compliance with Prevent.
 - (b) Council noted there had been no significant changes since the previous report; and that there had been a nil return for the 2020/2021 year.
 - (c) Key areas of support for students during the year had been safety online and maintaining duty of care. The University had measures in place to provide awareness of mechanisms for concerns about students, speakers or events to be raised and addressed.

Resolved: Council approved the declaration for signature by the Chair of Council for submission to the OfS.
The Director of HR and the Deputy Prevent Lead (Students) withdrew from the meeting.

6.3 Annual Environmental Report and Environment Strategy

The Director of Finance and the Energy and Environment Manager joined for this item

Received: Appendices C and D being the Annual Environmental Report for 2020/2021 and the Environment strategy respectively.

- Noted:
- (a) The annual report referenced the end of the original targets set for Carbon (in 2009) and other environmental factors (in 2011). There had been many highlights during the period with actions taken, schemes implemented, policies introduced and awareness campaigns to produce positive impact.

- (b) It had been disappointing that the Covid-19 pandemic had affected the final carbon reduction target but the extra measures being put in place would bring the University back to target.
- (c) Measurement and monitoring were important. Achievement of ISO 45001 provided assurance that appropriate measures were in place. Nonetheless, Council encouraged the University to research other accreditation/standards to support progress against targets.
- (d) In 2020, Council had committed to developing a new set of environmental targets to be achieved by 2030/2031. Council considered the targets, exploring feasibility, timelines, and the anticipated costs. The Board for Energy and Environment had reviewed each target carefully and University Executive had approved them, challenging as they were.
- (e) With regard to financial resourcing, the University had a positive track record in obtaining funding for environmental projects (eg. SALIX funds and interest free loans). It was estimated that, based on today's technology, c£20M would be required to achieve the new targets.

Resolved: Council thanked the Board of Energy and Environment for their report.

7. Revised budget 2021/2022

Received: Paper 2021-11-25-07 setting out the revised budget 2021/2022.

- Noted:
- (a) Income had increased by £4.5M from the original budget received by Council in July 2021. The Director of Finance summarised the increase in income to all key streams, except for residences. It was noted that challenges would remain in 2022/2023, particularly in relation to staff costs.
 - (b) In discussion, Council discussed the reduction in residential income which had seen an increase in accommodation but a significant reduction in catering income due, for example, to no business meetings, lunches and other functions taking place on the Cranfield campus.
 - (c) Having accepted the proposed deficit budget for 2021/2022 when it met in July 2021, Council was encouraged by the revised budget. However, Council would expect to see the University back in surplus in 2022/2023. The CE&VC commented that University Executive were fully behind being in surplus and, whilst taking a measured approach, would aim for surplus as soon as possible.

- (d) The Bond holders were being kept informed of the University's position and had raised no concerns.

Resolved: Council approved the revised budget 2021/2022.

8. Reports from Sub-Committees

Received: Papers and oral reports from sub-committees as follows:

Finance

8.1 Statutory Accounts

Received: Paper 2021-11-25-08a being the Statutory Accounts to 31 July 2021

Noted: The Joint Finance and Audit Committee (JFAC) had considered the Statutory Accounts at its meeting on 19 October 2021 and recommended them for presentation to Council for signature.

Resolved: Council approved the Statutory Accounts to 31 July 2021 for signature.

Redactions made

Audit

8.3 Academic Assurance Report

Received: Paper 2021-11-25-08c setting out the annual academic assurance report.

Noted: (a) The annual academic report had been endorsed by Senate and the University Executive for submission to Audit Committee. Audit Committee had discussed in detail matters relating to: student welfare; initiatives to address harassment; lockdown related complaints around access to laboratories and research; students and face-to-face teaching for taught students; Ofsted requirements; and the need to focus on priorities for future actions.

(b) Council discussed the ongoing impacts caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and welcomed attention for the coming year on:

- student and staff wellbeing, to determine what was best for both communities in terms of the new working arrangements;
- re-engaging and strengthening the research culture and supporting those students who were facing difficulty in catching up with their studies;
- the development of academic partnerships; and
- acceleration of the IT strategy and projects to meet increasing demands.

(c) The report provided Council with assurance that the University had appropriate academic governance in place to meet OfS regulatory requirements and align with the CUC Code of Governance.

Resolved: Council approved the report for publication.

8.4 Audit Committee Annual Report to Council

Received: Paper 2021-11-25-08d being the Audit Committee Annual report to Council

Noted: (a) The Chair of Audit Committee introduced the annual report confirming that it set out the opinion of Audit Committee on the adequacy and effectiveness of Cranfield's arrangements for risk management, control and governance; economy, efficiency, control and governance; and the management and quality assurance of data.

(b) Throughout the year, Audit Committee's key focus had been on matters relating to the Covid-19 pandemic; risk and resilience; academic standards, quality, and the student experience. The Committee also took an interest in the management and governance of Cranfield Aerospace Solutions Ltd.

Resolved: Council thanked the Chair of Audit Committee for the report; subject to amendment of the audit fee, the report was approved for submission to the Office for Students as part of the University's annual monitoring return.

Remuneration

8.5 Received: Oral report from the Chair of Remuneration Committee

Noted: There had been no further meetings of the Committee since the last report. In summary, the Chair advised members that the annual report from the Committee was included in the financial statements; and that the Remuneration Committee had a good balance of skills on its membership.

Honorary Degrees Committee

8.6 Received: Paper 2021-11-25-08e setting out proposals for honorary degree conferrals for 2022.

Noted: The proposals set before Council were fully supported by the Schools, University Executive, and the Honorary Degrees Committee. Amendments to titles of two nominees were noted.

Resolved: Council approved the nominations for Honorary Degrees in 2022.

Council Advisory Group on Defence & Security (CADS)

8.7 Received: Oral report from the Chair of CADS

Noted: (a) The Chair of CADS reported that the group would meet quarterly with updates to Council as appropriate.

(b) Following conversations with their respective chairs, the Chair of CADS confirmed that the division of responsibilities between CADS and Cranfield Defence and Security's own Advisory Boards was now clear, and

that going forward there would be transparency between each for the benefit of all.

- (c) CADS would provide focus on positioning Cranfield appropriately in advance for the Academic Provider contract renewal in 2028. It was anticipated that the new contract would be very different, with greater opportunity for partnership working. Opportunities for such partnerships and potential competitors were noted.

Resolved: Council thanked the Chair and members of the CADS.

9. Briefing

MK:U update

The Chief Executive of MK:U joined Council for this item.

Received: Presentation delivered by the Chief Executive of MK:U.

- Noted:
- (a) The CE&VC introduced discussion confirming that the University Executive remained committed to the MK:U project. The Chair of the MK:U Board reported that Milton Keynes Council was engaged in discussions about alternative options and was also committed to the future of MK:U.
 - (b) The Chief Executive of MK:U's presentation provided background to the MK:U project, including: the timeline from 2018 to 2022; the rationale; the innovative learning facilities at Bouverie House; the pilot test (currently 49 apprentices); and next steps.
 - (c) Council noted that the Milton Keynes MPs and Council leaders had already approached government following the outcome of the spending review. Council considered that it was likely to be inadvisable for Cranfield to write further on this matter.
 - (d) The Joint Finance and Audit Committee (JFAC) would receive detailed options and financial projections at its next meeting.

Received: Council endorsed the next steps for MK:U, subject to JFAC being satisfied by the detailed projections. JFAC would report the outcome to Council ex-committee.

10. Conferral of the title of Emeritus Professor

Received: Paper 2021-11-25-10 setting out a proposal to confer the title of Emeritus Professor on Kim Turnbull James.

Resolved: Council approved the recommendation from Senate that the title of Emeritus Professor be conferred up Kim Turnbull James with effect from 1 January 2022.

11. Any other business

This was the last meeting for Professor Emma Sparks who was leaving Cranfield to take up the post of Dean and Rector at the University of New South Wales in Canberra. Council thanked Emma for her contribution to Council and to the University and wished her well in her new role.

Julie Morris
Governance Officer
December 2021