University of Sheffield | University Secretary's Office

Minutes — Meeting of the Council

Date: 30 April 2026

Present: Martin Temple, Pro-Chancellor (in the Chair)

Claire Brownlie (Pro-Chancellor), Adrian Stone (Pro-Chancellor), Rob Memmott (Treasurer), Professor Koen Lamberts (President & Vice-Chancellor), Ghislaine Allilaire, Professor Conchúr Ó Brádaigh, Rebecca Freeman, Dr John Hogan, Varun Kabra, Professor Janine Kirby, Frances Morris-Jones, Dr Siobhán North, Phil Rodrigo, Professor Mark Strong, Rob Sykes, Dr Phil Tenney, Eli Thompson (Items 12-29), Professor Mary Vincent

Secretary: David Swinn

In attendance: Jo Jones, Dr Edward Smith, Emily Allan, Professor Sue Hartley, Ian Wright, Kiara Delgado Derteano (Items 12-29), Daryl Ormerod (Item 17)

Apologies: Amanda Peck-Down

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 The Chair welcomed Members and attendees to the meeting. Apologies as recorded above were noted.

1.2 Council noted that Amanda Peck-Down had been appointed as a 'Class 3' Member of Council until 2030. It was further noted that Sam Omondi had been elected to the position of 2026/27 Students' Union President and would attend the next meeting of Council as an observer.

1.3 The Chair noted that a quorum of the Council was present for a meeting in accordance with Section 3(5) of University's statutes and therefore that the meeting was duly convened.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

2.1 CLOSED MINUTE

2.2 CLOSED MINUTE

2.3 CLOSED MINUTE

2.4 For Item 15, President & Vice-Chancellor's Report, and discussions relating to the appointment of a permanent University Secretary, David Swinn was conflicted in his role as Interim University Secretary. As above, it was agreed that the conflicted attendee would not need to leave the meeting but would be prohibited from participating in any decisions relating to themselves.

2.5 There were no other conflicts of interest declared.

3. Approval of Category B Business

3.1 Council considered Category B business, which is covered in Minutes 9-11, below.

4. CLOSED MINUTE

5. CLOSED MINUTE

6. Capital Report

6.1 Council received and noted the report, which provided an overview of the finances of ongoing Capital Projects and an update from the meetings of the UEB Estates and Capital Sub-Group held on 28 January 2026 and 11 March 2026.

7. CLOSED MINUTE

8. Corporate Risk Register

8.1 Council considered and approved the 2025/26 Corporate Risk Register and noted the accompanying Corporate Risk Assurance Map 2025/26. Both documents had been considered at the meetings of UEB on 24 February and ARAC on 2 March 2026.

9. Minutes of the Council Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

9.1 Council received and noted the Minutes from the meeting of ARAC on 19 January 2026 alongside a verbal update from the meeting of ARAC on 2 March 2026. In respect of the latter, particular attention was drawn to the following:

9.1.1 <u>Cyber Security Update</u>
ARAC welcomed Tom Griffin, Chief Information Security Officer, to the meeting, who delivered an update on current work to maintain the University's robust cyber security posture. In broad terms, ARAC was assured that there was sufficient oversight of the University's cyber security arrangements and the principal external threats to these arrangements.

9.1.2 <u>Corporate Risk</u>
In addition to approving the latest iteration of the Corporate Risk Register (see Minute 8, above), ARAC would work with the Chief Operating Officer and colleagues in Strategic Planning and Change over the coming months to assess how the Corporate Risk Assurance Map was being embedded and used across the institution once it was rolled out in full from 2026/27. To support this closer interaction of RRG

and ARAC, Emma Hartley, the Head of Planning and Performance, would be in attendance at meetings of ARAC for the foreseeable future.

9.1.3 CLOSED MINUTE

10. Minutes of the Council Finance Committee

10.1 Council received and noted the minutes of the 23 March 2026 meeting of the Council Finance Committee.

11. Minutes of the Council Senior Remuneration Committee

11.1 Council received and noted the minutes of the 23 February 2026 meeting of the Council Senior Remuneration Committee.

12. Further Welcome and Introductions

12.1 Council welcomed SU Members, who would be present for the Unreserved Business conducted over the remainder to the meeting.

13. Further Declaration of Conflicts of Interests

13.1 There were no further conflicts of interest declared for this part of the meeting.

14. Category C Business

14.1 Council considered Category C business, which is covered in Minutes 19-30 below

15. President & Vice-Chancellor's Report

15.1 Council received and noted the President & Vice-Chancellor's report, which provided information on the principal current and forthcoming developments in the policy environment and against each of the themes in the University's Strategic Plan. Attention was drawn to the following updates and developments since the written report was prepared:

(a) Industrial Action
The Director of HR provided a verbal update on industrial action. Members were informed that a majority of University and College Union (UCU) members had voted in support of a mandate, and six days of strike action were now planned to take place between 7 and 14 May 2026.

(b) CLOSED MINUTE:

(c) Defence Universities Alliance

UEB had approved a non-binding Letter of Intent to join the Defence Universities Alliance (DUA) following a call for members from the Ministry of Defence. The principal objective of the DUA was to facilitate collaboration between the Ministry of Defence, industry, and academia to build defence-related industrial capacity and develop essential skills in the interests of UK sovereign capability. The University had completed its application to become one of nine founding members, having assured itself that the alliance aligned with its research strengths and public statement on defence and security. While acknowledging potential risks, UEB had identified significant opportunities in the partnership and would continue to update Council on the progress of the application.

(d) Interim Update: Review of the SU Constitution

Daryl Ormerod, the Chief Executive of the SU, had been invited to attend for the item (see Minute 17, below). In preparation for this, Members were informed that a potential conflict of interest regarding the dual role of an officer also serving as the Chair of Trustees had been identified and actively discussed by the Review Group. Noting the particular nature of SU governance and the role of students within them, and having considered alternative options the Review Group was recommending the retention of an SU Officer as Trustee Board Chair along with strengthened and formalised responsibilities for an external Deputy Chair, to mitigate the conflict risk.

(e) External Environment

Current legislative changes and governance pressures were exerting a significant impact on the UK higher education (HE) landscape. Universities were navigating new financial constraints, such as potential student loan interest caps and the International Student Fee Levy, alongside the stagnation of domestic tuition fees. Furthermore, the government had introduced stricter protocols to identify and mitigate foreign interference that could be seen to compromise national values or institutional free speech. To manage these risks, schools had implemented a new internal reporting system that allowed senior leadership to monitor and escalate security concerns.

(f) New University Vision and Strategy

The University had initiated the first stage of the development of the new University Vision and Strategy, which would focus on its core communal values. Internal stakeholder consultation, involving various stakeholders such as the Students' Union and academic staff through targeted focus groups and briefings, had begun. Council would have an initial discussion about the Vision and Strategy and its role in the broader process at the Council Away Day on 17 June 2026.

(g) Freedom of Speech Appeal

The University of Sussex had won its legal case at the High Court against the Office for Students (OfS) after a judge ruled that the regulator acted “beyond its powers”. The ruling could have consequences on how the OfS engaged with the Sector moving forward.

(h) Senior Recruitment Approvals
Council:

University Secretary:
Approved the appointment of Riley Power as the permanent University Secretary following a successful recruitment process, and the extension of the position of David Swinn as Interim University Secretary to 31 July 2026.

Interim Vice-President and Head of the Faculty of Health:
Approved the extension of Tracey Moore in the role of the Interim Vice-President and Head of the Faculty of Health to 31 August 2027.

16. Student Experience

16.1 Council received and noted the report. Foremost among the updates was progress on SU's were the outcome of the 2026 SU Officer Elections and the continuation of the SU's Belong/Influence strategic work.

17. Interim Update: Review of the Students' Union Constitution

(Daryl Ormerod in attendance for this item)

17.1 Council received and noted the interim update on the work in relation to the revised draft Articles of Association. Members were reminded that, under Section 22 of the Education Act 1994, the University was required to ensure that the SU had a written constitution (Articles of Association), approve that constitution, and to review it at intervals of no more than five years. While the current Articles were approved by Council for the purposes of SU incorporation in 2022, the last full constitutional review had taken place in 2020/21. The draft Articles presented had been updated based on updated sector model Articles which had been pre-approved by the Charity Commission, overseen by a working group comprising SU and University members. The final version of the Articles would be presented to the July 2026 meeting of Council for formal approval. The SU was planning a further review and refresh of its Bye-Laws during 2026/27, to support and complement the Articles themselves.

17.2 Council noted that the proposed Articles were drafted to ensure the University met its obligations under the Education Act 1994, endorsed the proposed direction of travel, and thanked working group members and SU colleagues for their work. Final formal Council approval would be sought in July and specific legal advice to the University would be sought to enhance the assurance to Council in discharging its legal obligations under the Education Act.

18. Creation of the Centre for Engineering Education and Skills

18.1 Following recommendation at UEB and Senate, at its meeting on 18 March 2026, Council considered and approved a proposal to develop a dedicated centre in the Faculty of Engineering. The prospective Centre would specialise in the provision of engineering apprenticeships and high-calibre Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provision, incorporating governance and management of the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) Training Centre and the current Multidisciplinary Engineering Education (MEE) team. The intention would be to launch the new Centre as a planning unit from August 2026 and then manage the full implementation on a phased basis to ensure a smooth transition and minimise any risk to core business.

19. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
(Meeting Held on 26 February 2026)

19.1 Council approved the Minutes as an accurate record.

20. Action Log and Matters Arising on the Minutes

20.1 Council approved the updated Action Log. There were no other matters arising.

21. Minutes of the Senate

21.1 Members of Council were informed that the minutes from the 18 March 2026 meeting of Senate would be circulated for information as soon as possible after the meeting.

22. Minutes of the Council Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

22.1 Members of Council were informed that the minutes from the 05 March 2026 meeting of the Council Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee would be presented alongside those from the meeting on 11 June 2026 to note at the next meeting of Council on 16 July 2026.

23. Report of the Honorary Degrees Committee

23.1 Council received and noted the report of the Honorary Degrees Committee meeting held on 17 March 2026.

24. OfS Update Report and Conditions Compliance Register

24.1 Council received and noted the update report and the register of compliance with ongoing conditions of registration.

25. Report on Action Taken

25.1 Council received and endorsed a report on action taken on its behalf since the previous meeting.

26. Council Business Plan

26.1 Council received and noted the latest iteration of the business plan.

27. Public Availability of Council Papers

27.1 Members of Council approved the arrangements for the publication of Council papers on the web.

28. Any Other Business

28.1 **CLOSED MINUTE**

28.2 120 Years of the Students' Union:
Celebrations would take place in May, and an exhibition on the history of the SU was on display in the Western Bank Library.

29. Feedback on the Meeting

29.1 The Chair thanked members and attendees for their contributions during the meeting.

30. Date of Next Meeting

30.1 Thursday 16 July 2026

These Minutes were confirmed at a meeting held on
16 July 2026

………………………………………… Chair