



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

University
Secretary's
Office.

Minutes Meeting of the Senate

Date: 8 December 2021

Present: The President & Vice-Chancellor in the Chair
L Abnett, Professor W Baird, Professor S Beck, Dr R Bellaby, Professor A Bingham, Dr L Bingle, Professor R Blakeley, D Boufidis, Professor G Brown, Professor C Buck, Dr J Burr, S Calderwood, A Cantrell, Professor T Chico, A Clements, Revd Dr J Clines, Professor D Coca, E Croxford, Professor S Cussen, Professor J Derrick, Professor H Dobson, Professor S Fitzmaurice, Professor A Fleming, Dr D Forrest, Dr J Forstenzer, Professor G Gee, Professor V Gillet, Professor J Grasby, Dr S Hale, L Hall, Dr V Halliday, Professor R Hand, S Hanson, A Hidalgo-Kingston, Professor J Hodson, Professor R Horn, Professor N Hughes, M Jones, Dr Simon Keegan-Phipps, Dr W Kitchen, Professor J Litster, Dr C Majewski, Dr M Malek, Professor M Mayfield, Professor S McIntosh, Professor E Milne, Professor N Monk, Dr N Murgatroyd, Dr S D North, Professor A Pacey, Professor George Panoutsos, Professor D N Petley, Dr E Poku, Dr S Pukallus, Dr B Purvis, Dr S Rushton, R Simpson, Professor N Sims, Dr S Staniland, Professor C Stokes, R Sykes, Professor R Timmers, R Tomlinson, Professor G Valentine, Dr D Vessey, Professor M T Vincent, Professor C Watkins.

Secretary: Dr T Strike

In attendance: M Borland, K Clements, A Davison, V Jackson, Professor L Maltby, Dr E Smith, M Stannard, D Swinn, L Wild.

Apologies: The Senate received apologies from 12 members.

Welcome

The President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) welcomed members to the meeting, including three new student representatives and one new Senate 'elected member' from the Professional Services

- Lissi Abnett (Postgraduate Students Officer)
- Dimitrios Boufidis
- Sophie Calderwood
- Matt Jones (Planning, Projects & Business Intelligence)

1. President & Vice-Chancellor's Report

The President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) presented the report and provided updates:

- (a) Comprehensive Spending Review: An announcement from Government of its plans for HE funding and fees, including a response to the Augar Review, was still awaited. Following the Comprehensive Spending Review there was speculation that DfE would publish a HE White Paper by the end of November, but that did not happen. Recent reports suggested that DfE might produce a consultation instead.
- (b) Horizon Europe: There was still no clarity on UK association to Horizon Europe. George Freeman MP, Minister for Science, Research and Innovation, had announced a “financial safety net” for successful applicants to Horizon Europe, in a written statement to Parliament. The Government will guarantee funding for the first wave of eligible, successful applicants to Horizon Europe who have been unable to sign grant agreements with the EU. The guarantee is a short-term measure and funding would be delivered through UKRI. UKRI was expected to publish further details and information on the application process in the coming weeks. In an open letter to the UK research and development sector, which accompanied the announcement, the Minister said that the sector needed to be “realistic” if the UK was unable to associate to Horizon Europe.
- (c) Knowledge Exchange: Research England has confirmed that the University will again receive the maximum HEIF (Higher Education Innovation Fund) allocation for 2021/22 of £4,785k. The funding will be central to achieving the University’s plans to drive innovation through knowledge exchange and deliver against the stated priorities under the Innovation pillar of the University’s 5-year vision.
- (d) Innovation: The P&VC drew Senate’s attention to two recent announcements:
 - (i) The University and ITM Power announced a new pioneering collaboration to advance the hydrogen sector in the UK. The proposed collaboration included an agreement in principle for a new ITM Power Gigafactory to be built at the University of Sheffield Innovation District. ITM Power and the University had also agreed to work together to jointly plan and fund a National Hydrogen Research Innovation and Skills centre, which will undertake research into the safe and efficient manufacture of hydrogen using low or zero carbon sources of energy.
 - (ii) At a UK Small Modular Reactor programme event on 9 November at the University’s Nuclear AMRC, Kwasi Kwarteng MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, announced with Rolls Royce new funding for the programme. The Nuclear AMRC will work with Rolls-Royce SMR to develop the manufacturing capability for a variety of advanced processes, using the state-of-the-art machining, joining and testing facilities at its research factory in Rotherham. The centre will also support the design of a new UK factory for large SMR components.

During discussion on attainment gaps, it was clarified that BAME attainment gaps were part of the University’s Access and Participation Plan. The University was also anticipated to have access via the Office for Students to the best practice in this area from other institutions.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interests

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 October 2021

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2021, having been circulated, were approved as an accurate record, with the exception of Item 4, Matters Arising, which had returned to Senate, see below.

4. Matters Arising on the Minutes

A member of Senate had provided a proposed opinion and the Chair had determined it was for Senate to decide whether to accept the matter onto its agenda. A vote was taken on whether "...the Chair admit the proposed opinion to the Senate agenda for consideration?" 31 members of Senate voted to admit the item on to the agenda and 35 members of Senate voted not to admit the item. Senate therefore had decided not to admit the item.

With regard to Item 17, Returning Officer's Report, Senate agreed at its October meeting to the appointment of the candidate who finished in second place in the Professional Staff election in May 2021 to serve on Senate, subject to willingness to serve. This was to replace the candidate who finished first who had since left the University before taking up their place on Senate. Senate noted that Matt Jones (Planning, Projects & Business Intelligence), who was in second place in that election, was willing to serve and had become a member of the Senate.

5. Matters Requiring Approval

Senate received and noted a summary of the matters for which Senate's formal approval was sought.

6. Financial Results 2020-21

Senate received and noted the presentation. 2020-21 headlines included an underlying operating surplus of £45m, income of £744m (+1%), cash from operations was £142m, capital expenditure of £69m. There was no new borrowing and all bank covenants had been met. An update for the current year and planned processes for 2022-23 and beyond were also provided.

Discussion focussed on the provision of student support, the effect of the pandemic on student support needs, and reports of delays in students being able to access support. The University had made investments in response to the pandemic and had regular discussions with the Students' Union. The Executive Director of Academic Services would explore the issues raised and report to a future meeting of Senate.

7. Education Planning 2021-22

Senate received and noted the presentation, which outlined the Interim Vice-President for Education and Deputy Vice-Presidents for Education Organisation Chart. Attention was drawn to the University's stance that it would remain a campus university. Learning from online teaching included that many students had found

the experience a levelling one, particularly those from less represented groups, but the sense of learning communities, especially peer-to-peer support had been challenging to recreate online. The student journey can be seen as a single theme across the three Priorities of the Education pillar of the University Vision.

Discussion focussed on employability spend per student. It was recognised that students should not be disadvantaged by virtue of which Faculty they studied in and work was ongoing to ensure that this was the case.

REPORTS FROM STATUTORY BODIES

8. Report on the Proceedings of the Council

(Meeting held on 18 October 2021)

Senate received and noted the Report on the Proceedings of the Council.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

9. Report of the Research Ethics Committee

(Meeting held on 3 November 2021)

Senate received and noted Report, including: the annual report of ethics decisions and summary of annual update forms submitted by departments for the period 01.09.20 – 31.08.21; an update on the on-going review of the Research Ethics Policy; and potential breaches of the Ethics Policy.

10. Report of the Senate Academic Assurance Committee

(Meeting held on 16 November 2021)

Senate received and noted the report, including the Committee's updated Business Plan 2021-22, and updates on the Committee's consideration of two of its themes for the year, namely digital education and knowledge exchange.

During discussion, it was suggested that a return to pre-pandemic ways of learning could see award gaps widen. The University was keeping this under review, in particular the effects on attainment of different ways of teaching and the work was anticipated to conclude in the 2022-23 academic year. The Senate Academic Assurance Committee would make its assessments regarding award gaps in June following its discussion at its February meeting. It was clarified that the Committee's intention was to look at assessments during the pandemic and award gaps together.

11. Report of the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee

(Meeting held on 16 November 2021)

Senate received the Report and approved the following:

- (a) A new University Policy on Quality and Compliance of Apprenticeships.

- (b) New, significantly amended, and discontinued programmes, and title changes and new exit routes approved by Faculties between 7 September 2021 and 1 November 2021.

Attention was drawn to the update on the Institutional Placement Year Model and that from 2023 onwards all undergraduate students would have the opportunity to undertake a placement year as part of their programme of study. The Student Skills and Employability Group would become a formal sub-committee of Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC).

During discussion regarding the Institutional Placement Year Model, it was recognised that further resources would be required and this would be looked at in the current academic year. The process for programme approvals was clarified. Faculties received proposals from academic departments for new, amended, suspended or discontinued programmes. These were then discussed, reviewed and refined before the Faculty made a recommendation to Senate. The Faculty recommendations were scrutinised by SLTC prior to reporting to Senate for its approval and then enacted.

12. Report of the Senate Research and Innovation Committee

(Including meeting held on 11 November 2021)

Senate received the Report and:

- (a) Noted the Concordat to support the Career Development of Researchers Action Plan 2020-25.
- (b) Endorsed and adopted the guidance note: Obtaining research governance approval from Local Authorities for social care research projects will be introduced with immediate effect.
- (c) Endorsed the recommendations of the Clinical Trials Sponsorship report.

Attention was drawn to the Concordat to support the Career Development of Researchers Action Plan 2020-25 that was anticipated to evolve. In relation to Clinical Trials Sponsorship, the recommendations would bring the University in line with the position of the eleven leading research active universities surveyed and the full report was available to members of Senate on the Senate Google Drive.

13. Report of the Senate Nominations Committee

(Business conducted by Chair's action)

Senate received the Report and approved the appointment of a Senate Representative to the Senate Academic Assurance Committee.

OTHER MATTERS

14. Library Comprehensive Content Strategy

Senate received and noted the report.

15. Major Research Grants and Contracts

A Report listing major research grants and contracts awarded since the last meeting of the Senate was received and noted.

16. Any Other Business

The President & Vice-Chancellor wished all members of Senate an enjoyable festive season and a happy new year.