

## **MINUTES OF THE CARDIFF UNIVERSITY MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 06 OCTOBER 2020 BY ZOOM AT 09:30**

- Present:** Professor Stuart Palmer (Chair), Professor Colin Riordan, Professor Rudolf Allemann, Professor Rachel Ashworth, Mr Paul Baston, Mr Ricardo Calil, Ms Hannah Doe, Mr Tomos Evans, Ms Judith Fabian, Professor Dame Janet Finch, Professor Kim Graham. Mr Alastair Gibbons, Mr Ken Hamilton, Mr Michael Hampson, Mrs Karen Harvey-Cooke, Professor Karen Holford, Ms Jan Juillerat, Dr Steven Luke, Dr Joanna Newman, Mr John Shakeshaft, Mr David Simmons, Judge Ray Singh, Dr Janet Wademan and Mrs Agnes Xavier-Phillips.
- Attendees:** Ms Katy Dale (Minutes), Mrs Rashi Jain, Ms Claire Morgan, Mr James Plumb (Minutes), Ms Ruth Robertson, Mrs Claire Sanders, Professor Damian Walford Davies, Professor Ian Weeks and Mr Robert Williams.
- Apologies:** Dr Carol Bell and Mr Len Richards.

### **1843 WELCOME AND PRELIMINARIES**

NOTED

- 1843.1 that Mrs Karen Harvey-Cooke was welcomed to her first meeting of Council.

### **1844 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were provided by Dr Carol Bell and Mr Len Richards. The meeting was confirmed to be quorate.

### **1845 RESEARCH**

A verbal update was provided by Professor Kim Graham.

NOTED

- 1845.1 that a large amount of work had been undertaken to support the University's researchers, PGR Students and Research Staff online during lockdown and to provide the ability for them to now undertake research on site safely;
- 1845.2 training had been provided on data security and communication tools, such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams;

- 1845.3 that changes had been made to the process for vivas to enable these to be undertaken online; this change had worked well and it was intended to offer students the option to undertake vivas in person or online going forward;
- 1845.4 that the University had worked with Oxford University to submit a case to UKRI for further funding in relation to the COVID-19 Grant Extension Allocation fund; the University received £3.1m and is in the process of allocating these funds to UKRI projects where there are COVID-19 mitigations;
- 1845.5 that UKRI had provided extended funding for final year PhD students funded by UKRI; the University had also provided funding for non-final year students requiring extended funding due to COVID-19; [REDACTED]
- 1845.6 a three-phased approach had been developed to enable essential access to laboratory spaces, ensuring this was provided in a safe and compliant manner;
- 1845.7 that £5.7m of funding had been received by the University to address COVID-19 Pandemic Outcomes, including COVID-19 and Rough Sleepers, Rapid Catalytic Disinfection of Surfaces and Transportation Through Chemistry;
- 1845.8 that the University continued to work hard to submit bid proposals, including collaborative large scale bids relating to the Cyber Wales Innovation Hub (£90m), Creative Capital (£20m) and the Wales Data Nation Accelerator (£184m); these would have a transformational impact on the University's research, capacity and opportunities for collaboration if successful;
- 1845.9 the University was in receipt of £2.7m funding from the Research Wales Innovation Fund of as part of a three-year ambitious plan to drive forward innovation;
- 1845.10 that there was a large external focus on research culture, especially following a recent report from the Wellcome Trust; in response to this, the University had created a Research Culture Working Group, who were developing proposals for concrete and deliverable opportunities aligned to this report;
- 1845.11 that Council would welcome a substantive item on research culture once the Working Group had completed its work.

## **1846 STUDENT NUMBERS AND ENROLMENT**

A verbal update was provided by Professor Rudolf Allemann.

- 1846.1 that Undergraduate Home/EU student numbers were currently 108% of target; there also remained students who had registered online but had yet to enrol which may further increase these numbers;
- 1846.2 that it was predicted a minimum of 60% of the target intake for Undergraduate International students would be reached, with the majority taught online and c.15% studying in person;
- 1846.3 that due to later start dates, the final Postgraduate Taught (PGT) student figures would not be known for some time; it was predicted 100% of the target intake for PGT Home students would be met and a minimum prediction of 40% of PGT International students;
- 1846.4 that a higher volume of deferral requests (c.4,000) had been received than in previous years;
- 1846.5 that there was an increased likelihood of dropout of Home and EU UG students due to local lockdown restrictions, fear of reported stringent restrictions on their freedom as seen at other institutions, and remote study creating a perceived lower commitment to the institution;
- 1846.6 that the experience of students needed to remain high to ensure limited dropout rates and onward commitment to study;
- 1846.7 that the University was issuing communications to students to address misunderstandings regarding Cardiff's local lockdown status, stressing the freedoms still available to students and promoting the screening service;
- 1846.8 that many applicants were still making decisions on their choice of University and required answers to detailed questions in a way that was unusual at this point in the year.

## **1847 PROVISION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

A verbal update was provided by Ms Claire Morgan.

NOTED

- 1847.1 that the University had undertaken extensive work to prepare for digital education provision this academic year and continued to provide blended learning as the default; access to learning was significantly different and improved compared to the pivot to online learning provided back in March;
- 1847.2 that a key element of the digital education provision was to ensure that the quality of this provision (and therefore the quality of the degrees earned) is maintained, whilst also ensuring a great student experience;
- 1847.3 that approximately 5000 students had arrived at University accommodation; given the recent media coverage, there had been anxiety

from students and their families, on the safety and sustainability of residence living. Separate telephone lines for both students and their families had been established to respond to general concerns and queries;

- 1847.4 that feedback from schools regarding induction activity had been positive; despite some technical issues, students were engaging with the new systems;
- 1847.5 that there were three key priorities for upcoming weeks:
1. that students can access support;
  2. that students have someone to speak to if they have a query;
  3. that students can access learning;
- 1847.6 that an open letter had been sent from the Vice-Chancellor and Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students to families and carers; this had been well received according to social media;
- 1847.7 that self-isolation for students remained an area of concern and the University was investigating and delivering the support provided to students in this situation (e.g. food provision, laundry services);
- 1847.8 that new support and training had been provided for Personal Tutors, given their key role in supporting students, and training was offered to academic staff on a daily basis to support online learning;
- 1847.9 that access to learning remained a priority and the University was keen to maintain a high quality of teaching;
- 1847.10 that the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students was holding twice-weekly meetings with University Deans, Student Union representatives and Professional Services staff to review feedback on the provision of learning and discuss possible further support;
- 1847.11 that the University issued regular communications to students and had arranged for question and answer sessions with the Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students and Student Union representatives to ensure international students felt prepared, especially given the different circumstances this academic year.

## **1848 FINANCIAL POSITION UPDATE**

A verbal update was provided by Mr Rob Williams.

NOTED

- 1848.1 that there remained challenges and opportunities in the current environment;

- 1848.2 [REDACTED]
- 1848.3 that income relating to residences and research looked positive;
- 1848.4 that a reduction due to the Voluntary Severance Scheme would result in a small benefit to pay roll figures; the University would also maintain its recruitment freeze but was aware of the need to ensure critical roles and support was maintained;
- 1848.5 that the University was reviewing academic activities to ensure costs are aligned with income; a review of Professional Services would also be undertaken to ensure support is provided in the right areas;
- 1848.6 that an updated position would be presented to Finance and Resources Committee in November, with a budget for 2020/21 presented to Council in November 2020;
- 1848.7 that despite the large deficit predicted, it was hoped the University was in a strong position to counter this position, given its strong balance sheet, and would be able to recover without having to deplete the University's Contingency Reserves;
- 1848.8 that in light of the large amount of work being undertaken to provide teaching and research in the new circumstances, management was reviewing areas that could be progressed and those that could be paused, to relieve pressure on staff and maintain standards.

#### **1849 LAY MEMBER RECRUITMENT**

Received and considered paper 20/89C, 'Lay Members - Appointments to Council'. Mrs Rashi Jain was invited to speak to this item.

NOTED

- 1849.1 that a recruitment exercise for new lay members had been undertaken, supported by Perret Laver;
- 1849.2 that interviews had been held and two candidates were proposed for appointment;
- 1849.3 that a declaration of interest was noted for Mr Chris Jones who is a student of the University on a part time Welsh Course;
- 1849.4 that a declaration of interest was noted for Dr Petty Sagoo relating to a spouse who is a Reader at the University;
- 1849.5 that consultations on these potential conflicts of interest had been held with CUC, those who had been participated on the Camm Review and the Vice-Chancellor; all were of the view any conflicts with respect to specific Council business can be managed through the existing procedures for

declaring interests at the start of the meeting as set out in the Ordinances Standing Orders;

- 1849.6 that Mrs Agnes Xavier-Phillips had declared that she knew Mr Chris Jones in a professional capacity as a member of Welsh Water;
- 1849.7 that it was also proposed both members would join Investment and Banking Sub-Committee (IBSC), with Mr Chris Jones taking over as Chair; Chris would also sit on Finance and Resources Committee as Chair of IBSC;
- 1849.8 that the appointments would be for a period of three years, not the four years noted in the paper.

**RESOLVED**

- 1849.9 to appoint Mr Chris Jones as a lay member of Council from 01 January 2021 to 31 December 2023;
- 1849.10 to appoint Dr Pretty Sagoo as a lay member of Council from 01 January 2021 to 31 December 2023.

**1850 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

NOTED there was no other business.