



**MEETING OF SENATE
MINUTES
Monday 4 December 2023
14.00, virtual Microsoft Teams meeting**

Present:

Professors: Allen, Banissy, Barbour, Beaverstock, Browne, Dermott Dillingham, N Edwards, Faul, Fraser, George, Glynn, Hope-Hailey, Jessop, Juncos, Kelly, Manley, Mellor, Munafo, Nairn, Nassehi, Manzini, O'Toole, Piggins, Powell, Raven, Ridley, Rust, Sandvoss, Savery, Smart, Spear, Squires, Tavare, Taylor, Tether, Thirwell, Timpson, Welch, West, Wylie.

Dr M Allinson, Miss N Antoine, A Beatriz Quelhas Oliveira e Moreira, M Byakatonda, Dr R Chitchyan, Dr J Collins, Dr S Das, Dr V Erlandsson, Ms A Edwards, Mr E Fay, Dr H Gadelha, A Garr, C Gazzard, Dr F Ginn, Ms L Goodhead, Dr G Hemani, Ms T Hill, Dr J Howarth, Y Lin, Ms A Linthorst, Y Liu, L Loades, Dr A Lythgoe, Dr B Main, Mrs M Millard, Dr J McManus, Dr S Montgomery, Dr A Papadaki, Ms L Parr, Dr B Pohl, E Tancan, E Tancan, Dr M Wang, Dr M Werner, Whittington, Dr L-F Wong.

In attendance: T Brunnock (entire meeting), C Buchanan (entire meeting), P Coonerty (entire meeting), I Craddock (entire meeting), A Jago (agenda items 9 & 10), D Jennings (agenda item 10), R Grimes (agenda items 9 & 10), B Mac Ruairi (agenda item 4), L Penrose (Deputy Head of Governance, Clerk to Senate), H Quinn (entire meeting), S Swales (agenda item 6), P Vermeulen (entire meeting).

Apologies: Prof M Allen, Prof A Birdi, Prof I Bond, Miss L Loades, Prof K Malik, Prof N Roberts, Prof C Thirlwell.

1. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 9 OCTOBER 2023** (*on file*)
 - 1.1 **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2023, as a true and accurate record.
2. **CHAIR'S REPORT**
 - 2.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/23-24/007) (*on file*).
 - 2.2 Senate members held a one-minute silence in memory of Prof Sir Eric Thomas Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Bristol from 2001 to 2015, who sadly passed away in November 2023 at the age of 70.
 - 2.3 **NOTED**: no written questions had been received in advance of today's meeting.
 - 2.4 The Vice-Chancellor then introduced her report. The following was **NOTED**:
 - 2.4.1 The Governance team hosted, on behalf of the University, the Annual Meeting of Court on 1st December 2023, which was attended by circa 90 key stakeholders for the University. The focus of the main workshop this year was 'Enterprise and Innovation', led by Prof Michele Barbour (APVC Enterprise & Innovation). Discussions focussed on where the University was doing well and how we could effectively communicate these successes to external audiences; where the University had the capacity for growth and how we might achieve this within local and sectoral constraints and; finally, the broader issues of equity, diversity and inclusion, taking inspiration from activities the University

was already engaged in to address inequities in entrepreneurship and considering how we could further develop these.

- 2.4.2 The Vice-Chancellor recently attended an event to mark the 10th anniversary of the Digital Catapult – the event had an excellent turnout, with there being excitement about the University's strategic intent around creative industries. Next week, the Vice-Chancellor was delivering a similar panel discussion with the National Council for University Business Interactions. Both these events and the Court meeting evidenced a growing momentum and awareness in the public of how the University was promoting inclusive enterprise and innovation.

3. **REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC TRUSTEES: UPDATE ON BOARD-RELATED BUSINESS**

- 3.1 On behalf of both staff trustees, Professor Craddock provided a verbal update on the business undertaken by the Board of Trustees at its meeting on 16 November 2023.

- 3.2 Discussions held at the meeting covered the following key themes:

- The drafting of a University agreement with the SU which set out key priority areas where the University and the SU would work together in the future.
- The challenges arising from the Israel/Palestine conflict and how the University demonstrated its duties under the Prevent agenda.
- Dental school launch and the considerable benefits it was already bringing to local communities.
- Progress on TQ and assurances that the building work continued to proceed on schedule.
- An update on the building renaming project and the investment being made in a programme of reparative futures.
- Progress on SPIs - the Trustees reviewed the University's progress in relation to its SPIs, **REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests**
- The approval of the Annual report and Accounts, for submission to the OfS.
- **REDACTED: S43**
- The Annual Report of the Remuneration Committee.
- The nomination of Prof Natalie Edwards to join the Board as a new academic trustee. Senate members extended their many congratulations to Prof Edwards.

Barra Mac Ruairi joined the meeting

4. **TQEC PROGRESS UPDATE**

- 4.1 RECEIVED and **NOTED**: paper ref (SN/23-24/008) (*on file*).

- 4.2 The DVC & Provost introduced the item, and the Chief Property Officer was in attendance to answer any specific questions.

- 4.3 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

- 4.3.1 Progress around the delivery of the University Library – **REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests**. The Executive was now working closely with the Board of Trustees to agree a timeline for the delivery of that programme once the main build phase for TQ had been completed. Senate would be provided with a more detailed update once the Executive and the Board had agreed the broader strategy in relation to the funding of the Campus Framework.

- 4.3.2 The loss of parking spaces at the University which was very problematic. The Chief Property Officer agreed to discuss this with the relevant Senate member outside of today's meeting.

- 4.3.3 The continued importance of the roll out of the communications plan for the Dental School, working closely with the local dental committee and various local dental groups.

5. UPDATE ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 RECEIVED and **NOTED**: a PowerPoint presentation on progress around the University's global civic engagement work (*on file*).
- 5.2 Palie Smart, the APVC for Global Civic Engagement, delivered her presentation, which covered:
- The civic engagement strategic context;
 - Four key aims of the University's global civic sub-strategy, including top priorities and;
 - Recent achievements in global and civic engagement.
- 5.3 The following was **DISCUSSED**:
- 5.3.1 How best the Science & Engineering faculties could work together with the Global Civic Engagement team to discuss how to weave in the work they do in this area, particularly in relation to their engagement with the UN and multinational companies.
- 5.3.2 The newly developed internal Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) report which the APVC agreed to circulate to Schools and Faculties to assist them with understanding where they sat in relation to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).
- 5.3.3 The importance of the role that the new University Library would play in the Global Civic agenda, providing a university space in which the University could connect with the wider public. It was noted that there was also very valuable engagement underway between the University and the local communities within their own community spaces, and that the strategy around this therefore required a two-pronged approach.
- 5.3.4 The importance of understanding and articulating a balance between what we meant by civic, recognising that this could be local and global. There should be a recognition of the University's internationalisation agenda i.e., how the University goes out into the world and has a global impact. Senators suggested that it would be worth referencing the online degree programmes into future updates of the Global Civic Strategy and related documents.
- 5.3.5 How lifelong learning would be encapsulated within the University's global civic agenda particularly in the context of there being minimal public money to support lifelong learning in universities. Senate noted that this was a sectoral issue but that the University was focussing on the skills requirements of the city by looking to deliver lifelong learning through partnerships **REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests**
REDACTED The University's assessment strategy, curriculum framework and Bristol Futures all spoke to those partnerships.
- 5.3.6 The best way of prioritising as an institution the relationships that should be taken forward/the key areas to focus on with a view to schools developing their own civic strategy off the back of the strengths of the faculties and overarching university strengths. It was noted that the APVC Global Civic Engagement would be happy to visit schools to discuss the University's civic strategy to help with identifying where there might be some overlap of activity – this would help with building on current successes and closing any gaps. Likewise, the Partnerships manager in the new global civic engagement team could private Faculties with information on the kind of partnerships already in place with each faculty.
- 5.3.7 It was noted that there was already some excellent work underway in the ILO in Engineering and PLN and the University could amplify its use of data in research projects through the data that is collected for example ALSPAC data used by students in their projects.
- 5.3.8 There was a huge opportunity around data/secure access/AI/health/the public, which was relevant for UoB soc/bio/med studies and data collection efforts in the University (including the new Dental School).
- 5.3.9 The fact that TQ was being used to pilot new ways of interacting with local communities and developing global civic engagement. The Barton Hill micro campus was important

for the University in terms of having presence outside of the University campus, [REDACTED]

REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests [REDACTED]

TQ was also where the University was really piloting new ways of engagement in terms of lifelong learning – engaging with mature and local learners, flexible degrees etc. [REDACTED]

REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests [REDACTED]

The need to teach differently, e.g., modular provision was also discussed in this context.

5.3.10 The idea of hybridisation" of integrating models from one approved degree/curriculum into another with some suggestions that this might be the best way towards supporting the current (horizontal) training needs.

5.4 Senate thanked the APVC Global Civic Engagement for all the excellent work that had been delivered in this area over the previous six months. Progress updates would be provided to Senate, as appropriate.

Simon Swales joined the meeting

6. UPDATE ON THE USE OF EXTERNAL ASSESSORS FOR PROMOTION

6.1 RECEIVED and **NOTED**: paper ref: (SN/23-24/016) (*on file*).

6.2 The DVC & Provost introduced the report, and Simon Swales was in attendance to assist with answering any specific questions.

6.3 **NOTED**: the ongoing work to design a new periodic benchmarking process in consultation with the Senate Working Group.

6.4 **NOTED**: the discussions held with the Senate Working Group on the use of external assessors for promotions.

6.5 **NOTED**: the revised promotion process and the agreed approach to decision making at Faculty Promotions Committee (FPC) and University Promotions Committee (UPC), which was as follows:

FPC decision making on whether to request external assessment:

- It was agreed that all cases referred to UPC would include a request for external assessors.
- Presenters (two per case) would be asked to highlight any criteria where they felt external assessment might be helpful.
- At the time of voting, the FPC Chair would lead the subsequent discussion regarding what external assessment would be needed.
- Currently, cases with two or more dissenting votes are referred to UPC, but it was agreed that for larger committees, e.g., more than eight members, this threshold would be increased to three votes or more.
- Candidates would be asked to nominate five assessors on their application form, which could be based on the previous use of assessors for either research (Pathways 1 and 2) or education and pedagogy (Pathway 3), while also highlighting any assessors for specific criteria in their case.
- As previously, the Head of School Report would confirm the external assessors and their rationale for the choice based on those provided by the candidate and any follow-up discussion with them as necessary.

UPC use of assessments to make a final decision:

- It was agreed that UPC would operate in the same way, which was to review all applications referred to them to ensure consistency in the process and decision making across faculties, and to make final decisions.
- The only difference would be that they would also consider the external assessor input.

Possible sampling of cases for external assessment:

- It was agreed that sampling would not be needed for the first use of the revised process as they expected the number of cases going to UPC to be higher than previous years and enough to ensure a robust test of the process.
- However, it was felt that random sampling of cases once the process was complete could be used as part of the new periodic process for benchmarking purposes.
- It was agreed that this new process would be designed in consultation with the Sub-Group.

As in previous years, there would also be ongoing monitoring of the process based on various characteristic (gender, ethnicity, etc.) to ensure that the changes were not affecting decisions.

6.6 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

6.6.1 The fact that the discussions in the Working Group had been extremely thorough and that the Group felt assured in the new process around the external reputation of the University and therefore any consequential impact on the reputation of professors promoted at the University. Many of the members of the Working Group had already been members of Faculty Promotions Committees and those individuals were very much involved in helping to design the new proposal.

6.6.2 The importance of individual academic staff members to look ahead and reflect on who they might nominate to be external reviewers.

6.6.3 The fact that the Working Group had also discussed the importance of this process in terms of the University's reputation with individuals for ranking purposes i.e., sending our best people out for review so that the wider community would know how good we are. It was noted that retaining external reviewers in this process allowed people to see what a comprehensive and well-rounded process the University had, one which sat at the forefront of EDI and generous citizenships concerns around academic work.

6.6.4 The view taken by the Working Group around EDI which was that there would be EDI concerns with any process, and the key here was to assess what the University was continually doing to make sure that the decision making was not being affected in a way that created any biases towards any particular groupings.

6.3.5 The importance of randomised sampling to provide reassurance and to ensure that the University's standard of benchmarking was exactly right. It was noted that the sampling (in addition to the cases where extra input was needed) would not be used for promotions decisions themselves, only for benchmarking purposes.

6.6.6 Senators agreed that the new process gave the University much more control over certain aspects of the process which it did not have previously, which was positive.

6.7 Overall, Senate agreed that this was now a more robust and efficient process, fair to all candidates, allowing for benchmarking and checking to ensure that the University's internal calibration was at the right level.

6.8 **NOTED**: the new process had been formally approved by the University Promotions Committee on the recommendation of the Senate Working Group. The process would 'go live' imminently, in the upcoming promotions round.

Simon Swales left the meeting

7. RESEARCH AND EDUCATION SPIS & KPIs PROGRESS UPDATE

7.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/23-24/009a&b) (*on file*).

Research

7.2 The PVC Research & Enterprise introduced the Research & Enterprise SPIs which primarily focussed on Goal 1 and Goal 6. These had three strategic performance indicators which were: research intensity; research recovery rate; IP disclosures. KPIs were monitored via a PowerBi dashboard through the University Research Committee (URC). The URC reviewed the dashboard regularly to try and understand the nature of

research across the University and where interventions could be made to provide support and either direct investment or changes in policy.

7.3 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

7.3.1 The fact that the Planning and Business Intelligence team were developing a version of the PowerBi dashboard for a wider audience and that this would be made available to Senators when it had been finalised.

7.3.2 SPI research intensity the sector-wide issue of how Education was increasingly cross-subsidising research.

7.3.3 The desire for more 'localised' KPIs at School and Faculty level.

7.3.4 The fact that the KPI data in PowerBi were currently only up to 2021/22 and so did not reflect where there had been substantive changes in the past 12 months (either change in FTE or change in income).

7.3.5 The potential challenge with per FTE measures which was that they could be misinterpreted as "individual targets".

7.3.6 REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests

The APVC Enterprise & Innovation would welcome any further discussions with Heads of School on this matter should they be interested in exploring further.

Education

7.4 The PVC Education & Students introduced the Education & Students SPIs which primarily focussed on Goal 2 and Goal 5. Goal 2 was about attracting and inspiring students across the globe (a shared goal with the PVC Global Engagement) and Goal 5 was around ensuring students gained future skills required to thrive in a changing world. All these SPIs related to UG education.

7.5 It was noted that a KPI dashboard in PowerBi would be developed for Education & Students in due course by the EDIT team in ESS division, who would work together with DREI and the PVC Research & Enterprise where the SPIs crossed over with research and enterprise.

7.6 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

7.6.1 REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests

7.6.2 REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests

7.7 Senate thanked the PVC Research & Enterprise and the PVC Education & Students for their respective papers, noting that a progress update would come to Senate at the next appropriate juncture.

8. ANNUAL EDI REPORT STAFF AND STUDENTS

8.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/23-24/010) (*on file*)).

8.2 The Chief People Officer introduced the report, and then the Head of Equity Diversity & Inclusion (staff) and the Executive Director for Education and Students (students) summarised the key highlights from the annual report.

8.3 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

8.3.1 The importance of measuring both the diversity of the total staff community as well as the diversity of our pipeline of staff who were being recruited into the University.

- 8.3.2 The fact that the proportion of UK black students had remained static, and what the University was doing to address this.
- 8.3.3 There was a query about how the focus on cultural change and support for black students whilst they were studying at the University might translate back into higher recruitment rates. The Executive Director for Education & Students agreed to source the information in response to this query and send an email to members of Senate.

Alicia Jago and Rob Grimes joined the meeting

9. REPORT ON PHILANTHROPIC SCHOLARSHIPS

- 9.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/23-24/011) (on file).
- 9.2 Rob Grimes, Director of Philanthropy, Alicia Jago, Assistant Director for Fundraising and Stewardship, introduced the report on behalf of the Executive Director of Global Engagement.

9.3 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

- 9.3.1 REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests

- 9.3.2 REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests

- 9.3.3 The challenge with philanthropic scholarships to make them very visible on school websites, and advice/best practice that could be shared for advertising these.

- 9.3.4 REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests

- 9.4 The Vice-Chancellor thanked Alicia and Rob for their excellent paper.
Doug Jennings joined the meeting

10. WIDENING PARTICIPATION UPDATE

- 10.1 RECEIVED and **NOTED**: paper ref: (SN/23-24/012) (on file)).
- 10.2 The Acting Director for Home Recruitment & Conversion, Doug Jennings, introduced the report.

10.3 The following was **DISCUSSED**:

- 10.3.1 Linking in the Director of Philanthropy so that he could best support the 'into university' partnership and communicate that partnership to current and potential donors.
- 10.3.2 WP for PGT students and the fact that PDs were quite concerned about the impact of the rise in PGT tuition fees for 24/25

REDACTED: S43 Commercial Interests

This was an issue that the University recognised, and the WP team were addressing e.g., the 'Access PG' initiative.

- 10.3.3 The fact that the SFE PGT loan often did not even come close to covering PGT fees, let alone living expenses.
- 10.3.4 A request for further information around the definition of what the University determined as local students under Access 2.8 - guaranteeing offers for local students. This question would be followed up outside of the meeting and shared with Senators.

11. RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

11.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/23-24/013) (on file).

11.2 The following was **NOTED**:

11.2.1 The report from the recent University Research Committee meetings.

11.2.2 Annex A (*on file*) which set out how the University responded to the legal and regulatory obligations regarding the National Security & Investment Act.

11.3 Senate **DISCUSSED** the proposed governance model for REF2028.

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11.4 The following was **NOTED**:

11.4.1 The REF Programme Board endorsed this governance and support model at its meeting on 18 September 2023, and URC approved the model at its meeting on 26 October 2023.

11.4.2 This governance model did not require any consequential amendments to the Senate delegation schedule since the model allowed for the URC to continue to retain its delegated authority to make decisions on operational matters relating to the REF.

11.4.3 The final REF timetable was still not formally agreed, and one of the possibilities was that there might be a delay to the REF outcomes by one year as the sector piloted through some of the people, culture and environment metrics.

11.5 It was agreed that the PVC Research & Enterprise would share with Senators a copy of the Terms of Reference and membership for the REF Programme Board outside of today's meeting.

11.6 **APPROVED**: the proposed governance model for REF 2028, as highlighted in the paper.

MEETING CLOSED. Next meeting 5th February 2024, 2pm.