

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 3 JULY 2024

11 AM IN CSH11/12

Present

Alison Brown
 Julia Chippendale
 Russ Coulter
 Dr Stephen Critchley
 Rebecca Crooks
 Tom Dannatt
 Anne Frost (*Chair*)
 Stephen Galjaard
 Max Gordon
 Prof. Marianne Howarth
 Rev'd Canon Dr Sarah Lawrence
 Walter Leschenko
 Dr Sacha Mason
 Bishop Nigel Peyton
 Prof. Karen Stanton
 Kate Truscott

In attendance

Leanne Chancellor, Head of the Vice-Chancellor's Office
 Craig Ferguson, Secretariat, Alumni Relations and Ceremonial Officer (*Minutes*)
 Dr Nick Gee, Executive Dean of Faculty
 Kym Gill, Students' Union Vice-President: Education

1. Welcome

- 1.1 The Chair, Anne Frost, welcomed members to the fifth University Council Meeting of the 2023/24 academic year.
- 1.2 The Chair formally welcomed the new Students' Union President, Max Gordon (MG) and the new Students' Union Vice-President: Education, Kym Gill (KG).

2. The University Prayer

- 2.1 The Chair invited Rev'd Canon Dr Sara Lawrence to lead the University Prayer.

3. Apologies

- 3.1 Apologies for absence were RECEIVED from:
 - Jaidip Sen;
 - Elise Temple; and
 - Rev'd Marian Toyne.

Action

4. Declarations of interest

4.1 There were no new declarations of interest received.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

5.1 The minutes of the University Council Meeting held on 26 March 2024 were APPROVED and a true record of the meeting and the Chair was authorised to sign them.

6. Matters Arising

6.1 Action Table

6.1.1 Members RECEIVED the action table from 26 March 2024 and progress against actions was NOTED.

6.2 Any other matters

6.2.1 There were no other matters arising.

7. Critical Path/Vice-Chancellor’s Report

7.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the Critical Path Update and Vice-Chancellor’s Report.

7.2 The Interim Vice-Chancellor, Professor Karen Stanton (KS) HIGHLIGHTED the following key points to NOTE:

- The annual Learning & Teaching Conference was taking place on 3 and 4 July 2024;
- The annual Research Conference was taking place on 10 and 11 July 2024;
- BGU hosted on campus the ballot count for the 2024 General Election;
- 10 months of implementing Critical Path 1;
- Implementation Plan for Critical Path 2 (2024/25) had been developed;
- The Chancellor, Dr Tracy Borman had been awarded an OBE;
- Clearing launched on 4 July 2024;
- Positive progress with Graduate Outcomes and Success; and
- Key focus for 2024/25 will continue to be financial sustainability.

7.3 Members RAISED the following questions and comments:

- Members congratulated KS and University staff for the progress that had been made over the course of the academic year with Critical Path 1.
- Noted was the good steady progress of Critical Path 1 – why were there some workstreams where targets had not been fully met?
 - KS NOTED that three workstreams which were outstanding:
 1. “Financial Framework” – with the Commercialisation Plan extended to September 2024;
 2. “Recruitment & Admissions” – with work continuing around transnational educational partnerships, with an aim of having one partnership confirmed by the end of the academic year.
 3. “Estate Strategy & Utilisation” – with the development of an Estates Strategy extended to September 2024.
 - The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations) & University Secretary, Tom Dannatt (TD) NOTED that a high-level

estates utilisation document was being created and was hoped to be completed by the end of July 2024.

- What plans were there for investment in IT infrastructure to meet the objectives within Critical Path 2?
 - KS AGREED that additional investment in IT infrastructure was required, but that BGU needed to capitalise on investment previously made in the first instance.
 - TD NOTED that plans were in place to invest in IT infrastructure and digital provision.
- Were there any third-party funding streams that could contribute towards the workstreams and objectives within Critical Path 2?
 - KS NOTED that access to third-party funding streams was limited, but that there would be a new round of Capital Funding from the Office for Students (OfS), which would be announced in 2025.
- Noted were the successful results from the Graduate Outcomes data - was there an opportunity to for BGU to take more advantage of this?
 - KS CONFIRMED that the recent Graduate Outcome data featured in the Marketing Plan and was being used on the website and within Open Day presentations.
- Noted was the encouraging increase in potential students at recent Open Days.

8. Q3 Financial Outturn and Update of First Draft Budget and Way Forward

8.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the Q3 Financial Outturn, first draft budget for 2024/2025, the draft Five Year Financial Framework.

The following items of business are redacted in accordance with Section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act – Commercial Interests

8.2 [Redacted]

8.3 [Redacted]

8.4 [Redacted]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9. [REDACTED]

9.1 [REDACTED]

9.2 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9.3 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

10. To Receive the Students' Union President's Report

10.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the Students' Union President's Report.

10.2 MG HIGHLIGHTED the following key points to NOTE:

- The By-Election for the position of Students' Union Vice-President: Education had taken place in April 2024.
- There had been collaboration with National Union of Students (NUS) for student campaigns.
- The Students' Union had attended various commercial and representation conferences.
- NUS National Conference had taken place in April.
- Handover to the new Student Leaders had taken place.

11. Update from Committee Chairs

11.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED updates from the Chairs of the Committees of University Council.

11.2 Governance & Nominations Committee (G&N)

The Chair of the G&N, Anne Frost HIGHLIGHTED the following key points for Council to NOTE from the meeting held on 22 May 2024:

- New appointments and Terms of Governance renewals had been confirmed.
- Finance Training for Council Members had been discussed.
 - In-house training was being explored by TD and the Governance Office.

11.3 Academic Assurance Committee (AAC)

The Chair of the AAC, Professor Marianne Howarth (MH) HIGHLIGHTED the following key points for Council to NOTE from the meeting held on 5 June 2024:

- Received the Research Development Plan for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029.
- Received the ICON Partnership Quality Review.
- Received an update on the Portfolio Review.
- Received an update on the Access and Participation Plan.
- Received the ITE Ofsted Report.

11.4 FE&GP Committee

The Chair of FE&GP Committee, Stephen Galjaard (SG) HIGHLIGHTED the following key points for Council to NOTE from its meeting held on 12 June 2024:

- Received a Student Recruitment update, which shows positive figures for September 2024 recruitment.
- There were discussions around cashflow utilisation from 2024/25 onwards.
- Approved the following policies:
 - Revised Redundancy Policy;
 - Student Charges, Debt and Refund Policy; and
 - Financial Regulations, Procedures and Purchasing Policy.

11.4.1 SG NOTED that FE&GP members would like to see an Accommodation Strategy at a future meeting.

DVC(Ops)

11.5 *Audit Committee*

The Chair of Audit Committee, Dr Stephen Critchley (SC) HIGHLIGHTED the following key points for Council to NOTE from its meeting held on 13 June 2024:

- Received was an updated Risk Register.
- Received was the revised Internal Audit schedule for 2024/25.
- Received was the External Audit Plan from Buzzacott.
- Agreed was that the revised Risk Management Framework would be presented to a future University Council meeting.

DVC (Ops)

12. Safeguarding Update

12.1 TD provided a verbal update on safeguarding and HIGHLIGHTED the following key points to NOTE:

- He had received a successful and smooth handover of the Designated Safeguarding Lead from the former Registrar & University Secretary, Dr Steph Gilluly before her departure from the institution.
- Connor Short (CS) was successfully appointed to the new Contention, Quality & Student Engagement Officer, and will be supporting the safeguarding area.
- Policies were being reviewed and amended, with nomenclature following the new university structures and job title roles.

The following items of business are redacted in accordance with Section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act – Personal Information

- [REDACTED]

13. Any Other Business

13.1 The Chair NOTED that this was Bishop Nigel Peyton’s (NP) final meeting, as the new Bishop of Lincoln, Bishop Stephen Conway, was taking back his seat from 1 September 2024.

- Members recorded their thanks to Bishop Nigel and wished him well in the future.

13.2 The Chair also NOTED that this was KS’s final meeting, before she departs BGU at the end of August 2024.

- Members recorded their thanks to KS for her work and support during her time as Interim Vice-Chancellor and recognised the positive contribution that had been made. Members wished KS well in her new role at London University of Arts.

14. Date of Next Meeting

14.1 The next University Council Meeting will take place on Friday 22 November 2024 at 11am, in person and via MS Teams.

15. To Note for Information

15.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the following documents for their information:

- OfS Financial Sustainability of HE Providers in England: 2024.
- Ofsted ITE Report.

16. Policy Approvals

16.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the following policies presented for approval:

- Safeguarding Children and at-risk Adults Policy.
- Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech Policy.

16.2 Members were **CONTENT** to **APPROVE** the Safeguarding Children and at-risk Adults Policy and the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech Policy.

17. Key Items from Committees

17.1 FE&GP Committee

17.1.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the following minutes of the FE&GP Committee from its meeting on 12 June 2024.

17.2 Audit Committee

17.2.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the following minutes of the Audit Committee from its meeting on 13 June 2024.

17.3 Governance & Nominations Committee

17.3.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the following minutes of the Governance & Nominations Committee from its meeting on 22 May 2024.

17.4 Academic Assurance Committee

17.4.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the following minutes of the Academic Assurance Committee from its meeting on 5 June 2024.

18. Reportable Events

18.1 Since the last University Council meeting on 26 March 2024 to the present meeting (3 July 2024), it was NOTED that there have been no Reportable Events to the OfS.

Signed Date