

C O U N C I L

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 26 April 2021

Present: Vice-Chancellor, Warden of New College, Ms Becker, Ms Boyt, , Professor Coulson, Sir Chris Deverell, Fra' John Eidinow, Professor Essler, Professor Hamerow, Mr Harman, Professor Hobbs, Professor Johnson, Mr Kroll, Professor Lahiri, Professor Nobre, Mr Ovenden, Professor Sánchez-Ancochea, Professor Trefethen, Head of the Humanities Division (Professor O'Brien), Head of the MPLS Division (Professor Howison), Head of the Medical Sciences Division (Professor Screaton), Head of the Social Sciences Division (Professor Dame Sarah Whatmore), Senior Proctor (Ms Lucinda Rumsey), Junior Proctor (Dr David Johnson), Assessor (Dr Bettina Lange).

Student Member Representatives and representative of the Early Career Research Staff: Nikita Ma (President of Oxford SU), Tucker Drew (Oxford SU VP Access and Academic Affairs) and Lauren Bolz (Oxford SU VP Graduates); Dr Hilary Wynne (Representative of the Early Career Research Staff).

Apologies: Principal of Brasenose, Professor Sir Rory Collins.

Officers in attendance: the Registrar, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Development and External Affairs), Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Innovation), Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources), Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), the Director of Finance, the Director of Legal Services and General Counsel, the Director of Public Affairs, the interim Head of Governance and Covid Planning, the Executive Officer (Policy and Governance) in the Vice-Chancellor's Office, the Head of Governance Secretariat, the Assistant Registrar (Governance), Dr Berry.

Order of business: the order of business was as set out on the agenda.

Declarations of interest: Council members were reminded to declare any interest that could give rise to a conflict in relation to any item on the agenda.

Introductory matters: the Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed the hope that this would be the last of the short meetings needed for Covid-19 updates and that Council might be able to meet in person in July.

The Vice Chancellor welcomed those for whom this was their first meeting of Council: the incoming Proctors and Assessor; Dr Hilary Wynne, representative of the Early Career Research Staff; Ms Kirsten Gillingham, interim Director of Finance; and Mrs Lara McCarthy, the new Head of the Governance Secretariat replacing Dr Nigel Berry.

I. ORDINARY BUSINESS

(A) Unreserved

CONFIDENTIAL

1. **The Vice-Chancellor's unreserved business (above the line)****

The Vice-Chancellor reported on the following matters.

- Mr Simon Boddie had been appointed as Chief Financial Officer and would be taking up post on 1 October.
- The stages reached in the recruitment exercises for the Dean of the Saïd Business School, the Head of the MPLS Division and the Head of the Social Sciences Division.
- A successful online Meeting Minds alumni gathering attended by 3,500 participants.
- The submission of the REF on time.
- The University's exposure to the ODA cuts.
- The source of funding for the £1bn cost of the UK's Associate Membership of the Horizon research funding programme had not initially been identified and, until the intervention of the Prime Minister at the eleventh hour, risked coming from the UKRI's existing budget for the current year. Next year the cost of Associate Membership would rise to £2bn. The University and the Russell Group had started to focus its attention on the Comprehensive Spending Review which would now be critical in setting the framework for future research funding.

- A celebration held to mark the year since the first trial injection of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine into a human being. Since then a quarter of a billion doses of the vaccine had been administered. To go from 1 to 250,000, 000 in a year was truly extraordinary. The uplifting event had been attended by the vaccine team, AstraZeneca and the Government.

CONFIDENTIAL 2. **Covid-19****

Council received oral reports on the return of students, testing and business continuity planning status and reopening.

CONFIDENTIAL 3. **USS consultation****

The Chair of the USS Working Group, Professor Fabian Essler, outlined with the aid of slides and the principal consultation documents the current stage in the consultation on the 2020 valuation.

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed the clear exposition of the present situation. She advised that the draft response to the consultation would be considered by Council prior to its submission.

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