

UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

**Minutes of the 81<sup>st</sup> meeting of Council held at 4pm on 28 February 2022  
in Room 314, Mandela Building, Digby Stuart College and via MS Teams**

- Present: Phil Walker (Chair), Mark Allen, Dr Priscilla Chadwick<sup>1</sup>, Janet Cooper<sup>2</sup>, Jennifer Coupland<sup>3</sup>, Prof Ann R. David, Sr Christine Edwards, Prof Jean-Noël Ezingard, Dennis Hone<sup>4</sup>, Revd Dr Tim Macquiban, Sheena Pindoria<sup>5</sup>, Dr Sacha Powell<sup>6</sup>, David Sharkey, Revd Canon Dr Jennifer Smith<sup>7</sup>, Kevin Thomas<sup>8</sup>
- Secretary: Dr George Turner
- Notes: Elaine Lentell
- Apologies: Farrah Black, Prof Laura Peters
- In attendance: Prof Anna Gough-Yates, Baljit Kaur, Liam Hurley, Jordan Kenny<sup>9</sup>, Tom Rowson

**Regular Business Matters, Minutes and Reports**

**1. Welcomes, introductions, apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1 No conflicts of interests were declared.

**3. Notification of Any Other Business**

- 3.1 It was agreed that any other business would be discussed at the end of the meeting.

**4. Minutes**

- 4.1 The minutes of the 80<sup>th</sup> meeting of Council, which was held on 22 November 2021 (Paper RUC81/1), were **confirmed** and Council **approved** the redactions for the published minutes as highlighted.

**5. Matters Arising**

- 5.1 Council noted progress on the matters arising as set out in Paper RUC81/2 and that all outstanding actions were complete.

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1 - 9 attended the meeting via MS Teams

## Substantive Items

### 6. Vice-Chancellor's Report

6.1 Council received the Vice-Chancellor's Report (Paper RUC81/3) and noted the following points in particular:

#### *External Environment*

- a) That a full update on the Augar Review would be presented to Council on 14 March 2022, following the Government's response on 24 February 2022.
- b) That a third round of industrial action was taking place across late February and early March. Thanks were extended to all the staff who were ensuring that disruption was kept to a minimum.
- c) That the Office for Students (OfS) was undertaking a number of consultations. The main focus would be on adopting a new approach to regulating student outcomes and to the Teaching Excellence Framework, as detailed in item 1.2 of the report.

#### *Sustainability*

- d) That there had been higher than forecast enrolments for the January intake, with strong recruitment in Business and Law, Computing, Nursing, mostly for Postgraduate Taught courses, particularly among international students. Applications for the April intake had increased. September applications were looking more positive, although it was still too early to know how this would translate in terms of enrolments.

### 7. Roehampton 2022-27 pack

7.1 The Vice-Chancellor noted that the purpose of the three papers was to discuss the strategic direction for the University, and invited Council to consider and agree the recommendations set out in each paper. Members of the Executive Team presented the papers to Council and the following points were highlighted:

#### **Strategic Opportunities 2022-27 (Paper RUC81/4a)**

- 7.2 That the University's focus was on developing new areas, including STEM in Health, Computer Sciences and Technology, to address the shift in the UK undergraduate market and external factors as well as changes in the popularity of subject areas. There would also be a focus on different types and levels of qualifications that accounted for students' diverse personal circumstances.
- 7.3 That the University's research and knowledge exchange centres, launched in November 2021, would help to advance its RKE priorities and ensure that the research undertaken aligned with its mission of engaging with local communities. The centres would further develop the University's reputation as a south London hub for the exchange of knowledge and practice with industry, the public sector and civic society.

- 7.4 That the strategic opportunities set out in the paper would reflect and strengthen the fundamental values of Roehampton as derived from its four founding colleges.

#### **Strategic Alignment Challenges (Paper RUC81/4b)**

- 7.5 That there were several external challenges facing the University, such as the long-term shift towards professionally focussed subject areas and changing home undergraduate recruitment patterns. It was therefore crucial that the University reviewed its current academic size and shape to ensure that it was fit for the future.
- 7.6 That it was necessary to change the balance of resources to allow for investment in new areas and build relationships with new external partners, both in the UK and abroad, and to invest in student outcomes.
- 7.7 That a review of student accommodation was currently being undertaken by the Chief Operating Officer, who was working closely with the four colleges.

#### **Financial Sustainability Strategy 2022-27 (Paper RUC81/4c)**

- 7.8 That some aspects of the financial strategy were already built into the five-year forecast (Paper RUC81/5). However, from a financial sustainability standpoint, the University would only be able to deliver the changes proposed in the strategy papers if it generated sufficient headroom to invest in its future. The intention was therefore to provide the financial headroom to deliver the work addressed in the *Strategic Alignment Challenges* paper.
- 7.9 With reference to commercial activities, that the scope of the University's existing subsidiary companies was limited and could be expanded substantially to help increase revenue. Key areas of potential growth included conferencing and lettings, and corporate training and education under the umbrella of lifelong learning. The University would therefore develop its group structure to allow for more efficient delivery of education-related activities and to introduce a more commercial offering.
- 7.10 Council **agreed** to the recommendations set out in each paper and that they should be included in the planning for the next phase of the Strategy Delivery Programme, which should be accelerated.

### **8. Five-Year Financial Forecast to the Office for Students (OfS)**

- 8.1 Council received and noted the contents of the Financial Forecast (Paper RUC81/5).
- 8.2 Council was referred to the 'Commentary to support the OfS Annual Financial Return Workbook' and agreed that the following sentence should be added under Section 13 at the end: 'We will therefore need to reprofile our income and expenditure plans to ensure that the covenant is not breached'.

8.4 Council **approved** the Five-Year Financial Forecast for submission to the OfS.

## **9. Appointment of Council Members**

9.1 Council received the Appointment of Council Members paper (Paper RUC81/6).

9.2 Council **approved** the following appointments on the recommendation of the Nominations and Governance Committee:

- Christine Carpenter, as an Independent Member of Council nominated by the Society of the Sacred Heart, from 28 February 2022 for an initial term of three years.
- Mark Allen, as an Independent Member of Council (HE) for a second term until 16 March 2025.
- Tim Macquiban, as an independent Member of Council nominated by the Southlands' Methodist Trust, for a second term until 16 March 2025.

## **10. Any Other Business**

10.1 Council noted that it was Homelessness Awareness Week from 21 - 25 March. It was agreed that details of the initiative would be circulated to members outside of the Committee.

10.2 Council engagement with the University Community. It was suggested that Council members could meet students, which would be facilitated by the Secretary.

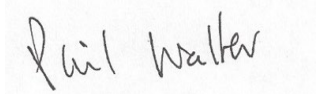
10.3 Support available on the Roehampton website was signposted for any colleagues or students affected by the ongoing crisis in Ukraine.

10.4 Governance matters.

- i. It was advised that the Secretary would arrange the process to appoint a successor to Professor Laura Peters, the Senate Nominee to Council, as soon as practicable, following her appointment to PVC (Academic Development and Sustainability).
- ii. Council agreed to circulate to the Members proposed changes to the University's Articles of Association for approval by written resolution.
- iii. Council agreed to the following changes to the schedule for 2021-22:
  - Arrange for an additional Council meeting in late April.
  - Postpone the dinner and away day on 4/5 May until later in the year.
  - Arrange a dinner following the Council meeting on 14 March.

**Actions: Secretary, Governance and Legal Office**

Signed:



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Phil Walker, Chair of Council

Date: 16 May 2022

Minutes prepared by:  
Elaine Lentell, Senior Governance Officer, February 2022