

COUNCIL**CONFIRMED MINUTES**

Minutes of the 234th meeting of Council held on **Wednesday, 22 November 2023** at 2.00pm in ESGW402, Eastern Gateway Building

Present: Professor Stuart Palmer (Chair); Professor Andrew Jones (Vice-Chancellor & President); Ms Amanda Rowlatt (Deputy Chair); Ms Sharon Blackman; Ms Janet Dean; Professor Dave Delpy; Ms Rita Gardner (Teams); Mr Mark Garrett; Professor Paul Hellewell; Ms Lucinda Hunt; Mr David Kennedy; Ms Josie Mangan; Mr Suraj Shaw; Professor Claire Turner (Pro Vice-Chancellor Education); Ms Tone Rosingholm; Ms Anne Waltham (Teams); Professor Jonathan Wastling (Deputy Vice-Chancellor);

In attendance: Mr Peter Cross, Interim Chief Finance Officer
 Ms Beatrice Otudeko, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Partner (Teams)
 Professor Geoff Rodgers (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Enterprise & Employment);
 Dr Nicola Rogers (Chief of Staff);
 Dr Rosa Scoble (Director of Strategic Planning);
 Professor Hua Zhao (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research)

Officers: Mr Tristan Foot (University Secretary and General Counsel);
 Mrs Joanna Barry, Governance Officer (Notes)

Apologies: Mr Mukhtar Ahmed; Professor Manuel Alonso; Mr Shashank Manjunatha;
 Mr Chris Maw; Dr Peter Thomas

REGULAR BUSINESS**23/24 DECLARATION OF INTEREST(S)**

24/01 NOTED: that there were no declarations of interest.

23/25 MINUTES OF THE 233RD MEETING (CO/3973)

25/01 APPROVED: the minutes of the 233rd meeting held on 17th October 2023.

23/26 MATTERS ARISING (CO/3974)

26/01 NOTED: the outstanding actions as detailed within the action summary sheet.

26/02 AGREED: that the UBS Chief Executive be invited to the next Council meeting in March 2024.

23/27 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT (CO/3975)

27/01 NOTED: the high-level update and overview of the key areas of importance contained within the Vice Chancellor's report.

27/02 Members were reminded of the importance of being mindful and observant of behaviours in light of the current troubles in the Middle East.

- 27/03** **AGREED:** that in order to provide a greater clarity, the Vice Chancellor's report would be amended for future meetings to include tabulated student recruitment data. It was noted that student numbers alone did not provide a full view of financial performance, which necessitated additional data relating to fees payable and attrition, for example.

23/28 APPOINTMENT OF CHANCELLOR

- 28/01** **NOTED:** that following a previously unsuccessful recruitment campaign, the Governance & Nominations Committee had agreed to resume its search to appoint a Chancellor.

23/29 APPOINTMENT OF PRO CHANCELLOR (CO/3976)

- 29/01** The Chair reported that the Governance & Nominations Committee had discussed the proposal at its meeting on 30th October to recommend Dr Shini Somara for the appointment of Pro-Chancellor.
- 29/02** Members noted that the Chair and Vice Chancellor had met with Dr Somara and considered her to be an excellent candidate. Dr Somara's scientific credibility in the field of engineering, public engagement work and overall advocacy of the University was commended.
- 29/03** **APPROVED:** the recommendation to appoint Dr Shini Somara to one of the vacant roles of Pro-Chancellor.

OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

23/30 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CO/3977)

- 30/01** **NOTED:** that the Financial Statements had been reviewed by the Finance Committee on the 6 November 2023 and approved in draft format by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 9 November 2023. Feedback received from both committees is incorporated into the report.
- 30/02** **APPROVED:** the Financial Statements for the year ending 2022-23, subject to KPMG recommended presentational amendments and typographical errors within the report.
- 30/03** **AGREED:** that the Chair of Council sign the letter of representation.

23/31 ANNUAL FINANCIAL RETURN (CO/3978)

- 31/01** Members acknowledged that the University is undergoing a transitional stage of development with a new organisational strategy and the progression of supporting academic plans, which will form a core part of the planning cycle from early 2024.
- 31/02** **NOTED:** the intention to further review the Annual Financial Return early in 2024.
- 31/03** **APPROVED:** the initial submission to OfS in December and the delegated authority to the Vice-Chancellor to submit the final version of the Annual Financial Return.

23/32 PREVENT DUTY – ANNUAL RETURN (CO/3979)

- 32/01** **APPROVED:** the Prevent Annual Report for 2022/23.

23/33 ANTI-SLAVERY STATEMENT (CO/3980)

- 33/01 APPROVED:** the University's annual Anti-Slavery Statement for publication.
- 33/02 AGREED:** that future changes be highlighted in track changes for ease of reference.

23/34 COUNCIL ORDINANCE 5 – TERMS OF REFERENCE (CO/3981)

- 34/01 APPROVED:** the revised Council Ordinance 5 incorporating the updated Terms of Reference for all Committees.

23/35 STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

- 35/01 NOTED:** the presentation received by the Deputy Vice Chancellor that provided an overview of the key performance areas, delivery priorities and timeline of Brunel's strategy that was launched in September 2023.
- 35/02** Institutional KPIs and an associated monitoring framework would be discussed and agreed at the January 2023 Council Away Day. A desire to link the short, medium and long term ambition of the institution to the strategy was noted.
- 35/03** The sub-committee reporting structure of the Strategic Planning Committee was presented. Gender balance in the composition of committees was emphasised.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION**23/36 RESEARCH CONCORDAT (CO/3982)**

- 36/01 APPROVED:** the University Research Integrity Concordat Annual Statement 2022/23.

EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE**23/37 REPORT AND SUPPORT AT BRUNEL (CO/3983)**

- 37/01 NOTED:** an overview of the "Report and Support" platform received by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Partner.
- 37/02** Members recognised the need to ensure that the platform appropriately interfaces with University policies. The value in undertaking data analytics work was discussed the clear messaging that supports the reduction in the number of incidents.
- 37/03 AGREED:** that Council will receive a future update on progress.

23/38 REPORT FROM UBS (CO/3984)

- 38/01 NOTED:** the highlights of the UBS report that details recent ongoing activity and outcomes of the Union of Brunel Students, including the recent financial update, review of the Union Governance, Complaints and disciplinary process and democracy review.
- 38/02 AGREED:** the Report from UBS would feature earlier in the agenda for the next meeting.

ENTERPRISE AND EMPLOYMENT

23/39 KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE POLICY ENVIRONMENT (CO/3985)

- 39/01** **NOTED:** the current HE policy and funding environment for knowledge exchange and the recently released results for the Knowledge Exchange Framework.

INTERNATIONAL AND SUSTAINABILITY

23/40 FORTHCOMING COUNCIL MEETING DATES

- 40/01** **NOTED:** Forthcoming meeting dates:
 30-31 January 2024 (Council Dinner and Away Day) – Plan
 and Strategy Monitoring Framework
 13 March 2024
 3rd July 2024

23/41 MEETINGS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND SENATE (CO/3968)

- 41/01** **NOTED:** Audit & Risk Committee Minutes (12 October 2023) (CO/3986)
- 41/02** **NOTED:** Annual Report of the Audit & Risk Committee (CO/3987)
- 41/03** **NOTED:** Remuneration Committee Minutes (28 September 2023) (CO/3988)
- 41/04** **NOTED:** Annual Report of the Remuneration Committee (CO/3989)
- 41/05** **NOTED:** Governance & Nominations Committee Minutes (31 October 2023)
 (CO/3990)

23/42 GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW – FINAL ACTIONS (PAPER FROM GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE) (CO/3991)

- 42/01** **NOTED:** the update on progress against the final actions from the most recent review, with particular reference to:
- (i) the need to ensure that Council concentrates on adding value and influencing the strategy – a review will be undertaken on an annual basis to ensure that committee agendas support the wider impact;
 - (ii) the attendance of Council members to at least one Senate meeting per year.
 - (iii) that independent members of Council have contact with student representatives.

BRUNEL EVENTS

23/43 BRUNEL MEDIA COVERAGE (CO/3992)

- 43/01** **NOTED:** the update on media coverage of the University and its achievements gained over the month, since the last meeting.

23/44 OFS COMPLIANCE SUMMARY (CO/3993)

- 19/01** **NOTED:** the assurances of how the University is meeting its ongoing Conditions of Registration and significant updates relating to the OfS.

23/45 OFS REPORTABLE EVENTS

45/01

23/46 STAFF APPOINTMENTS, RESIGNATIONS AND LEAVE OF ABSENCES (CO/3994)

46/01 NOTED: all academics, post-doctoral and senior professional appointments, retirements, resignations and fixed term contract terminations since the last report dated 29 June 2022 and permanent academic employees taking leave of absence.

23/47 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS (CO/3995)

47/01 NOTED: the documents that have been sealed.

23/48 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

48/01 AGREED: that in view of the priorities relating to cyber security, the Chief Operating Officer provide an update at the next Council meeting in March 2024.

23/49 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 13 March 2024

Meeting Minutes Approved:

Professor Stuart Palmer, Chairperson

Date