UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

COUNCIL

The 287th meeting of Council held on Monday 26 January 2026 from 16:00 to 18:00 on MS Teams.

Meeting Minutes

Present: Rosemary Martin (Chair), Stanley Alozie, Tago Amiani, Tony Bullman, Professor Sara Crangle, Dr. Jackie Grant, Sherene Jose, Gemma Harman, Professor Michael Luck, Professor Sasha Roseneil, Nick Watson, Lewis Wilson, Professor Gerhard Wolf, Richard Zaltzman

In attendance: Jim Andrews, Jacinda Humphry, Dean Machin, Amy Rogerson (Secretary)

PART ONE – PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
1.	**Welcome and apologies for absence**
1.1	Apologies were noted for REDACTED: GDPR AND DATA PROTECTION
2.	**Declarations of interest**
2.1	There were no new declarations of interest declared.
3.	**Minutes**
3.1	Council APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2025.
3.2	Council APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2025.
4.	**Matters arising**
4.1	Council NOTED matters arising from the minutes not referred to elsewhere on the agenda. A number of actions remain in progress for further updates at the Spring meeting of Council.
5.	**Chair's Action and Report**
5.1	Council NOTED that no formal action was taken by the Chair on behalf of Council since the previous meeting.
5.2	Council RECEIVED an oral report from the Chair.
5.2.1	REDACTED: GDPR AND DATA PROTECTION, Nick Watson and Richard Zaltzman will each step down from Council by the end of their current terms. Professor Steve Caddick plans to step down before the end of the Spring term.
5.2.2	The Chair provided an update on the recruitment of three Council members. Names for consideration and approval will be brought to Council at its meeting on 27 March.
5.2.3	The Chair informed Council that she and the Vice-Chair attended a session with Laila El Baradai, General Counsel and Director of Governance and Compliance, Professor Sasha

	Roseneil, Vice-Chancellor and President and external Counsel to receive an update on preparations for the forthcoming Judicial Review. Following advice from external Counsel, who provided a positive assessment of the prospect of success in the Judicial Review, no reason was discerned not to proceed as planned.
5.2.4	The hearing is scheduled to begin on 3 February, is expected to last three days, and a decision from the Court will follow some time thereafter.
PART TWO – KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION	
6.	**Academic Developments**
6.1	Council CONSIDERED an update from the Vice-Chancellor on academic developments.
6.1.1	The Education and Student Strategy has been approved by the University Executive Board, and the remaining core strategic plans will be brought forward for approval shortly. The transformational theme taskforces are now underway, with first progress report due to the Sussex 2035 Strategy Delivery Board (SSDB) in February.
6.1.2	Progress under the Recovering and Rebuilding Strategic Plan continues, including work on the brand refresh and development of the new website, due to launch at the end of February. Activity also includes ongoing portfolio adjustments, with the introduction of new programmes and the withdrawal of others, the introduction of January-starts for some programmes, the expansion of international articulation agreements, and strengthened marketing and recruitment activity.
6.1.3	SPC has reviewed the interim targets for the Recovering and Rebuilding Success Indicators, noting that the interim targets are intended to drive improvement rather than act as forecasts. Work is continuing to ensure clearer coordination of actions and deliverables across teams.
6.1.4	Professor Elizabeth “Buzz” Harrison, Dean of the Sussex School for Progressive Futures provided an update on the School’s establishment. The School is focused on building its internal academic community of ‘affiliates’, shaping its direction and embedding the Sussex 2035 transformational themes, each of which now has an academic leader in place. The first Professor-of -Practice has been appointed, Professor Caroline Lucas, Professor-of-Practice in Environmental Sustainability, and is contributing to student engagement and public events, with further appointments underway. Work is progressing on the flagship first-year electives for introduction in Autumn 2026, alongside outreach activity with schools and public events linked to the School’s, and the Sussex 2035, transformational themes.
6.1.5	In response to a question about distinctiveness, it was noted that whilst there are many ‘institutes of advanced studies’ in research intensive universities, there is only one broadly comparable model in the UK, giving Sussex a clear competitive advantage in integrating teaching and research with global and civic engagement, and a unique focus on our transformational themes
6.1.6	Council received an update on the new Further and Higher Education Sussex Strategic Alliance (FHESSA) involving all universities and FE colleges across the Sussex region. A mission statement is being developed, and early work is focused on mapping education and skills provision and pathways across the region, as well as exploring opportunities for shared activity, including in mental health services
6.1.7	The PVC for Global and Civic Engagement reported on the launch of the Sussex Civic University Agreement, which involves 18 partners, and sets out a shared vision for a Sustainable,

	Connected and Equitable Sussex. The University has led the work to established the Agreement, which has been signed by all three universities (Sussex, Brighton and Chichester), all three upper tier local authorities, all the FE colleges in Sussex, and key public services (NHS Sussex, Sussex Police) and business organisations and large employers.
6.1.8	REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE
6.1.9	Early discussions are also underway regarding a potential Sussex presence in India. Market testing and business case development are in progress in order to determine whether to progress plans before consideration by Senate and Council. Questions raised by members regarding scope, faculty involvement and the long-term pipeline of students will be considered as planning develops.
6.1.10	Council received a further update on the forthcoming Judicial Review of the OfS decision against Sussex. REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE
6.1.11	Council noted that the University's "Sussex Quantum Silicon Valley" proposal has been selected for the competed strand of the Local Innovation Partnership Fund by the region's local authorities. The University has also achieved top-200 subject placements in the THE World University Subject Rankings in six subject areas (Business and Economics; Education Studies; Law; Physical Sciences; Psychology; Social Sciences), with improvements in rankings for Education Studies, Law, Life Sciences, and Psychology. Psychology is now ranked 61st in the world, and Social Sciences 76th. Physical Sciences is ranked 27th in the world for Research Quality and Psychology is ranked 28th in the world for Research Quality.
6.1.12	Council was informed that the establishment of a new Reform UK Student Society has been approved by USSU in line with regulatory requirements REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE
7.	**Council sub-committee structure**
7.1	Council APPROVED the proposed merger of the Finance & Resources Committee and the Strategy & Performance Committee into a single Committee.
7.1.1	The COO and University Secretary introduced the proposal, noting that SPC members had discussed it at their last meeting and FRC members had been briefed in advance. Members expressed support for reducing duplication and improving efficiency, with comments emphasising the need for disciplined scheduling and clarity of terms of reference.
7.1.2	Membership arrangements will be considered by Nominations and Governance Committee.
7.2	Council APPROVED the reconstitution of the Chair's Committee as a Nominations and Governance Committee.
7.2.1	During discussion, a question was raised about the proposed membership, REDACTED: CONFIDENTIAL; it was noted that Nominations and Governance Committees are typically composed of independent members. It was agreed that any significant governance issues should be escalated to Council, and this will be incorporated into the Terms of Reference.
7.2.2	Council welcomed the clearer definition and increased transparency provided by the revised structure.

8.	**Council Effectiveness Review 2025 – Summary of findings, recommendations, and action plan**
8.1	Council CONSIDERED findings and recommendations
8.2	Council CONSIDERED the action plan and asked that the University present updates at a future date.
9.	**Terms of Reference Approvals**
9.1	Council APPROVED the updated Terms of Reference for the Audit and Risk Committee and Senate, pending a small update to the Senate terms of reference to correct an error referring to Senate as a committee.
10.	**Updated Regulation 9: Procedure for written and email resolutions**
10.1	Council APPROVED the amended Regulation 9: Procedure for written and email resolutions.
10.1.1	A query was raised regarding Regulation 9, specifically whether the regulation applied to Senate; it was confirmed that it does not. A further question concerned whether timeliness could be built into the regulation. It was clarified that Regulation 9 governs the mechanism rather than the timings of individual steps, and that appropriate safeguards are already in place.
11.	**Any other business**
11.1	No additional business was raised