



COUNCIL

**Minutes of the 254th meeting of Council held on Friday 23 October
at 13.00 to 13.30 via Zoom**

1. PRESENT

Members present: Dame Denise Holt (Chair), Ms Adrienne Fresko (Vice-Chair), Professor Saul Becker, Mr David Benson, Mr Andy Bryant, Mr Tony Bullman, Mr Mark Devlin, Professor Steve Caddick, Mr Mark Fisher, Professor Mario Novelli, Professor Sara Crangle, Ms Jane Parsons, Professor Steve McGuire, Mr Albertus Schoeman, Ms Aleema Shivji, Professor Adam Tickell, Mr Nick Watson, Dr Gerhard Wolf, Mr Richard Zaltzman, Mr David Curley, Mr Max O'Donnell-Savage, Mr Connor Moylett.

In attendance: Dr Tim Westlake (Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary), Mr Allan Spencer (Director of Finance), Professor Stephen Shute (Pro Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources), Ms Michelle Gordon (Director of External Relations), Ms Rowena Rowley (Head of Governance Services), Miss Georgina Seligmann (Deputy Head of Governance Services), James Bluring (Deputy Head of Governance Services).

Apologies for absence were received from: Ms Kirstin Baker, Professor Sir Peter Knight, Ms Katie Ghose.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 It was agreed to note Kirstin Baker's standing declaration re her role at The Pensions Regulator. It should also be noted that some staff members of Council may be members of the USS pension scheme and ultimately beneficiaries of it.

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2020 (C/252/M) and matters arising will be considered at the meeting of 27 November 2020.
- 3.2 The meeting scheduled for 2 October 2020 (C/253) was not quorate so matters were discussed in informal briefing format.

4. CHAIR'S ACTION

- 4.1 To NOTE that further to the discussion with Council held on 2 October 2020 the Chair took action on behalf of Council to approve the inclusion of an appeals process in the Student Fines Policy.

As the meeting on 2 October 2020 was not quorate, the views of Council members were sought on the inclusion of an appeals process as part of the informal optional briefing. This was overwhelmingly supported and Chair's Action was subsequently taken to update the Policy.

PART 2 - MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR DECISION

5. **UUK Consultation**

5.1 Council CONSIDERED the proposed response to the UUK consultation on the USS Trustee's proposed methodology and assumptions for the Scheme's technical provisions in relation to the 2020 Valuation (C/254/1 – restricted to Council members) only introduced by the Vice-Chancellor, who drew Council's attention to the following:

- a) the University's response broadly tracks the AON / UUK view.
- b) Council had received by circulation the document sent from UCU regarding its views on the pensions issue.
- c) The principles for restricting papers and as such the University's institutional response will be strictly confidential to Council members. The consultation is between the University as the employer, and UUK as the employers' membership body, and as such confidentiality should be maintained.
- d) Council is not required to approve the response but must demonstrate it` has been engaged in the discussion.

Items raised in discussion included acknowledgement of the contentious nature of this issue, and the length of time that it has remained live and unresolved. Whilst there is some alignment of position between the various stakeholders some members of Council raised their concerns about their inability to discuss the institutional response outside the meeting. It was agreed that consideration would be given to publishing a broad statement to the community following the meeting. Additionally Council members were encouraged to report back to staff and students that whilst they were not able to break the confidentiality of the meeting they would be able to confirm that Council is taking the matter very seriously and taking time to consider and debate the key issues over which it has influence. **[ACTION: Chair to consider publication of statement following meeting]**

Following discussion, and noting that UUK require confirmation that the governing body has been engaged with the response, although formal approval was not required, Council AGREED to submit the proposed consultation response in line with the UUK deadline of 30 October 2020

6. **Any other business**

6.1 No other business was raised.

7. **Dates of next meetings**

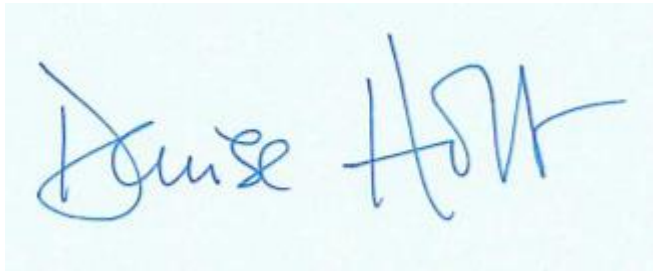
Friday 27 November 2020	9am – 4pm (strategy morning then meeting) via zoom
Friday 26 March 2021	9am to 4pm (strategy morning then meeting)
Friday 2 July 2021	9am to 4pm (strategy morning then meeting)

The meetings in March and July will be preceded by a dinner and briefing the night before from 5pm onwards.

Dr Tim Westlake
Secretary to Council

October 2020

Approved by Council as a true record on 4 November 2020 and signed electronically by the Chair, Dame Denise Holt.

A handwritten signature in blue ink on a light blue background. The signature reads "Denise Holt" in a cursive, flowing script. The first name "Denise" is written in a more rounded, cursive style, while "Holt" is written in a more angular, blocky cursive style.