

OPEN

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

COUNCIL

25th November 2020 at 9.00a.m.

MINUTES OF MEETING

Members present: Mr Mervyn Walker (Pro-Chancellor and Chair); Professor Helen Abbott; Ms Tobiloba Adeyemi (President of the Guild of Students); Ms Rebecca Cutler (Guild Postgraduate Officer); Professor Sir David Eastwood (Vice-Chancellor and Principal); Professor David Hannah; Mr Malcolm Harbour CBE; Ms Rosie Harris; Mr Richard Haywood (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Mr Steve Hollis; Dame Lin Homer; Professor Tim Jones (Provost and Vice-Principal); Mr Harjinder Kang; Mr Mick Lavery; Professor Una Martin; Mrs Caragh Merrick (Treasurer); Mr Richard Swann; Ms Jacqueline Taylor; Professor Nicola Wilkin.

Also present: Professor David Adams (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor Richard Black (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Ms Erica Conway (Finance Director); Professor Jo Duberley, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion)- for Minutes 20/104(2); Professor Andrzej Gasiorek (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Ms Cathy Gilbert (Director of External Relations) - for Minute 20/103; Professor Laura Green (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor Stephen Jarvis (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor Robin Mason (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International); Mrs Colette McDonough (Assistant Secretary); Ms Gillian McGrattan, Director of Human Resources - for Minutes 20/96, 20/102(2) and 20/107; Ms Carolyn Pike, Director of Legal Services - for Minute 20/98; Professor Clive Roberts, Head of School of Engineering - for Minute 20/98; Ms Emma Robinson (Academic Registrar) - for Minutes 20/96, 20/99, 20/102(1), 20/104 and 20/106; Mr Lee Sanders (Registrar and Secretary); Professor Gavin Schaffer, Postgraduate Dean - for Minute 20/104(2); Professor Tim Softley (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Transfer)); Professor Mark Sterling, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Staffing) - for Minute 20/102(2).

Apologies: Mr Alan Davey CBE, Ms Deborah Cadman OBE and Professor Kathleen Armour (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)).

Papers: The minute book contains copies of all written papers or reports to which reference is made below unless indicated otherwise.

20/91 Declarations of Interest

**Noted:** that there were no changes to the entries of members of Council in the University's Register of Interests or any interests declared in relation to any item on the agenda.

20/92 Minutes

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 30th September 2020 be approved (CO.20.11.02).

20/93 Matters Arising from the minutes not addressed elsewhere on the agenda

***[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]***

20/94 Pro-Chancellor's Items

**Reported:** that there were no Pro-Chancellor's Items.

20/95 Vice-Chancellor's Items

**Considered:** the report of the Vice-Chancellor (CO.20.11.04).

**Reported** that Council welcomed the news that:

- (a) the University had recently received two further Athena SWAN awards; a silver award for the College of Medical and Dental Sciences, and a bronze award for the Birmingham Law School;
- (b) the partnership between Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education (BCRRE) at the University of Birmingham and Porterbrook to develop the UK's first hydrogen-powered train (HydroFLEX) had been named 'Business Partnership of the Year' in the 2020 Guardian University Awards.

20/96 Covid-19 Update

**Considered:**

- (a) the work being undertaken by the University in response to the Covid-19 emergency (CO.20.11.05). The latest version of the tracker which recorded decisions made as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak was attached at Appendix 1;
- (b) the proposed extension of the arrangements for the operation of Council and its Sub-Committees, emergency powers and delegations during the Coronavirus Emergency first approved by Council on 2nd April 2020.

**Reported:**

- (a) the latest national and local position and the current position in relation to education and students, research, staffing and Campus;
- (b) members of Council commended the University's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the significant work being undertaken by staff at this difficult time, noting that:
  - (i) for universities, the implications of the national government restrictions in the Autumn had been very different to last Spring; universities were one of the settings which the government had specifically decided would remain open, along with, for example, construction and manufacturing. Government's clear expectation, in accordance with current regulations, was that students would remain on campus and in residence, supported with a blend of face-to-face and on-line teaching; that research continued; and that the Library and campus buildings remained open and that universities provide study space and opportunities for students. ***[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]***. The majority of the Russell Group were also retaining a balance of in-person and online teaching based on their local regional position in line with DfE guidance, which meant there were some differences between different regions;

- (ii) the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Senior Education Team, which included the Directors of Education for all Colleges, would continue to lead on the University's approach to blended education, and keep the approach under review in light of government and public health guidance and advice;
- (iii) the University had reviewed and revised the categories of staff who had continued to spend some time working from campus to support education, students, research and the running of the campus and those categories of staff who could work from home or would need to be furloughed, informed by the government guidance. In this, as throughout, the University had been sensitive to individual circumstances, and the well-being of colleagues, noting that there were some staff who felt that their mental or physical wellbeing required a campus presence some or all of the time;
- (iv) the number of new Covid cases for students and staff at the University was declining. This continuing reduction in new cases was heartening and reflected the excellent partnership working with the Guild of Students on a range of supportive measures. Importantly academics within the College of Medical and Dental Sciences Institute for Applied Health Research had analysed the case data and had confirmed that it suggested that transmission might be occurring in shared accommodation and the pattern of notification of cases did not suggest there had been transmission to either staff or students during face to face teaching. They had concluded the risk from face-to-face teaching was therefore very low;
- (v) the government had published its guidance for universities to support students to return home for Christmas. This included:
  - (a) supporting students to return home for Christmas during a travel window between 3rd and 9th December;
  - (b) moving teaching online by 9th December at the latest;
  - (c) setting up a Lateral Flow Device testing programme for students;
- (vi) in order to facilitate this, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Heads of College and College Directors of Education had agreed that the last day of face-to-face teaching on campus would be Friday 4th December. This decision had been endorsed by UEB. The last week of teaching before Christmas (week commencing Monday 7th December) would be delivered online, as would Assessment Support Week (week commencing Monday 14th December). There were only very limited exceptions to this, including some clinical placements. These exceptions had been communicated locally;
- (vii) the move to wholly online teaching was in place until the Christmas break and the approach in January would be reviewed in light of the new local tier restrictions that would be put in place once the current national restrictions ended on 2nd December and any further guidance from DfE, including any implications of Birmingham being placed in new Tier 3 of local restrictions;
- (viii) the University would remain open through December with research continuing and key services, including the library, study spaces, welfare and wellbeing services, all being available to students who remained on campus or who were commuter students. This included the many international students who would remain in Birmingham over Christmas, and those planning to arrive in the country during December, and particularly home and international students remaining in our halls of residence (currently estimated at c.1200);
- (ix) the University would be part of the national programme of Lateral Flow Device testing of students. It would be providing a rapid testing facility in

the Great Hall open to all students between 2nd and 9th December to support their travel home for Christmas. A booking system would operate with any student at the University able to book a test if they so wished. This work was being led by Professor Alan McNally and his team, who had significant experience in setting up and running Covid testing labs both nationally and at the University, and Dr Emma Robinson, Academic Registrar. It would allow students to receive test results within an hour, enabling those who tested negative to travel home within 24 hours. Students who tested positive would need to take a PCR test to confirm the result and would be supported to self-isolate for 10 days before returning home if this test was positive. The aim of this testing was to provide additional assurances for students that, where tests were negative, there was a reduced risk in travelling home, and a reduced risk of transmission to their family and home community. The University was also planning on the basis of maintaining the rapid testing facility to support the return of students in January and the start of Semester 2;

- (x) government guidance on the arrangements for the return of students in January was expected in the next week. Under the University's New Academic Teaching Year, teaching was due to start for Semester 2 for the majority of students on 1st February 2021 so there would be time to support a phased return during January if that was permitted;
- (xi) the conduct of the vast majority of the University's students during this difficult time was commended by the Vice-Chancellor. The University's partnership working with the Guild of Students had made a significant contribution to this positive position.

**Resolved:** that

- (i) Council expressed its appreciation of the continued effectiveness of the University's response to the Covid-19 pandemic;
- (ii) the arrangements for the operation of Council and its Sub-Committees, emergency powers and delegations during the Coronavirus Emergency approved by Council on 2nd April 2020 (and extended by Council on 19th May 2020 until 30th September 2020) be extended to continue to operate until 27th January 2021 (the date of the next ordinary meeting of Council);
- (iii) a further Covid-19 Update would be provided to members of Council by e-mail before Christmas.

20/97 2020/21 Budget Update – Phase 1+

**COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

**[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

20/98 **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

20/99 Enhancing the Student Experience: National Student Survey 2020 and the New Approach for 2021

**Considered:** the University's performance in the 2020 National Student Survey (NSS) and the University's new strategy for delivering NSS enhancement actions both for the current academic year and longer term (CO.20.11.08).

**Reported** that:

- (a) the University was committed to delivering an enhanced student experience,

re-thought for the post-Covid era. Paper CO.20.11.08 focused on key areas of challenge and enhancement and summarised the key features of the new approach. **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION];**

- (b) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (c) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (d) given the tendency for similar concerns to arise each year, and the challenges faced in sustaining improvements that occurred in specific areas, a new Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor role (Student Academic Experience) would be created to focus on rethinking the University's approach to improving key areas of the student experience and to support Schools to design and – importantly – deliver appropriate action plans. The aim was for the new Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor to be appointed next month, to share their early reflections and set out their key priorities for SPRC in March and contribute to development of the Education pillar of the next Strategic Framework for approval by Council in June 2021;
- (e) members of Council welcomed the proposed new holistic approach and the creation of the new Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor role in particular. The positive impact of the arrival of Dr Emma Robinson as Academic Registrar and the strong partnership working and collaboration with this year's Guild officer team was also recognised;
- (f) the uncertainty surrounding the longer term future of the NSS and the Teaching Excellence Framework was noted.

**Resolved** that the new strategy for delivering NSS enhancement actions both for the current academic year and longer term, and the new approach set out in Paper CO.20.11.08 and above be approved.

#### 20/100 Report of Audit Committee

- (1) Annual Report of the Audit Committee

**Considered:** the Annual report of the Audit Committee (CO.20.11.09).

**Reported** that:

- (a) the Audit Committee had considered the draft Annual Report and Accounts and the report of the External Auditor, and members had opportunities to ask questions of detail about both documents at the meeting, and to send detailed and textual comments in advance to the Finance Director to consider in finalising the Annual Report and Accounts. The Committee had been satisfied with the answers to their questions and had seen and heard nothing to date to suggest that the Committee would not be recommending to Council approval of the Annual Report and Accounts. However, the Committee noted that the External Auditors needed to complete their work before it could confirm its recommendation to Council to approve the Annual Report and Accounts. An additional meeting of Audit Committee would therefore be arranged in December 2020 in order for Audit Committee to complete its work in considering the finalised Annual Report and Accounts and External Auditor's report, and to confirm its recommendation to approve the Annual Report and Accounts to Council;
- (b) however, based on the information and explanations provided to the Committee, including the reports and opinions received from Internal and External Auditors, Audit Committee was satisfied that during 2019/20 and up to the date of its Annual Report:

- (i) the University's risk management and internal control and governance arrangements taken as a whole, including in respect of data provided by the University to Higher Education Statistics Agency, the Student Loans Company, OfS, Research England and other bodies, were adequate and effective;
  - (ii) the University had adequate and effective arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money);
  - (iii) the statements on corporate governance and internal control included in the Annual Financial Statements fairly reflected the systems that existed, including their inherent limitations; and
  - (iv) the Responsibilities of the Council as stated in the Annual Report as regards the financial statements had been adequately discharged;
- (c) the Committee was satisfied with the performance of Internal Audit during the period.

**Resolved:** that the Annual Report of Audit Committee be approved as set out in Paper CO.20.11.09, noting that the wording at Paragraph 7.2 and on the cover sheet regarding approval of the University's Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st July 2020 would be considered confirmed and approved when the outstanding work on the External Audit and sign off of the University's Annual Report and Accounts had been completed (Minute 20/101 below refers).

- (2) Report from the meetings of the Audit Committee held on 22nd September and 12th November 2020

**Considered:** the report from the meetings of Audit Committee held on 22nd September and 12th November 2020 and the appointment of the next External Auditor (CO.20.11.10).

**Resolved:** that Ernst and Young be appointed as External Auditor for the financial year ending 31st July 2021.

20/101 Annual report and Accounts for the Year Ending 31st July 2020

**Considered:** the Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ending 31st July 2020 (CO.20.11.11).

- (1) Annual Report and Accounts

**Reported** that:

- (a) the latest draft of the University's consolidated Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20 was attached at Appendix 1 to Paper CO.20.11.11. Earlier versions had been reviewed by SPRC at its meeting on 18th November and Audit Committee on 12th November;
- (b) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**. Currently there was still audit work ongoing and as a result it was possible the figures presented in this paper would change. Council would be updated on any changes as the process concluded;
- (c) Deloitte had not concluded the external audit and advised the current status of the audit as Amber, noting though that the Finance Director assured Council that no matters of significant concern had been identified by the audit to date. Audit Committee had therefore not been able to confirm its recommendation that the Accounts be finally approved as reported at Minute 20/100(1) above. Council was therefore invited to consider the draft Annual Report and Accounts and give its

initial approval to the Accounts, noting that further work was required to complete the external audit work. As the audit concluded, the outcomes would be discussed with the Vice-Chancellor, as Accountable Officer, the Finance Director and the Treasurer. A meeting of Audit Committee had been arranged for 14th December in order for Audit Committee to consider the updated External Auditor's report, and to confirm the conclusion of its work in relation to the Annual Report and Accounts to Council in order for Council to adopt the Accounts. Following this, Council would be advised on 16th December 2020 of the outcome of the external audit, the recommendation of the meeting of Audit Committee and of any changes made to the financial statements, for Council to approve by circulation;

- (d) the deadline for submission of the Annual Report and Accounts to the Office for Students had been extended by two months to 1st February 2021. The University also had covenant compliance requirements for completed financial statements by 31st January 2021. It was anticipated that both of these deadlines would be achieved as the auditors anticipated completing their work during December 2020;
- (e) the Treasurer confirmed that she was very satisfied with the Annual Report and Accounts which had been presented to Council, noting that they could be reconciled to the University's cash position and the financial reports which had been submitted to SPRC throughout the year. The possibility of further adjustments as a result of completion of the external audit was noted as was the point that no material concerns had been identified by the audit to date.

**Resolved** that Council:

- (i) gave its initial approval to the University's Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st July 2020, noting that further work was required to complete the external audit and that Audit Committee was therefore not able to confirm its recommendation that the Accounts be finally approved at this stage;
- (ii) would be asked by circulation to give final approval and to adopt the Accounts with any changes following completion of the external audit and consideration of its outcomes, and confirmation from Audit Committee that it recommended Council approved the Accounts, **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**.

#### 20/102 Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee

**Considered:** the report of the meetings of the Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee held on 3rd and 18th November (CO.20.11.12).

- (1) StARS+ Update and Recommendations for Future Direction

#### **COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

**Considered:** the StARS+ Update and recommendations for future direction (CO.20.11.13).

**Reported:**

- (a) to (j) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

**Resolved** that the revised approach to StARS+ be approved as set out in Paper CO.20.11.13, **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**.

(2) Birmingham Academic Career Framework

**Considered:** the proposed new Birmingham Academic Career Framework (CO.20.11.14).

**Reported:**

- (a) that the arrangements for the Birmingham Academic Career Framework (BACF) project had been approved by Council on 2nd April 2020 on the recommendation of SPRC;
- (b) that the first stage of the project had been to develop and consult on the overall structure of the proposed new career framework for the University's academic staff. This work had been carried out over the Summer and the outcome of the consultation with academic staff and the University of Birmingham branch of UCU (BUCU), together with the recommendations of Workstream 2 members for the proposed new BACF, had been considered by UEB on 19th October 2020;
- (c) that the aims of the proposed new BACF were to:
  - (i) strengthen the rigour of the academic probation process;
  - (ii) provide an extended framework for the provision of support and development of new academic staff during the early period of their careers at Birmingham;
  - (iii) facilitate promotion to (new title) Associate Professor earlier than the current average of 6-7 years;
  - (iv) provide additional routes to contribution and promotion by revising the career pathways with an expected positive impact on equality and the gender pay gap;
  - (v) provide greater clarity and revised promotions criteria so that staff can see where their contribution(s) will be rewarded and where individual strengths can be recognised;
  - (vi) improve support for early career staff below the level of Assistant Professor.
- (d) that the key changes from the current career and promotions structure which would be implemented by the Framework were:
  - (i) changes to the current academic career pathways;
  - (ii) a move to a system of assessment for promotions that will consider evidence from up to five contribution areas;
- (e) the outcome of the consultation;
- (f) that SPRC had considered the proposed new Framework on 18th November 2020 and recommended it to Council for approval;
- (g) the plans for development of a specific offer for Grade 7 Early Career Researchers and Teaching and Research Fellows on fixed term contracts.

**Resolved:** that the proposed new Birmingham Academic Career Framework be approved as set out at Appendix 1 to Paper SPR.20.11.18 for implementation from the 2021/22 academic year.

**[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

20/103 Recruitment and Admissions Update

**COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

**Considered:** the Recruitment and Admissions Update (CO.20.11.15).

**Reported** that:



(a)-(i) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

(j) the next recruitment and admissions update would be provided to Council in January 2021.

20/104 Report of Senate

(1) Annual Report on Academic Quality, Standards and the Student Experience

**Considered:** the Annual Report on Academic Quality, Standards and the Student Experience (CO.20.11.16).

**Reported** that:

- (a) Paper CO.20.11.16 was the annual assurance report to Council on academic quality, standards and the student experience. This report was one of those submitted to Council to provide ongoing assurance on academic matters;
- (b) Council had also received this report annually to enable it to make the required annual assurances to the Office for Students (OfS) as part of the Annual Accountability Return. The OfS had confirmed in November 2019 that the Annual Accountability Return no longer included these assurances. At the time of writing, the OfS had not published any information about the Annual Accountability Return 2020;
- (c) this report brought together issues that Council had already considered during 2019/20 as part of its normal cycle of business, and additional evidence from the past year.
- (d) since March 2020, the University had been focussed on delivering a rapid and effective response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and ensuring that academic quality, standards and the student experience had been, and would continue to be, protected.

**Resolved:** that the University's approach to academic quality, standards and the student experience as set out in Paper CO.20.11.16 be approved.

(2) Tackling Antisemitism on Campus and the IHRA Definition

**Considered:** the proposed adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Association's (IHRA) definition of antisemitism (CO.20.11.17).

**Reported:**

- (a) that numerous governmental and non-governmental organisations had now adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism, and universities were coming under increasing governmental pressure to do so;
- (b) that, as in other places, there had been reported some disturbing instances of antisemitism in recent years at the University. The adoption of the IHRA Definition would send a positive signal to all students (but especially to Jewish students) that the University took antisemitism extremely seriously, and that it would not be tolerated within the University's community;
- (c) the IHRA definition and its examples of antisemitism were set out in Paper CO.20.11.17;
- (d) that the adoption of the IHRA definition (including the examples) in full by the University was supported by the Chaplaincy and Guild of Students. The adoption of the definition had first been considered by UEB at its joint meeting with the Guild of Students in January 2020, following its proposal by the Guild Education Officer 2019/20;

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- (e) that at least half of the Russell Group universities had already adopted the definition (including the Universities of Bristol, Durham, Exeter, London School of Economics, and Manchester), with several more (including Glasgow and Sheffield) considering adoption during this academic year;
- (f) that UEB on 19th October 2020 had recommended to Council that the University adopted the IHRA definition and examples of antisemitism in full, noting that Senate on 4th November 2020 would have the opportunity to consider and submit any comments on this recommendation to Council;
- (g) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (h) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (i) that, having considered the comments by members of Senate, UEB on 9th November 2020 had confirmed its recommendation to Council that the University adopts the IHRA definition and examples of antisemitism in full;
- (j) that the definition and examples would sit alongside the University's policies on equality, diversity and inclusion, and freedom of speech if adopted;
- (k) that the discussion highlighted:
  - (i) the importance for the University to demonstrate that it took antisemitism extremely seriously, and that it would not be tolerated within the University's community;
  - (ii) the importance of highlighting that adoption of the IHRA definition was part of the University's overall strategy to address and promote its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

**Resolved:** that the University adopt in full the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Definition of Anti-Semitism, including the examples, with immediate effect.

### (3) Report of Senate

**Considered:** the report from the meeting of the Senate held on 4th November 2020, including the Annual Report on Research Integrity (CO.20.11.18).

**Resolved:** that the University's Annual Research Integrity Statement for 2019/20 be approved as set out at Appendix 1 to Paper CO.20.11.18.

## 20/105 Annual Report to Council on the Prevent Duty 2019/20

**Considered:** the Annual Report to Council on the Prevent Duty 2019/20 (CO.20.11.20).

**Reported** that:

- (a) the purpose of Paper CO.20.11.20 was to demonstrate that the University had 'due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism' (The Prevent Duty) and to provide assurance to Council on the University's implementation of the Prevent Duty. The University continued to take a serious, proactive and proportionate approach to discharging its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty. While a detailed annual report was no longer required by the Office for Students (OfS) as part of their monitoring approach, this report was provided to Council so that assurance could be provided that the University was meeting its responsibilities;
- (b) based on the assurance provided through this report, Council was asked to approve the Accountability and Data Return for Prevent Duty Monitoring 2020 (Appendix 1) and the Prevent Annual Accountability Statement (Appendix 2) for signature by the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council and submission to the OfS by 1st December 2020;

- (c) the reporting period covered by the submissions to the OfS for this year was 1st August 2019 to 31st July 2020. This included the period of restricted campus operations due to the Covid-19 pandemic, from the end of March 2020. During this period events and activities on campus were significantly curtailed, resulting in a reduction in the number of reported events and speakers approved. In some instances, events moved online and advice was issued to staff and students to remind and reinforce that the reporting duty and approval process should continue to operate for online events. These measures, along with a summary of further advice and guidance issued to staff and students to promote online safety and security, were detailed in the report;
- (d) the OfS had issued further guidance in May 2020 specific to the Prevent Duty; *“recognising the extraordinary circumstances that providers face in responding to the challenge of the pandemic”*. This advice highlighted the importance of continuing wellbeing provision and safeguarding measures in the online environment, which the University was already supporting. The OfS had also required this year that the Annual Accountability Statement summarised how the governing body had due regard to the Prevent duty and the evidence it had used to assure itself. Additionally, the OfS required information on welfare provision and the University’s response to the pandemic in relation to the Prevent duty. This was provided in Paper CO.20.11.20, particularly Appendix 2, and the annual assurance report which Council received on student wellbeing each January.

**Resolved** that:

- (i) the Annual Report on the Prevent Duty 2019/20 which provided detail and assurance that the University had discharged its Prevent Duty be approved. This includes the University’s Accountability and Data Return for Prevent Duty Monitoring 2020 (Appendix 1) and the Prevent Annual Accountability Statement (Appendix 2);
- (ii) the submission of the Prevent Annual Accountability Statement to the Office for Students be approved, confirming that:  
 “Throughout the academic year 2019-20 and up to the date of approval, the University of Birmingham:
  - has had due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent duty);
  - has provided to OfS all required information about its implementation of the Prevent duty;
  - has reported to OfS in a timely way all serious issues related to the Prevent duty, or now attaches any reports that should have been made, with an explanation of why they were not submitted;
  - has reviewed, and where necessary, updated its Prevent risk assessment and action plan.”

20/106 **Brexit Planning**

**Considered**: a progress report on the University’s planning for Brexit (CO.20.11.19).

**Reported** that:

- (a) the University had been planning for both the academic and operational risks of Brexit since 2017 and as a result, it was well ahead of the sectoral guidance that had been issued. The main planning assumption was a hard end to the UK’s Brexit transition period on 31st December 2020. In terms of the main academic risks:

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- (i) Student mobility: work had been undertaken with EU partners to ensure continuation of exchange agreements, in the event that the UK was no longer associated with Erasmus+;
- (ii) Horizon 2020: the estimated **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]** of outstanding awards on 1 January 2021 would be funded until the completion of the projects. Applications to H2020 had continued to increase. International research schemes set up by UK funders were being prioritised; the University had already been successful in the Leverhulme International Professorship scheme;
- (iii) Clinical trials: arrangements had been put in place to ensure that the University could continue to run clinical trials in the EU;
- (iv) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (v) Staff: EU-national staff **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]** had been supported in their applications for settled or pre-settled status. There was no evidence to suggest that candidates are being deterred from applying;
- (b) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (c) the University's Europe strategy had been developed explicitly to mitigate the effects of Brexit for the University and was being successfully implemented. Most notably, the University had been awarded a 'European University of the Future'. The EUniWell alliance was an ambitious partnership of seven leading European universities—Birmingham, Cologne, Florence, Leiden, Linnaeus, Nantes, and Semmelweis—supported by €7 million of EC funding. The alliance ensured the University's institutional links with leading research-intensive universities in the EU, however the transition period ended.

**Noted:** the assurance provided to Council in terms of the University's preparations for Brexit as set out in Paper CO.20.11.19.

### 20/107 Membership Committee

**Considered:** the report of the virtual meeting of the Membership Committee held on 12th October 2020 and progress with the search for new members of Council (CO.20.11.22).

**Resolved:** that Tim Gardam be appointed as a lay member of Council for four years with effect from 1st December 2020.

### 20/108 Remuneration Committee

**Considered:** the report from the meetings of the Remuneration Committee held during 2020 (CO.20.11.21).

**[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

**Noted:** the Annual Report of the Remuneration Committee, including the details of the senior pay reward process and the remuneration of the Vice-Chancellor.

**[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

*[Note: The Vice-Chancellor withdrew from the meeting for the duration of this agenda item].*

### 20/109 Capital Projects over £10m

**COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

**OPEN**

**Received**: the progress update on Capital Projects over £10m (CO.20.11.23).

20/110 Affixing of the University Seal

**Received**: a report noting the transactions which had required use of the University Seal since the last meeting of Council (CO.20.11.24).

20/111 Any Other Business

**Reported** that:

- (a) the Pro-Chancellor thanked the Vice-Chancellor and members of UEB for their significant and exceptional work during what had been an extraordinary and challenging year for the University;
- (b) the Vice-Chancellor thanked the Pro-Chancellor and members of Council for their support and the quality of their advice and decision-making during the past year.

20/112 Programme of Meetings

**Noted**: the programme of meetings of Council for 2020/21:

Tuesday 26th January 2021, 5.00pm, Council Presentation and Dinner  
Wednesday 27th January 2021, 9.00am, Council Meeting  
Thursday 22nd April 2021, 9.00am, Council Strategy Day and Dinner  
Tuesday 29th June 2021, 5.00pm, Council Presentation and Dinner  
Wednesday 30th June 2021, 9.00am, Council Meeting