

# CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING



## Council

*Thursday 24 February 2022, at 9.30am*

*Council Chamber with some virtual attendance via Zoom*

### Present:

Pamela Chesters, Chair  
Maria Bond  
Tim Ford  
Christine Gibbons  
Professor Dot Griffiths  
Dr Marion Harney  
David Hardy  
Dr Alan Hayes  
Malcolm Holley  
Tim Hollingsworth  
Don McLaverty  
Catherine Mealing-Jones  
Calum Mercer  
Charlotte Moar  
Dr Dai Moon (remote attendance)  
Sujata McNab  
Andrew Ross  
Professor Ian White (remote attendance)  
Jacob Withington

### In attendance:

Professor Phil Allmendinger, incoming Deputy Vice-Chancellor (remote attendance)  
Professor Steve Brammer, Dean of School of Management  
Professor Nick Brook, Dean, Faculty of Science (for item 7394)  
Richard Brooks, Director of HR (for item 7398)  
Professor Julian Chaudhuri, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education (remote attendance)  
Professor Sarah Hainsworth, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research  
Professor Rajani Naidoo, Vice-President (Community and Inclusion) (remote attendance for item 7401)  
Peter Phelps, Climate Action Project Lead (for item 7400)  
Charlie Slack, Head of Student Voice and Engagement, Students' Union (remote attendance)  
Martin Williams, Finance Director  
Professor Cassie Wilson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Student Experience  
Chris Young, Deputy Director Safety and Wellbeing Services (for item 7397)  
Keith Zimmerman, Chief Operating Officer (remote attendance)

# CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

## Secretariat:

Emily Commander, Secretary  
Fiona Blackmore, Member of secretariat  
Karen Gleave, Member of secretariat  
Greg Noakes, Member of secretariat  
Caroline Pringle, Member of secretariat

## Apologies:

Professor Marcelle McManus  
Annie Willingham

## 7387 - Welcome and Quorum

The Chair welcomed members and attendees and made a formal note of attendance to ensure that quorum was maintained throughout the meeting.

She extended a particular welcome to Calum Mercer, Treasurer, who was attending his first Council meeting, and to Professors Julian Chaudhuri and Sarah Hainsworth, who were attending their first Council meeting since taking up their posts as Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Education and Research, respectively.

She welcomed the incoming Deputy Vice-Chancellor, who was observing the meeting, and thanked Professor Jonathan Knight for his work as Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

She welcomed Professor Steve Brammer, who was the Dean in attendance at this meeting, and Charlie Slack who was in attendance to support the Student Governors.

The Chair welcomed the new members of the Governance team to the meeting.

## 7388 - Declarations of Interest

The Chair declared an interest in one element of item 7405. Accordingly, she would leave the meeting for the duration of that element and another Council member would chair in her absence.

Maria Bond, Tim Ford, Professor Dot Griffiths, Tim Hollingsworth and Catherine Mealing-Jones had an interest in a different element of item 7405 and, accordingly, would leave the meeting while it was considered.

Dr Dai Moon declared an interest in items 7398B (professorial pay) and 7408 (USS pension) and, because he had been directly involved in negotiations over these issues, would leave the meeting while they were considered. He also declared his involvement in items 7394 (life sciences) and 7397 (health and safety) but the Chair advised that, as he had no direct involvement in negotiations, it would not be necessary for him to leave the meeting for these items.

Malcolm Hollingsworth and Jacob Withington declared their involvement in item 7394 (life sciences), and Andrew Ross declared that item 7396 related to his area of work, but, on the same basis as for Dr Moon, the Chair advised that they would not be required to leave the meeting for the items in question.

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

### 7389 - Minutes of the Previous Meeting – C21/22 – 41 (A and B)

The minutes of the previous meetings of Council held on 18 November 2021 and 29 November 2021 were approved.

**Action: Minutes to be redacted in line with the Framework and published on the website.**

### 7390 - Actions and Matters Arising

The following decisions taken by correspondence were noted:

CUB21/22 – 03 – LIBOR Transition (15 December 2021)

CUB21/22 – 04 – Settlement Agreement (20 December 2021)

CUB21/22 – 05 – New Investment Fund Managers (20 January 2021)

CUB21/22 – 06 – Appointment of a Treasurer (25 January 2022)

#### Actions for oral update

##### **Safeguarding (7258):**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) gave an update on the provision of safeguarding training at the University. The Head of the Student Policy and Safeguarding Department had taken up post at the beginning of February. The Student Safeguarding Manager had started a few weeks earlier. The Department had identified its objectives for the coming months. These included:

- Clearly defining safeguarding;
- Establishing consistent nomenclature;
- Creating clear job descriptions for safeguarding officers;
- Establishing an accountability structure for safeguarding;
- Establishing partnerships with external stakeholders;
- The PREVENT agenda; and
- Safeguarding training.

**Action: a report to come to the Council meeting in July providing an update on safeguarding issues.**

#### Action Log

The Chair informed Council that she had reviewed the action log and all other actions from previous meetings had either been completed or were not yet due, with the exception of student fees approval process which had been deferred to enable the new Treasurer to comment and work on the Scheme of Delegation which was still ongoing. **Action: Action log to be presented as a paper for the next meeting.**

### 7391 – Institutional update – C21/22 – 42

The Vice-Chancellor presented the institutional update. He noted that, since the last Council meeting, it had been an unusually intense period and he extended his thanks to all members of the University and relevant stakeholders. He highlighted a number of recent developments since the paper had been written, including the escalating situation between Russia and

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

Ukraine, and recent government statements regarding the levelling-up agenda and capping of tuition fees.

Members of Council raised issues and were answered as follows:

- Bath had seen a slight reduction in some of its national rankings for 2022, compared with previous years, but remained in a very strong position compared with longer term past performance. The University continued to be ranked in the top 10 across the UK tables. In the QS international ranking, its performance had improved and for the first time it had been ranking in the top 100 for employability.
- It was recognised that the ongoing pensions situation was difficult for staff, both in and out of the scheme, and indeed for the University as the employer. Council commended both the University and the local trade unions for their efforts to move the situation forward.
- UK undergraduate applications had performed well compared with the rest of the sector.
- Current data showed that Bath, overall as a University, would comfortably meet the minimum acceptable student outcomes thresholds proposed by the OfS although it was recognised that the University could not be complacent.
- Rates of Covid among staff remained high, though student numbers had reduced. The University was continuing to support students who had to isolate. The University would be cautious in relaxing the measures put in place to protect staff and students, but it was recognised that there was no longer a statutory basis for these measures and rates of compliance among students and staff were declining.
- There were about 21 Ukrainian students at the University. They had been contacted directly before Christmas and again in January and support was offered. Consideration was being given as the extent to which wider support should be offered in addition to continuing to support Ukrainian students.

**Action: Future updates on rankings to provide trends over recent years.**

Council noted the institutional update.

### 7392 – Performance reporting – C21/22 – 43

The Pro-Vice-Council for Research [presented an update](#) to Council regarding the Research pillar of the University Strategy. She thanked Graham Brooks and Elizabeth Haynes, who had authored the paper.

Members of Council raised issues and were answered as follows:

- Increasing research income would require a ‘multi-pronged’ approach.
- There was considerable appetite for greater scrutiny of research grants at an earlier stage, particularly as historically the success rate for grants had been low.
- Bath Beacons was a good initiative for growing the University’s ability to win larger grants.
- When staff had pivoted to online teaching at the start of the pandemic, more time had been allocated to teaching; although many had engaged in research during the pandemic, there could be more time to focus on research going forward. Initiatives to support this included the relaunch of the sabbatical scheme and research focus weeks.
- Growth in research could be supported in various ways, including investment in infrastructure and freeing up staff time for research.

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

- Consideration had been given to how Bath could benefit from the government's proposal to increase R&D spend outside of London and the South East, as part of its levelling-up agenda.
- Four new posts were being recruited for research ethics and governance to strengthen this area and ensure that the ethics approval process was robust.
- The level and standard of facilities varied across the University: there was a need to promote good practice, for example in sharing facilities.
- The University needed to do everything it could to make Bath a good place to do research, and to be clear about what its successes were; the balance between teaching and research was important.
- Council noted that the REF results would be out in May and the requirement this time to submit all research active staff, which had not been the case in the previous REF, was expected to generate a different pattern of results.

**Action: presentation slides to be circulated.**

### 7393 – School of Management

The Dean of the School of Management (SoM) [gave a presentation](#) on the School of Management's strategy.

Members of Council raised issues and were answered as follows:

- Research impact was an increasingly important aspect of the Research Excellence Framework (REF).
- The Dean indicated his desire for a move towards greater devolved autonomy on delivery as a means of optimising performance while acknowledging this would have to be balanced by clear milestones and KPIs against which the School's leadership could be held to account.
- Finance Committee would benefit from receiving regular updates about the School of Management's progress against the business case for its new building.

**Action: presentation to be circulated.**

**Action: Finance Committee to receive regular updates about the SoM's progress against the business case.**

### 7394 - Department of Life Sciences – C21/22 – 44

The Dean of the Faculty of Science presented paper C21/22 – 44 on the formation of a Department of Life Sciences. He informed Council that a Project Board had been established and that external advisors would be sought. The research strategy was being discussed and would go to UEB in May. The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) had been consulted and it did not have concerns about the proposed merger. Consultation had also taken place with the Trade Unions, which had been constructive.

Members of Council raised issues and were answered as follows:

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

- The advisory panel was advising on the search for an appropriate leader for the new Department, taking into account ongoing work in parallel on the research strategy. Discussions had also taken place with an executive search agency.
- Reassurance was given that the new Department would still have a focus on ensuring high quality pharmacy degrees and compliance with the GPhC.
- In the short-term the course portfolio offered by the new Department of Life Sciences would remain the same as that currently offered by the Departments of Biology & Biochemistry and Pharmacy & Pharmacology.
- At this stage, no additional resourcing was being sought, however future business cases may be presented to Council at a later date through the normal approval channels.

Council approved the formation of a Department of Life Sciences.

### 7395 – Degree Outcomes – C21/22 – 45

*Items 7395 and 7396 were taken after item 7401.*

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education presented the institutional Degree Outcome Statement, which had been recommended by Senate at its meeting on 2 February 2022.

Members of Council raised issues and were answered as follows:

- The paper provided data on the outcomes for black students as requested by Council in 2020. However, in the Degree Outcome Statement intended for publication, the data on black students was included in the wider category of BAME students. It was acknowledged that including these students within the BAME category risked hiding issues faced by black students, however the categories had been set by OfS and there were so few students in this category that going into more granular detail would risk identifying individuals which would be inappropriate in a public document. This did not, however, mean that internally the University would not want to continue to focus on differential outcomes experiences by specific cohorts.

Council approved the institutional Degree Outcomes Statement, on the recommendation of Senate.

**Action: Degree Outcomes Statement to be published on the website.**

### 7396 – Widening Participation – C21/22 – 46

*Items 7395 and 7396 were taken after item 7401.*

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education presented paper C21/22 – 46 which provided an update on progress towards the Access and Participation Targets and the OfS-driven changes to Access and Participation Plans and monitoring processes. He informed Council that the University had met its access milestones for the 2021/22 entry and was moving in the right direction.

Members of Council raised issues and were answered as follows:

- Bath did not make contextual offers but did take a contextual approach to reviewing applications.

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

- The new “Access to Bath” programme was aimed at students from widening participation backgrounds.
- Outcomes for BAME students had improved but there was not yet a clear understanding as to how this had been achieved.
- Black students achieved lower outcomes at every stage of their educational journey compared with white students; Bath had a smaller outcomes gap than the sector as a whole.

Council noted the update on widening participation and noted the progress made in support of delivery of the Access and Participation Plan.

### 7397 – Health and Safety – C21/22 – 47

The Deputy Director of Safety and Wellbeing Services presented paper C21/22 – 47. He highlighted that the key health and safety challenge over the next months would be emerging from Covid and operating safely. He informed Council that a number of staff would be anxious or clinically vulnerable and that there would likely be an increase in staff presenting with musculoskeletal disorders, severe mental health issues, or other issues arising from a lack of primary care intervention during the pandemic.

Members of Council raised issues and were answered as follows:

- The University had a contract with Royal United Hospitals (RUH) for the Employee Assistance Programme and Occupational Health services. RUH had the capacity to bring in extra resources to meet the University’s needs. The service was competitively priced and received positive feedback.
- Consideration was being given to establishing a support service on campus.
- Bath’s well-being services were quite advanced compared to others in the sector and it often received enquiries from other institutions about its service.
- Staff wellbeing surveys were run frequently to establish a baseline. The data then informed focus groups which were held in different departments. The wellbeing surveys did not include direct questions about workload but, where this was raised as an issue, it was taken up with the relevant Head of Department.
- The asbestos risk was managed by the Estates department. There was a current internal audit looking at asbestos management.
- Fire risk assessments were regularly undertaken in all areas, including student accommodation.

Council noted the Health and Safety report.

### 7398 – HR matters – C21/22 – 48 (A and B)

The Director of Human Resources presented paper C21/22 – 48A which set out the quarterly update on workforce issues.

Members of Council raised issues and were answered as follows:

- The HR team was looking at engaging external experts to support its work on reward and provide extra capacity.
- There were about 1,500 PhD students in total; of these, about 250 – 300 were involved in teaching. Approximately 50 – 80 of them were on employment contracts while the rest

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

were on hourly contracts. This represented an increase in the number of PhD students with employment contracts compared with previous years.

- Council commended HR for the positive and proactive work it had done regarding pay negotiations and anti-casualisation.
- Workforce wellbeing surveys were run three times a year. These had shown a decline in organisational pride, possibly as a result of remote working. Investment was being made in community inclusion and culture to strengthen workforce culture in the future workplace.

Council noted the quarterly update on workforce issues.

*Dr Dai Moon left the meeting.*

The Director of HR then presented paper C21/22-B regarding professorial pay.

Members of Council raised issues and were answered as follows:

- HR had modelled the transition and carried out an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion impact assessment to identify anomalies.
- It was hoped that the professorial promotion system and criteria would “trickle down” to department and faculty-level promotion committees and prompt a cultural change across the University. It was envisaged that this cultural change would take two to three years.
- It was hoped that the University would reach a position where departments were required to consider everyone that was eligible for promotion and who had not opted out, rather than waiting for people to put themselves forward.
- HR would be introducing a process called “career conversations” to try to make appraisals a more meaningful process.

Council approved the University proceeding to the next stage of negotiations with the University Colleges Union (UCU), involving a formal ballot of members on the new professorial pay system.

***Action: the final proposal to be brought to Council in March for approval.***

*Dr Dai Moon re-joined the meeting.*

### 7400 – Climate Action Framework – C21/22 – 49

*There was no item 7399 on the agenda.*

The Climate Action Project Lead presented the University’s Annual Carbon Report.

Members of Council commended the quality of the report and the positive approach that the University was adopting towards the climate emergency. Members of Council asked questions and were answered as follows:

- There were tensions between the Climate Action Framework, the need for a clear plan and the operation of the University, for example, the carbon footprint of international travel versus the push to attract more international students. The Climate Action Project hoped to start to address these matters via planned workshops.

Council approved the University’s Annual Carbon Report for external publication and noted an update on delivery against the Climate Action Framework.



## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

**Action: Annual Carbon Report to be published on the website.**

### 7401 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – C21/22 – 50

The Vice-President (Community and Inclusion) presented paper C21/22 – 50 which provided an update on equality, diversity and inclusion matters. She informed Council that next steps would include gaining agreement on key objectives, prioritising these with an action plan, and adopting an intersectional approach to create a cohesive community. The Vice President (Community and Inclusion) outlined plans for developing an internal and external-facing platform which would bring together and highlight all of the work which was taking place around the University, and boost external recognition of this.

Council noted the update on equality, diversity and inclusion matters.

### 7402 – The Office of the Independent Adjudicator – C21/22 – 51

Council noted the Annual Statement from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

### 7403 – Finance – C21/22 – 52

The Interim Treasurer presented paper C21/22 – 52. He informed Council that inflationary pressures had been discussed by Finance Committee in relation to all agenda items. The forecasts for the year were better than expected, but inflation would have an impact. Finance Committee had approved the replacement of part of the 3 West roof, as this had become dangerous and needed urgent repairs. Finance Committee had also approved the accommodation rents for the next year and had welcomed the progressive bursary scheme which had been put together by the Finance team. However, it was noted that accommodation and hospitality had been under-recovering as a result of the pandemic and, as inflation rose, it would become more difficult to meet the SU's target for affordable accommodation in the absence of any increase in the government maintenance loans.

Members of Council raised issues and were answered as follows:

- There was currently no need to revisit the research themes in light of the delays to IAAPS, as the research themes were sufficiently broad.
- It would be important to consider which activities could subsidise others as part of the financial strategy planning.
- The approved bursary scheme was considered to be the best approach as it would allow students to choose the type of accommodation they spent it on rather than having all bursary recipients in a single accommodation block, which would not promote an inclusive community.

Council thanked Tim Ford for his tenure as Interim Treasurer and Chair of Finance Committee, which was at an end following the appointment of a new Treasurer.

Council noted the report from the Finance Committee and noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of Finance Committee held on 3 February 2022.

### 7404 – Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) – C21/22 – 53

Professor Dot Griffiths presented paper C21/22 – 53. There were no comments or questions.

Council thanked Dot Griffiths for her tenure as Interim Chair of ARAC.

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

Council noted the report from ARAC and noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of ARAC held on 26 January 2022.

### 7405 – Nominations Committee – C21/22 – 54

*Pamela Chesters left the meeting. Council selected Tim Ford to chair the meeting in her absence.*

Council considered a report from the Nominations Committee and approved the reappointment of Pamela Chesters as Chair of Council for a second (and final) three-year term.

**Action: Reappointment letter to be sent to Pamela Chesters.**

*Pamela Chesters re-joined the meeting and assumed the chair. Maria Bond, Tim Ford, Dot Griffiths, Tim Hollingsworth and Catherine Mealing-Jones left the meeting.*

Council considered a report from the Nominations Committee and:

- Agreed to maintain the status quo with lay membership in order to provide stability whilst giving maximum flexibility to reduce the total number of lay members at an appropriate time.
- Approved the re-appointment of Maria Bond, Dot Griffiths and Tim Hollingsworth for a second term of a maximum of three years.
- Approved the re-appointment of Tim Ford and Catherine Mealing-Jones for a third term of a maximum of three years on Council, with the expectation that Catherine Mealing-Jones would only serve for one more year.
- Agreed to seek to recruit an experienced HR lay member later in 2022 with a view to their numerical replacement of Catherine Mealing-Jones by the end of the 2022/23 academic year.

**Action: Reappointment letters to be sent to Maria Bond, Tim Ford, Dot Griffiths, Tim Hollingsworth and Catherine Mealing-Jones.**

**Action: Recruitment process to be initiated for an HR specialist lay member.**

*Maria Bond, Tim Ford, Dot Griffiths, Tim Hollingsworth and Catherine Mealing-Jones re-joined the meeting.*

Council noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Nominations Committee held on 19 January 2022.

### 7406 – Remuneration Committee – C21/22 – 55

Council noted a report from the Remuneration Committee. There were no observations or questions.

### 7407 – Council Appeals – C21/22 – 56

The Head of Governance presented paper C21/22 – 56. She informed Council that the proposed changes to the Council Appeals Committee's Terms of Reference would reflect the Committee's responsibility to hear Fitness to Study appeals.

In advance of the meeting, the following amendment to the proposed Terms of Reference was suggested:

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

- In paragraph 20, to replace the words ‘unless they have a disability which prevents them from doing so’ with ‘unless they have a compelling reason which prevents them from doing so’.

Council approved the recommendation to amend the Terms of Reference of the Council Appeals Committee, subject to the above amendment.

**Action: Council Appeals Committee Terms of Reference to be amended and published on the website.**

### 7408 – Pensions Working Group – C21/22 – 57

Council noted the report from the Pensions Working Group. There were no observations or questions.

### 7409 – Effectiveness reviews 2022 – C21/22 – 58

Council noted plans for reviewing the effectiveness of Council and its committees in 2022.

### 7410 – Senate Minutes

Council noted the unconfirmed minutes from the meeting of Senate held on 2 February 2022.

At its meeting on 2 February, Senate asked the Vice-Chancellor to draw Council’s attention to the Annual Report from the Library. This was made available to Council members via Convene.

### 7411 – Minutes of Joint Committees of Council and Senate – C21/22 – 59

Council noted the minutes from a meeting of the Council Senate Students’ Union Committee on 2 December 2021.

### 7412 – Minutes of Court

Council noted the unconfirmed minutes of a meeting of Court held on 27 January 2022.

### 7413 – Governance team update – C21/22 – 60

Council noted the responsibilities of the governance team.

### 7414 – Programme of Meetings for 2021/22 – C21/22 – 61

Council noted the programme of meetings and the proposed items of business for the next meeting. In light of a change to the award ceremony dates, it was necessary to change the date of the July Council meeting. Potential dates had been canvassed with Council members in advance of the meeting and 13 July was confirmed as the most suitable alternative date.

- Wednesday 23 March, 9.30am – Council Spring Strategy Day (venue tbc)
- Thursday 12 May, 9.30am (Council Chamber)
- ~~Thursday 21 July, 9.30am (Council Chamber)~~ Wednesday 13 July, 1.30pm (Council Chamber)

## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING

**Action: Calendar to be updated and the July meeting rearranged for 13 July.**

7415– Any Other Business

There was no further business.

The meeting finished at 13.04pm.

---

*Sections of three of the agenda items have been redacted either because they pertain to information relating to individual staff or students, or because they are still commercially confidential.*

---