

CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY

UNRESTRICTED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY HELD AT 4.00PM ON TUESDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2022 IN VH3.03 (VERENA HOLMES BOARD ROOM) AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS TELECONFERENCE

Present: Ms J Armitt (Chair), Ms S Appleby, Mr D Bichener, Mr S Carey, Professor G Dewhurst, Dr A Eyden, Ms J Harding, Mr R Higgins, Mrs P Jones, Mrs A Newey, Mr C Stevens, Revd. R Stevenson, Mr J Stockwell, Professor R Thirunamachandran, and Professor J Wood*

In Attendance: Ms S Foll (Head of Health and Safety) [Minute 105 only]
Professor A Honour (Deputy Vice-Chancellor)
Mr M Keir (Director of Marketing and Communications)
Mr D Leah (Director of Finance and Chief Financial Officer)
Ms A Sear (University Solicitor & Clerk to the Governing Body)
Professor M Weed (Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Enterprise and Business Development))
Ms E Currie (Governance and Compliance Officer)

*attended via Teams

84. Opening Prayer

The opening prayer was delivered by Mrs P Jones.

85. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Ms N Ahmed, Dr K Fox and the Rt Revd Bishop R Hudson-Wilkin.

86. Declarations of Interest

Members of University staff, Mr D Bichener, Dr A Eyden, Dr K Fox, Mr R Higgins and Professor R Thirunamachandran all declared an interest in Agenda item 11a, Support for Staff During the Current Cost-of-Living Crisis [Paper P57]. The Chair consulted the Governing Body and resolved that these Governors be permitted to remain in the meeting for this discussion.

The Chair asked that all members of the executive leave the meeting for the duration of the reserved agenda, including the Annual Report of the Remuneration Committee 2021/22 [Paper P72].

87. Chair's Communications

The Chair said that she had attended the excellent Public Lecture given by Jo Brand, alongside several Governor colleagues, and that she looked forward to Carols by Candlelight on 9 December which was always a wonderful occasion.

88. Minutes of the Meetings of the Governing Body held on 05 October 2022

The minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 05 October 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record.

89. Matters arising not appearing elsewhere on the agenda

The Governing Body noted that the action log was up to date and all actions had been completed.

90. Report of the Vice-Chancellor [Paper P51]

The Vice-Chancellor was invited to present his report, Paper P51, to the Governing Body. He reported on the positive Graduate Outcomes Survey result, in which the University ranked third in the country. 76% of the University's graduates were in highly skilled employment 15 months after graduation. The Vice-Chancellor reflected that this was perhaps the ultimate goal of the University and should be considered a true success story.

In terms of recruitment, the University had increased its market share of 18 year olds in the 2022/23 intake. This was an important element of the 'quality climb'. The University would know how many applications it had received through UCAS for the 2023/24 academic year by late January following the UCAS application deadline.

Student registration for 2023/24 had been undertaken using the new student record system, SITS which had 'gone live' during the summer. Overall it had gone well. There remained considerable work to be done in rolling out the remaining modules. Two lessons learnt reviews would be undertaken to understand the issues encountered during the registration process: one would be undertaken by the Internal Auditor and would consider the student experience, and one would be jointly overseen by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Director of IT and Digital Strategy, to consider the registration processes.

Scaffolding would be in place on Petros Court student accommodation in January 2023. The work would be undertaken one building at a time. Negotiations with the landlords regarding the repairs and a potential seven-year extension to the lease were ongoing. Terms had been considered and accepted at the extraordinary Finance and Resources Committee meeting of 21 November. A full business case would be presented to the Governing Body for its approval at the extraordinary board meeting on 31 January 2023. The University would be required by the Charities Act to demonstrate that the offer constituted good value for money.

The Vice-Chancellor reported that negotiations with Historic England concerning the rooftop plant at Verena Holmes were ongoing. Once an acceptable compromise had been reached it would be submitted to the Canterbury City Council Planning Office.

RESTRICTED

[...]

END OF RESTRICTION

The Vice-Chancellor said that the report following the Kirkup Review into East Kent Maternity Services had been published and was of great concern. The University had been mentioned in relation to its students undertaking midwifery placements in the Trust. The report had not received as much coverage as might have been expected due to the resignation of the Prime Minister on the same day.

The work to gain accreditation for the new Midwifery programme was ongoing. A 'Student Listening Exercise' was scheduled for 8 December with the University's midwifery students and the National Midwifery Council (NMC). A representative from Health Education England would be present.

RESTRICTION

[...]

END OF RESTRICTION

UCU led industrial action had taken place on 24 and 25 November. It had been peaceful with approximately 30 staff on the picket line. The impact on students was more significant than during industrial action in 2016: 30% of lessons in the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Social Sciences, and a similar number in the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Social Care had been cancelled. A further strike day was scheduled for 30 November.

The Vice-Chancellor said that it would be vital to ensure that learning outcomes were not negatively impacted. It was expected that lessons would be rescheduled, particularly in the case of regulated programmes. Most striking academic staff had contacted students directly to make them aware that classes would not take place. The University would reimburse students for their travel and childcare costs incurred in the event they had attended campus unnecessarily during the strike.

There was a discussion during which the Governors sought assurances that the University was taking appropriate measures in order to ensure that students' learning was not adversely affected by the strike action. The Vice-Chancellor said that he and the Director of HROD remained in close contact with UCU representatives.

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the University had been made aware of what appeared to be nationwide fraudulent activity against the Student Loans Company (SLC). The University had responded to a request for information received from the Office for Students (OfS) in a full and timely manner. The Vice-Chancellor had briefed the Chair of the Governing Body and the Chair of the Audit Committee promptly following the contact from the OfS. A further update would be provided in due course.

A Governor asked if the positive Graduate Outcomes Survey result was applicable across all University courses. The Vice-Chancellor said that some programmes were performing better than others in this area, for example the percentage of healthcare students in highly skilled work was circa 90%. Some programmes scored closer to 50%, and these would be reviewed. It was important to consider that reporting on Graduate Outcomes captured work in the regulated professions, but did not capture, for example, creative arts graduates that had started their own business.

Nevertheless, only five programmes were below the sector benchmark in terms of graduate outcomes, and only one was significantly underperforming against the OfS threshold.

In response to a question from a Governor about potential caps on international student recruitment, the Vice-Chancellor said that the suggested approach of only allowing 'elite' universities to recruit international students was likely to trigger a judicial review. The University had recently been granted 150 additional CAS licenses for students to study Business Management courses at the University.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor thanked Governor, Judith Harding, for her support during the SITS implementation project.

NOTED

91. Termly Report of the Students' Union including Impact Report, Trustees Report, and SU Financial Statements 2021/22 [Paper P52]

The Student Governor reported that the Students' Union was focussed on supporting students through the cost-of-living crisis. Research from the NUS and research directly undertaken by the Union showed that many students were struggling. The Working Group tackling the cost-of-living crisis for students, chaired by the Director of Finance and Chief Financial Officer (CFO), was making good progress. Café 41 had been reopened as a 'warm bank' offering free hot drinks and soup. The Students' Union hoped to establish a food bank for students and were considering the practical arrangements for this with the support of the Chaplaincy. The group was also considering the cost of travel for commuting students, and how to consolidate activities so that such students could travel in a more efficient way. The Students' Union had successfully lobbied the University to contribute to graduation costs for students in hardship. The University had agreed to pay 50% of the gown cost for these students.

Positively, the highest ever number of course student representatives had been trained, which was essential for amplifying the student voice. The Student Governor said that offer of a personal recommendation letter from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for all course representatives had been a key driver for this achievement.

The Students Union had agreed, following a vote by its student council, to support UCU industrial action. It was now waiting to see the outcome of the strikes and the impact on students.

The Student Governor reported that the students had voted for the Union to remain affiliated with the NUS, with 63% in favour of affiliation. Certain societies had campaigned intensively in favour of the NUS. He noted that the CCSU decision to remain affiliated with the NUS had been linked to the resignation of the NUS president, by pure coincidence of timing. The Sabbatical Team would meet with societies to address and resolve any outstanding issues with NUS affiliation.

A Governor said that in light of the cost-of-living crisis she would strongly recommend that students seek help with debt problems as early as possible. She said there were various external charities that offered specialised support. In addition, the CFO said that the University was developing a 'money matters, you matter' campaign

to support students with financial concerns, and had established a student financial support function within the Student Support team. The University would also be paying the Jubilee Scholarship in December, and an additional scholarship to AAA-ABB students.

The Governing Body discussed the merit of online teaching to combat travel costs. It was noted that certain teaching establishments and healthcare trusts reimbursed placement travel costs. Certain students travelled into campus to avoid paying to heat their home. The Vice-Chancellor said that the overwhelming feedback was that students wanted face-to-face teaching. The key would be intelligent timetabling to consolidate time on campus as far as practicable.

In reference to the Trustees Report, the phrase 'all Union staff are *supposed* to be employed on joint contracts with Canterbury Christ Church University' was queried by a Governor. The Student Governor said that the employment status of union staff was currently an area of discussion with the University.

The Student Governor was asked about the gender pay gap at the Union. He replied that having a male CEO within a small staff team skewed the data, but that it was nevertheless an area of interest. He would report back on any action taken to address the gap. He noted that a female Deputy CEO had recently been appointed, and this would redress the pay disparity somewhat.

The Vice-Chancellor observed that despite the issues to be addressed within the NUS, remaining affiliated with the organisation would allow the Students' Union to influence from within.

The Vice-Chancellor said that the Students' Union official stance of support for the industrial action made it more difficult for the University to safeguard against any impact on the student experience due to lost timetabled teaching, but that he respected the democratic process.

The Governing Body noted the reported financial deficit for the 2021/22 year, but acknowledged that the Union had ample reserves to cover this.

NOTED

92. Vision 2030 Strategic Framework [Paper P53]

The Governing Body received the Vision 2030 Strategic Framework, which was accompanied by a video presentation. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported that staff, students, and the Governing Body had been engaged throughout the process in the development of the strategy, most recently the Governing Body had considered it at the October Strategy Day. The video was intended to 'bring alive' the strategy and had been developed in-house by the corporate communications team.

The next step would be a brand refresh, maintaining both the University's name and heritage, but reinvigorating the branding.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor said that staff had received regular updates on the progress of the project and fed into the

development at various points, including a final update two weeks previously. The Staff Governors agreed that staff already felt familiar with the Strategy and keen to operationalise it. The ongoing consultation with staff on the development of the Strategy had generated much energy and enthusiasm amongst staff.

The Chair said that it was hoped that the Strategy would be launched at an event that would take place after the extraordinary Governing Body meeting of 31 January. Both the Strategy and the Annual Report 2021/22 would be launched to staff and other key stakeholders.

RESOLVED:

That the Vision 2030 Strategic Framework be approved.

93. External Auditor's Report 2021/22 [Paper P54]

The CFO said that the External Auditors' report had been received and scrutinised by the Audit Committee on 14 November. At that point the Going Concern opinion had not yet been finalised. This work had since been completed. There were no internal control recommendations for 2021/22 and a summary of misstatements was included within the report for information.

The Chair congratulated the CFO on a very clean audit report.

RESOLVED:

That the External Auditor's Report 2021/22 be approved.

94. Report on the University's Financial Position for the year ended 31 July 2022 and the Consolidated Financial Statements for the University, including letter of representation [Paper P55] and Support for Staff during the current Cost-of-living Crisis [Paper P57].

The CFO said the statements had been received and scrutinised by the Finance and Resources Committee and the Audit Committee. A schedule of changes made since those meetings was included as an annex to the paper.

The CFO said that the 'real' financial position was a £5.7million surplus. However, the accounting treatment of the pensions liabilities within the statements made a significant impact on the financial position. The statements reflected the increased income and that the University had therefore met its bank covenants with ample headroom.

The approved statements would be signed by the Chair of the Governing Body and the Vice-Chancellor and then shared with the University's banks, and the External Auditors.

The CFO said that a £1.5million provision had been made within the statements for a one-off staff payment. This would consist of a £750 payment to all permanent staff (pro-rata for part time staff), and £150 for all sessional staff who had completed 20 hours of teaching since 1 August 2022. The CFO said that the threshold had been imposed on sessional staff as their teaching hours ranged from 2 to 180 hours per year. It was fair that those who regularly contributed to the University would be recognised in the scheme.

The CFO emphasised that this payment was intended to help staff through the cost-of-living crisis. It was not in recognition of short time working, which had been addressed with the staff recognition payment the previous year.

RESOLVED

That the consolidated Financial Statements for year-ended 31 July 2022 be approved.

That the one-off payment of £750 pro rata to permanent staff, and £150 to eligible sessional staff be approved.

95. Medco (CCCU) Limited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2022, including letter of representation [Paper P56]

The CFO reported that the Medco (CCCU) Ltd financial statements were fully consolidated into the University's group accounts, and had been reviewed by the External Auditor, Mazars and approved by the Medco Board at its meeting of 14 November 2022. The Chair of the Medco Board would sign the statements.

NOTED

96. OfS Financial Forecasts [Paper P58]

The CFO said that the full Annual Financial Return (AFR) workbook was available on the Governor Blackboard should anyone wish to consult it, the data was the identical to that provided in the paper.

Once approved by the Governing Body the financial forecasts would be submitted to the OfS. The OfS would review the return and revert to the University with any queries, and the University would address queries and re-submit by 9 January. The CFO requested that authority be delegated to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Vice-Chancellor and the Chair of Finance and Resources Committee to approve the final version of the forecasts ahead of the 9 January deadline.

The CFO said that in terms of the inflationary assumptions used in the forecasts, the assumptions made for staff cost inflation was 4-5% which was below what the trade unions would expect. The other related inflationary assumption was that there would be no increase in the student fee level. There were two areas where financial growth through diversification of income was possible: international students and partnership development.

The University had two significant partnerships in place: Global Banking School; London School of Commerce; and a third that was expected to be increasing its collaborative activity - Elizabeth School of London (ESL). These arrangements would help to mitigate the University's financial risks, although it should be noted that the University only retained a proportion of the tuition fees received from partner students.

The CFO said that as the surplus forecast within the report had been calculated before the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, the inflationary rates used within the report might be subject to change. The OfS had provided no guidance on inflation rates. Given the inflationary assumptions used, the growth in partnerships and the

growth in international, the maximum forecast surplus was £17.163million, which, although it appeared significant, was only 5% of turnover. He acknowledged that there was a significant national funding challenge for universities, and it was simply not feasible to make the pay increases expected by the trade unions unless student tuition fees were increased.

The forecasts also assumed that the University would drawdown the full £47million when the Revolving Credit Facility (RCF) termed out in April 2023, although no firm decision had been taken.

Given the uncertain economic climate, a revised forecast would come to the Governing Body at its extraordinary meeting of 31 January. This would ensure that decisions about the RCF drawdown were supported by the most realistic and up to date forecasts.

The priorities set out in the Vision 2030 Strategic Framework would require funding. In addition, the University would need to ensure it continued to comply with its bank covenants, which were due to change at the end of the financial year. He noted that the headroom on the covenants reduced over the period covered by the forecasts, although they did continue to be met. He said that by 2026/27 the financial position would be challenging if there was no political intervention on a national level to uplift the undergraduate home tuition fee level.

The Chair commented that the University was in the privileged position of having extraordinary opportunity for income growth in the near future. It would remain to be seen if the University had the capacity to seize the opportunity.

The Vice-Chancellor said that the existing resources had been used to the fullest enable the existing key partnerships. It would be necessary to rapidly increase the available resource to continue the partnerships. Work in this direction had started with the establishment of the UK Partnerships Office. Additional staff would also be required in the Finance, Registry and Marketing teams. The new partnership with ESL would increase the demand on resources. He acknowledged that staff recruitment was challenging and the University was looking at creative solutions such as directly employing its own graduates.

A Governor said that although staff recruitment was important, it would be vital to establish efficient processes. Ensuring partner processes were effective was also important, the University would need to establish boundaries and penalties in the case of poor performance by its partners. The Vice-Chancellor agreed, and noted that efficient internal working would be vital in ensuring the partners were operating effectively. The CFO said that an internal audit review of the University's partnerships was due, and that the OfS guidance on preventing Fraud had been received by the Audit Committee.

A Governor suggested that the University should be mindful of staff overwhelm and the impact of the growth in partnership activity on staff retention. The CFO acknowledged the impact on staff. Lessons learned from the September intake were feeding into improved processes for the January intake. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor said pre-arrival information and student touchpoints had been considered, keeping in mind the differing needs of students in direct delivery and partnerships.

RESOLVED:

That the initial submission of the Financial Forecasts to the OfS be approved.

That approval of the amended Financial Forecasts, prior to the 9 January deadline for submission, be delegated to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Vice-Chancellor and the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee.

97. Annual Internal Audit Report – year ended 31 July 2022 [Paper P59]

The Governing Body received the Annual Internal Audit Report for the year ended 31 July 2022. The CFO said that the report had been endorsed by the Audit Committee at its meeting of 14 November 2022. The Head of Internal Audit Opinion was Significant assurance with minor improvement opportunities. This was awarded despite three reviews with a 'partial assurance with improvements required (amber-red)' rating. The University used the internal audit function as a tool to tackle problem areas, and had specifically requested the reviews of the areas which received an amber-red rating. The Vice-Chancellor noted that the amber-red reviews related to the situation in summer 2021, and the consequences of not going live with SITS at that point. The current picture was much improved.

The Chair of the Audit Committee (February – September 2022) commented that there had been a build up of actions over the lockdown period, particularly actions which had been dependent on the 'go live' of SITS. Progress to clear the backlog of actions was now evident.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Internal Audit Report be approved.

98. Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2021/22 [Paper P64] (taken out of order to enable the Chair of the Audit Committee to be present)

The Governing Body received the Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2021/22. The CFO said this was a stewardship report, from the Audit Committee to provide assurance to the Governing Body of its oversight of the areas set out in its Terms of Reference. The Governing Body noted the sad passing of Philip Fletcher who had been Chair of the Audit Committee until January 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Report of the Audit Committee be approved.

99. Prevent Annual Monitoring Statement 2021/22 [Paper P60]

The University Solicitor and Clerk to the Governing Body (the Clerk) presented the annual monitoring statement that demonstrated the University was compliant with its Prevent duties in 2021/22. The Clerk said that the Prevent Monitoring Group met three times per year. The risk of students being drawn into terrorism at the University had been assessed as low. The main risk was posed from right-wing extremism. The Risk Assessment and Action Plan was up to date with no overdue actions. There had been no major incidences and no channel referrals in year.

A new Head of Safeguarding had been appointed and would take a lead role in the Prevent duty work in the future. The University's Code of Practice on Freedom and

Speech and External Speakers would be reviewed in light of the new Freedom of Speech legislation that was expected in the near future.

RESOLVED:

That the Prevent Accountability and Data Return 2021/22 be approved for submission to the OfS.

AN left the meeting

100. Annual Report on the Maintenance of Academic Standards and the Management and Enhancement of the Quality of the Student Learning Experience 2021/22 [Paper P61]

The Governing Body received the Annual Report on the Maintenance of Academic Standards and the Management and Enhancement of the Quality of the Student Learning Experience 2021/22. The report was intended to provide the Governing Body with assurance that the University was meeting the OfS B Conditions of Registration. There had been various updates to the B conditions in 2021/22 and the University had fed into the consultation processes.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor said that report considered course monitoring metrics; NSS results; Access and Participation Plan targets; the attainment gap; and TEF data. There had been significant work at course level to demonstrate key metrics. The metrics had been used to identify courses requiring more active monitoring, and meetings had been held with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to develop action plans.

The report also highlighted the increase in student engagement with the NSS and the 5% increase in the student satisfaction score. Despite the improvement the University was still scoring below the sector average, and work in this area would continue.

A Governor asked if the attainment gap should be an institutional KPI. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor said it was a University target and a KPI at course level, driven by the work of the Strategic Lead: Closing our Gap.

The Governing Body discussed the data presented in figures 7 and 8. It was agreed that these should be redrafted, to ensure they were fully aligned with the narrative that the University was performing well in all but one area. The metrics should reflect the most recent years' data and an institutional level table should be included.

A Governor asked about the rise in the percentage of first class degrees from 15% in 2010/11 to 28.9% in 2020/21. The Vice-Chancellor said it was difficult to make as meaningful comparison over a time period, but when benchmarked against comparator institutions the University was not outside of normal boundaries. The University was rigorous in maintaining its degree awarding algorithm.

RESOLVED:

That the report be amended as set out above, and that authority be delegated to the Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of the Academic Board, to approve the amended report.

101. **Annual Compliance Statement on Research & Enterprise Integrity 2021/22 [Paper P62]**

The Governing Body received the Annual Compliance Statement on Research & Enterprise Integrity 2021/22. The Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor said that the University received block funding from Research England which had increased significantly due to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) outcome. It was important to note that the University made a comparatively small investment in research, circa £2million. Research intensive Russell Group Universities would invest circa £100million. The University's research activity should be considered in this context, as a teaching-led, research-active institution.

The report set out the standards of rigour and integrity that the University was required to ensure to satisfy the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and safeguard its funding.

The Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor highlighted the support for research careers within the statement, which was an important element in strengthening and intensifying the research culture at the University. This was a key element of Vision 2030.

The REF 2021 outcome had been extremely positive with the University doubling its world-leading research, quadrupling its world-leading impact and moving into the third quartile of institutions for the first time. This had resulted in a more than 49% increase in funding. With the launch of the new Strategic Framework, and the increased funding, the top-level goal going forward would be to enter the middle third of Universities.

In terms of the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF), the University had ranked in the top 40% of universities for the majority of measures, and in the top 20% for 'working with the public and third sector'. This was important in terms of the contribution to the region. It highlighted the work of local and regional regeneration, particularly through the work of the EDGE Hub, and supporting SMEs.

The Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor acknowledged that there had recently been a shift to smaller, lower value bids, which made it challenging to meet income targets. Going forward there would be a renewed focus on income generation, as well as research and innovation, and the next REF/KEF. A Governor noted that small bids could be disproportionately labour intensive and it would be key to train support staff who could coordinate the administrative aspect of research bids. The Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor said that the Research and Innovation Funding Unit had this remit. Limited staff capacity meant that the University would have to make difficult decisions about which research bids to pursue.

Positively, the Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor reported that the news had been received that day that a research colleague had been awarded a prestigious and high value fellowship.

The Chair congratulated the Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor on the positive REF and KEF results.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Compliance Statement on Research and Enterprise Integrity 2021/22 be approved.

102. Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement [Paper P63]

The Governing Body received the Modern Slavery Act Statement 2021/22. The CFO said that the statement was produced by the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking working group, which was a sub-group of the Sustainability Strategic Management Group. The focus in year had been on procurement, developing KPIs and training for key staff. The group had also considered the University's responsibilities towards the Unitemps staffing agency. Good progress had been made. The CFO said that Procurement, the Students' Union and the Student Support, Health and Wellbeing team had fed into the development of the statements and there had been no indications that there were any areas of concern relating to Modern Slavery or Human Trafficking within the University.

The Staff Governor (the University's Head of Procurement), said that the high risk areas were Estates and Facilities, in terms of the exploitation of low-skilled labour, and IT, in terms of the supply chain. He said that procurement staff had identified 40 contracts as 'high risk'. Fortunately, 30 of these contracts were under the control of four members of staff, so those staff would be upskilled to properly manage and mitigate the risks. He said that the procurement team undertook initial and ongoing due diligence on all contracts.

In terms of auditing suppliers, the University did not conduct regular audits due to not having the available resource of expertise, but instead relied on external accreditations that provided assurance on their Modern Slavery Act compliance.

RESOLVED:

That the Modern Slavery Act Statement 2021/22 be approved for publication on the University's website.

103. Degree Outcomes Statement [Paper P65]

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor said that the University was required to analyse and review its percentage of first and 2:1 degrees awarded each year in order to guard against grade inflation and 'gaming the league tables'. A gradual increase in grades would be expected. It was difficult to know what impact the covid cohorts would have on the metrics, as such students had progressed to university on predicted grades. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor said that gradual increase in attainment should mirror the gradual increase in entry tariff as part of the University's planned 'quality climb'.

RESOLVED:

That the Degree Outcomes Statement be approved for publication on the website.

104. Finance and Student Enrolment Report 2022/23

A) Report of the University's Financial Position for the Three-Month period to 31 October 2022 and Full Year Forecast [Paper P66]

The CFO said that the Financial Position was currently £4million above budget, and income for the year was projected to be £50million higher than anticipated. The increased funding from UKRI due to the successful REF outcome had had a demonstrable impact, as had the increase in international student fees, which had risen from £2.5million to £11million, thanks to the hard work of the Dean of International.

RESTRICTED

[...]

END OF RESTRICTION

The forecast for the year also included a provision for measures to combat the cost of living, including the increase in the PhD stipend, and the agreed contribution to students' graduation costs.

NOTED

B) Student Enrolment Report 2022/23 [P67]

The Governing Body received the Student Enrolment Report 2022/23. The CFO said that there were 160 more Full-Time Undergraduate Home students than in the previous year. However, registration of Full-Time Undergraduate continuing students was 873 below target. It was believed that the drop off in returning students was a sector-wide phenomenon, linked to ongoing covid concerns, cost-of-living, and an enticing job market. It was not yet clear if this trend would continue.

The strong recruitment to the collaborative partners' courses was positive. The student Governor asked if the University was able to be assured on the student experience delivered by its partners, in light of their over-recruitment. The Vice-Chancellor said that the partners had very positive NSS scores (in the 90s). Nevertheless, the Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor had undertaken to conduct a detailed review of the partners' admissions and attendance processes. Student experience assurance would be included within this review.

NOTED

SF joined the meeting.

105. Health and Safety Annual Report 2021/22 [Paper P68]

The Governing Body received the Health and Safety Annual Report 2021/22. The Head of Health and Safety joined the meeting for that item. The Head of Health and Safety reflected on the achievements detailed within the report, including:

- the prompt response to the fire authority audit, the immediate mobilisation of staff and development of an action plan; and
- the first internal audit to consider Health and Safety since 2017. Seven areas of good practice had been identified.

There were four outstanding risks detailed in the annual report, which required a long term approach to remediate, and two new risks.

Health Surveillance was a new risk. This was a statutory requirement to protect staff and certain students. Face-to-face surveillance by the Occupational Health provider had been paused during covid and had not resumed. Multiple data anomalies had since been identified. This would be addressed through a complete data audit. A tender was planned for the Occupational Health contract.

Health and Safety leadership was the second new risk. There had previously been good progress in this area, but it had been put on hold due to covid, as senior staff were dealing with other critical priorities. An SMT training with an external expert was scheduled for May 2023.

RESOLVED:

That the H&S Policy Statement be approved.

That the H&S Annual Report be noted.

SF left the meeting. MW left the meeting.

106. Office for Students Compliance Update [Paper P69]

The paper provided the Governing Body with assurance that the University remained compliant with the OfS Conditions of Registration.

NOTED

107. OfS Statement of Expectations - update [Paper P70]

This item was taken as read.

108. Summary Minutes of the Meeting of the Academic Board held on 28 September 2022 [Paper P71]

Key points from the minutes had been covered already within the meeting.

NOTED

109. Any Other Unreserved Business

There was no other business

110. Items to be kept confidential

Certain discussion at minute 90, Vice Chancellor's report [Paper P51] and minute 104, Financial Position for the three-month period to 31 October 2022 [Paper P66] would be kept confidential from the published minutes.

111. Reserved item: Annual Report of the Remuneration Committee for 2021/22 including Summary Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 31 October 2022 [Paper P72].

This item was noted.