

22/27.2 Update on the Higher Education External Environment

COUN22-P39

Council **NOTED** an update on the Higher Education external environment in which the University operates.

The general Higher Education environment is financially constrained and highly competitive. Key points were highlighted to Council as follows:

- i. The ability to recruit and retain staff is becoming more challenging as terms and conditions and salaries have fallen behind some sectors.
- ii. and student numbers remain strong. However, the fee cap on domestic students means that tuition fee revenue can only be grown via international students. International student numbers, particularly Chinese postgraduates, are not back to pre-Covid levels. This fall has been mitigated in part by an increase in students from other geographic regions, particularly India and parts of Africa.
- iii. should see an improvement in funding from £18 million currently to in excess of £20 million, however the figure is to be confirmed by Research England.
- iv. The risk of cyberattacks remain acute, with the Higher Education sector being particularly targeted. Attention is focussed on work to mitigating the risks of potential cyberattacks.

rankings. Being in the top 200 of the QS ranking is a key metric as many international governments and agencies use this as the cut-off for engagement. Loughborough has retained its place among UK institutions but overall UK institutions have fallen. Some of this fall is attributable to methodological changes to the rankings and the university is engaged in consultancy to understand its rating.

- ii. The number of staff who hold the most prestigious awards increased from 5-8 and the RAG rating was therefore changed from amber to green.

22/27.4 Proposed New Key Performance Indicator Framework COUN22-P41

Council **ENDORSED** the proposed KPI reporting framework for the new strategy (Creating Better Futures. Together).

Council will receive a performance measure for each of the

It was noted that Finance Committee reports to Senate owing to its impact on academic matter, however, Council has primacy for financial matters.

22/28 Research Excellence Framework Results

COUN22-P43

Council **RECEIVED** the results of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) which had been very positive. 91% of research was rated world-leading (4*) or internationally excellent (3*) compared to 74% in 2014. The overall ranking was up 19 places to equal 30th place out of 129 institutions.

The REF is supposed to inform university budgets from August 2022 but it is likely to be after August when Research England sets the amounts to be awarded. Research budget is static for 2022/23 but due to increase over the subsequent 3-5 years. As noted earlier in the from Research England will increase from £18 million currently to over £20 million.

The positive result now needs to be leveraged: the REF is important not only in terms of funding but also in terms of institutional reputation which means the institution may be able to engage new partners and attract more qualified students.

Academic Schools have already begun planning for the next REF, although the exact date is yet to be determined. Improvement on the output metric can continue to be made, with a need to focus on 4* rated research the key for future success.

It would be difficult to break into the top 25 as most places are filled by the Russell Group institutions, which are larger than Loughborough and size matters for an institution's overall ranking.

22/29 University Finances

COUN22-P44

Council **RECEIVED** an update regarding performance against the approved budget for 2021/22, **NOTED** the forecast out-turn for the current year, and **APPROVED** the planning parameters for the forecast period 2022/23.

The 2021/22 outturn projected a year-end cash balance of £131.2m and a surplus of £19.2m. This represents a £17.6m improvement to surplus resulting from the release of contingency, a strong January postgraduate intake, higher than expected.

The decline in postgraduate taught students has been mitigated by increasing the undergraduate intake by 300 students, and again planning for a January start in some subjects for 2023. However, these mitigations do not fully offset the reductions in revenues leaving a £2.8m impact which is reflected in the proposed budget. Longer term mitigations are being prepared in order to protect the recruitment position in future years and include the proposal for a Private Pathway Provider considered under the next item and the international core plan.

concerns. The root cause of both cases has been identified and one incident led to disciplinary action. Food safety is important because the potential penalties for the institution include an unlimited fine and criminal sanctions.

22/34 Reappointment of Chancellor

Council **APPROVED** the appointment of The Lord Coe CH KBE as Chancellor for a further five-year term.

22/35 Report from the Vice Chancellor

Council **RECEIVED** a verbal report from the Vice-Chancellor who was approaching the anniversary of his first year in office.

The Vice-Chancellor noted the number of award ceremonies at Loughborough, which was something the institution did very well. The Vice-Chancellor had attended the annual Degree Show for graduating students in the School of Design and Creative Arts and been impressed by the work on display. The Vice-Chancellor encouraged Council members to attend the Degree Show as a showcase of the work taking place at the institution.

The first in-person open days post-Covid were due to be held on Friday 1 and Saturday 2 July. Loughborough would be welcoming thousands of perspective students and their guests to campus and was looking forward to good weather.

There were a range of activities relating to the Commonwealth Games on campus, most notably the Queens Baton Relay is due to visit campus on Monday 11 July. Non-executive members of Council had been invited to attend and the Vice-Chancellor looked forward to welcoming all those who attended.

The two incoming Pro Vice-Chancellors, Professor Dan Parsons and Professor Charlotte Croffie,

48.3 Reportable Events

COUN22-P66

Council **NOTED** that no reportable incidents have taken place since the last meeting of Council

Council Members of Staff: Pauline Matturi and Professor Claudia Eberlien.

Professor Steve Rothberg whose term of office as Pro Vice Chancellor Research is ending was also thanked by the Chair for his contribution to Council.

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