



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

University  
Secretary's  
Office.

## The Council, 26 November 2018

### Report of the Senate

**Date:** 31 October 2018

**Chair:** The Acting President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC)

**Secretary:** Dr T Strike

#### For information

#### 1. Acting President & Vice-Chancellor's report

1.1 The Acting President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) presented the report, including:

- (a) Brexit: Government had extended its commitment made on Horizon 2020 funding & Erasmus+ programmes until 2020 even in the event of a no deal Brexit. Non-UK EU students entering higher education in 2019/20 would be treated as Home students. The University was undertaking contingency planning regarding a no deal Brexit.
- (b) Review of Post 18 Education and Funding: The independent Panel, chaired by Philip Augar was now anticipated to publish an interim report by the end of 2018. The timescale was linked to a decision from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on how student loans should be treated in the public accounts, which was expected in December 2018. The outcome of the full Review is scheduled to be spring 2019.
- (c) Office for Students (OfS): The OfS is consulting on its new approach to access and participation with a focus on the student lifecycle where progression and attainment are likely to be considered as important as access.
- (d) Mental Health: Universities Minister, Sam Gyimah, had written to all Vice-Chancellors requesting that they prioritise mental health. The University could respond positively to the request given its recent work, including work with the Students' Union.
- (e) National Budget: The Chancellor announced £1.6bn for science and innovation, but this did not represent new money as it was part of £7bn extra research and development funding previously committed. However, the announcement did contain details of how this would be spent, including areas which align with Sheffield's research strengths.
- (f) Education and Student Experience: Regarding student recruitment, home undergraduate application levels had exceeded the sector average and there had been a further improvement in quality. In relation to the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF), Government had published its response to the consultation and a combination of the two TEF models initially proposed would be used which included both a provider-level assessment and a subject-level assessment.
- (g) Research and its Impact: The REF annual stock-take exercise had been completed and action plans agreed with Departments and Faculties. Jake Berry MP, Northern Powerhouse Minister, recently opened three new advanced engineering research centres in Sheffield.

- (h) The Power of People: The final pay offer of 2% had been implemented with effect from 1 August 2018. A BAME Strategy would shortly be launched. The staff survey was open and staff were encouraged to respond.

## **2. Senate Effectiveness Review – Consultation Responses**

2.1 Senate received the Report and approved the recommendation that the University Secretary, in consultation with the President and Vice-Chancellor, brings forward to the Senate proposed revisions to Regulation IX: The Senate, Section 2., Composition of the Senate, which:

- Reduces the overall size of Senate,
- Maintains a balance of elected and ex-officio members,
- Introduces constituencies to the elected category, to reflect Faculty and Grade,
- Revises the eligibility for election, to include Grade 7.

2.2 Attention was drawn to the scope of the review, the engagement of Senate members through various mechanisms, and the key principles and recommendations. During discussion it was confirmed that the Review Group had considered the issue of the most appropriate day and timings of Senate meetings.

## **3. University Research Institutes**

3.1 Senate received and approved the award of University Research Institute (URI) status to the following four proposed Institutes in this first wave of the process, provisionally named:

- The University of Sheffield Research Institute for Energy
- The University of Sheffield Research Institute for Healthy Lifespan
- The University of Sheffield Research Institute for Neuroscience
- The University of Sheffield Research Institute for Sustainable Food

3.2 Attention was drawn to the process to arrive at the recommendations. 29 Expressions of Interest had been received with 8 full bids submitted which were assessed by a Panel in July. The formal launch of the URIs would be in early 2019. Ways to support the 4 unsuccessful full bids to take their ideas forward would be explored. The second wave of URI proposals were anticipated to be brought to Senate in October 2019.

## **4. Report of the Council**

4.1 Senate received a report on the meeting of Council held on 9 July 2018.

## **5 Reports of committees**

### **5.1 Committees of Senate**

5.1.1 Senate approved the reports of the following committees:

(a) Learning and Teaching Committee  
(Meeting held on 4 July 2018)

- (i) Student Support: Senate approved updated Terms of Reference for the Student Support Committee and the Student Support Strategy.
- (ii) New and significantly amended, suspended & discontinued Programmes: Senate approved new, significantly amended, and discontinued programmes, and title changes and new exit routes approved by Faculties between 10 May-27 June 2018.

Attention was drawn to ongoing work in relation to Programme Level Approach (PLA) and requests to departments in relation to TEF.

(c) Research Ethics Committee

(Meeting held on 12 September 2018)

Senate approved a new version of Ethics Policy Note no. 7: Administrative research within the University and a new version of the Committee's Terms of Reference to better reflect current practice. Attention was drawn to recent breaches of the Ethics Policy, revised guidance paper regarding research involving adults who lacked the capacity to consent, position statement on ethically reviewing external research, a funding opportunity, and membership changes.

(d) Senate Academic Assurance Committee

(Meeting held on 16 October 2018)

Senate approved the Annual Academic Assurance Report, for submission to November Council. (Council are asked to approve this report under item 10.3 on the Council Agenda.) Senate noted the themes the Committee would focus on in 2018/19:

- External examiners across all student groups, including their role and how the University uses the information they provide,
- Grade inflation, specifically the position by Faculty and by Department
- Professional accreditation, including which courses have it, which no longer have it, and which never sought it.

Attention was drawn to Committee's role to provide oversight and assurance.

(e) Senate Budget Committee

(Meeting held on 19 July and 9 October 2018)

Senate received and approved the Report, including the 2018/19 Budget Pack and a Recruitment Update. Attention was drawn to the Minute of the Chair of SBC's meeting with UEB, and to the publication of the minutes of SBC's meeting with the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor on its website.

## **5.2 Other committees**

- 5.2.1 Senate noted the reports previously circulated by email of the Finance Committee (meetings held 10 May and 25 June 2018) and the Human Resources Committee (meeting held 13 June 2018)

## **6 Draft Financial Results**

- 6.1 Senate received for information the Draft Financial Results for 2017/18.