# NORWICH UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

**COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Council

Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Friday 6 October 2023, commencing at 09:45 in the Conference Suite, 20 Bank Plain, Norwich NR2 4SF.

# Present:

Mr M Jeffries (Chair) Ms C Armor

Ms C Bray

Ms R Chakraborty Prof. Lady R Cooper Mr D Dwyer

Ms A Ferguson Mr A Grimbly Mr C Lawrence Mr R Lee

Ms C Middleton (via video link) Prof. S Ofield-Kerr

Mr I Watson Mr L Wells Mr T Wilson Mr T Wood

# In attendance:

Prof. L Anderson (Pro Vice Chancellor, Academic)

Ms A Beckett (Pro Vice Chancellor, Student Experience and Academic Registrar, Clerk to the Council) Prof. H Carlisle (Dean of Creative Education)

Prof. L Nixon (Dean of Research and Knowledge Exchange)

Mr J Smeeth (Chief Operating Officer) Ms A Mulcairn (Deputy Clerk)

**Apologies:** Ms G Young Dr S Bradshaw Mr K Pink

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| **CHAIR’S INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME** |
| The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Council to the away day. The Chair introduced Abbie Mulcairn as the new Deputy Clerk to the Council.  The Council confirmed their ongoing adherence to the Nolan Principles. |
| **ELECTION OF OFFICERS** |
| The following were appointed as officers of Council for 2023/24: Council  Chair of Council: Mark Jeffries Deputy Chair of Council: Cathy Armor  Council Committees  Chair of Audit Committee: Toby Wilson  Chair of Finance and Resources Committee: Andy Grimbly, to be succeeded by Alex Ferguson on completion of Andy Grimbly’s term of office  Chair of People Committee: Cathy Armor  Chair of Renumeration Committee: To be confirmed by Nominations Committee in March  Ex-officio Chair of Nominations Committee: Mark Jeffries |
| **INTRODUCTORY ITEMS** |

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| **1.** | **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING** |
|  | Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2023, subject to correction of attendance and apology lists. |
| **2.** | **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES** |
|  | Risk appetite would be included on the November meeting of Council. All other matters arising were on the agenda. |
| **3.** | **SUCCESSION PLANNING – CHAIR DESIGNATE** |
|  | Received: a proposal for the appointment of Chair Designate  Council noted that though there were advantages to external appointments, continuity was the current priority for the Council in order to support the executive team and provide consistent oversight for the implementation of the strategy and Operational Plan.  Council agreed that the skills audit should be mapped against the University Strategy and that future new independent governors would be appointed with relevant skills to fulfil future chairing roles. This would enable external benchmarking to be included as part of that exercise.  **Clerk/Chair of Nominations Committee**  Council agreed that there should be sufficient experience from amongst the current membership to appoint a Chair designate from the existing membership.  Council approved the recommendation and the proposal to delegate authority for the appointment of the Chair Designate to the Nominations Committee.  **Clerk/Chair of Nominations Committee** |

**PART I**

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| **4.** | **VICE CHANCELLOR** |
| **4.1** | **Vice Chancellor’s Report**  Received: a report from the Vice-Chancellor  The Vice-Chancellor (VC) drew the Council’s attention to the project work ongoing over the summer, thanking colleagues across the University for their dedication and energy, and noted that there has been a cultural shift in the University with both ambition and the pace of change increasing noticeably.  The Board noted the triple gold result of the TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework), and that Norwich University of the Arts was the only specialist arts and design university to attain this result.  Council requested updates on student recruitment figures at a future meeting.  **Vice-Chancellor**  Council thanked the Vice-Chancellor for his report |

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| **4.2** | **Press Coverage**  Council received the press coverage reports, highlighting the positive review in the Guardian for the recent East Gallery show. |
| **5.** | **STUDENT MATTERS** |
| **5.1** | **Students’ Union Report**  Received: a report from the Students’ Union President for Education and Representation  The Board noted the ongoing work around the cost-of-living crisis and community pantry offer being provided by the SU, and collaborative work between the Students’ Union and Student Support Services.  The Presidents attended National Union of Students (NUS) Lead and Change training and networking event.  The President updated Council that recruitment was underway for the new Managing Director, with a goal to have the staff member in role by January. Other matters drawn to Council’s attention included successful freshers’ week activity and year 1 induction talks.  Council thanked the President for their report, which Council received. |

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| **5.2** | **Student Union Development and Funding**  Received: a report from the Clerk on governance and SU developments.  The Board noted that funding for the Students’ Union was signed off by the Council as part of its approval of the annual budget. Council’s governance responsibility was to ensure the effective running and governance of the Students’ Union, and this would not change as a result of the SU Developments, the nature of the reports received by Council would be those regulatory reports that apply to the incorporated SU. |
| **6.** | **FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE** |
| **6.1** | **Prospective Purchase of Student Accommodation**  Received: minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Finance & Resources Committee  No conflicts of interest were declared in respect of this item.  F&R Committee had previously agreed that as part of the overall strategy, use of funds and capital investments should go towards purchasing student accommodation which would benefit the organisation as well as students. The Senior Management Team had investigated multiple accommodation options over the summer and the proposal presented in the papers turned out to be the most appropriate option.  Council noted that the accommodation is of good quality and fitted into the accommodation strategy in providing more choices and price points for students. Due to its high quality and the flexibility to be disposed of as separate properties (if necessary) the purchase was both a good option for  students and a sound financial investment. |

Council approved the recommendation of the F&R Committee to purchase of the additional student accommodation, subject to searches and surveys.

This item was noted as commercially sensitive and subject to redaction from the confirmed minutes until such time as the purchase is complete.

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|  | **PART II** |
| **7.** | **CHAIR’S COMMENTS AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS REQUESTS** |
| **7.1** | **Chair’s update** |
|  | The Chair thanked Larra Anderson (Pro-Vice Chancellor – Academic) for her significant contribution to the University and the Council wished her all the best with her future career. |
| **7.2** | **Any other business requests** |
|  | There was no other business |
| **8.** | **DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING** |
|  | The next meeting would take place on Friday 17 November 2023 at 10:00am. |