

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Friday 4th February 2022

Meeting held at Burges Salmon

MINUTES

Present: Mr J Boyer (Chair), Professor H Brady (Vice-Chancellor), Dr M Bhabuta, Mrs K Bright, Professor A Carr, Ms J Cecil, Dr S Clarke, Ms L Fletcher, Mr N Joicey, Dr J Khawaja, Mr A Poolman (Treasurer), Mr F Quek, Dr Andreas Raffel, Professor C Relton, Mr M Saddiq, Mr S Robertson, Professor J Squires (Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC) Provost), and Mr K Sithamparapillai

In attendance: Hannah Quinn (Head of Governance), Robert Kerse (Chief Operating Officer), Lucinda Parr (Registrar and University Secretary), Nicola Key (for item 7), Barra Mac Ruairi (for item 7).

Apologies: Gillian Bowen

1 WELCOMES, APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1.1 The Chair welcomed members, noting apologies.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1 There were none.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting of the Board of Trustees on 19 November 2021 were APPROVED as a fair and accurate record, subject to minor changes.

4 ACTIONS & MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 That the Honorary Degrees Committee would not meet again this year, and the action in relation to gender balance would be rolled forward.
- 4.2 That the Board would receive further updates on international recruitment, and a focus on China, over the coming meetings.

5 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT AND QUESTIONS

5.1 The following points were NOTED:

- 5.1.1 That progress on key issues remained slow due to the significant amount of government business.
- 5.1.2 The response to the Augar Review was still outstanding and there were concerns about the progress on association with Horizon Europe
- 5.1.3 The Government's Freedom of Speech Bill had received a proposed amendment which would obligate universities to disclose any dealings with an foreign entity worth over £50K. This would result in a significant workload and cost for the regulator and universities.
- 5.1.4 The publication of the levelling-up white paper, and the lack of clarity as to whether new money would be made available. There was an emphasis on distribution of research and innovation outside of the South East. This had focussed on the North and the Midlands, rather than the South West. That Bristol was working with partners to make the case that the South West has multiple indices of deprivation. There were further considerations of the implications of increased spending outside the "golden triangle" – that allocations

- become more political and less excellence based. That further representations had been made in relation to Temple Quarter funding.
- 5.1.5 Significant effort had been employed to support overseas students remaining in Bristol over Christmas, and the return to studies and assessment in January. While case rates among students were rising, this was nothing as significant as previous waves.
 - 5.16 The Registrar noted that student case rates were low and the institutional risk assessment was being reviewed fortnightly. City background rates were continuing to rise. The University was supporting students and staff and continuity plans were working well.
 - 5.17 The COO noted the change in pension position since the time of writing of Board papers. Particularly that notice had been received of 10 days of industrial action during February and March, seven days in relation to pensions and three in relation to pay. This was likely to have an adverse impact on some students, particularly as staff were not required to declare their intentions in advance. Student communications were in place, and UEB had agreed to withhold a percentage of pay from staff who engaged in Action Short of a Strike. This was a departure from previous practice but it was important to show support for the student learning experience.
 - 5.18 The COO also noted that a short notice consultation had been issued by UUK around proposed changes to USS benefits. The particular aspect of the consultation was in relation to a reduction in the cap on the annual revaluation of benefits. The COO recommended that the Board to react positively to this suggestion at a modest additional cost of c£360k per annum and a small extension to the recovery plan to emphasise that we are listening to staff. UCU had tabled a proposal at the end of January, which had been based on historic figures, and was considered unaffordable (an additional £8 – 9m). The Chair of the Pensions Task & Finish Group noted that the Group was unable to meet in the timescale required by the consultation, and that he supported the recommendation to the Board.
 - 5.19 The Board AGREED to support the UUK proposal in relation to USS.
 - 5.20 The Vice-Chancellor and the COO sought the Board's advice on the approach to negotiating the national pay award.
- 5.2 The following points were DISCUSSED
- 5.2.1 That the pay award was a national agreement, and Bristol was unable to move out of line from the collective agreement. There was the option to make a one off discretionary payment to staff, but only where this was performance related.
 - 5.2.2 The likelihood of staff discontent in relation to withholding pay for Action Short of a Strike. The Executive noted that this would be a contentious position, although there had not been significant feedback so far. It would be a challenge to identify staff, and there would be a need to rely on staff and student reporting.
 - 5.2.3 That Bristol had advocated a cost of living increase in line with CPIH in recent history and this would be the preferred position, with weighting towards the lower grades. Trustees recognised the significant work of staff throughout the pandemic, and the impact of inflation rises. That there may be some support within the sector for a three year deal, but not all institutions would be able to meet a 3% commitment.
 - 5.2.4 Trustees questioned what alternatives, other than financial, might be appropriate. The COO acknowledged that a very principled colleague base, alongside high national solidarity would continue to result in staff taking strike action. However, it was acknowledged that the pandemic had restricted, for example, thank you events and other ways of showing appreciation to staff.
 - 5.2.5 Whether the institution was doing enough to communicate with staff about the issues, and whether this would reduce the number of staff striking. The COO noted significant efforts around communications, and contentment of staff shown through the low turnover rates. Some staff would only engage with some elements of the strike and continue to work at other times.

- 5.2.6 The impact on students, considering the compound impact of previous strike and pandemic impact. The Executive noted the reduction in support from students at this point and that impact would continue to be monitored at programme and unit level. Impact on students varied significantly by discipline with Arts & SSL staff more likely to engage with industrial action.

6 STRATEGY NEXT STEPS (reference BT/21-22/032)

- 6.1 RECEIVED the paper. The DVC & Provost (Judith Squires) introduced the item.
- 6.2 The following points were NOTED
- 6.2.1 Plans for a robust and integrated monitoring of the strategy, with the introduction of a monthly Strategy Implementation Board which would monitor delivery and progress. Changes to the Portfolio Boards which monitored projects and programmes.
- 6.2.2 The development of Strategic Progress Indicators for the Board of Trustees and Key Performance Indicators which sat beneath these. The SPIs were aligned with the overarching goals and included sectoral salience, with a focus on metrics used for league tables. There was a mixture of input, process, output and outcome measures, some of which required further refinement as they were relatively new measures.
- 6.2.3 That the Board would receive the final set of SPIs in May, alongside a dashboard of available data.
- 6.2.4 That a revised Oxford Economics report had been circulated to the Board, measuring our impact.
- 6.2.5 That the Strategy was in use internally and would be launched internally next month, but the external launch would align with the appointment of the new Vice-Chancellor.
- 6.3 The following points were DISCUSSED:
- 6.3.1 That the architecture of reporting needed to be able to provide early warnings and indications of the direction of travel, and that mitigations and review should be built in for areas which were on track, as well as more clarity on benchmarking . The DVC & Provost confirmed that further detail on targets and benchmarking would be brought back to the Board in May, and although most would be benchmarked at upper quartile, the importance would be to focus on what was ambitious for Bristol in that area.
- ACTION: DVC & Provost
- 6.3.2 That the wording of the Vision and overarching goals could highlight more the commitment to teaching excellence. The DVC & Provost confirmed the shared desire for excellent teaching and that this was defined in Goal 2 which would have a robust suite of indicators aligned to the TEF metrics as well as a qualitative narrative. That the OFS was consulting on TEF and NSS and any changes would be incorporated. She would review the articulation of teaching excellence within the vision statement and present any final amendments to the Chair of the Board for approval under Chair's Powers.
- ACTION: DVC & Provost
- 6.3.3 How engagement from theme leads was progressing. It was confirmed that engagement was positive and that theme leads had validated their SPIS and drafted their own implementation plans.
- 6.3.4 Whether there were lead and lag indicators, and that while lead indicators may be few, they were valuable. A combination of indicators had been selected and a digital reporting tool was being explored to provide transparency and early access to information.
- 6.3.5 How it would become evident if there were gaps in SPIs or missing measures. It was confirmed that the Strategy Implementation Board would consider this, as well as any modifications to measures, bringing this back to Board as required.
- 6.3.6 How postgraduate metrics would be included in the SPIs, and particularly the impact of the recent investment in PhD scholarships. The DVC & Provost explained that PG indicators were generally less robust, unpublished or not benchmarkable, however given the symbolic importance they would be held at

KPI level. While not benchmarkable, there was also value in PG metrics for marketing.

6.3.7 How the portfolio boards would work together. The portfolio Boards would provide standard and exception reports to the Strategy Implementation Board who would look at agenda setting and resource allocation in alignment with the goals.

6.3.8 Inclusion of references to the One City initiative and the Civic University Agreement (CUA) and whether this could be expanded. It was confirmed that the CUA was under discussion with Bristol City Council alongside the development of the Council's new strategy. The process had been agreed and discussions were opening up with other institutions.

6.3.9 Whether there could be additional measures in relation to research culture, and further development of measures in relation to innovation. The DVC & Provost noted that the newly appointed Associate Pro Vice-Chancellors would look to refine the measures on research culture and innovation.

6.3.10 In relation to our contribution to the economy, a request to add a measure in relation to diverse workforce. It was agreed to add an additional measure on diversity, and to add reference to diversity in goal 9.

ACTION: DVC & Provost

6.3.11 That much of the information captured would be valuable internally, especially when disaggregated by Faculty or Division. It was confirmed that the intended reporting tool would provide visibility throughout the institution. That there was an ambition to be ahead of the sectoral curve in monitoring and rigour.

6.3.12 The required actions to balance a Carbon Net Zero and top 50 ambition. That the commitment to Net Zero was a positive challenge from the Board and would engender change more rapidly. Discussions were continuing internally and would return to the Board.

6.3.13 That the Board would annually receive updates twice per year, in May and November. Agreed not to produce hard copies of the Strategy

6.3.14 The opportunity to focus the external launch around big themes, such as supporting economic growth, EDI. Trustees offered to engage with video messaging from the Board.

6.4 APPROVED the re-wording of the Overarching Goals and the broad coverage of the proposed SPIs. DELEGATED approval of any final changes to the Chair of the Board

6.5 The Board thanked the DVC & Provost and her team for their significant efforts

7. **TEMPLE QUARTER GATEWAY DECISION** (reference **BT/21-22/033**)

7.1 RECEIVED the paper. The Vice-Chancellor (Hugh Brady) introduced the item. Nicola Key and Barra Mac Ruairi were welcomed to the meeting.

7.2 The following issues were NOTED:

7.2.1 The level of ambition established by the new strategy, progress made by peer institutions and the alignment of the TQEC vision with national research priorities. That the development would facilitate the strategic aim to be a top 50 global institution.

7.2.2 That a larger CM1 development was the appropriate strategic response to our Net Zero ambitions and space challenges. That CM1 has been and would continue to be a game changer in Bristol's ambition and reputation. It would act as a key enabler of other capital developments including the New University Library.

7.2.2 That the land package as assembled would support 30 to 40 years of growth, and would cost many times more were it purchased at current rates. That the enabling works were well advanced and were leveraging irreplaceable public investments in Temple Meads station and local waterways. Bristol City Council was developing the Eastern entrance and other public realm works.

7.2.3 That the pandemic disruption had been used to redesign major elements for the post -Covid world, to value engineer and progress key enabling projects.

- 7.2.4 That the planned investment was modest by comparison with competitors and the development benchmarked favourably with developments elsewhere.
 - 7.2.5 That resources were in place to fund the development, including contingency for potential overruns.
 - 7.2.6 The impact of not progressing with the development on student residences, commercial partners, incubators, and on committed research and philanthropic funds. If not progressed, that Bristol risked returning to a similar decision in the medium term at higher cost and with the accompanying risk of decline in rankings in the interim.
 - 7.2.7 That this was not a TQEC vs Clifton Campus decision but that all campuses would thrive if TQEC succeeds, through additional capacity, financial surpluses and a multiplier effect.
 - 7.2.8 That while the decision had been difficult against a background of historic underinvestment, supply chain and Covid impacts the academic, financial, and civic rationales remained compelling.
 - 7.2.9 The importance of value for money and how this was measured. The project used a sector standard £/sqm, rather than a measure of £/student as students use buildings in differing ways by discipline and usage changes over time. That 20 million people annually would pass through the station and see our campus, while 8 million access the campus each year.
 - 7.2.10 That the multiplier effect could already be seen through the grants won since the start of the development e.g. BDFI and a subsequent award of £10m for an ESRC centre, the Digital Nation bid and MyWorld. That grants would not have been won without the TQEC vision and colleagues were already competing for further funding.
 - 7.2.11 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**.
 - 7.2.12 The impact on philanthropy of the TQEC vision. Since the development launched there have been significant donations from individuals and foundations and more in development.
 - 7.2.13 That the recommendations to the Board were unanimously endorsed by the University Executive Board.
 - 7.2.14 That Trustees responsibilities were to determine whether or not this proposal was the best option for promoting the objects of the University (i.e. to advance education, learning and research for the public benefit), and to ensure that the overall assets and beneficiaries of the University were not at risk as a consequence of the decision.
- 7.3 Trustees sought response from the Executive on the following issues
- 7.3.1 The contribution of the Business School in terms of student numbers and income, and mitigations if these were not met.
 - 7.3.2 The response from staff to investment in TQEC whilst staff disputes were ongoing in relation to pay and pension contributions.
 - 7.3.3 The need to join up student sports and leisure facilities across campuses and ensure access for all students, including how income from TQEC could be reinvested into other campuses.
 - 7.3.4 The risk of lapsing planning permission and delivery delays, and how this could be mitigated
 - 7.3.5 The risk of doing nothing to the delivery of the strategy and our ability to recruit key staff
 - 7.3.6 Whether there was enough capacity for project management and oversight
 - 7.3.7 Whether the development was ambitious enough as a result of further value engineering
 - 7.3.8 The contribution of the development to the City and region in relation to regeneration.
 - 7.3.9 The risk of inflation rises and the costs required to achieve Net Zero aspirations
 - 7.3.10 The impact on cash flow, debt reporting and covenant commitments.
 - 7.3.11 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**

- 7.3.12 The relationship between the level of contingency held and the cost of delays and increases so far, as well as any benchmarking for the contingency considering the complexity of the scheme.
- 7.3.13 Concerns about affordability and whether the business model was robust enough to generate sufficient revenue flow and the link with the reliance on China.
- 7.3.14 How equity of investment in other areas of research could be ensured and how the development met the metrics for a global top 50 institution.
- 7.3.15 How expectations would be managed for staff on the Clifton campus and how they would benefit.
- 7.3.16 Whether lessons could be learned from comparable developments and their ability to win government funding
- 7.3.17 The internal position and level of support for the development.
- 7.3.18 The level of investment that other institutions are making and the consequences of not progressing.

7.4 The following issues were DISCUSSED in response to Trustee questions above, grouped and responded to in sections.

Tensions between people and building, TQEC and other campuses

- 7.4.1 That this was a tension that could be managed rather than a restriction on proceeding and that investments in people and in our estate had been shared on a recent all staff live stream.
- 7.4.2 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**
- 7.4.3 That investment was also planned in relation to the New University Library, but TQEC would be sequenced first due to attracting external funding and the imperative to accelerate research and knowledge exchange. That Finance & Infrastructure Committee (FIC) would undertake a deep dive into the NUL in April, and consider the broader campus framework investment over 5 years.
- 7.4.4 That the development addressed the criteria for a global top 50 ambition, particularly the key input of peer assessment of research. TQEC would put Bristol on the map for research in key areas as well as measures in relation to the knowledge exchange. It had also proved key in attracting high quality candidates to the recruitment of a new Vice-Chancellor.
- 7.4.5 That student facilities were based on a 35 minute mobility model e.g 35 mins between Clifton and Stoke Bishop residences and between TQ and Clifton, so facilities would be available for all students.

The Business School

- 7.4.6 That the Board had approved the merger of 2 existing schools to form a Business School. in September 2021, which included projections of student numbers.
- 7.4.7 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**
- 7.4.8 That the Business School programme had two phases. Phase 2 was being worked up with the introduction of new programmes and the recruitment of new staff, including advertising for a Head of School. The vision for Phase 2 would be brought back to the Board and would feature research and value led teaching, equipping leaders, micro credentialling and executive education, drawing on local and regional strengths in sustainability, creative industries and public health.

Financial Aspects

- 7.4.9 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]** .
- 7.4.10 That the University had adequate capacity to deliver the development. Significant progress had been made in developing and diversifying the team, with excellent recent appointments to manage key person dependencies.
- 7.4.11 That lobbying of government continued as did development of diverse funding sources. Recent discussions had been held with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities.
- 7.4.12 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**
- 7.4.13 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]** The requirement for debt reporting to the OFS in relation to loan covenants and to the USS

pension scheme. These requirements had been stress tested and the breach risk low. The financial forecasts were all within appropriate reporting metrics.

- 7.4.14 That the financial appraisal was in line with the Investment Policy. **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**. The level of confidence had increased since further work on site. There was also a significant insurance programme.
- 7.4.15 That the development would enable the institution to attract more funding of the type that will cover its own costs and has the biggest positive impact potential across all disciplines, generating additional operating cashflow for reinvestment.

Planning and Capital Development

- 7.4.16 That outline and reserved planning permission was in place for the development, **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**
- 7.4.17 That commencement works would preserve permission in relation to Cattlemarket Road and work would commence on the entrances. **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**
- 7.4.18 That the TQ team was well resourced with expert colleagues. That the Campus Division would also be meeting other needs through the campus framework plan and would be employing a new Head of Capital and Head of Property. The diversity of the team had also changed, representing different backgrounds and skills particularly through participation in the JoinUs scheme. The resource would be kept under review to enable delivery of new projects going forward.
- 7.4.19 The level of ambition within the design, and that the value engineering process, alongside Covid impacts, had allowed the opportunity to review the structure, increasing the available space, removing significant carbon and meeting the impact of Covid on teaching practices and student behaviours. This included removing a raked lecture theatre and adding additional laptop lounges and flexible teaching spaces. The process had achieved a lot for users considering the scale of the change and the cost reduction. It was not anticipated that any further value engineering was possible. It was confirmed that AECOM had verified the cost plan.
- 7.4.20 The criticality of the development for Bristol, **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]** with potential for regeneration, research and other partnerships. That the development differentiated Bristol and would fuel additional investment and attract people.
- 7.4.21 That this was a complex site, but was known well by the team and the design approach made risk conditions better by our activity. There would always remain health and safety and environmental risks for any project of this type.
- 7.4.22 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]** . Office rents were at £42/sq ft, which was the highest level outside London and the market was buoyant with an under supply of offices.
- 7.4.23 The risk appetite of the contractor and relevant provisions within the contract to manage risk and target costs.

Residential Development

- 7.4.24 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**
- 7.4.25 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]** .

7.5 Following discussion, it was collectively acknowledged that while not all elements of risk and concern identified in a development of this magnitude could be mitigated, however the Board agreed and that elements of risk and concern raised by the Board had been addressed appropriately considering the complexity of the development. Having evaluated the five detailed options the following were UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED:

- 7.5.1 OPTION D to progress the CM1 building development with the expectation of entering into the construction contract in April 2023, following the Board's final sign off the construction contract in early 2023.
- 7.5.2 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**

7.6 The Board acknowledged Robert Kerse, Nicola Key, Barra Mac Ruairi and the whole team for their efforts, particularly the impact on the City its citizens and economy.

8. OfS FINANCIAL AND STUDENT NUMBER FORECASTS (reference BT/21-22/034)

8.1 RECEIVED the paper. The Chief Operating Officer (Robert Kerse) introduced the item.

8.2 The following issues were NOTED:

8.2.1 The requirements of the Office for Students, and the interaction with our internal planning processes.

8.2.2 That the budget would be brought back to the Board in July and November, further to consideration by University Executive Board and Finance & Infrastructure Committee.

8.2.3 That the level of operating surplus was lower, but realistic given the level of investment required.

8.2.4 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**

8.2.5 That the forecasts were achievable, with no significant risks identified, and met the requirements of borrowing covenants and the USS.

8.2.6 That FIC would further consider the Capital Programme before it returned to Board.

8.3 The following issues were DISCUSSED

8.3.1 The planned student number targets. The Executive noted the impact of unplanned overshoots for two years due to the impact of teacher assessed grades. **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**. Targets for the next two years had been discussed and approved with Faculties and Schools.

8.3.2 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]** That there was a link between clearing and near miss offers and student wellbeing, as students often had a late transition and were less prepared.

8.3.3 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**. In relation to widening participation, research had shown that the use of clearing and near miss had a greater impact on tariff than the contextual offers. These would be continued without a detrimental impact on tariff.

8.3.4 That the commentary should be updated in relation to Temple Quarter and the Business School.

ACTION: COO

8.3.5 Considered the analysis in relation to the debt repayment and re-financing risk associated with the existing borrowings and concluded that they remain affordable.

8.3.6 The University's debt repayment re-financing risk which would return to FIC in September and the Board in November. There was also a forward item in relation to Fit for the Future plans.

ACTION: Head of Governance

8.4 The following items were APPROVED:

8.4.1 The revised Capital Programme presented at Appendix 2

8.4.2 The proposed submission to our regulator the OfS, as presented at Appendix 3, subject to minor changes to the commentary.

9. CHAIR'S REPORT (reference BT/21-22/035)

9.1 RECEIVED the paper. The Chair of the Board, Jack Boyer, introduced the item.

9.2 NOTED the update from the Effectiveness Review Steering Group, particularly the notes from Board workshop (Reading Pack).

9.3 NOTED the decisions taken between meetings. NOTED the Gifts and Donations Policy framework and the external due diligence completed in this case.

9.4 NOTED the content of the report.

- 9.5 DISCUSSED the value of Trustees engagement with escalated student cases, and agreed to report on these cases annually.

Action: Head of Governance

10. REPORT FROM COO (reference BT/21-22/036)

- 10.1 RECEIVED the paper. The Chief Operating Officer (Robert Kerse) introduced the item.
- 10.2 DISCUSSED the financial performance for the five months ended 31 December 2021 and the forecast financial outcome for 2021/22, including whether management is taking appropriate action to address areas of under performance. **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**
- 10.3 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**.
- 10.4 DISCUSSED the ongoing industrial disputes in relation to pay and pensions, which represented both a significant financial risk and risk to the student experience.
- 10.5 DISCUSSED the blended working trial which had been extended into the summer and the flexible approach. AGREED to update the Board on the feedback and outcomes at their September meeting

ACTION: COO

- 10.6 NOTED progress on the Dental School and that a further update would be provided to FIC.
- 10.7 NOTED the Bristol City Council consultation on a planning framework for student accommodation, which could be restrictive to students and the University. A strong consultation response had been made, and discussions were ongoing with BCC to find affordable and sustainable solutions for the city.
- 10.8 APPROVED the attached letter (Appendix 2) to be sent to Barclays, *Authority and Indemnity for Collection, Negotiation and Deferral of Foreign Cheques*.
- 10.9 DISCUSSED the deep dive at ARC on Cybersecurity and Business Continuity.
- 10.9.1 The future planned roll out of MFA to students
- 10.9.2 The recent Log4j issue and the University's response
- 10.9.3 That Cybersecurity was a residual red risk
- 10.9.4 AGREED to address questions from Trustees further to the meeting

ACTION: COO

11. REPORT FROM DVC & PROVOST (reference BT/21-22/037)

- 11.1 RECEIVED the paper. The DVC & Provost (Judith Squires) introduced the item.
- 11.2 NOTED the report of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost.
- 11.3 The following points were DISCUSSED
- 11.3.1 **[REDACTED: information for future publication]**
- 11.3.2 That the report on the transatlantic slave trade had been completed and would be presented to University Executive Board. That controversy was inevitable in this area. This was part of wider debate within the city and the University needed to be open and consultative. Advice had been taken from the Anti-Racism Steering Group as well as national research from Bristol colleagues. The report would be shared with the Board further to UEB discussion.

ACTION: Head of Governance

- 11.3.3 A recent UCU motion calling for honorary degrees to be awarded to the Colston Four and asking for the University to dissociate from the Society of

Merchant Venturers. The University co-sponsored the Venturer's Trust Schools.

11.3.4 The OFS consultations on NSS and TEF. That subject level TEF would not be pursued, but that attention would continue to be focussed on large low performing programmes.

11.3.5 Staff and student training on freedom of speech

11.3.6 The common unit evaluation system introduced, which allowed for optional discipline or programme specific questions to be selected where required. That there was no intention to share this level of detail with the Board.

12. REPORT FROM REGISTRAR & UNIVERSITY SECRETARY (reference BT/21-22/038)

12.1 RECEIVED the paper. The Registrar & University Secretary (Lucinda Parr) introduced the item.

12.2 NOTED the content of the report.

12.2.1 There had been a continued focus on business continuity, close monitoring of staffing levels and identification of additional mitigations.

12.2.2 The Student Experience Programme had been working on processes which did not meet students' expectations. Significant impact in workload and service had been gained by the introduction of self-service appointment bookings.

12.3 NOTED the final OFS report (Appendix 2) which had concluded that communications to students were clear and that there was no breach of the CMA.

13. REPORT FROM FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE (reference BT/21-22/039)

13.1 RECEIVED the paper. The Chair of the Finance & Infrastructure Committee, Andreas Raffel, introduced the item.

13.2 NOTED the report of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee meeting held on the 07 December 2021.

14. REPORT FROM AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE (reference BT/21-22/040)

14.1 RECEIVED the paper. The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, Andy Poolman, led on this.

14.2 NOTED the report of the meeting.

14.3 NOTED discussions of the about overall risk profile which had reduced to four red risks only, which were Temple Quarter, Cybersecurity, Student Wellbeing and Pensions.

14.4 The Board ACCEPTED the Risk profile as an accurate picture.

15. VC APPOINTMENT UPDATE (reference BT/21-22/041)

15.1 RECEIVED the paper. The Chair of the Board of Trustees (Jack Boyer) introduced the item. The Vice-Chancellor, the COO and the DVC & Provost recused themselves.

15.2 DISCUSSED the update on the VC Appointment Process.

15.3 The following points were NOTED

15.3.1 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests].**

15.3.2 That the panel would meet again on the 10th February to shortlist further. The final candidates would undergo a staff and student panel and media assessment.

15.3.3 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests].**

15.3.4 **[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests]**

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 16.1 That the Board sought an update on the University's approach to lobbying, to include how we work with the Russell Group.

ACTION: Head of Governance.

- 17. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:** 31 March and 1 April 2022.