

<b>University of Oxford</b>	
<b>COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Minutes of the Unreserved Meeting held at 13:15 on 11 March 2024 in the MCR, OUP, Walton Street, Oxford</b>	
<b>Minute</b>	<b>Item</b>
096	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Professor Irene Tracy (Vice-Chancellor / Chair), Sir Chris Deverell (External member), Tom Fletcher (Elected member of Conference of Colleges), Antony Willott (Director of Planning and Council Secretariat) and Dr Hilary Wynne (Early Career Researcher)</p>
097	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b> (012-COUN-231030-P refers)</p> <p>No new declarations were made.</p>
<b>Committee Governance</b>	
098	<p><b>Unreserved minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2024</b> 098-COUN-240311-C</p> <p>The Chair reminded members to raise any suggested amendments to minutes prior to the meeting where possible.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Council <b>approved</b> the unreserved minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2024.</p>
099	<p><b>Matters Arising from 5 February 2024 meeting of Council not otherwise on the agenda</b></p> <p>No items for consideration.</p>
<b>Chair's Unreserved Business</b>	
100	<p><b>Vice-Chancellor's unreserved business and selected highlights</b></p> <p>Professor Grant noted that he would be in the Chair as the Vice-Chancellor was on jury duty.</p>
<b>For Discussion</b>	
101	<p><b>Head of Division Annual Report – Social Sciences</b> (slide deck will be made available on SharePoint)</p> <p>Professor Timothy Power thanked the Divisional Registrar, David White, for putting together the presentation.</p> <p>He highlighted the following:</p> <p><i>Financial outlook</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divisional operating income was down on previous years for a number of reasons, including the REF and increased charges following the implementation of the White Paper.</li> <li>• SSD policy was that all departments should break even (after paying University charges) and hold some financial reserves for risk - 12 out of 15 depts would achieve this in 2023/24, two were close and one was finding it challenging.</li> <li>• Departmental deficits were funded by a repayable loan from the divisional risk reserve, which was topped up by all departments.</li> <li>• Financial control was key and needed to be habitual.</li> </ul> <p><i>Saïd Business School (SBS) - strategic plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ambition over the next five years was to establish SBS as the leading business school in Europe.</li> <li>• The aim was to grow research faculty by c50 and ensure faculty pay was competitive, funded by growth in executive education, degree programmes, and online programmes.</li> <li>• The Osney Power Station project (opening 2025) would support this plan, providing 117 study bedrooms.</li> <li>• The SBS was much smaller than comparator business schools, a quarter the size of Harvard and smaller than Cambridge.</li> <li>• In terms of contribution to the University, SBS today paid an eighth of all University departments' contribution to the Chest. The Division supported the School's quality strategy and its plans to grow faculty, students, and space to achieve this. SBS' financial contribution to Oxford and its global reputation were substantial and both would be enhanced by this plan.</li> </ul> <p><i>Research</i></p>

- Research conducted within the Division was broad-ranging and inter-disciplinary, with strong thematic research links with wider institutional strategic plans, including climate, public health policy, and societal impact of AI.
- Computational methods, experimental design, and AI had outpaced Oxford's investment in these areas for social scientific research. The Centre for Advanced Social Science Methods, which was essentially a coalition of five departments and Nuffield College, aimed to tackle this issue.
- Research overheads were similar to those in other divisions, although SSD had also been adversely affected by funding challenges relating to the global south and the uncertainty around Horizon Europe.

#### *Education*

- SSD had a long tradition of interdisciplinary teaching at UG level (PPE was 100 years old and Human Sciences 50 years old) but this brought challenges in terms of Oxford's structure: a key risk was college support for academic posts teaching on smaller programmes (esp. Human Sciences). To meet the University's strategic objectives, these challenges would need to be addressed.
- There were a number of innovative new programmes within the Division, including PGDip in Strategy and Innovation, the MSc in Financial Economics and executive education programmes within the Law Faculty.
- 83% of SSD PGTs were international – risks to recruitment included:
  - rising visa and NHS surcharges for overseas students (10 years ago costs had been around £300, now they were in the several thousands);
  - PGT students no longer being able to bring dependents to the UK on visas.

#### *Equality, Diversity & Inclusion*

- The Division's EDI work was aligned with Oxford's EDI Strategy and the Division was grateful for the Chief Diversity Officer's work in taking this to the next level.

#### *Key risks to the Division*

- Student number constraints on academic and financial strategy (SBS was the key example in SSD)– new colleges or a new approach to college places were needed.
- Impact of UK immigration changes and high fees on PG recruitment (academic and financial risk).
- Research income trends – the Division aimed to diversify income and invest in advanced methods capacity.

Council thanked the Head of Division for his insightful and informative presentation.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- The focus on the SBS was very helpful as Council did not generally have much visibility in this area. It might be useful for the Dean to attend Council (either at another meeting or for a session at an Away Day) to provide more information on the School's work and its vision.
- Most MBA/EMBA students wanted a college association, as a key part of the Oxford experience – better mechanisms were needed for aligning colleges that wanted more students with departments needing more college places.
- Consideration was currently being given to the constitution of the School's Board – additional external members were intended to improve the connection to business. It was suggested that introducing divisional representation onto the Board might also be helpful (noting that the Heads of Division were members of the Blavatnik Board).
- In considering expansion, the School needed to consider potential implications for student and staff support, including discipline and welfare provision.
- The topping-up of the divisional risk reserve by all departments was an interesting concept.
- It might be helpful for larger departments to share issues/concerns they had in common.
- In terms of increasing student numbers, the emphasis across the collegiate University needed to be on the academic rather than financial case.

**ACTIONS:** Council agreed:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To invite the Dean of the Business School to attend a future Council meeting/Away Day.</li> <li>2. To suggest to Divisions that larger, in surplus departments, might be invited to identify best-practice re developing ambitious plans and share issues/concerns they had in common, including growing student numbers, academic quality and finance.</li> </ol> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Council <b>noted</b> the presentation.</p>
102	<p><b>Access and Participation Plan (APP) (first draft) 102-COUN-240311-C</b></p> <p>The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) introduced this item reminding Council that the APP was an Office for Students (OfS) requirement and would cover the period from October 2025 to September 2029. The 13 May Council meeting would be asked to approve the final draft for submission by 31 May 2024.</p> <p>He further noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data with regard to ‘Access’, ‘Continuation’, ‘Completion’, ‘Outcomes’ and ‘Progression’ had been analysed.</li> <li>• Having completed the data analysis, it had been decided to focus on Access and Outcomes.</li> <li>• Different metrics would be used this time, previously ACORN (postcode measure of socio-economic disadvantage) and POLAR (participation of local areas) had been used. ACORN had been revised in 2023 and POLAR was considered to be a poor indicator of disadvantage. The Index Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) would be used for this APP. (See page 18 of the board pack for further details)</li> <li>• On Outcomes three targets would be set to cover the awarding of ‘good’ outcomes for (i) students from IMD Q1 and Q2 (ii) disabled students, and (iii) for Black students.</li> <li>• Modest admission changes were being looked at along with University involvement in pre-16 schemes that fitted OfS parameters.</li> </ul> <p>Council discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The data used and whether the gap at entry was simply replicated on graduation. The picture was considered complicated as a number of factors were at play including the transition to university, new ways of studying and varying assessment methods.</li> <li>• College and departmental programmes and how they might be co-ordinated to ensure as wide a net of activities as possible. The Chair of Conference described the consortia organisation and how teacher and pre-year 10 support was provided. Pooling resources would make sense.</li> <li>• The differences in attainment between black and white students alongside that of Pakistani and Bangladeshi students and what the University could do to raise the attainment of black and minority ethnic (BME) students. It was important to recognise that the culture of both the University and individual college life played their part in how a student settled in and thrived. The Chief Diversity Officer noted that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategic plan would place sustained attention on culture.</li> </ul> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Council <b>noted</b> the first draft of the Access and Participation Plan and supported the general direction of travel.</p>
103	<p><b>National Pay Negotiations 103-COUN-240311-I</b></p> <p>The HR Director introduced this item explaining that an extension to the submission deadline had been agreed in order that Council could discuss. The RG wanted greater flexibility and the possibility of Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) looking at the pay spine, pensions and salaries in the round might help this.</p> <p>As Trustees, Council were mindful that they needed to protect the interests of the University, within the context of the sector as a whole. It was noted that RG HR Directors would be meeting next month to talk through the issues and how both national and local factors could be considered.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> In order to avoid large numbers of council Members having a significant conflict of interest on the setting of pay across the University, the Registrar was asked to look again at options that might include a separate group/committee or extending the remit of the current Senior Remuneration Committee to provide Council with recommendations on pay.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Council agreed that paper 103-COUN-240311-I be submitted by the HR Director to UCEA.</p>
<p><b>For Approval</b></p>	

104	<p><b>Proposal for a Working Group to review the University’s <i>Human Remains Policy</i> and <i>Procedures for claims for the Return of Cultural Objects</i></b> 104-COUN-240311-I</p> <p>The Head of the Gardens Libraries and Museums (GLAM) set out the main points of the proposal for Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The claims under consideration today were the first since the claim for the return of the Benin Bronzes in 2022; that case had been the first since the policy and procedures had been approved by Council.</li> <li>• The University’s <i>Human Remains Policy</i> had now been in place for 18 years.</li> <li>• Both the <i>Human Remains Policy</i> and <i>Procedures for claims for the Return of Cultural Objects</i> now needed to be reviewed to ensure that they reflected the current legal position and aligned with the Charity Commission position, DCMS advice, Arts Council guidelines and sector-wide best practice.</li> <li>• In terms of governance, the GLAM Board was proposing that both Policies be updated to include a requirement for all claims for the return of human remains and of cultural objects to be reviewed by the Board itself before coming to Council for approval.</li> </ul> <p>During discussion, it was noted that whilst the review itself should be fairly straightforward, the consideration of individual claims was much more complex – case law was evolving and any future claims would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the revised Policy and Procedures. It was suggested that it might be helpful to involve external members in the review, as they had been very helpful when the policies were originally drafted.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Council approved the proposal to create a task-and-finish Working Group, including input from external members, to review, and where appropriate to recommend updates for, (i) the <a href="#">Human Remains Policy and Procedures for the return of Human Remains</a>, and (ii) the <a href="#">Procedures for claims for the Return of Cultural Objects</a>.</p>
105	<p><b>Claims for Repatriation of Human Remains and Cultural Objects</b> 105-COUN-240311-C plus clips 105 A-D on <a href="#">Sharepoint</a></p> <p>The Head of GLAM set out the background to the requests for Council, drawing attention to the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GLAM Board was recommending that Council approve four requests for repatriation of human remains and cultural objects, and decline one request as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Request from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre for the return of five hair samples held in the collections of the Pitt Rivers Museum – approve.</li> <li>○ Request from the Sarawak Kenyah Badeng Association for the return of a sunhat held in the collections of the Pitt Rivers Museum – approve.</li> <li>○ Request from the Hopi Tribe Cultural Preservation Office for the return of one Hopi Tribe cranium held in the collections of the Oxford University Museum of Natural History – approve.</li> <li>○ Request from the High Commission of India for the return of two Indian Bronzes held by the Ashmolean Museum – approve the return of one Bronze but not the other as there was no evidence to support the work’s previous ownership or its possible theft. The item in question had not yet been accessioned – if the recommendation to decline the return request was approved by Council, the item would be accessioned.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Whilst four requests coming to Council at one time was unusual, as context, the GLAM collections held 32 million objects.</li> </ul> <p>During discussion, the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was confirmed that the likely changes to the Policy and Procedures which might come into effect following the review (item 104 above) would not contradict the decisions being taken today in relation to the current requests.</li> <li>• There was some discussion as to where the burden of proof lay – with the country being asked to return an object or with the country claiming ownership. As explained in item 104, consideration of such requests was complex and each request needed to be examined on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>• The question was raised as to whether all of these requests needed to be considered by Council. This point would be considered by the review group established under item 104.</li> </ul> <p><b>DECISIONS:</b> On the recommendation of the GLAM Board:</p>

	<p><i>Request from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre for the return of five hair samples held in the collections of the Pitt Rivers Museum</i></p> <p>1) Council <b>agreed</b> to the return of the hair samples.</p> <p><i>Request from the Sarawak Kenyah Badeng Association for the return of a sunhat, held in the collections of the Pitt Rivers Museum</i></p> <p>2) Council <b>agreed</b> to the return of the sunhat.</p> <p><i>Request from the Hopi Tribe Cultural Preservation Office for the return of one Hopi Tribe cranium held in the collections of the Oxford University Museum of Natural History</i></p> <p>3) Council <b>agreed</b> to the return of these remains.</p> <p><i>Request from the High Commission of India for the return of two Indian Bronzes held by the Ashmolean Museum</i></p> <p>4) Council <b>agreed</b> to the return of EA1967.42 to the temple of Shri Soundarraja Perumal Kovil in Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu, India, on moral grounds;</p> <p>5) Council <b>did not agree</b> to the return of LI181.16 as there was no evidence to support the work's previous ownership or its possible theft.</p>
<p>106</p>	<p><b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Report 2022-23</b> 106-COUN-240311-I</p> <p>The Chief Diversity Officer, Professor Tim Soutphommasane, led on this item. He highlighted the six current University Equality Objectives and progress towards achieving them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure University decision-making and governance structures are representative of the University community (approved July 2021). BME staff on Council and main committees 12% - target 15% by 2027. Female representation on Council and main committees 38% - target 40-60% by 2027.</li> <li>2. Increase the proportion of women in senior academic roles (approved Feb 2022). Proportion of Statutory Professors is 22% - target 27% by 2029. Proportion of female Associate Professors is 33% - target 35% by 2029. University awarded Silver Athena Swan in 2022/23.</li> <li>3. Increase the proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff in senior roles (approved Feb 2022). . Proportion of BME Statutory Professors is 8% - target 9% by 2029. Proportion of BME Associate Professors is 9% - target 11% by 2029. Proportion of BME Senior Researchers (Grade 8+) is 18% - target 20% by 2029. Proportion of BME Senior Professional Staff (Grade 8+) is 10% - target 14% by 2029. Successful renewal of Race Equality Charter Bronze award (January 2024).</li> <li>4. Consolidate our position in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (approved July 2019). An LGBTQ+ Task and Finish Group has been established to prepare a submission to the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.</li> <li>5. Achieve the equality-related objectives set out in the University's agreement with the Office for Students (approved March 2020) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of the targets to reduce gap in participation rates between ACORN and POLAR groups</li> <li>• Eliminated the gap in offer rates for Asian applicants in 2021/22 (data yet to be received to confirm if this has been maintained for 2022/23)</li> <li>• Attainment gap for Black students is 9.6% (8.8% in 2021/22) - target: 6% by 2024/25</li> <li>• Attainment gap for disabled students is 2.6% (2.2% in 2021/22) - target: eliminate the gap by 2024/25</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. Eliminate the undergraduate gender attainment gap by 2030 (approved March 2020). The attainment gap between men and women is 9.6% - target 4.4% by 2025.</li> </ol> <p>Council appreciated the richness of the report and discussed a number of issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The naming of academic posts (Statutory versus Titular Professors) and the implications for career advancement and value. The need for a single pathway from Assistant through Associate to Full Professor, with clear promotion criteria that could be applied across disciplines.</li> <li>• Association with Stonewall and how engagement was important for staff and students, allowing the University to check processes and overall performance. Members were reminded that Council made the decision to participate in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the targets within the report had been set and whether they were both stretching and obtainable. The Chief Diversity Officer stated that Council would receive a further update in June where the targets could be further discussed. Members agreed that it was important to consider both departmental / divisional differences in the make-up of staff when setting overall University targets.</li> <li>• The importance of looking at the barriers to taking up roles such as the Proctors and Assessor.</li> <li>• The prevalence of sexual assault and harassment and how numbers might be reduced recognising that under reporting was likely due to a number of factors. The introduction of consent training at student induction events had helped.</li> <li>• The admission of a diverse range of applicants and how that could be further facilitated, recognising that this meant that other issues would need to be addressed in order to ensure a culturally safe learning environment for all.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIONS:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Council <b>noted</b> the progress towards the University's Equality Objectives.</li> <li>2) Council were invited to provide any further feedback regarding equality, diversity and inclusion efforts, noting the current development of a collegiate University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan.</li> </ol> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Council <b>approved</b> the publication of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2022-23, noting that data was outstanding to confirm maintenance of target (i), further narrative content to support the data, and final editing of the report.</p>
107	<p><b>Gender Pay Gap Report 107-COUN-240311-C</b> The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (People and Digital) introduced the report, highlighting the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As an employer with more than 250 employees, it was a legal requirement for the University to report to the government its gender pay gap based on the "snapshot date" of 31 March each year. The format of the report was quite prescriptive and the report was about structures rather than equal pay.</li> <li>• Both the median and mean gender pay gaps had reduced: the median pay gap from 13.7% to 11.1%; the mean pay gap from 19.5% to 19.1%.</li> <li>• The "Thank you" payment had been included in the bonus pay calculations.</li> <li>• The pattern of pay gaps differed greatly by Division and therefore the actions required to close the gaps and reduce the total pay gap needed to be understood and targeted. Following the publication of the gender pay gap report in 2022 a Task and Finish Group had been set up to undertake an in-depth review of the reasons for the gender pay gap with a view to arriving at a set of recommended actions to close the gap. The Group would report next term.</li> <li>• Although overall the University was incrementally moving in the right direction on gender pay gaps, progress needed to be much quicker.</li> </ul> <p>During discussion, the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was suggested that the point made about the effect of the "Thank you" payment on the bonus pay gap (in the narrative on Bonus) should be reflected in the key points section on the first page of the narrative.</li> <li>• The discrepancies in bonus pay were disappointing. The Clinical Excellence Awards and OUP Bonus Scheme persisted as the primary sources of bonus pay disparity and this required further consideration.</li> </ul> <p><b>DECISIONS:</b> Council;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>noted</b> the analysis of the 2023 gender pay gap report</li> <li>2) <b>noted</b> the report from the Task and Finish Group and,</li> <li>3) <b>approved</b> the narrative for publication</li> </ol>
108	<p><b>Report from Finance Committee: Osney Power Station: Progress Report and Funding Request</b> 108-COUN-240311-C <i>Item moved to reserved agenda</i></p>
<p><b>Items below this line were for receipt and/or approval, without discussion</b> <b>For Approval and Note</b></p>	
109	<p><b>Vice-Chancellor's Unreserved Business below the line 109-COUN-240311-P</b> <b>DECISION:</b> Council <b>noted</b> paper 109-COUN-240311-P</p>

110	<p><b>Updated Council Standing Orders 2023/24</b> 110-COUN-240311-I</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Council <b>approved</b> the revisions to Council's Standing Orders for 2023/24</p>
111	<p><b>Report from Strategic Capital Steering Group and Finance Committee: Sherrington Project</b> 111-COUN-240311-C plus clips 111 A-D on <a href="#">Sharepoint</a></p> <p><b>DECISIONS:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Council <b>approved</b> funding for Phase 2 (Enabling Works) of the Sherrington Project;</li> <li>2) Council <b>recommended to Congregation</b> the allocation of approximately 673 sqm net usable area (NUA) of currently unallocated/unusable space on the third floor of the Sherrington Building (building 217), to the Department of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics, for an unlimited period (in line with the Department's existing allocation within the building), from completion of the Sherrington Project, currently estimated 28 September 2026 (as set out in Annex E); and</li> <li>3) Council <b>noted</b> the plan to request funding for Phase 3 (Main Works) to take the Project to completion, at SCSG in March 2024.</li> </ol>
112	<p><b>Minor Capital Plan Business Case: Expanding the Clinical Biomanufacturing Facility</b> 112-COUN-240311-C</p> <p><b>DECISIONS:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Council <b>approved</b> the uplift in the project budget Council <b>approved</b> the release of funds to allow the project to progress to completion.</li> </ol>
113	<p><b>Report from Finance Committee: Le Gros Clark – Stage 3 cost uplift</b> 113-COUN-240311-C plus clip 113 on <a href="#">Sharepoint</a></p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Council <b>approved</b> a PEA uplift to facilitate additional building strip-out costs identified during project stage 3.</p>
114	<p><b>PRAC report to Council – Delegation for Gateway 2 approval on Minor Capital Plan projects</b> 114-COUN-240311-I</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Council <b>approved</b> that PRAC be granted delegated authority to approve Gateway 2 and final release of funds for Minor Capital projects.</p>
115	<p><b>Unreserved report from the GPC meeting held on 19 February 2024</b> 115-COUN-240311-I</p> <p><b>DECISIONS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Council <b>approved</b> the proposed amendment to the membership, and therefore regulations, of the Medical Sciences Divisional Board as set out in Annex A of paper 057-GP-24/02/19-P.</li> <li>2) Council <b>approved</b> the change to Council Regulations 10 of 2002, as set out in Annex B of paper 056-GPC-24/02/19-P.</li> </ol>
116	<p><b>OEF Trustee Flash Factsheet to 31 December 2023</b> 116-COUN-240311-C</p> <p>Council <b>noted</b> the paper.</p>

**Next meeting of Council: 13:30-16:30, 22 April 2024**

**Pay and Conditions**

**Next full meeting of Council: 13:15 – 17:30, 13 May 2024**

**Items already on the agenda are listed below:**

- Estates Strategy (Finance Update)**
- Access and Participation Plan**
- Change to Statute XVI and Open Access Publications Policy**
- Student Discipline Changes to Statute XI**
- Q2 Forecast**
- Review of Assessor role**
- ASC termly report**

