

University Council Minutes

The University Council met at the Sandy Bay Campus in the Council Room and by video conference (via Zoom) on Wednesday 28th June 2023 from 9.30am.

Members: The Chancellor (Ms Alison Watkins AM) as Chair, Vice-Chancellor (Professor Rufus Black), Professor Natalie Brown, Ms Karina Groenewoud, Mr James Groom, Ms Sarah-Jayne Hall, Ms Tara Howell, Ms Alicia Leis, Ms Ariane Moore, Associate Professor Ashley Townsend, and Ms Sheree Vertigan AM.

In attendance: Professor Ian Anderson (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic), Mr Craig Barling (Acting Head, Student Services and Operations), Professor Anthony Koutoulis (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research) and Ms Kate Huntington (Executive Director, Strategic Communications) attended for all items other than members only.
Ms Sally Paynter attended as University Secretary.

By invitation: Mr Geoff Cohen (Managing Director, Flagstaff Partners)
Professor Stuart Crispin (Executive Dean, CoBE)
Ms Kristen Derbyshire (Chief People Officer)
Ms Kym Goodes (Consultant, 3P Advisory Pty Ltd)
Ms Prue Horne (Director College Transformation)
Mr Rick Inglis (Executive Director Strategy)
Mr Ben Rose (Chief Financial Officer)

Apologies: Emeritus Professor Peter Dawkins AO has been granted a leave of absence.

1 MEMBERS ONLY

1.1 * Members Only

University Council met in closed session without the Vice-Chancellor in attendance and considered the following:

- Members confirmed that the programmatic approach to academic quality improvement (agenda item 3.10) had been included on the Council agenda for information and early feedback from members. Academic Senate would also be considering this item at its meeting on Friday 30 June. It was agreed that the recommended motion associated with this item would be amended from 'endorse' to 'note'.
- Members agreed that the Council agenda papers should more clearly specify why a particular item was provided to Council and what decision, if any, was required. Formal motions put to Council would fall into one of three categories: 'for information', 'for noting' or 'for approval'.

Vice-Chancellor Rufus Black joined the meeting at 9.47am

1.2 * Report from Remuneration and Nominations Committee

1.2.1 * Council CPI Review 2023

University Council considered and approved a tabled proposal for annual salary uplift for senior managers at 3%, in line with budget and equal to the salary uplifts provided to staff under the University Staff Agreement. Council member Karina Groenewoud abstained from voting on this motion.

Members supported the proposal to adjust the University Council and Council Committee members remuneration rate for 2022/2023 to also align with the University's staff agreement rate of 3% and to expand the scope of the scheduled external review of University Council, to be undertaken in 2024, to also include a review of the setting of remuneration rates for University Council and Council Committee members.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-1.2.1(1)

University Council **approved** the annual salary uplift for senior managers as 3% to be effective from the first full pay period after 1 July 2023. Noting that this is in line with budget and equal to the salary uplifts being provided to staff that are subject to the University Staff Agreement.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-1.2.1(2)

University Council:

- noted** the pause of the 2023 payment of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate to all Council and Committee members pursuant to a review of remuneration conditions.

- **approved** the proposal to: adjust the 2022 CPI increase (to be applied in 2023) to align with the University staff agreement rate of 3%; and adjust the payment date of the CPI increase from 1 January each year to 1 July in line with staff increases.
- **approved** a review of the setting of remuneration pay rates for Council and Council committee members as part of the external review of Council.

1.2.2 * Friends of the University Membership

University Council did not discuss this item.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-1.2.2

University Council **approved**:

- the extension of the terms of membership for current Friends of the University Mr Christopher (Eoin) Breen, Dr Damian Bugg AM KC, Mr Nick Cretan, Mrs Charlotte Gilbertson, Dr Brian Hartnett, Mr David Rowell and Mr Richard Watson AM for an additional 3-year term to end on 11 May 2026.
- the appointments of Mr Mark Habner, Ms Phillipa Leedham, Dr Anthony Sprent AM and Dr David Warren as Friends of the University for a 5-year term to 30 June 2028.
- the appointment of Mr Christopher (Eoin) Breen to the role of the Chair of the Friends for an initial 12-month term to 11 May 2024, with the possibility to review and extend the term after 12 months.
- the extension of the term of Ms Susan Gough as the Friends of the University's representative on the University Foundation Committee for an additional 12-month term to 30 June 2024.

1.2.3 * Extended Nominations Committee Member

University Council unanimously supported the selection criteria for independent members appointed to the Extended Nominations Committee and the appointment of Alexander McKenzie to the Committee.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-1.2.3

University Council **approved** the proposed selection criteria for independent members appointed to the Extended Nominations Committee and **approved** the appointment of Alexander McKenzie to membership of the Extended Nominations Committee.

1.2.4 * University Council Membership Update

University Council noted the update.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-1.2.4

University Council **approved** the extension of Professor Dawkins leave of absence until 1 October 2023 and **noted** the confirmation of the end of the current terms of office for Ministerial Appointees, Sheree Vertigan and Tara Howell as 1 April 2024.

Ian Anderson, Craig Barling, Kate Huntington and Anthony Koutoulis joined the meeting at 10.08am

2. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

2.1 * Introductory Items

Welcome and Apologies

The Chancellor welcomed members and noted one apology from Emeritus Professor Peter Dawkins.

Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest noted.

Minutes

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-2.1(1)

University Council **confirmed** the minutes of the meetings held on 27th April and via circular on 2nd June 2023 as true and accurate records.

Actions

Council noted the update on action items.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-2.1(2)

University Council **received** the report showing progress on all outstanding items from previous Council meetings.

2.2 * Items to be starred / Motions on unstarred items

The motions relating to the remaining unstarred items were passed in a block:

- Item 7.2 Revisions to the Academic Senate Ordinance
- Item 7.3 Fundraising and Naming Policy Amendments
- Item 7.4 Draft Alumni Ordinance
- Item 7.5 2024 University Planning Calendar

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-2.2

University Council **adopted** the recommendations and reports presented as unstarred items and these were adopted without discussion.

Kym Goodes joined the meeting at 10.11AM

3. STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE

3.1 * Stakeholder Engagement Update

University Council noted that the stakeholder engagement update would remain as a standing item on each meeting agenda with a focus on members sharing insights and themes identified through various engagement opportunities and conversations with stakeholders and highlighting any specific areas requiring strategic focus and communication.

The following areas of strategic focus were highlighted during discussion:

- The recent Hobart City Council meeting held to discuss the next steps in the planning process for the University's projects in the Hobart CBD, attended by the Deputy Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and including representatives from Save UTAS Campus and Tasmania University Student Association, had been successful. The meeting had focused primarily on the planning process and the neighbourhood plans for Sandy Bay and Mt Nelson.
- Members discussed establishing clear and well-timed messaging to stakeholders and the wider community using consistent language around the University's ongoing plans for campus development with a focus on the University's broader mission, not simply on buildings.
- Members discussed the University connecting into the ongoing work of regional economics committees to identify opportunities for future workforce planning, focusing on the energy and construction industries and looking to target future cohorts of students who may be looking to study once employment opportunities in these areas plateau. This approach would also include pursuing partnership opportunities with industry and government in various ways to address skills shortage in different areas including teaching.
- Feedback received by the Student Member on Council indicated that students were encouraged by and supportive of the relocation of teaching spaces into the Hobart city and were keen to begin using new facilities in the CBD.
- Members referenced the ongoing discussions around planning for the future of the College of Business and Economics as an opportunity to engage with important stakeholders in the finance and business community around the development of the future strategic direction of the University.

Whilst there was support for a central repository for capturing relevant information, comments and questions gathered from engagement opportunities with key stakeholder groups, members were not supportive of purchasing purpose-built community and stakeholder engagement online platforms at this time. Instead, the use of current systems and resources would be explored to collect and use this important information.

Members discussed the impacts on various stakeholders following decisions made by Council, and noted the importance of signalling when these groups might be impacted by an outcome and when conversations or specific communications might be required to inform and support them.

Action: *University Council to continue to be provided with updates on current topics including relevant information to guide conversations when engaging with various community members and key stakeholders.*

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-3.1

University Council **noted** the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy update.

Kym Goodes left the meeting at 11.07am

University Council agreed to consider the following items out of order as follows:

3.3 * Chair, Academic Senate Report

The Chair, Academic Senate updated members on the major items discussed at the meetings on 3 May and 12 May 2023. Council noted the success of the special meeting convened to consider the University's response to the Indigenous Voice to Parliament, the constructive sharing of diverse viewpoints and the care and concern expressed for Indigenous colleagues throughout the process.

At its meeting on 12 May Academic Senate had engaged in two strategic sessions, the first covering University initiatives, programs and experiences. The session had been led by students and focused on what high-impact student experiences looked like and how to overcome barriers to study. Members discussed the positive impact of student led strategic sessions at Academic Senate and noted that the student members involved were engaged and had shaped much of the planning for the sessions. The second strategic session focused on professional development and support for academic staff, specifically what new teaching staff needed to know and how best to support them through induction including how to engage in a culture of continuous quality improvement in learning and teaching. Members noted that whilst new teaching staff may come to the University with experience it was important to clearly set expectations for what quality learning and teaching experiences looked like at UTAS.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-3.3

University Council **received and noted** the report from the Academic Senate meeting held on 3 May and 12 May 2023.

Kristen Derbyshire joined the meeting at 11.40am

3.2 * Vice-Chancellor's Update

The Vice-Chancellor did not provide a separate update to University Council on this occasion.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-3.2

University Council **noted** the update from the Vice-Chancellor.

3.4 * University Performance Report

The Vice-Chancellor and the Senior Executive invited questions and comments from members on the University Performance Report and the following was noted during discussion:

- The uplift in domestic student applications and conversions for second semester compared to first semester 2023 was encouraging, with members noting that there were no clear themes or market trend to indicate the reasons for the increase but that there was a slight weighting towards courses that offered a discount. International student numbers were also favourable with management confident that the budget targets would be met for second semester.
- The Australian Universities Accord Interim Report was due to be released in July with members noting that once released the top line insights would be shared with Council. It was expected that the Interim Report would not include specific recommendations but would provide enough policy direction to inform discussions and likely include an indication of whether the Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) Guarantee would be extended.
- After significant consultation and following the initial decision in October 2022, the University had lifted its COVID-19 vaccination mandate. All University staff, on-campus Higher Degree by Research candidates, consultants, contractors, and volunteers no longer have a vaccination requirement. Staff would continue to be encouraged to take precautions against COVID including through vaccination and students undertaking Professional Experience Placements would still need to comply with the vaccination requirements of the workplaces they are entering.
- Members were invited to provide feedback on the University's Public Reporting webpage.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-3.4

University Council **received and noted** the University Performance Report for June 2023

Rick Inglis, Geoff Cohen, Stuart Crispin, Rick Inglis and Ben Rose joined the meeting at 12.08pm

3.5 * Strategic Choices for Achieving Long Term Sustainability

In preparation for the development of a new Strategic Plan, University Council held a working discussion on options for achieving long term sustainability. Key themes and topics discussed included higher education reform and the Australian Universities Accord recommendations, options for securing long term financial sustainability, promoting greater distinctiveness through course offerings, workforce profiles and planning and teaching and research performance.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-3.5

University Council **discussed** the strategic choices that are available for achieving long term financial sustainability, so that preferred options can be further developed and progressed as we develop our next Strategic Plan.

Prue Horne joined the meeting at 2.08pm

3.6 * Case for College of Business and Economics Transformation

University Council was updated on the work undertaken by the College of Business and Economics (COBE) to consider how it might respond to the challenging financial landscape it faces and what strategic choices it may make to enable it to achieve long term sustainability. Members noted that in the past COBEs' revenue contribution had been critical to funding the University's operations and place-based mission however, the impact from COVID on the pipeline of commencing international students has resulted in a sharp decline for COBE's revenue. Members discussed additional challenges facing COBE including teaching quality issues and unsatisfactory international graduate outcomes and noted the concentrated thinking currently underway to create a sustainable future for business and economics at the University of Tasmania.

Members discussed the ways in which COBE might work to build greater engagement with industry and options for organising around key areas of impact to ensure that the needs of students, staff, and the Tasmanian community were appropriately met. Management agreed to provide Council with a summary of the key points raised during the discussion to assist in guiding conversations around the University's thinking and planning for COBE's future.

Action: Management to circulate to University Council members a summary of key points to assist in guiding conversations around the University's thinking and planning for COBE's future.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-3.6

University Council **noted** the update on a case for the College of Business and Economics Transformation.

Stuart Crispin, Prue Horne and Rick Inglis left the meeting at 2.30pm

3.7 * Funding Model Update

University Council considered an update on options for the University's capital funding structures to support current and future projects. During the working discussion available funding alternatives were discussed along with how these funding options might appropriately meet the requirements of the identified timeframes for the completion of priority capital projects. Members also discussed the potential impacts various funding options might have on identified stakeholder groups. University Council requested that management continue to update the Strategic Resourcing Committee and University Council as capital funding options continue to be explored.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-3.7

University Council:

- **Confirmed** the strategic direction as outlined in the update on options for the University's capital funding structures to support current and future projects.
- **Noted** that management will continue to progress the development of funding solutions in support of that strategy; and
- **Noted** that management will keep Council informed via regular updates to both Strategic Resourcing Committee and University Council itself as the development of funding solutions progress, with particular emphasis on stakeholder management as required.

3.8 This item was withdrawn from consideration.

Geoff Cohen, and Ben Rose left the meeting at 3.40pm

3.9 * Representation on Hobart Draft Local Provisions Schedule – Sandy Bay Site

University Council noted that the Hobart Interim Planning Scheme 2015 will soon be replaced with the Tasmanian Planning Scheme (TPS), which will include 'Hobart Local Provisions Schedules' (LPS) and will capture the University's Sandy Bay Campus. Members confirmed support for the University making a short submission on the Hobart draft LPS which been advertised for representation by 30 June 2023 and welcomed the opportunity to participate in planning for the optimum future of the Sandy Bay Campus in partnership with the Hobart City Council and the broader community and through the ongoing consultation processes for implementation of the Greater Hobart Plan.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-3.9

University Council **approved** the University making a representation to the City of Hobart on the Hobart draft Local Provisions Schedules in the form of Attachment 1.

3.10 * Programmatic Model for Academic Quality Improvement

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic led a discussion on the proposed programmatic approach to academic quality improvement noting that the model was commonly deployed in the health sector and was proven to be successful in helping unite interconnected projects across various areas towards a common objective and program of work. A programmatic approach would enable staff to better understand their individual role and accountabilities whilst working towards collective aims and outcomes. Members noted that the approach had

proven to be particularly relevant for areas working through change and in aiding staff to identify and improve on systems and processes that supported their work; two major areas of focus the University is responding to following the results of the employee engagement survey.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-3.10

University Council **noted** the proposed programmatic model for academic quality improvement.

University Council agreed to consider the following items out of order as follows:

6 FOR NOTING

Triona O'Neill joined the meeting at 3.52pm

6.1 * Project Aurora Update

University Council noted the progress made to date on Project Aurora including the first tranche of remediation payments made to staff, the implementation of project governance structures and a new project team. Management confirmed that the Project had formally transitioned into its second phase and would remain a standing item for monitoring by the Audit and Risk Committee.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC- 6.1

University Council **noted**: the progress made to date on the payment of the first tranche of remediation payments to our staff; the status of the communication strategy for locating former staff owed a payment; the methodology and status of planning for the next phase of the project; the project governance structures, including the new composition of the project team and the association reporting lines; and the cause and status of a number of post-go-live system rectification issues.

Kristen Derbyshire and Triona O'Neill left the meeting at 3.56pm

4. MONITORING – COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

4.1 * Audit and Risk Committee

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee highlighted several important areas of focus from the Committee meeting held on 5 May including the Executive Risk Presentation on the Whole-of-University Strategic Risks and Tier 1 Operational Risks owned by the Research Division and the thoroughness of the work to date ensuring that risk was front and centre for the Division. The Committee had noted the educative approaches being adopted to mitigate breaches of research integrity and responses to the national trend decline in Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidatures. The Committee had also considered the latest updates on Project Aurora and had noted the positive findings from the work by KPMG to evaluate whether the wishes of donors were being upheld, and disbursements aligned with agreed uses, in the management of the University's philanthropic funds.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-4.1

University Council **received and noted** the report from the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 20 April 2023 and 5 May 2023.

4.2 * Compliance Report

University Council considered the Compliance Report and noted that in response to earlier feedback from the Audit and Risk Committee the reporting of complaints relating to staff behaviour and additional commentary on identified hotspots had been enhanced and incorporated into the report. Other matters of note highlighted included the improvement opportunity identified in relation to engagement of volunteers and the educative program under way to address the current variability across Schools and Colleges related to required timelines for resolving complaints.

Resolution 27-04-2023-UC-4.2

University Council **received and noted** the Compliance Report.

4.3 * Strategic Resourcing Committee

The Chair of the Strategic Resourcing Committee advised that in addition to consideration of options for the University's capital funding structures to support current and future project (as referenced at agenda item 3.7), the Committee had discussed the University's investment function and performance and had begun investigating alternative options for further consideration.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-4.3

University Council **received and noted** the report from the Strategic Resourcing Committee meetings held on

26 May 2023, 9 June 2023 and 16 June 2023.

4.4 * University Foundation Committee

The Vice-Chancellor advised that the University had exceeded its annual philanthropic funding targets with an impressive half yearly result of \$9.5 million. \$1 million of this funding had been gifted from Jill and Ian Wilson to establish an endowed Scholarship in their names, with the first Scholarship to be awarded in 2024. The donation is the largest philanthropic gift for funding in this area in the University's history. Members also discussed the success of the recent morning tea held to thank donors and University volunteers and the positive impact from scholarship recipients, Menzies researchers and student participating in mentoring programs sharing their stories.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-4.4

University Council **received and noted** the report from the University Foundation Committee meeting held on 20 April 2023.

5 GRADUATIONS

5.1 * Conferral / Reissue of Awards

University Council conferred awards to the students listed in the agenda.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-5.1

University Council **conferred** the awards listed in Attachment 1.

7. UNSTARRED ITEMS

7.1 This item was withdrawn from consideration.

7.2 Revisions to the Academic Senate Ordinance

This item was unstarred and therefore not discussed.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-7.2

University Council **approved** the amendments to the Academic Senate Ordinance.

7.3 Fundraising and Naming Policy Amendments

This item was unstarred and therefore not discussed.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-7.3

University Council **approved** the amendment to the title of the University's *Fundraising and Naming Policy* to the *Fundraising, Gifts and Naming Policy*.

7.4 Draft Alumni Ordinance

This item was unstarred and therefore not discussed.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-7.4

University Council **approved** the revised Alumni Ordinance 2023 and **noted** the re-establishment of the Alumni Advisory Committee and its Terms of Reference.

7.5 2024 University Planning Calendar

This item was unstarred and therefore not discussed.

Resolution 28-06-2023-UC-7.5

University Council **received and noted** the proposed University of Tasmania planning calendar for 2024, including Council, Council committees and Academic Senate meeting dates.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Other Business, Confidential Items and Future Meetings

There were no items of other business raised.

The meeting concluded at 4.07pm