

Appointments Committee

25/14 A meeting of the Committee was held on Tuesday 3 June 2025 at 9.00 am via Teams.

Present: Lay Member of the Council, Kate Owen (Chair)
Lay Member of the Council, Sian Butler
Lay Member of the Council, Kevin Corrigan
The President of Council, Helen Gordon
Lay Member of the Council, Sue Maple
The Vice-Chancellor
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor
An elected member of the Council, John Jack

By invitation: Director of Human Resources
University Secretary
Director of Governance (Secretary)

25/15 Minutes of the last meeting

The Committee approved the minutes of the last meeting held on 30 January 2025 and the additional meeting held on 15 May 2025, as a correct record.

25/16 Matters Arising

It was noted that the report of the Committee submitted to Council on 10 March 2025 had been accepted.

In addition it was noted that it had been approved by Chair's action, on behalf of the Committee, that Sian Butler be appointed to hear Personal Titles appeals following the School stage of the process, and that Sue Maple be appointed to hear Personal Titles appeals following the University stage of the process, each for a three-year period covering 2025/26, 2026/27, and 2027/28.

In regard to the appointment of the Chief Operating Officer it was noted that a candidate pack had been produced and that the Director of HR was in conversation with some search firms who might be able to reach a broader range of applicants.

All other matters arising were covered below.

25/17 Committees of Selection

The Committee received and noted two Committees of Selection Reports that had been submitted since the last meeting.

The Committee noted that the University received a strong field of applications for the Professor in Leadership appointment; the candidate appointed was highly qualified in their discipline. The field was more limited for the Professor in Sustainable Accounting and Finance due to demand for these skills across a number of sectors, but the University had been able to secure a very strong appointment.

25/18 Membership of the Council

The Committee received and noted membership of the Council in Class 2.

Proposal for the re-appointment of the President of the Council

[The President of the Council Helen Gordon was recused from the meeting for this item]

The Committee noted that Helen Gordon's current period of office as president would end on the 31st of July 2025, after which time she would have served eight years on Council as member, Vice President and President (a President could serve a maximum period on Council of 12 years).

The Committee at its meeting on the 30th of January 2025 discussed the process that should be put in place to decide whether Helen should be extended for a further maximum period of four years. Given Helen's successful first period as President and her wish to continue for a final four years the Committee agreed that Kate Owen as Chair, would write to all members of Council asking for comments and feedback on the core part of the President's role as set out in the job description with particular focus on three areas. Helen would then be asked to submit her objective for the four-year term to the Vice-Presidents, to be followed by an interview by them to review and scrutinise these, her performance, and her energy and motivation for a further term. The Chair had written to the Council on 25 March 2025 in regard to this process.

It was noted that a 100% response rate had been received with 100% strong support for the proposal to extend Helen as President.

The Vice-Presidents had interviewed Helen and reviewed her objectives for her next term as well as ensuring that the Vice-President objectives and hers complemented each other and provided coherent and comprehensive leadership for Council. The interview confirmed and supported all the positive feedback received. Helen had demonstrated strengths in all aspects of her work as President and confirmed her willingness and energy to continue despite the considerable challenges of the current environment. The Vice-Presidents' conclusion, strongly endorsed by all members of Council, was that the University was fortunate to have her and it was, therefore, recommended to appoint Helen for a second term as President to 31 July 2029.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council that Helen Gordon be reappointed as President of the Council for a further and final period to 31 July 2029.

Proposal for re-appointment of Kevin Corrigan as Vice-President of the Council

[The Vice-President of the Council Kevin Corrigan was recused from the meeting for this item]

The Committee noted that it had been usual practice for Vice-Presidents to be reappointed on the recommendation of the President then discussed and agreed by Appointments Committee before submitting a recommendation to the Council. This year it had been agreed to include more rigor in the process. If the existing Vice-President wanted to be re-appointed, then the following should take place:

- Appraisal by the President (as part of the overall Council process) to include the next year's objectives
- Formal request to the President from the Vice-President to be reappointed for an additional term including four or five key objectives
- An interview with the President and the Chair of Appointments Committee/Vice-President which included reviewing and challenging the objectives and ensuring that they complemented those of the President and other Vice –President/s and fulfil the requirements of the role
- A report and recommendation for discussion and endorsement by the Appointments Committee before seeking approval at the Council

The Committee noted that Kevin Corrigan had served three years as a Vice-President and wished to put himself forward for a further final three years. Helen Gordon (President of the Council) and Kate Owen (Chair of Appointments Committee) conducted the above process. Their conclusions were as follows:

- Kevin has had a very successful first term as Vice-President chairing a skillfully refocused S&FC, developing the work of IDC and as Vice-President particularly adding value to the financial game plan. He had demonstrated his understanding of the HE sector, wider business and charity and has a genuine interest in students.
- His objectives (see below) were scrutinized, challenged, and considered strong, highly appropriate and fit well with those of the President/other Vice-President. Together they covered all the major areas required of senior leadership of the Council.
 - To provide senior leadership on financial strategy and sustainability - this would involve relationship development with the new CFO, stepping down from the IDC Chair role and building a stronger relationship with the Audit Committee
 - To support the President and senior leadership in developing the 2026 strategy - reimagining what the University could and should be and ensuring Council was involved

- To ensure that the University was able to deliver a balanced budget that was timely and sustainable
- To support Council and the President in any senior leadership changes at the University

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council that Kevin Corrigan should be reappointed as Vice-President for a further and final three years to 31 July 2028.

The Committee noted that the President was reviewing the need for a third Vice President and the timing to ensure all areas were full covered and there was appropriate succession cover.

Lay Membership of the Council

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council the reappointment of the following lay members (Class 2) for a further term of three years to 31 July 2028:

- Sue Maple
- Peter Milhofer
- Shamshad Ali
- Angus McCallum
- Steve Alexander

The Committee also agreed to carry forward current membership of committees in line with their terms of office.

The Committee noted that the President would speak with Janet Young later in the week in regard to her time commitments before a recommendation was made. [Post meeting note – Janet Young’s appointment was confirmed to 31 July 2028].

It was felt that Chris Shaw, [redacted, section 40], should now stand down from the Council with the University’s thanks for the contribution that he had made over the last six years. This would leave a vacancy on the Audit Committee. [Post meeting note – it had been mutually agreed that Chris Shaw’s term of office would end on 31 July 2025].

It was noted that lay members were keen to use their own experience more widely either in committees or short-term action groups. The Director of HR suggested they could also help with informal coaching/mentoring. It was agreed that this matter be discussed further outside of the meeting with the Director of HR.

Council Appointments in Class 3, 4, 5, 6

The University Secretary noted that all four of the internally elected University members would finish in 2025/26 so elections would need to be held in each Class.

The Committee agreed that it would be helpful to consider as part of the review of the effectiveness of the Council how well University representatives felt they could fulfil their roles.

Update on the appraisal process 2025

The Committee received and noted an update on the Council appraisal process in 2025. This was the fourth year of the formal appraisal process for Council; the process was more rigorous and had been used to inform Council reappointments.

Most members were very positive about being on Council. Feedback would be taken forward, particularly as part of the next review of the effectiveness of the Council in 2026.

25/19 HEPI Policy Note 63 – who leads our universities

The Committee received the HEPI Policy Note 63 for its information.

25/20 Dates of next meeting

Meetings of the Appointments Committee in the Session 2025-26 have been scheduled for:

Tuesday 14 October 2025 1.30 – 2.00 pm
Thursday 29 January 2026 2.00 – 2.30 pm
Tuesday 2 June 2026 9.00 – 9.30 am