



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
NEW UNIVERSITY  
EST. 1891

## **COUNCIL (BUSINESS MEETING)**

Open Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2025 in the Mezzanine Boardroom, High Wycombe campus and on MS Teams.

### **Present:**

- Maggie Galliers (Independent [Chair]);
- Professor Damien Page (Vice-Chancellor);
- Brian Lewis (Independent [Chair of Audit Committee]);
- Dr Annet Gamell (Independent [Chair of Student Experience Committee and Council Safeguarding Ambassador]);
- Shaun Crawford (Independent [Chair of Resources Committee]);
- Marek Pruszewicz (Independent);
- Sadie Groom (Independent);
- Adam Honor (Independent);
- Jackie Westaway (Independent);
- Matthew Tong (Academic Member);
- Charlotte Stewart (Professional Services Employee Member);
- Andy Davies (Professional Services Employee Member);
- Jean Marc Amagoua (Students' Union President)
- Charles Miles (Student Co-opted Member)

### **In attendance**

- Trevor Gabriele (Chief Finance Officer [Chair of Missenden Abbey Board]);
- Louise Harvey (Chief Impact Officer (Chief of Staff))
- Rachael Cornwall (Chief People Officer)
- Dr Emma Tomsett (Clerk to the Council and Head of Governance and Compliance)
- Margaret Rioga (Director for Student Success / Prevent Lead) – for the Annual Safeguarding Report only
- Sandy Gill (Head of Transformation) – for the Risk items only
- Esin Turkaslan (Associate Professor in Physicians Associate) – for the GP Clinic item only
- Clare O'Callaghan (Resolutions Manager) – for the OIA Report item only
- Nick Barthram (Firehaus) – for the Brand Narrative Strategy item only

### **Apologies**

- Karen Satterford (Co-opted member [Deputy Chair and Chair of Governance, People and Vice-Chancellor's Remuneration Committees]);
- Andy Cole (Independent);
- Francine Goodrich (Independent)

## Welcome / Apologies for Absence

- 25.394 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and noted one apology as outlined above. A warm welcome was extended to Charlotte Stewart who was attending her first meeting.
- 25.395 Council was informed that Independent Member Justin Sullivan had resigned from Council.
- 25.396 It was noted that the live demonstration of the new Council dashboard had been postponed until the new institutional key performance indicators (KPIs) had been agreed as this would enable Council to offer more substantive comments on the dashboard, which was currently at the shell stage. The two Independent Members who were involved in developing the dashboard and who had seen a preview, Jackie Westaway and Adam Honor, agreed with this change.
- 25.397 The Chair thanked all Council members who were acting as mentors to new Council members.

## Declaration of conflicts of interest

- 25.398 Professional Services Employee Member Charlotte Stewart declared an interest in the GP Clinic item as she was of one the University's leads on the project. Council agreed that if this conflict was deemed important, she would be asked to leave the meeting, but anticipated that it would only note that she had led some of the work on the project.

## Minutes of the previous meeting

- 25.399 The Open Minutes of the previous meeting on 7 October 2025 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting without amendment.

### Council Minutes

- 25.400 Council considered and approved all future discussions of partnership matters being treated as reserved business as these were commercial matters, noting that clause 4.2c in the Articles of Government enabled Council to deal with commercial matters on a confidential basis.
- 25.401 Council also approved the redaction of partner names in the Open Minutes of the meetings on 20 and 28 May, 8 July and 7 October 2025 published on the Council's webpage.

## Matters Arising / Status of Actions

- 25.402 Council noted the status of the actions as outlined on the action sheet. The following additional verbal updates were provided:
- a) 25.244d: following legal advice from the University's solicitors, the Missenden Abbey Limited Board had met on 24 November 2025 and voted to reduce itself to one director to complete final business for the company as the Abbey would cease trading on 30 November 2025 and an active board of directors was no longer required. All the directors had resigned apart from Trevor Gabriele, who remained as the sole director and would report updates on the company to Council as needed
  - b) 25.352b: the KPMG report would be circulated as soon as the Clerk to Council received it.

## Chair's Action

- 25.403 Council noted the chair's action taken on 17 November 2025 to approve the Annual Prevent Report and OfS Annual Return. This item would normally have been approved by full Council, but the deadline for submission of the Return to the Office for Students (OfS) was 1 December. Council would receive the report later in the meeting.

## Communication from the OfS

- 25.404 Council received a letter sent by the Chair of the OfS to all chairs of governing bodies on 4 November 2025 to share information about the risks the OfS saw emerging across the sector and to invite chairs to consider these with members of their boards. Council agreed that it was already considering the risks identified in the letter but requested further information about the legal duty to protect freedom of speech. The Chief People Officer informed Council that it was a complex area which now required universities to prove, for example, that a person expressing views that some people found controversial or offensive on a BNU site or at a BNU event had caused them reputational damage. However, the University's updated Code of Practice had been reviewed by an employment lawyer and an external organisation, Alumni For Freedom of Speech, who had both concluded it was good, although it would be kept under review. BNU's emphasis was on staff and students being themselves. The Students' Union (SU) President confirmed that the SU had not identified any challenges around freedom of speech – students were confident in expressing themselves – and had also reviewed the new Code and were content with it.
- 25.405 The Chair noted that Council had not received many reports on freedom of speech because it had not been an issue at BNU.
- 25.406 The Vice-Chancellor noted this was the first time the OfS had written directly to chairs copying in vice-chancellors, which indicated the OfS' increasing focus on governance, which aligned with the Department for Education's focus. Institutional failings were being seen as partly a result of poor governance. The Chair noted that this reemphasised the importance of Council's role.

## Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2025

- 25.407 Council noted that the accounts for both the University and Missenden Abbey Limited had been scrutinised by Resources and Audit Committees, who had recommended them to Council for approval.

### KPMG Audit Findings Report 2024-25

- 25.408 Council considered and approved the KPMG Audit Findings report detailing the results of KPMG's audit of the University's consolidated financial statements and its subsidiary companies. The report had previously been considered by and recommended by Audit Committee:
- a) the report had been prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 requirements;
  - b) there had been no significant changes to the audit plan and strategy;
  - c) the audit was complete;
  - d) KPMG expected to be able to sign their audit opinion soon after Council's approval of the financial statements provided that the outstanding matters noted on page 4 of the report were satisfactorily resolved;

e) The Auditor's Report was expected to be unmodified.

25.409 Council also considered the Letter of Representation to the auditors as recommended by Audit Committee for sign-off by both the Chair of Council and the Vice-Chancellor.

#### Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 July 2025

25.410 Council considered the primary Financial Statements: the Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure, Balance Sheet and Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows for the consolidated group results for the year ended 31 July 2025. These had previously been considered by Resources Committee to reflect upon the financial performance of the University in 2024-25 and by Audit Committee who had provided assurance that FRS102 and OfS SORP audit compliance requirements had been met. Both Committees' comments had been incorporated into the narrative text. Council did not request any further amendments to the narrative text.

25.411 Council noted the University's reported income of £184.9m with expenditure of £184.5m leading to a surplus of £0.445m. Cash remained strong with a closing balance of £54m, an increase of 15% from the previous year, and reserves had held stable at £115m. The cashflow statement showed that the cash being generated from operating activities remained strong at £15.6m.

25.412 The Chair commented that Council must recognise that there had been considerable movement on partnerships and a voluntary severance scheme during the year so ending the year in surplus was to be commended. The work completed in 2024-25, which would continue in 2025-26, would hopefully put BNU in an even stronger position.

25.413 The Chairs of Resources and Audit Committee agreed the results were good and should be celebrated. They noted that there were risks in 2025-26 related to the £3m previously received as a teaching grant from the OfS due to the changing of government rules and from the further future decline in partner income.

25.414 The Chief Impact Officer (CIO) informed Council that there might be some media interest in the statements once published because of the previous Vice-Chancellor's remuneration. The University had a reactive statement prepared, but the remuneration was explained in the Statements and the CIO was content with the account given. The Chair regretted that the situation had arisen due to the actions of a previous Chair, but the University was being transparent about it, including with the OfS.

25.415 The Chair complemented the narrative text that accompanied the accounts, which was now very finessed and akin to a public impact and benefit statement.

25.416 It was agreed that the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) would discuss one member's concern about the return on capital investment during the year with the member after the meeting. It was noted that this was not usually reported in end-of-year accounts.

**Action: Chief Finance Officer**

#### Subsidiary Accounts for the year ending 31 July 2025

25.417 Council considered the accounts for the year ending 31 July 2025 for the University's subsidiary company Missenden Abbey Limited, noting that they had not been prepared on a going concern

basis as the Abbey had ceased trading on 30 November 2025. The individual company account for the Abbey showed an ever-increasing liability as the trading company had reported an £895,000 deficit and returned losses of just under £3m, due to income dropping off and the company accruing money for staff being made redundant. The University had had to make provision for the intercompany debt which resulted in the University having a trading position of a £1.6m deficit while the Group overall made a surplus. The University had also been loaning cash to the Abbey as it had not generated cash, which the University had made provision for on its balance sheet. It was a sunk cost. It was noted that two former independent Missenden Abbey Limited directors had suggested that BNU could sell some of the equipment at the Abbey which might yield some more monies.

- 25.418 The Chair of Audit Committee sought clarification of where the £2m gap between the Group surplus and University trading loss was accounted for. The Chief Finance Officer clarified that this was mainly from the provision for writing off the intercompany debt; Council would be asked to approve the debt write-off when the company was made dormant but at the current time the position only needed to be recorded in the accounts. The Chair added that the company would not be able to repay the debt so it would need to be treated properly by Council, but it once again indicated the University could not have continued supporting the Abbey.
- 25.419 Following the discussions outlined above, Council approved the Letters of Representation and the accounts and accompanying notes and narrative text for Buckinghamshire New University and for Missenden Abbey Limited.

### **Reserved Business: Disposal of Missenden Abbey**

- 25.420 This item was considered as reserved business. See Reserved Minutes.

### **Reserved Business: Uxbridge Campus Proposal**

- 25.421 This item was considered as reserved business. See Reserved Minutes.

### **Financial Position Update**

- 25.422 Council received an updated Operational Budget and Five-Year Budget Extrapolation to 2029-30 alongside the Management Accounts versus Budget (Month Two Year-To-Date). Council had approved the budget in July 2025 to operate at a £2.7m deficit as the University had been very prudent when drafting the budget as the impact of partnership changes had not been clear at that time. The University now had more certainty around partnership income and other areas which amounted to over £3m which would mean the University was forecast to operate in a £0.5m surplus for 2025-26. Recruitment for 2025-26 had been positive which gave a strong position for the forecast.
- 25.423 In response to a query about why international recruitment had been strong, Council was informed that the University had reviewed its portfolio and developed 10 new courses that had recruited strongly internationally. The new Head of International Recruitment had also led a new focus on recruiting stronger students whose English was better and who were better prepared for study at degree level. These new students were much more engaged with studies and university life, including events organised by the SU and volunteering opportunities. Council welcomed these changes while noting that the residual impact of previous international recruitment lingered amongst staff who had experienced less strong students.

- 25.424 The Vice-Chancellor commented that the University needed to refocus on regional Home recruitment, which had been neglected for some time. The University needed to brand itself as a vocational university to reflect its portfolio.
- 25.425 One member sought further explanation around the increase in partner income. The CFO clarified that when the budget had originally been prepared, all income from London School of Science and Technology (LSST) had been removed, but the University was now projecting income of approximately £4m from LSST, which accounted for much of the increase in partner income. It was noted that under the terms of the contract with LSST, the University had been obliged to give 12 months' notice that the partnership would be terminated and to allow LSST one further intake in 2025-26, but this intake had been restricted in size and the partnership was in teach-out. The results of the OfS audit of LSST were still unknown but the University was making plans to step in if the results were as poor as what had been found at Oxford Business College (OBC). If the University was required to step in, it would retain all tuition fees instead of only 20%.
- 25.426 The Chair of Audit Committee noted that the core business was making a £12.1m loss, which the CFO confirmed with partnerships yielding £12.6m profit. While this could present challenges, by the end of the five-year cycle, the University would have reduced its partnership income by 75% and reduced its trading deficit to a much more comfortable position. The University would also benefit from the inflationary uplift to Home tuition fees and from cost-cutting exercises. One member commented that only as recently as 18 months ago, Council was being told that it was impossible to reduce the University's dependence on partnerships; how the reduction was being managed, albeit with some of it being imposed upon the University due to events at OBC, was extremely commendable. It was noted that compared to other providers, the proportion of BNU registered students who were taught at partners was falling which was positive. Other providers continued to expand their partnership provision as it was seen as a means to address financial challenges.
- 25.427 The Chair noted that the OfS would need to receive the papers as part of their enhanced financial monitoring and asked if there was any indication of their view upon the changes. The CFO had not met with the OfS recently but noted that the first set of papers from Resources Committee had been submitted to the OfS some weeks ago, including these papers, and he had not received any communications from them; the CFO expected that if the OfS had serious concerns they would have already contacted him. When the CFO had discussed similar plans to reduce partnerships income, moving the cost base and increasing international recruitment with the OfS in the summer they had been received very positively.

## **Vice-Chancellor's Report**

- 25.428 Council received a report from the Vice-Chancellor on developments within the University since its last Business meeting (8 July 2025) including principles for future campus developments. The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the disestablishment of the Marketing and Student Recruitment directorate, which would be replaced by a new Brand, Communications and Marketing group, which would take the approach of an internal marketing agency, to address the decline in Home numbers. Seven members of the previous directorate would join the group which would be led by a new Director of Brand, Communications and Marketing who had 30 years of agency experience.

The focus would be on standing out and being different, to create BNU's own space in the sector landscape and to change how internal customers were serviced.

- 25.429 The University would also be engaging with all political parties locally to build allies. Universities UK was leading national engagement. The Chair commented that while it might be challenging, BNU needed to be influencing thinking.
- 25.430 The campus would be the focus for investment for the next two years, but a more strategic approach guided by the principles for campus development outlined in the report would be taken. The Student Member commented that he heard fewer reports about broken projectors in classrooms or issues with physical facilities, but that issues tended to be with Wi-Fi and access to MyBNU. Council noted that it had said in the past that it was not comfortable with the low degree of investment in the campus spaces in previous years and that it was concerning that issues with Wi-Fi were a recurring issue. The SU President advised that he was in regular contact with students, the supplier, and the University about Wi-Fi problems. The Vice-Chancellor noted that Wi-Fi was a problem across the sector, with Oxford University also having problems, but Digital and Technical Services were investigating how this could be resolved.
- 25.431 Council was pleased by how much work was underway and by the changes to staff benefits including access to a General Practitioner (GP). The Vice-Chancellor commented that the quality of staff now being recruited had greatly improved, driven partly by the improved benefits offer. It was helping to fill vacancies that previously had been more challenging to fill.

## Students' Union Report

- 25.432 Council received a comprehensive written report from the SU President. The President reported that engagement with all SU activities had increased, but particularly highlighted the increase in catering sales, where income had increased by 10% but the SU had been able to reduce prices by over 20%. The partnership with the University was working extremely well and the SU had been delighted to develop the Joint Principles.
- 25.433 In response to queries, the SU President confirmed:
- a) the SU had recruited 177 student representatives, which was a record
  - b) further guidance on how to use Artificial Intelligence was being developed, with a focus on consistency across the University.
- 25.434 The Chair asked that members were told how they could be involved with the Bucks New Usage upcycle household essentials scheme. It was also noted that discussions about developing a clothes donation bank were underway.

**Action: Students' Union President / Clerk to the Council**

## University Matters

### University Brand Strategy Update

- 25.435 Council considered an update on the development of the University's new brand strategy. The fully developed narrative strategy would be presented to Council in February 2026.

- 25.436 Council was advised that since the strategy had last been discussed with Council, Firehaus had carried out extensive quantitative research, speaking to 1,000 prospective students and 250 prospective parents as well as current students and staff. The main attributes associated with BNU that had emerged from the research were
- a) support was a defining strength
  - b) life-study balance
  - c) strong sense of inclusion and belonging
  - d) strong sense of community and pride
  - e) vocational and career-focused
  - f) real value and accessibility.
- 25.437 Some attributes were in tension such as ambition versus focus, inclusivity versus perception of low entrance requirements creating a quality issue and sense of community versus teams working in siloes. All teams said they were good at communicating with other teams, but that other teams they worked with were not. There was also a sense that students would achieve their degree and wanted to achieve it due to the support, inclusivity, financial flexibility, and proximity to post-university careers provided by BNU.
- 25.438 The attributes had informed the survey Firehaus had then launched. The results showed that study-life balance was the top attribute, and that BNU was doing very well on supporting students.
- 25.439 Firehaus had plotted what BNU stated it was good at on a distinctiveness x demand grid. The grid had shown that BNU was not known for anything: its brand profile was flat, and there were no competitive advantages or disadvantages for brand attributes. Firehaus had data from 127 universities to compare BNU's results to, and this was quite typical: only a few providers stand out, including Oxford and Cambridge universities and Imperial College London. The next step was to consider the rest of the sector landscape and what BNU could credibly aim for. Firehaus had removed attributes the University was not known as being good at and removed attributes that other universities were known for which had resulted in wellbeing and mental health support, value for money and study-life balance being the top BNU attributes, which aligned with the qualitative research. Firehaus was now sense checking the findings and considering how to create a cohesive narrative about this that BNU could use to become known.
- 25.440 Council commented that being a vocational university was a major differentiator for BNU and needed to be included, and that the final narrative strategy needed to avoid too many soft attributes. Council also commented that the University provided extensive hands-on experience that would be useful for the 'real world'. Firehaus would consider how the vocational element could be incorporated into the strategy.

#### GP Clinic Pilot

- 25.441 Council considered a proposal seeking its approval to establish a pilot BNU Primary Care Hub offering GP, Physiotherapy and Disability Services on campus, with an accompanying business case, financial breakdown, return on investment analysis and implementation timeline between 2025 and 2030. The long-term aim of the project was to create a permanent health facility designed to improve student access to timely healthcare, safeguard placement continuity, and enhance retention and wellbeing. The Hub would operate through a dual-stream model:

- a) free, NHS-aligned services for students, including GP consultations, physiotherapy triage, disability and DSA assessments, and minor-illness appointments
- b) private physiotherapy and specialist clinics available to staff and the wider community, generating income to support long-term sustainability.

25.442 In addition, the Hub would adopt a civic-impact model whereby for every two paid physiotherapy sessions delivered, one free session would be offered to an individual from the local community who would otherwise be unable to access physiotherapy. This would strengthen BNU's civic mission and enhance the Hub's value to the wider Buckinghamshire community.

25.443 The Hub would meet all Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) requirements, and all other compliance requirements. Local GPs were interested in partnering with the University and it would provide placement opportunities for students on BNU's health programmes.

25.444 In response to queries from Council members, it was clarified that the pilot would be a satellite service registered as a sister service by a local GP. Students would have the choice to register as temporary or permanent patients with the surgery. If a permanent private clinic was established, it would bring several services already being delivered at BNU under its purview. It was agreed that the Chair of Student Experience Committee, who was a former GP, would meet with the staff leads on the project to discuss her detailed questions, for example around medical notes. It was also agreed that the staff leads would meet with Independent Member Francine Godrich who had some legal questions.

**Action: PSE Services Member Charlotte Stewart /  
Associate Professor in Physician Associate / Francine  
Godrich / Dr Annet Gamell**

25.445 Council recognised the value of the project and approved the pilot, subject to clarification of legal and technical questions raised by two members. However, Council noted that moving into healthcare provision was not necessarily low risk: there was reputational and legal risk if medical malpractice should occur. Council agreed that lessons must be learned from the pilot, including how to avoid the service making a loss if it moved to the second stage. Benchmarking and lessons learned from other providers who had established such a facility would also be valuable, particularly on governance.

## **Annual Safeguarding Report**

25.446 Council considered and approved the report for 2024-25 and noted that Council's Safeguarding Ambassador had met with the Director of Student Success to review the report ahead of the meeting. The Ambassador highlighted that safeguarding was an extremely important duty for the University.

25.447 The Director of Student Success highlighted the increasing number of cases, with 1,291 reports being submitted through the University's Report + Support system during the year. A particular focus during the year had been on ensuring that all staff understood that safeguarding was a collective responsibility. The Director's main concern was around safeguarding at partnerships: work had been completed with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (External Collaborations) and the partnerships team to create an induction and training programme on safeguarding, and partner managers had been given questions to ask partners to ensure continuous monitoring. There was

also some concern about international students who could be reluctant to seek support due to stigma around it and because of differences of perception about what mental health support meant.

- 25.448 In response to queries, it was clarified that the 1,291 reports sometimes included several reports about one student, but this was rare. Benchmarking indicated that reporting rates were much higher at BNU than other providers, but that was because the Report + Support tool was used more widely at BNU and not a reflection of a higher risk. The University reviewed trends in reporting and introduced in-year interventions as required, such as offering advice on finance or organising events to counter homesickness and loneliness for students who remained in University accommodation over the summer break.

## **OIA Annual Report and Action Plan**

- 25.449 Council noted the report which covered 2024. The number of complaints taken by BNU students to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator in Higher Education (OIA) had declined while nationally the number of complaints had risen; 1 in 8 BNU students who had complained had taken their complaints to the OIA. The Resolutions Manager reported that the University had reduced its Completion of Procedures (COP) issuing to nearer BNU's band median. In 2025, 28 complaints had been taken to the OIA to date, eighteen of which related to OBC.
- 25.450 In response to a query about how students submitted their complaints, it was confirmed that complaints were not discounted if students did not complete a complaint form. If students stated in an email that they wished to make a formal complaint, they would be encouraged to complete a complaint form as it provided helpful detail but the complaint would still be considered if they did not. A report about how the University responded to complaints internally would be taken to Student Experience Committee. It was noted that the OIA also considered academic appeal and mitigating circumstances outcomes as well as complaints, and students were clearly signposted through all stages of those BNU processes including to the OIA at the end of the final BNU stage. It was also noted that the complaint numbers for 2025 were impacted by some group complaints.
- 25.451 The Chair thanked the Resolutions Manager for her team's important work.

## **Council Dashboard**

- 25.452 It was noted that the demonstration of the Council dashboard had been postponed (see minute 25.396 above).

## **Report from Audit Committee**

### Chair's Summary Report

- 25.453 Council received the summary of the work of the Audit Committee since the previous meeting of Council. The Chair of Audit Committee confirmed that the Committee had been content with all the items Council was being asked to approve.

### Risk Management Policy

- 25.454 Council approved the revised Risk Policy. Risks had been restructured into different categories. New due diligence processes were now being embedded.

#### Annual Risk Management Report (2024-25)

25.455 Council approved the annual report on risk management, as recommended by Audit Committee. The trends in the report reflected some volatility, partly because there was a lag in the impact of mitigations on risks.

#### Audit Committee Annual Report to Council and the Vice-Chancellor (2024-25)

25.456 Council approved the report which provided assurances from the Audit Committee in relation to the areas listed without comment.

25.457 Council also approved the following reports which were appended to the report without comment:

- a) Annual Internal Audit Report (2024-25) prepared by KCG, summarising assurance levels achieved across all audit assignments completed during the reporting period;
- b) Report on compliance of Buckinghamshire New University with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2024-25), which was approved for submission to Research England;
- c) Value for Money Monitoring Report (2024-25).

#### BNU Updated Internal Audit Charter

25.458 Council approved the Charter which had been updated by KCG to comply with the Global Internal Audit Standards (2025) issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors.

#### Annual Prevent Report and OfS Monitoring and Accountability Return

25.459 Council received the Annual Prevent report and OfS Monitoring and Accountability Return.

### **Report from Resources Committee**

#### Chair's Summary Report

25.460 Council received the summary of the work of the Resources Committee since the previous meeting of Council including review of the draft Financial Statements; recommendation of the disposal of Missenden Abbey, on which the Committee had assumed all due diligence had been done, and the Uxbridge campus proposal to Council for approval; and recommendation of the Modern Slavery Statement for approval.

#### Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

25.461 Council approved the updated Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for the year ending 31 July 2025, as recommended by Resources Committee, for publication on the University website. The CFO noted that Resources Committee had asked the University to reflect on how this work was embedded institutionally.

### **Report from Student Experience Committee**

#### Chair's Summary Report

25.462 Council received the summary of the work of the Student Experience Committee (SEC) since the previous meeting of Council. The Chair of SEC advised Council that SEC had given the draft SU Accounts detailed consideration and recommended them for approval by Council as the auditors had raised no concerns and had affirmed the SU's status as a going concern. The timing of this SEC meeting would be reviewed as the Committee had only seen the draft accounts. Independent Member Jackie Westaway, who had acted as Chair of the SEC meeting, commented that the range

of the SU's offer was extremely impressive, and the staff who attended the Committee were very positive.

#### Students' Union Accounts for the year ending 31 July 2024

25.463 Council approved the Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements for Bucks Students' Union, as recommended by Student Experience Committee. The SU President confirmed that the figures in the accounts had not changed from the draft accounts.

### **Report from Governance Committee**

25.464 Council received the summary of the work of the Governance Committee since the previous meeting of Council. Committee member Sadie Groom highlighted that the Committee had decided the appointment of a Senior Independent Governor was not needed at the current time. It had also agreed that the recruitment process to replace Justin Sullivan should commence immediately with a particular requirement for candidates with entrepreneurial experience. Recruitment was being led through social media.

25.465 It was agreed that the Clerk to the Council would share recruitment materials with members to promote the vacancy. The Chair noted that the recruitment process would be robust but required a wide pool of candidates.

**Action: Clerk to the Council and Head of Governance and Recruitment**

### **Reserved Business: Remuneration Matters**

25.466 This item was considered under Reserved Business. See Reserved Minutes.

### **Starred Items**

25.467 These items had been deemed starred items which would only be discussed if the Clerk to Council received comments before the meeting. No comments had been received.

#### Use of the University Seal and Coat of Arms

25.468 Council noted that the University Seal had been used on two occasions since the last meeting.

#### Minutes from the University Committees

25.469 Council received the minutes of Senate (26 September 2025) and the minutes of the University Collaborations Committee (1 May, 25 June, and 9 September 2025).

#### Minutes from Council Committees

25.470 Council received the following minutes of Council Committee meetings: Audit Committee (16 September and 11 November 2025); Governance Committee (14 October 2025) Resources Committee (3 November 2025); Student Experience Committee (21 October 2025).

### **Date of next meeting**

25.471 The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 3-4 February 2026.

25.472 In response to a query about the appointment of a new Chancellor, it was noted that Governance Committee had agreed this should be taken forward later in 2026.