University Of York

Constitution and Nominations Committee

Matters for note by the University Council at its meeting on 29 November 2023 arising from the meeting of the Constitution and Nominations Committee held on 15 November 2023

1. Terms of reference and membership 2023/24

The Committee approved its membership and terms of reference for 2023/24, noting that going forward, the Vice-Chancellor would be the sole senior staff representative on the Committee and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor would no longer attend. The Chair and the University Secretary also noted the need to address the gender balance on the Committee, as this was a specific commitment of the University for its senior bodies, noting also intersecting protected characteristics within its membership in the longer term.

2. Recruitment of Council/ARC independent and co-opted members

The University Secretary reported that [redacted] applications had been received, and the positive action statement regarding gender and other protected characteristics had yielded a diverse range of candidates. CNC would be updated on the number shortlisted once the panel - a small group of Council members - had met that afternoon, and an interim verbal update would be provided to Council at its meeting on 29 November. Face to face interviews were scheduled for 6 December. The University Secretary confirmed that it would be possible to recommend shortlisted but ultimately unsuccessful candidates for co-option to a Council committee should any further vacancies arise in the near future.

3. Proposed new Ordinance on Academic Representation

The Committee endorsed a new Ordinance 13 on Academic Representation for Council approval.

4. University Court Review - Final Report (November 2023)

Subject to one instance of rewording and clarification of the status of the Report, the Committee recommended the Court Review Report for Council approval, including:

- the recommendation to disband the University Court after its Annual Meeting in December;
- proposals to move forward under a new model of engagement led by External Relations, sustaining/developing tailored relationships with individual members and creating a core package of communications based on current provision (e.g. communication of University achievements, graduation ceremonies, Festival of Ideas).

The University Secretary reported that the Chancellor had been engaged throughout the review process, and observed that it was important to manage reporting of the outcome at Court's December meeting, which would take the form of a celebratory milestone occasion. The Committee commended the Review, observing that the report was rigorous and thorough. It thanked all those involved, and all Court members for their commitment and contribution to the work of the University.

5. Honorary Degree Nominations

a. The Committee **noted** that the award of honorary degrees fulfilled the following important functions:
   - a ceremonial contribution to graduation ceremonies, providing inspiration to graduating students as an expression of the University's values;
   - direct academic benefits through the development of relationships with honorary graduates;
   - [redacted]

b. The Committee **observed** that in the longer term, there was a need to:
   - review and clarify the criteria for award and their relative weighting, to explicitly include:
     - distinction in and impact beyond a nominee's core role;
     - fit with the University's academic activity and institutional values;
     - concrete and realistic plans for relationship development.
   - revisit the nomination procedures in order to elicit an appropriate level of focus and detail in response to the above criteria.

c. **Resolved:**

1. **To recommend for Council approval that honorary degrees (DUniv) be offered to the following candidates:**
   - [redacted]

2. **That further amplification of five further nominations would be sought, with particular attention to the proposed relationship with the University, for consideration via Chair's action on behalf of CNC and Council, in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor.**

3. **That the remaining nominations would *not* be taken forward.**