

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES

The 487th meeting of the Council was held at **08.35am (Canberra) on Friday 9 August 2024** in the Mills Room, Chancelry,

Members present

1. Chancellor, the Hon Julie Bishop
2. Pro-Chancellor, Ms. Alison Kitchen
3. Vice-Chancellor, Distinguished Professor Genevieve Bell
4. Dr Anne-Marie Schwirtlich AM
5. Ms. Padma Raman PSM
6. Professor Sarah Pearson
7. Dr Larry Marshall
8. Mr. Rob Whitfield
9. Professor Craig Moritz
10. Dr Liz Allen
11. Professor Lyndall Strazdins
12. Ms Megan Easton
13. Phoenix O'Neill
14. Mr. Edan Habel
15. Professor Tony Connolly

Apologies

1. Tanya Hosch

In attendance

1. Provost - Dr Rebekah Brown
2. Chief Operating Officer - Mr. Jonathan Churchill
3. Chief Financial Officer - Mr. Michael Lonergan

Secretariat staff

1. University Secretary - Mr. Phillip Tweedie
2. Senior Governance Officer - Ms. Leslie McDonald
3. Senior Governance Officer - Ms. Emma Murrell (Zoom)

PART 1 – PROCEDURAL ITEMS

*1 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES

Council met in private session at 8:35am with the formal meeting commencing at 9am.

At the meeting, Council:

- Welcomed Rob Whitfield for his first meeting of Council and formally welcomed Alison Kitchen to her first Council meeting as the new Pro-Chancellor.
- Noted that the terms of Drs Moritz, Allen and Strazdins are expiring and thanked them for their contributions.

*2 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- There were no requests from members for any leave of absence.

*3 DISCLOSURE OF MATERIAL PERSONAL INTEREST

- Dr Liz Allen raised a potential conflict of interest regarding her participation in the 2024 NTEU Elections. Dr Allen did not take part in discussion of Item C11.

*4 ARRANGEMENT OF AGENDA

- Item 16 was moved ahead of Item 12 due to presenter availability.
- Item 18 was unstarred due to presenter availability.
- Item 22 was moved to follow Item 10 due to subject matter overlap.

Resolved:

1. Council **approved** that unstarred items be dealt with as proposed in the agenda.

*C5. MINUTES

- Council noted two proposed amendments to the minutes for meeting No. 486 relating to the Reconciliation Action Plan

Resolved:

1. Council **approved** the minutes of meeting No. 485 31 May 2024.
2. Council **approved** the minutes of meeting No. 486 14 June 2024 subject to proposed amendments.

*C6 MATTERS ARISING – COUNCIL DELIBERATIONS

Council discussed each of the items on the Matters Arising list.

- The two staff related recommendations in the Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy review have been accepted and progress will be reported through standard Council WHS reporting. Council approved the closure of this matter.
- Council noted the ongoing review into the 2023 Emeritus Professor Appointments and that the University's procedure has been amended to create a review mechanism for such appointments. This matter will remain open.

Resolved:

1. Council **noted** the Matters Arising update; and
2. Council **approved** the closure of one matter as proposed.

PART 2 – KEY BUSINESS ITEMS

***C7 CHANCELLOR’S REPORT**

- The Chancellor provided an update to Council on various ANU activities undertaken since the last meeting.
- The update included discussions with the Commonwealth, ANU Graduations Ceremonies and the new Australian Governor General, an ANU alumna.

Resolved:

1. Council **noted** the Chancellor’s Report.

***C8. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S REPORT**

- The Vice-Chancellor provided an update to Council and discussed matters across four broad themes – Culture, Operations, Engagement & Finance.
- This update included attendance at Senate Estimates, progress regarding COO recruitment, security on campus and endorsement of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

Resolved:

1. Council **noted** the report from the Vice-Chancellor.

***C9. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S 6 MONTH REPORT**

- The Vice-Chancellor provided a retrospective to Council on the first 6 months of their tenure.
- The VC noted the love and affection that the community has for the University’s place in the world and the importance of aligning our culture to our purpose. This includes how to better communicate that purpose.
- The VC noted the significant work to streamline operations including functional realignment, policy consolidation, financial controls and raising the profile of the leadership team.
- In discussion, Council noted the significant achievements already made and the importance of maintaining the pace of much needed reform.

Resolved:

1. Council **noted** the report from the Vice-Chancellor.

***C10. ANU FINANCIAL UPDATE**

- The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer spoke to this update which included the University’s updated July financials.
- An update was also provided on activities underway including financial controls, LTIP rationalisation and consolidation of College financial staff.
- In discussion, Council noted that while controls are starting to have an impact, more work needs to be done.

Resolved:

1. Council **noted** the University’s June 2024 year-to-date financial results as compared to the 2024 Budget and the Q2 Forecast.

***C11. SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL FOOTING**

- The Vice-Chancellor spoke to this item and provided updates across four broad areas: risk appetite, engagement with the government, ongoing testing and implementation of financial controls as well as challenges seen in both the University's cost and revenue.
- In discussion, Council noted that realising the full benefit of functional realignment requires a whole of University approach. The University is currently progressing Phase 3 of this process which includes a data driven approach to reconsider academic and research support, communications, facilities and governance.
- Council members discussed the importance of the ongoing cultural change across University leadership, the importance of accountability and the need to continue to push and embed financial controls.
- The Vice-Chancellor discussed the need to remove \$250m from the University's underlying cost base. Council endorsed this target and requested more information on how that target would be met, to be provided as soon as possible.
- Council commended the Vice-Chancellor and leadership team on the work that has taken to date.

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the paper and the presentation.

***C12. STUDENT SAFETY & WELLBEING REPORT**

- Chair of the Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee, Catherine Fitzpatrick, DVCA Professor Grady Venville and Registrar, Scott Pearsall, spoke to the report.
- Ms. Fitzpatrick noted the Committee's proposed new members, discussions around the Mental Health Strategy and a recent deep dive into Student Communications.
- Professor Venville discussed and answered queries regarding the Anti-Racism Taskforce, food insecurity on campus and the uptake of training for staff.

Resolved:

1. Council **noted** the Student Safety and Wellbeing Report.

***C13. STAFF WHS REPORT (1 JANUARY to 29 FEBRUARY 2024)**

- Chief People Officer, Kate Witenden and Deputy Chief People Officer, Kylie Grady spoke to this report.
- Ms. Grady noted ongoing work to scope a Figtree replacement, enhancements to our safety culture and provided commentary to trends seen in the dashboard.
- Council discussed the University's efforts to develop tools and practices to combat sexual discrimination and SASH incidents.
- Council requested that the Audit & Risk Management Committee are given an update regarding the various WHS audits referred to in the update.

Resolved:

1. Council **noted** and **endorsed** the Work Health and Safety Performance Report for the period 1 January to 30 June 2024.

PART 3 – STRATEGIC ISSUES AND DISCUSSIONS

***C14. SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT POLICY**

- Director of the Investment Office, Mary Fallon, spoke to this Item.
- Ms Fallon highlighted that the proposed updated implementation will initially focus on negative screens that exclude civilian small arms manufacturers and controversial weapons manufacturers. However, work will progress to develop positive screens around gender equality, First Nations companies and Modern Slavery.
- Council noted the importance of continuing to manage the University's investments in a fiscally responsible way while also ensuring that it continues to do the right thing with its resources. The communications around this matter will need to be transparent about what is meant by controversial weapons.
- Council commended the Chief Financial Officer and team on the consultation process, one of the most widespread in the University's history, and the professional way in which the team handled disruptions during the public town hall. Council noted that the Community should be thanked for their engagement.

Resolved:

1. Council **approved** the implementation of the Socially Responsible Investment to include the exclusion of controversial weapons manufacturers and civilian small arms manufacturers;
2. Council **noted** that management will progress work to develop positive screens for gender equality, First Nations companies and Modern Slavery.

***C15 DIGITAL PLAN REPORT**

- Acting Chief Information Officer, Mr. Sajid Hassan, spoke to this Report.
- Mr Hassan provided an update on a new Learning Management System, risks to the Zero Trust Network project and proposed mitigations as well as approaches to Privileged Access Management.
- In discussion Council noted that although the dashboard reporting is appreciated, additional effort could be made in quantifying the positive impact on productivity.

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the Digital Master Plan Report.

***C16. BELOW ZERO**

- Professor Lachlan Blackhall, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Mr. Jeremy Matthew, the Director of Facilities & Services as well as Ms. Clare de Castella, the Associate Director of Sustainability, spoke to this item.
- Professor Blackhall noted the team's recent move to the Facilities & Services Division and the benefits that will bring.
- In discussion Council noted the ongoing efforts to reduce emissions and the need to appropriately consider and manage any move towards offsets.
- Council thanked the team for the progress made to date in dealing with an incredibly difficult problem.

Resolved

1. Council **noted** progress made by the Below Zero project to date.

PART 4 – ANNUAL REPORTING

***C17. 2023 ADVANCEMENT ANNUAL REPORT**

- Vice-President of Advancement, Alex Furman, spoke to this Report.
- Mr. Furman provided an update on work to improve gift governance, creation of a typology of gifts to track and support the 800+ gifts and bequests the ANU oversees.
- Mr. Furman also noted his thanks for the work undertaken by members of Council to engage with donors and highlight the excellent work undertaken at ANU.
- Council thanked Mr. Furman and team for their ongoing work.

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the Advancement Annual Report 2023; and
2. Council **noted** the Fundraising and Engagement Performance Report 2023

C18. INFORMATION SECURITY UPDATE

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the Information Security Update.

C19. ANU INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO UPDATE

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the investment portfolio review of the LTIP and GCF.

C20 CORPORATE PLAN QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the progress of performance under the ANU 2024-2027 Corporate Plan.

***C21. HONORARY DEGREE NOMINATIONS**

- The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor spoke to this Item.
- Council discussed the achievements of both s47F - Public Interest Condi and Dr Mason. If awarded, a conferral for Dr Mason would need to take place off campus due to ill health.
- During discussion, Council emphasised the importance of the University continuing to focus on potential recipients from non-traditional backgrounds.
- Council noted that one proposal has been removed from consideration.

Resolved

1. Council **approved** the award of an honorary degree to the following people, as endorsed by the Honorary Degrees Committee on 13 June 2024:
 - s47F - Public Interest Conditional Exemptions - Personal Privacy
 - Dr Rosamond Mason – HonDSc

***C22. FINANCIAL RISK APPETITE**

- The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer, Michael Lonergan, spoke to this update. The CFO noted that many existing parameters incorporated into the Financial Plan were set as the University grappled with COVID-19 and should be revisited.
- This item has been discussed at the Finance Committee and is informed by best

practice across the sector.

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the risk appetite methodology presented with further modelling to be undertaken and incorporated within the University's 2025 Budget

PART 6 – OTHER MATTERS FOR NOTING

C23. 2024/2025 INSURANCE RENEWAL STRATEGY UPDATE

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the update on the 2024/25 Insurance Renewal Strategy;
2. Council **noted** the ANU Natural Hazard Loss Modelling draft outputs, as summarised in the Insurance Renewal Strategy update; and
3. Council **noted** the brokerage fees concluded with [REDACTED] for the 2024/25 insurance renewal.

C24. COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND ACADEMIC BOARD – EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

Resolved

1. Council **noted** Council Committees and Academic Board Summaries from June and July 2024.

C25. COUNCIL COMMITTEES MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Resolved

1. Council **approved** the proposed appointments to the Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee.

C26 ANU FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the recent resignation of Ms. Jane MacLeod from the ANU Foundation Board.

C27. TUITION FEE BANDS 2025

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the Tuition Fees for 2025, as presented.

C28. CHANGES TO ACADEMIC ORGANISATION UNITS

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the change in name of the National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing Research (308) to Yardhura Walani.
2. Council **noted** the disestablishment of two inactive AOU in the John Curtin School of Medical Research - Genome Sciences (225) and Cancer Biology and Therapeutics (235).
3. Council **noted** the disestablishment of five inactive AOU in the Research School of Physics - Centre for Plasmas and Fluids (236), Atomic and Molecular Physics Laboratory (C05), Plasma Research Laboratory (C07), Non-Linear Physics Centre (C22), and Department of Quantum Science (C24).
4. Council **noted** the disestablishment of one inactive AOU, in the Crawford School of Public Policy - the Centre for Democratic Institutions (D31).

C29. LEGISLATION UPDATE

Resolved

1. Council **noted** that no new legislation has been approved or made by Council or the Vice-Chancellor since the Council meeting on 14 June 2024.
2. Council **noted** the implementation of actions required following approval of changes to legislation up to and including 14 June 2024.

C30. GRANTS AND CONSULTANCIES

Resolved

1. Council **noted** the report on grants and consultancies.

C31. UNIVERSITY SEAL REPORT

Resolved:

1. Council **noted** that there has been no use of the University Seal for the period 14 June 2024 to 29 July 2024.

PART 7 – OTHER BUSINESS

*32. OTHER BUSINESS

- Council noted their admiration for Professor Peter Yu's policy work as reflected in the Prime Minister's recent speech at the Garma Festival. It was also noted that the University should continue to monitor its capability to meet its goals in this space.

Resolved:

1. Council **considered** any other business.

*33. 2025 DRAFT CALENDAR

Resolved:

1. Council **noted** the 2025 draft meeting calendar for Council and its Committees.

*34. NEXT MEETING

1. Council **noted** that the next meeting will take place on Friday 4 October 2024.

The meeting closed at 3.05pm (AEDT)



The Hon Julie Bishop
Chancellor
The Australian National University

Date: 4 October 2024
