



## The Council, 24 April 2017

### Review of Court: Post-implementation Update Report

#### 1. Purpose of paper/action requested

- 1.1 This paper provides an update of activity undertaken in response to the recommendations of the Council Task and Finish Group established to review the University Court in 2014-15 and Chaired by Dr Simon Eden, which were accepted by Council in July 2015.
- 1.2 Council is invited to note the actions taken to date, and the wider context in which these activities take place.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting in November 2014 Council approved the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to review Court as the final element of the broader review encompassing the University's governing instruments and alumni engagement<sup>1</sup>. Membership included members of Council, relevant academic and professional services staff, and staff and the President of the Students' Union.

Whilst taking into account broader arrangements for stakeholder and external engagement, communication and partnership, the review was originally charged with considering an annual stakeholder event to replace Court, taking into account:

- The purpose and type of such an event;
- The groups of stakeholders at which it should be targeted;
- The implications for Court in terms of:
  - Role;
  - Composition;
  - Conduct of business
- Any changes

#### 3. Process and Recommendations

- 3.1 The Review Group focused on the need for Court or any successor arrangements to make a stronger and more meaningful contribution to stakeholder and civic/community engagement in the context of other activity and developments, and reflected on feedback from attendees and exhibitors at the meeting of Court held on 12 March 2014. An interim

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<sup>1</sup> Court was originally the statutory body of the University charged with overall responsibility for institutional affairs. Following reforms to the sector in the 1990s the residual role of Court was limited to providing a forum by which to engage stakeholders, particularly alumni and senior and community leaders from within the SCR. From 2011, meetings were preceded by a University 'showcase' style event with invitations extended to a wider range of SCR stakeholders - with limited success. Following changes to the University's constitution in 2013-14, Court was removed from the University's Charter and Statutes and its extremely limited 'powers' and composition were moved to Regulations of Council. Wider developments around the 'civic' roles of universities and other specific activities by the University, including a Council review of alumni engagement, provided further impetus and context.

report was endorsed by Council in April 2015 and subsequent consultation with Court members undertaken. Council approved the final report in July 2015.

- 3.2 The Review Group concluded that Court was intended to provide a forum for institutional accountability to various stakeholders and raise awareness of the University's contribution to the city-region amongst these groups. It identified three key areas of focus:
- Strategic Leadership – facilitating dialogue and reporting at senior level within the SCR;
  - Dialogue with other stakeholders, e.g. alumni, schools, former lay members of committees;
  - Showcase and celebration – civic engagement.

It concluded that the format of Court was no longer effective to achieve these objectives but did not propose establishing any new body or structure, which would be better achieved through the pre-existing and more targeted initiatives identified during the review.

- 3.3 Nine recommendations sought to offer a framework for a more strategic approach to external and stakeholder engagement in the context of existing and new activities, and that any additional activity must add value. Activities would need to evolve over time to meet changing institutional circumstances and respond to the broader external environment. Primary responsibility for implementing the recommendations was agreed to rest with Corporate Communications, working with other departments as appropriate, in particular DARE and R&IS.

#### **4. Response to specific recommendations**

- 4.1 See Appendix 1.

#### **5. Other related activity**

- 5.1 The University Strategic Plan 2016-2021, under the theme 'Our Place: Locally and Globally,' states that "We are a global university rooted in Sheffield." The University strategy includes actions to enhance its strengths locally and globally, to drive the regional economy, forge key partnerships and to support social and cultural vibrancy. Additional activity takes place broadly linked to the 'Our Public Responsibility' section of the Strategic Plan.
- 5.2 In Autumn 2016 the University reviewed the governance and management of City Region Activity and the wider work being undertaken (including that of the Public Value Sub-Group) following the decision to prioritise activity around Regional Economy, Education, Health and Culture, and to communicate institutional strengths and achievements in these areas more clearly. The portfolio of the Chief Operating Officer includes Engagement and Public Responsibility, which will help to consolidate links and further integrate activities in and across relevant Professional Services.

Further examples of related activities and events are set out in Appendices 2 and 3 and a short briefing report from KPMG entitled 'Connected universities, connected cities' is available as Appendix 4 in the BoardPad Reading Room, for information.

#### **6. Next steps**

- 6.1 Progress will continue to be monitored and reported to Council as part of wider reporting of particular initiatives.

**The Council, 24 April 2017****Review of Court****Progress against recommendations agreed by Council on 6 July 2015****Recommendation 1:**

That Court should be formally disestablished with immediate effect, the University's Regulations amended accordingly and this decision communicated to former Court members by Strategy, Planning and Governance.

**Update:**

Letters to Court members were sent on behalf of the University Secretary in July 2015. References to Court were removed from the University's constitutional documents with effect from 2015/16.

**Recommendation 2:**

That UEB monitor and evaluate new developments regarding the governance of the city-region, and the University's involvement in these initiatives. This should be the basis for a "Forum" to engage key strategic stakeholders in the development and achievement of the University's strategic goals.

**Update:**

Ongoing work through existing bodies- SCR LEP, Science & Innovation Board.  
SCR engagement plan approved July 2015.  
Regular updates to UEB by thematic area.  
Central University role in the Sheffield City Region and Lancashire LEP Science and Innovation Audit.

'Our Place Locally and Globally', 'Our Strategic Partners' amongst the five themes of the new Strategic Plan.

Following the presentation about the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District and SCR vision that the President & Vice-Chancellor gave to Council at the June 2016 Away Day, the University carried out a review of its city and regional activity, which has been discussed subsequently and UEB with a view to further enhancing and refining the University's approach (see update to recommendation 7 regarding emergent new structures, below). A large amount of activity with a regional dimension is embedded within core activities, rather than as a distinct initiative. A summary of activity by theme is attached at Appendix 3.

Regular updates via the President & Vice-Chancellor's report to Council.

Dedicated web pages: 'Working with the City Region':

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/about/city>

### **Recommendation 3:**

That the Alumni Board considers how the alumni body might have the opportunity for a form of annual report or presentation from the University and Students' Union.

#### **Update:**

The Alumni Board approved that there will be a biennial alumni lecture delivered by a distinguished alumni and this could be the opportunity for an update prior to the lecture. The inaugural lecture will take place during 2018 and DARE are actively seeking a speaker, with the date to be confirmed subject to their availability.

Council received the annual report of the Alumni Board in October 2016. As well as details about the Charter Day, it referred to funding for distinguished alumni lectures, alumni awards, and developing fora for alumni to offer feedback as well as a means for alumni to support the achievement of strategic objectives, and the Students' Union.

### **Recommendation 4:**

That the Students' Union develops its External Engagement Strategy to ensure that it supports the objectives set out in this report.

The University and Union will wish to liaise on how their respective engagement projects are best co-ordinated.

#### **Update:**

The SU Strategic Plan was updated in 2016. It includes, as an enabler, the section Strong Relationships. This describes the Students' Union's engagement outside of its own student leadership and staff team and implies positive working practices which ensure both parties work effectively together to shared objectives. The vision statement reads:

When delivering our work we connect with our members first and foremost. We also connect our members with each other to build networks. Our other relationships are important: the University, the local community, alumni, the student movement, local & national decision makers and the rest of the world.

As part of the implementation, actions include the development of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

### **Recommendation 5:**

That Corporate Affairs considers how former Lay Members of Council can be kept informed and engaged, in liaison with Strategy, Planning and Governance.

#### **Update:**

Corporate Communications and DARE liaise with the Governance team in SPG to provide contact details periodically.

An annual update will be provided of Lay members of central University committees whose terms of office have expired.

### **Recommendation 6:**

That Corporate Affairs/DARE consider the development of a 'University Day' or similar showcase activity in the context of existing alumni/public/civic engagement activities and relevant elements of the Civic Engagement Strategy.

#### **Update:**

In 2016 the University held 'Charter Day' celebrations in a series of global events, targeted primarily at alumni. The aim was to re-engage with alumni around the world and celebrate the founding of the University. Plans are now for certain targeted events to take place in areas where we hope to launch international alumni groups.

Other showcase activities already take place such as Discovery Night, Krebs Festival, Festival of the Mind and Festival of Arts & Humanities, engaging alumni and the city and it was felt these regular events rather than one specific day were the best way to showcase the University.

Dedicated web pages: 'Working with the City Region':  
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/about/city>

### **Recommendation 7:**

That the UEB Public Value Sub-Group is engaged throughout the development of recommendations (b)-(f) and considers the addition of an external member.

#### **Update:**

PVSG regards its brief as including dialogue and interaction with the many stakeholders of the University (both internal and external) around three core questions posed by UEB:

- 1) What is the University doing about decarbonising the energy economy?
- 2) How does the University ensure that all its students, staff and graduates have the knowledge and skills to be active citizens in a world where sustainability is a major challenge?
- 3) How can we manage the development of our campus to meet the needs of our ongoing growth, whilst contributing to a sustainable urban environment?

The PVSG action plan covered embedding public value into overarching University strategies and key University 'values' commitments; involving dialogue and engagement with external stakeholders, for example engaging with Sheffield City Council and the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector about using academic research to help develop a cohesion strategy for Sheffield. PVSG has worked closely with Public Engagement and Civic Engagement teams, and had members staff who head those areas.

The Group considered the possibility of appointing an external member but ultimately decided that this was not necessary in view of its specific brief and the frequent level of external dialogue and consultation.

In connection with the review of city and regional engagement activity (see update for recommendation 2), and a subsequent task and finish group that proposed an emergent new governance structure for overseeing and coordinating institutional activity, the Public Value Sub-Group has been dissolved in its current form with new terms of reference and

membership to be proposed to best support the new arrangements. Four priority themes are to be: Regional Economy, Education, Health, and Culture.

'Our Public responsibility' is one of five themes of the new Strategic Plan

### **Recommendation 8:**

That DARE/Corporate Affairs develop a means of effecting continued contact with former members of Court in the context of ongoing work to map and evaluate existing external connections, thereby mitigating the risk that they may feel 'disenfranchised' by its disestablishment and ensure that their interest in and enthusiasm for the University are retained.

### **Update:**

DARE/Corporate Communications now have contact details of all former members.

Option to receive annual alumni magazine and quarterly updates (DARE).

A letter was sent out in April 2016 to all former Court members who were not already on the alumni database and receiving communications from us. The letter went with a reply slip enabling former court members to opt-in to receiving news from the University via DARE's communications (magazine and e-newsletters) together with any one-off announcements from Corporate Communications

### **Recommendation 9:**

That Council should receive an update on progress made against the Task and Finish Group's recommendations in October 2016, after a full year under the new arrangements, to provide assurance that the matters identified during the review were being satisfactorily addressed and that enhanced overall external engagement is being achieved.

### **Update:**

This was originally proposed to be an item in the newsletter but was revised in view of a recommendation in the Council Effectiveness Review regarding post-implementation reviews, and moved to the agenda of the April 2017 meeting.

**The Council, 24 April 2017**

**Review of Court**

**Related Developments**

<p><b>Regional activities – City and Regional Engagement</b></p>
<p>The University continues to work closely with the SCR LEP and is playing a leading role in the local growth agenda, e.g. responding to the Government’s consultation on the Industrial Strategy Green Paper and is well placed to actively participate in the strategy’s development. The recent announcements by McLaren and Boeing are high profile examples of success.</p>
<p>Working with Sheffield Hallam, the university has launched the three-year Sheffield Innovation Programme to enable SMEs access to academics, expertise and facilities to stimulate innovation.</p>
<p><b>City and Cultural Engagement Office</b></p> <p>Led by Vanessa Toulmin, activities are directly related to the City and Region; through, for example, the Cultural Consortium, Sheffield BIDS, Renew, Castlegate, Year of making, Love Square, Festival of the Mind.</p>
<p><b>SCR Vision</b></p> <p>Heather Campbell is working with Sheffield City Council (and others), helping them develop thinking on devolution in association with Sheffield Partnerships Board, SCR Combined Authority and the LEP.</p>
<p><b>Engaged Learning</b></p> <p>Brendan Stone leads work in partnership with community organisations and neighbourhood groups and supports the Engaged Learning Sheffield Network in holding seminars, fora, and events; and publishing texts, which explain and disseminate work in public/civic engagement in learning and teaching.</p>
<p><b>Awards and recognition</b></p>
<p>In June 2016 the University was named top for public engagement at the Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA) awards. The Public Engagement and Impact team was Highly Commended in the Public Engagement and Advocacy category at the for KrebsFest, which celebrated the life and work of Nobel Prize winning academic Sir Hans Krebs.</p>

## Summary of University-SCR Activity

Further information is available via: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/about/city>

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>City based public engagement</b>	Understanding of Philosophy events
	Festival of the Arts and Humanities – including a Faculty showcase event
	Festival of the Mind
	Science Week
	Alumni Volunteering
	Migration Matters Festival
	SUPER (Schools Physics experience)
<b>Regional strategic partnerships</b>	Country Houses, Arts Practice, Museums and Archives, Community Education
	Yorkshire and Humber CLAHRC
	N8, Yorkshire Universities, White Rose
<b>Income generation initiatives for the City</b>	Love Square, Grey to Green, Renew, Meanwhile Use, Castlegate Project
<b>Consultancy to the City</b>	SCR Vision for Sheffield Strategic Advisory Forum, SCR Combined Authority/LEP culture change consultancy
<b>Regional economy and skills</b>	RISE, University of Sheffield Enterprise
	Apprentice Training Centre, Medical AMRC, Knowledge Transfer Centre, Factory 2050
	Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District
	Grantham Centre for Sustainable Futures
	WRIPA (White Rose Industrial Physics Academy)

<b>Groups, Networks and Committees</b>	AMID Steering Group, Chamber of Commerce Council, SCR Business Growth Board, ESIF Committee, Barnsley Economic Partnership, Rotherham Together
	AMP Steering Group, University/City Planning
	Forum, LEP Property and Construction Board
	SCR-LEP New Business Partnership, Sheffield Technology Parks, Yorkshire and Humberside Graduate Enterprise Board, Sheffield Social Enterprise Network
	Sheffield Strategic Advisory Forum, Sheffield Partnerships Board, SCR Combined Authority, LEP
	Cultural Consortium, Renew, Brand Trust, Sheffield Festival Network, Culture Forum North, Castlegate Group, Sheffield BIDS