Present: The Vice-Chancellor (Chair), Professors Barr, Bickers, Birdi, Dermott, Flecker, Grierson, Hammond, Jarrold, Jordan, Lithander, Linthorst, Macfarlane, Marklof, Neild, Nobes, Norman, Oliphant, Payne, Piggins, Pleydell-Pearce, Peters, Powell, Purdy, Raven, Schonle, Smart, Smith, Squires, Tavare, Timpson, Tonks, Tormey, Wilson and Wilding;

Dr J Agarwal, Dr D Aldamen, Dr M Barbour, Ms T Brunnock, Dr N Dahnoun, Mr D Freda, Mrs M Gillway, Miss H Gyebi-Ababio, Mr P Kent, Mr R Kerse, Miss Y Li, Dr E Love, Mr B Mac Ruairi, Dr N Millner, Dr K Opie, Mrs L Parr, Dr D Poole, Dr S Proud, Ms L Robinson

Apologies: Dr M Allinson, Miss V Bending, Prof A Blom, Prof A Carrington, Mr S Chadwick, Prof D Dymock, Dr S Fitzjohn, Dr A Flack, Dr C Fuller, Dr S Hannuna, Prof M Hickman, Dr J Howarth, Miss R Hudson, Prof J Iredale, Prof T Jessop, Dr S McGuinness, Prof I Nabney, Prof C Nobes, Prof G Orpen, Mr A Pearce, Prof K Pollman, Prof A Ridley, Prof J Robbins, Prof F Smith

In attendance: Ms L Barling (Clerk), Mr Barra Mac Ruari (Chief Property Officer) for item 7; Ms Claire Slater (Deputy Director of Student Services (Residential Life & Wellbeing)); Mr Martin Wiles (Head of Sustainability) for item 7; Mr Keith Woolley (Chief Information Officer) for item 6.

1.1 APPROVED the minutes of the meeting of 28 October 2019.

1.2 Under matters arising, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost confirmed to Senate that on 22 November 2019 the Board of Trustees approved the revisions to the Freedom of Speech Code of Practice & External Speaker Policy as recommended by Senate at its last meeting. The University would now publish the Code of Practice & Policy on the website, with effect from Monday 16 December 2019, and an announcement would be made in the staff bulletin with a link to the web page.

1.3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost also informed Senate that following on from its last meeting, the Board of Trustees also approved, on the recommendation of Senate, the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism. At its meeting on 22 November 2019, the Board of Trustees agreed the following statement:

“The University of Bristol has agreed that we will be adopting in full the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism. We will also start to consult on the adoption of additional definitions relating to other minority groups that may also feel vulnerable to discrimination and hatred. All such definitions will be applied by the University in a manner which is consistent with our legally-binding commitments to freedom of speech and to the rights of all students and staff to discuss difficult and sensitive topics, provided that this right is exercised responsibly, within the
law, and with respect for others who have differing views. We take this opportunity to restate that there is no place for any racism, bullying or discrimination at the University of Bristol and that this should be a place where all feel safe, welcomed and respected, regardless of gender, gender identity, religion, race, sexual orientation, disability, age or social background.”

2. **CHAIR’S REPORT**
   2.1 **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**: paper ref: (SN/19-20/011).

2.2 In relation to the UCU-mandated strike action period, Members noted that the University Management team were committed to understanding and addressing issues, and in the coming weeks would look to take clear action on the local challenges that it was able to address. The work that the University had done already on **reducing casualisation** in the workforce and **closing the gender pay gap** was making an impact but it would be important to ensure that the University maintained its focus and momentum. On the national issues, the Vice-Chancellor continued to engage with Universities UK and UCEA, reiterating the University’s position on both pay and pensions, and lobbying for a sector-level framework and/or principles around the gender pay gap, casualisation and workload. The Senior Management team wanted to see continuing negotiations to address the fundamental challenges within our sector. The University also hoped to see the findings from the Joint Expert Panel report before Christmas, as this was a key platform for addressing many of the pension-related issues. Over the coming weeks the University would continue these conversations on campus and nationally and would also be assessing the impact of strike action on students – a particularly important issue given the University would soon enter the January assessment period.

3. **VICE-CHANCELLOR’S QUESTION TIME**
   3.1 No questions were raised.

4. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS**
   4.1 The Vice-Chancellor had **RECEIVED** a written question in advance of the meeting from a Senate member, Dr Laura Dickinson, (from the Engineering Faculty). The question asked whether the Vice-Chancellor and the COO had read the letter which was an **open letter** dated 9 September 2019 from the former USS trustee Prof Jane Hutton to VCs and Financial Officers, and what the response would be from the University. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that neither he nor the Senior Management Team had seen the letter, which was a local letter, and they therefore had not planned to respond to it.

5. **FACULTY BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**
   5.1 There were none.

6. **DEVELOPING THE DIGITAL STRATEGY**
   6.1 **RECEIVED**: paper ref: (SN/19-20/012).

6.2 The Chief Information Officer introduced the item and a detailed discussion ensued. The following was highlighted:
   - Senate welcomed the shift towards a digital framework consisting of inputs driven directly by the needs of the University.
   - Senate was supportive of the further alignment of the IT resources to organisational objectives based on the requirements of the University. In particular, the ‘What-Who-How’ model which had been adopted to ensure that as the University’s strategic objectives emerged, there was a strategic methodology for addressing service provision and delivery. It was clear to members that the University wanted to work in partnership with staff and students in delivering this.
• It would be important to ensure that services were operating from the most appropriate place where they would be most efficient, be that in central administration, or out in the Schools/Faculties. There would need to be a good balance between cost and the services on offer.
• Inter-operability of the services would be the key to success, particularly given how much academic staff was currently being lost on lack of inter-operability.
• The exceptional user experience should be used as a lens for future procurement.
• It was agreed that the University IT Services needed to be more pre-emptive with their communications, in particular asking colleagues what data do they hold, what data do they need and what IT Services would do with that data.
• In developing cost-effective digital learning and teaching standards and policies the ambition was to work within the Education Services’ strategy and make rooms as device agnostic as possible using mainstream channels. This would better enable academic staff to always know what equipment was in each room that they were teaching in.
• The scope of the work included driving changes around VLE’s, but did not include website content, which was outside of the scope. The External Relations Division was currently reviewing the latter.
• IT Services were consulting with all key stakeholders and were also benchmarking against other top Universities. The team was keen to work together with Schools and Faculties to agree a future direction of travel.
• Requirement gathering and pre-readiness assessments were timetabled to complete by the end of 2019 with the generation of the investment portfolio, including socialisation of direction, being undertaken through to May 2020.

6.3 Senate welcomed the direction of travel and noted that it would have further opportunities to provide input as the strategy continued to develop.

7. SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY & CLIMATE EMERGENCY UPDATE
7.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (SN/19-20/013).
7.2 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement) introduced the item, with support from the Chief Property Officer and the Head of Sustainability.

7.3 Senate CONSIDERED the progress being made with regards to the delivery of a new Sustainability Strategy and the carbon reduction work following the climate emergency declaration. In discussions, the following was highlighted:
• A new draft Sustainability Strategy had been drafted covering 15 key areas and was currently being consulted on during November and December, with approval due by April 2020. The Strategy would go to University Executive Board, then Senate, and then for approval by the Board of Trustees.
• A major sustainability communications initiative aimed at staff, students, and the wider community had started regarding current achievements and future plans.
• A key Climate Emergency action to date had been the establishment of the People’s Assembly led by students, with the aim of generating ideas that the University’s staff and students could take forward.
• Improved communication and clarity about what exactly was expected of Schools regarding their School Climate Action Plans, would be useful, including a clear differentiation of what Schools should be doing versus what the central University activities would be.
• It would be important to include in the Strategy an acknowledgement of the tension between travel and sustainability and the University’s strategy to grow international student numbers whilst also addressing climate issues.
• An example was given of a European University that had set the default offerings of its catering facilities to vegan, with students and staff having to ask for exemptions if they
wanted non-vegan options. It was suggested that the University of Bristol should also consider how its catering offerings could be more sustainable.

8. UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SERVICES DIVISION STRATEGY 2019-2024
8.1 RECEIVED and NOTED: paper ref: (SN/19-20/014) and presentation (on file).

8.2 The Director of Library Services led the discussion. Members noted the following:
- There was a strong alignment with the structure and themes in the University’s overarching strategy.
- There was a heightened emphasis in the strategy on engagement and contributing to the Global Civic University ethos.
- The strategy would be enabled by an empowered workforce.
- The Strategy had been considered by Research Committee, Professional Services Heads, the Library Services Strategy Group and the Education Committee prior to coming to Senate.

8.3 Senate were supportive of the direction of travel and noted that approval for the Strategy would now be sought by the University Executive Board.

9. STUDENT DISCIPLINARY REGUALTION AMENDMENTS (INITIAL DRAFT)
9.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (SN/19-20/018).

9.2 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) led the discussion, with contributions from the Deputy Director of Student Services (Residential Life & Wellbeing).

9.3 The following was highlighted:
- The proposed changes to student disciplinary procedures were in response to the OIA Good Practice Framework on Disciplinary Procedures and in recognition that some more complex and sensitive misconduct allegations, for example in relation to sexual misconduct, required a more active investigation to be undertaken by the University.
- The proposals recognised that the students impacted needed to be well supported from a wellbeing perspective and to be well informed about the disciplinary processes, the various parties involved, and the potential outcomes.
- The new procedure included the introduction of additional staff (budgetary approval had not yet been given), sitting within the University Secretary’s Office. The individuals would help student to navigate the disciplinary process and investigate complaints, whilst welfare focused support would be provided by the University Wellbeing Team including those who were trained as Sexual Violence Liaison Officers.
- In parallel with discussion at Senate, Student Services and the University Secretary’s Office would also be consulting with student groups on the proposed procedures.
- The new regulations would come into effect fully from a academic year 2020/21. Transition plans would be put in place in the meantime to operate within the principles of the new proposals if broadly agreed.

9.4 Members of Senate made the following comments:
- There were debates about whether the anonymous function in ‘report and support’ submissions were beneficial, however research in this area indicated that some individuals started with an anonymous report and then built themselves up to making a formal report. It would be important to be clear with students what the University would do to act on the submissions, and perhaps this could also be linked in with the current staff relationships guidance.
- The University was seeking further advice and considering carefully whether it could reveal information about the outcome of the process on the complainee to the complainant – these discussions were in light of national legal and regulatory
9. Constraints, and whilst the University was keen to manage the expectations of students it wanted to do so within the realms of legality and confidentiality. In the meantime, the University had reinforced its risk assessment processes and would making appropriate judgements and continuing to explore what information was appropriate to share. Members noted that the Russell Group was currently working towards a consensus on the matter.

9.5 Senate broadly supported the new procedures and noted that once finalised, requests would be made for budgetary approval of the new posts referred to above.

10. EDI UPDATE
10.1 RECEIVED: an update on the University’s approach to driving a cultural shift towards true inclusion through a range of measures such as executive accountability, governance and ‘grassroots’ action. NOTED the significant range of initiatives introduced to support staff and student inclusion: paper ref: (SN/19-20/015).

10.2 The following was highlighted:
- In terms of governance, suggestions/ideas for transformative change were welcomed and would likely come from the Staff Networks and could then be submitted up to University Executive Board for further consideration.
- The University was currently analysing the data from the recent Race Equality Survey and was using information from that along with recommendations from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission Report to identify key priorities for next year.
- A Student EDI Committee had recently been established which reported into Student Experience Committee and then University Executive Board.

11. EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT
11.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (SN/19-20/016).

11.2 Senate APPROVED a request to grant delegated authority to University Education Committee to review and endorse a University of Bristol degree outcomes statement before recommending it to the Board of Trustees for approval.

11.3 Senate NOTED the rest of the report.

12. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ETHICS OF RESEARCH COMMITTEE
12.1 RECEIVED AND NOTED: paper ref: (SN/19-20/017).

12.2 Senate NOTED the Annual Report, which would be considered by the Board of Trustees in January. Feedback on the committee’s activities during the year could be provided electronically to the Chair of the Committee (the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Health)).

13. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY, INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF EQUALITY RELATED RISKS
13.1 Senate considered EDI related risks as part of: the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism; the UCU-mandated strike action; the student disciplinary regulations amendments; and the EDI update.

14. COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION
14.1 Members of Senate were encouraged to share what was discussed today with colleagues across the University.

15. CONSIDERATION AND SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS
15.1 Senate considered Sustainability matters as part of the update on the draft sustainability strategy and climate progress.

16. CONSIDERATION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE MATTERS
16.1 Senate had approved request to grant delegated authority to University Education Committee to review and endorse a University of Bristol degree outcomes statement before recommending it to the Board of Trustees for approval.

16.2 No other quality assurance matters were raised.

17 Date of Next meeting: The date of the next meeting of Senate would be Monday 24 February 2020, in the Reception Room, Wills Memorial Building.