

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 27 November 2009

Present: Mr J Leighfield (Chair), Mr K Bedell-Pearce, Mr A Bradley, Professor L Bridges, Professor S Bright, Professor A Caesar, Mrs V Cooke, Sir George Cox, Mr P Dunne, Mrs P Egan, Mrs T Elliott, Mr J Higgins, Mr G Howells, Professor K Lamberts, Professor R Lindley, Mr G Lyons, Mr A Perkins, Mr A Rivett, Mr N Sanders, Professor Sir John Temple, Professor N Thrift, Professor M Whitby, Mr B Woods-Scawen.

Apologies: Professor J Davey, Dr R Chung, Mrs V Heywood, Professor R Higgott, Mr K Muthalagappan, Professor M Smith, Professor V Zammit.

In Attendance: Registrar, Finance Director, Deputy Registrar, Director of Estates, Head of Governance Support Services, Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office).

NOTE: The Pro-Chancellor welcomed Mr Glenn Howells to his first meeting of the Council.

27/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8 October 2009 be approved.

28/09-10 Future Strategic Topics and Presentations for Meetings of the Council

RECEIVED:

A list of future strategic topics and presentations for meetings of the Council (C.13/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Chancellor)

That the list as set out in paper C.13/09-10 had been updated in the light of recent suggestions from members of the Council and that further recommendations on potential future items were welcome.

RESOLVED:

That "What does innovation mean in Warwick today?" be added to the list of future strategic topics for discussion.

29/09-10 Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Chancellor)

That the Warwick Manufacturing Group had been awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education, awarded every two years in recognition of world-class achievement that demonstrates evidence of originality, innovation and benefit to the wider community.

30/09-10 Conferral of Emeritus Status

RESOLVED:

That the Council approved the recommendations from the Senate for the conferral of the title of Emeritus Professor on the following individuals:

- (a) Professor Howard Thomas (Warwick Business School) on his departure from the University in January 2010.
- (b) Professor Julian Gardner (History of Art) with effect from his retirement on 31 October 2009.

31/09-10 Register of Interests

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Chancellor)

That it was a requirement for the University to keep an up-to-date Register of Council Members' Interests, and that those members who had not yet returned an updated entry should do so at their earliest convenience.

32/09-10 Constitutional Advisory Group (minute 109/08-09 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the Constitutional Advisory Group, chaired by Professor Sir Martin Harris and established to ensure that the structures of the institution continued to be appropriate to enable the University to fulfil its strategic objectives, had met four times and would meet again on 7 December 2009 and for a final time in January 2010.
- (b) That the recommendations of the Group would be considered by the Senate and the Council in the Spring of 2010.

33/09-10 The Warwick Commission on International Financial Reform

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the second Warwick Commission, on International Financial Reform, had launched its report earlier that day and that the publication of the findings of the Commission, which explored how international financial reform could move beyond questions of architecture and towards how it may be possible to build consensus, had attracted significant media coverage.

34/09-10 The Shanghai JiaoTong Academic Ranking of World Universities

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the University had moved up twenty places to 176 in the recently published Shanghai JiaoTong Academic Ranking of World Universities.

35/09-10 Times Higher Education Awards (minute 10/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the Times Higher Education 'University of the Year' award, for which the University had been shortlisted, had been won by the University of Teesside.

36/09-10 School of Life Sciences

RECEIVED:

A report of the discussions at the extraordinary meeting of the Senate held on 16 November 2009 to discuss a report from the School of Life Sciences Advisory Group providing an update on progress on the School of Life Sciences project (C.14/09-10), along with an accompanying oral report from the Chair of the Faculty of Science.

REPORTED: (by the Chair of the Faculty of Science)

- (a) That at its meeting of 16 November 2009, the Senate had voted on and approved the implementation plan for the School of Life Sciences as outlined in C.14/09-10.
- (b) That the Senate had debated the concerns that had been raised during the consultation process regarding the implementation and priorities of the plan.
- (c) That the Senate was advised that the University was committed to developing the wider vision for Warwick Life Sciences, of which the School of Life Sciences formed a part, but that this wider vision would be delivered in a timescale beyond that of the immediate implementation of the School.

37/09-10 University Financial Plan (minute 124/08-09 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The University Financial Plan 2009-2013 (C.15/09-10), prepared by the Financial Plan Sub-Committee and recommended for approval by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Treasurer outlining the revised income, surplus, and cash flow forecasts for the period 2009-2013, noting in particular the following:

- (a) That due to the scale of anticipated future cuts in HEFCE income being unknown, the Plan included a zero inflationary increase in recurrent grants, equating to a real terms cut.
- (b) That, in addition, the Plan assumed a removal of all future capital funding, which equated to a further 16% per annum real terms cut in total HEFCE funding.
- (c) That effective management of pension costs would continue to be a key factor of consideration in future planning.

- (d) That the University would preserve the key themes of the evolving Vision 2015 Strategy by careful prioritisation of resources and management of the pace of implementation.
- (e) That the Audit Committee should continue to play a crucial supporting role in the Financial Planning process by ensuring that the integrity of the balance sheet was safeguarded.
- (f) That, as outlined in the document, considerable work had been undertaken to stress-test the Plan and that this work continued, including testing the Plan against risks such as significant future rises in the rate of inflation.

REPORTED:

(by the Finance Director)

- (a) That the small surplus achieved in 2008/09 was in part due to a number of exceptional one-off items including the accounting treatment of £1.1m of matched funding for donations, £700k from the partial sale of Kirton and an £800k margin achieved on a favourable term within the loan agreement with Barclays.

(by the Pro-Chancellor)

- (b) That it was recognised that the pressures that had been put on the maintenance budget could not continue into future years.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, on the recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, the 2009 Financial Plan be approved and submitted to HEFCE by 1 December 2009, as set out in C.15/09-10.
- (b) That all of those involved in the preparation of the University Financial Plan be thanked for their contributions.

38/09-10 Report from the Finance and General Purposes Committee

CONSIDERED and ADOPTED with the resolution set out below a report from the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 3 November 2009 (C.16/09-10 {Parts 1 and 2}) together with an oral report from the University Treasurer and the Finance Director on the following items of business:

- (a) Financial Performance Report and University Consolidated Statutory Accounts 2008/09

RESOLVED:

That the University Consolidated Statutory Accounts for the year ending 31 July 2009 and the associated Management Representation Letter, paper FGPC 2/09-10 of the Report from the Finance and General Purposes Committee (C.16/09-10 {Part 1}) be approved and submitted to HEFCE.

(b) Students' Union Refurbishment

REPORTED: (by the Finance Director)

That the adverse variation to budget of £1.75m, due in main to unforeseen works, changes in scope, commercial tenant issues and costs associated with the value engineering process, meant that reflection on the project would be necessary in order to secure key learning points.

(c) Bluebell Student Residences

(d) Students' Union Leases

39/09-10 Report from the Audit Committee

CONSIDERED and ADOPTED with the resolutions set out below a report from the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 22 October 2009 (C.17/09-10) together with an oral report from the Chair of the Audit Committee, Mr John Higgins, on the following items of business:

(a) Annual Report from the Audit Committee and Committee Opinion on Data Quality

CONSIDERED:

The Annual Report from the Audit Committee summarising the Committee's work for the year, including an overview of the membership of the Audit Committee and the structure of business, the Committee's scrutiny of the external auditor's management letter, a range of reports prepared by Internal Audit, an overview of information received by the Committee that related to Value for Money, the Quality of Data Returns to Funding Bodies, Risk Management and Governance and the Audit Committee's conclusion that the University's audit arrangements and internal controls for the 2008/09 financial year were satisfactory.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Report from the Audit Committee as set out in paper AC.13/09-10 (revised) of C.17/09-10 be received and noted.

(b) Risk Management Report

REPORTED: (by Mr John Higgins)

That the Audit Committee would be engaging further with the Risk Management process in order to understand both how the process affects middle management decisions, and how the University might avoid 'red risk fatigue'.

(c) Internal Controls: Student Number Data Returns and the Upcoming HESES Audit

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

(i) That HEFCE were in the process of undertaking an audit of the Higher Education Students Early Statistics Survey (HESES) for all institutions, and that it was anticipated that approximately two-thirds of institutions

would formally be non-compliant in relation to progression / completion statistics.

- (ii) That the University would be audited in 2010 and may be found to be non-compliant, it being noted that in the opinion of the University, HEFCE was using a flawed methodology.

- (d) Statement on Internal Control
- (e) University Accounts and External Audit Management Letter
- (f) Internal Audit Annual Reports

RESOLVED:

That the Audit Committee be thanked for their work.

40/09-10 University Risk Status and University Key Performance Indicators

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report outlining the current status of the University Key Performance Indicators (C.18/09-10),
- (b) A report outlining the current risk status for a selection of key risks for the University (C.19/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That the KPIs and Risk Status Report had been aligned this year, and that as such the risk status report mapped selected KPIs against the University risk register (C.19/09-10).
- (b) That the process of measuring and reporting the University Key Performance Indicators and University risk status remained evolving processes, and that the alignment between the two processes would continue to be developed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the status of the University Key Performance Indicators be noted as set out in C.18/09-10.
- (b) That the risk status summary report be approved as set out in paper C.19/09-10.
- (c) That the next report on the status of the University Key Performance Indicators would include a three-year report on the performance of each KPI against the relevant areas of risk over the same time horizon.

41/09-10 Corporate Planning Statement

CONSIDERED:

The provisional University Corporate Planning Statement (CPS), to be submitted to the HEFCE by 1 December 2009 (C.20/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the University Corporate Planning Statement be approved as set out in paper C.20/09-10.

42/09-10 Academic Statistics Yearbook

CONSIDERED:

The University's Academic Statistics Yearbook document for the academic year 2009/2010 (C.21/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the Academic Statistics Yearbook was still developing and aimed to provide a set of data that gave a broad picture of the University.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That further work be undertaken to include comparative data and benchmarking in the Yearbook where possible
- (b) That consideration be given to whether data on the environmental impact and sustainability of the University be included in future iterations of the Yearbook.

42/09-10 Awards and Distinctions

RECEIVED:

A paper setting out the awards and distinctions that have been conferred on members of the University since the last meeting of the Council held on 8 October 2009 (C.22/09-10).

43/09-10 University Council Members' Biographies 2009/10

RECEIVED:

The University Council Members' Biographies document for the 2009/10 academic year (C.23/09-10), noting that the document would be kept updated and available to download from the University website.

44/09-10 Amendments to University Regulations

REPORTED:

That the Pro-Chancellor had, on behalf of the Council, approved:

- (a) Amendments to University Regulation 34 governing Fitness to Practise, as outlined in paper C.24/09-10.
- (b) Amendments to University Regulation 23 governing Disciplinary Matters, as outlined in paper C.25/09-10.

45/09-10 Professor Simon Bright

RESOLVED:

That Professor Simon Bright be thanked for his contribution to the Council on the occasion of his last meeting.

NOTE: That immediately following the formal meeting of the Council, the Council Away Day was held on the theme of refreshing the University Strategy.

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