

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Open Minutes of the Meeting of the Senate Steering Committee held on 29 February 2016

Present: Professor Stuart Croft (Vice-Chancellor and President (Chair)), Ms R Drinkwater (Group Finance Director), Professor S Gilson (Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Arts), Professor Christina Hughes (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)), Professor Christopher Hughes (Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences), Professor T Jones (Provost), Mr I Leigh (President of the Students' Union), Professor S Swain (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (External Affairs)), Professor C Sparrow (Academic Member of the Senate, from item 179/15-16), Professor P Thomas (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)), Professor P Winstanley (Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine), Professor L Young (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Planning and Resources)).

Apologies: Professor A Coats (Academic Vice-President (Monash-Warwick Alliance)), Professor J Palmowski (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Postgraduate and Transnational Education)), Professor M Shipman (Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science), Mr K Sloan (Registrar and Chief Operating Officer).

In Attendance: Ms S Black (Assistant Registrar (Governance) (Assistant Secretary)), Mr J Breckon (Director of Estates), Ms C Cochrane (Director of Research & Impact Services, for item 181/15-16), Mr R Green (University Librarian, for item 182/15-16), Mr C Hindhaugh (Education Officer of the Students' Union, 182/15-16), Ms J Horsburgh (Deputy Registrar (Secretary)), Ms B Lees (Senior Assistant Registrar (Strategic Programme Delivery), for item 181/15-16), Ms G McGrattan (Director of Human Resources), Mr N Panda (Postgraduate Officer of the Students' Union, 182/15-16), Mr D Wallis (Director of Strategic Programme Delivery, for item 181/15-16), Ms R Wooldridge Smith (Deputy Academic Registrar).

165/15-16 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the open and restricted minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2016 be approved.

166/15-16 Varsity 2016

REPORTED: (by the President of the Students' Union)

(a) That the University had won the 26th Varsity Championship between Warwick and Coventry University, culminating in a rugby union match on Sunday 28 February at the Ricoh Arena.

(b) That the Students' Union thanked everyone who had supported the events.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Committee's warm congratulations be extended to the students on this achievement in the 26th year of the Varsity competition.

(a) That the Students' Union be congratulated on their role in the organisation of the events.

167/15-16 In memoriam: Professor Sir Christopher Zeeman

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That it was with deep sadness that the University reported the death of Professor Sir Christopher Zeeman, who passed away peacefully in his sleep on Saturday 13 February 2016 at home in Woodstock, aged 91.
- (b) That Sir Christopher Zeeman, a Founding Professor of Mathematics at the University of Warwick, had contributed to the design of the academic structure of the University.
- (c) That a private funeral was planned for the Zeeman family, followed by a service to celebrate his life, details of which would be announced shortly.

RESOLVED:

That the sincere condolences of the Steering Committee be extended to the Zeeman family.

168/15-16 In memoriam: Filip Brkovic

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That the University had been informed of the sad news of the death of Filip Brkovic, a recently completed Politics and International Studies PhD student who had passed away in January.
- (b) That in commemoration, Filip's colleagues intended to name an annual PhD prize in honour of his memory.

RESOLVED:

That the sincere condolences of the Steering Committee be extended to the Brkovic family.

169/15-16 In memoriam: Helen Anderson

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That the University was deeply saddened by the news of the death of Helen Anderson, a PhD student in the Department of Sociology, who had passed away in January.

RESOLVED:

That the sincere condolences of the Steering Committee be extended to the Anderson family.

170/15-16 In memoriam: Carl McQueen

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That the University was deeply saddened by the news that Dr Carl McQueen, who was based within Warwick Clinical Trials Unit in Warwick Medical School, had died suddenly on the morning of Friday 12 February 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the sincere condolences of the Steering Committee be extended to the family of Dr McQueen.

171/15-16 Staff Awards

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

(a) That the short-listed individuals for the University's Staff Awards had been published online, noting that the standard of nominations had been incredibly high this year.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Planning and Resources))

(b) That there had been a high level of engagement with the awards from staff and students across the University.

(c) That all shortlisted nominees had been invited to an awards evening on Friday, 11 March 2016 where the winners would be announced.

172/15-16 Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence (WATE)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That nominations of Warwick staff and postgraduate students who teach were being invited for the Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence (WATE), to recognise, reward and celebrate effective and inspirational teaching.

173/15-16 National Student Survey

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

(a) That final year undergraduate students at Warwick were being invited to participate in the National Student Survey (NSS), which had launched on 8 February and would close on 30 April 2016.

(b) That the University was working collaboratively with the Students' Union and individual departments to improve upon the good response obtained in recent years, this year aiming to reach a University response of 80+%.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning))

(c) That the positive early response rate, in relation to the previous year, could be attributed to enhanced communication in certain departments, noting that other departments were holding back in advance of targeted "NSS events".

174/15-16 Chair of the Faculty of Medicine

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

(a) That following the announcement of Professor Winstanley's intention to retire at the end of May, the University would seek to appoint a Chair of the Faculty of Medicine from 1 June 2016.

(b) That nominations and expressions of interest had been invited, with interviews scheduled for the following week.

175/15-16 WMG involvement with Intelligent Transport Initiative

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That WMG was to use a laser scan of 30 miles of Coventry roads to test driverless pods as part of a research programme launched at the beginning of February.
- (b) That WMG would work with RDM Group, the UK's only designer and manufacturer of driverless Pods, in a project called INnovative Testing of Autonomous Control Techniques (INTACT).
- (c) That the project, funded by Innovate UK, would enable Coventry-based automotive innovation experts, RDM, to test its vehicles on one of the world's most adaptable and advanced driving simulators at WMG.

176/15-16 Shakespeare Birthplace Trust University of Warwick Representative Trustee

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That as part of its current Governance Review, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT) had contacted the University to confirm that although no changes to its governing body would take place until the Review was complete, there was a requirement to ensure that all Trustees were technically, fully appointed.
- (b) That Professor Carol Rutter's three year tenure as the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust's University of Warwick Representative Trustee was due to end on 31 March 2016, and therefore required renewal.
- (c) That the SBT were requesting that Professor Rutter be reappointed by the University for a subsequent term of office, subject to the SBT Governance Review, noting that Professor Rutter was willing to stand again for reappointment.
- (d) That the exact date for the transition to the new Board would be dependent on Charity Commission and Parliamentary timescales, it being noted that the transition was anticipated to take place in mid-2016, at which time the representative Trustee position would cease to exist.
- (e) That in preparation for the transition, a Shadow Board of Trustees had been appointed, all of whom were appointed equally, on their own merits and to provide the skills and experience required.
- (f) That following a full external recruitment process, Professor Rutter had been appointed to the Shadow Board and would transition to the new governing body in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the reappointment of Professor Carol Rutter to the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust as the University of Warwick Representative Trustee for a subsequent term of office, subject to the SBT Governance Review, be approved.

177/15-16 Queen's Anniversary Prize Awards

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That, following the announcement in November 2015 of the award to the University of a Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education for its research in Mathematics and Statistics (minute 73/15-16 refers), a number of colleagues from Warwick had attended the prize-giving ceremony at Buckingham Palace on 25 February 2016.
- (b) That the award was a great marker for the departments involved.
- (c) That future application rounds could provide the University with the opportunity to consider and put forward other research areas from across the institution.

178/15-16 *The Abolition of Student Maintenance Grants - Motion from the Students' Union

CONSIDERED:

A motion on the abolition of student maintenance grants proposed by the Students' Union for inclusion on the agenda of the meeting of the Senate on 8 March 2016 (SC.75/15-16 {Restricted}).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the motion be taken forward to the Senate, in principle.
- (b) That legal advice be sought in advance of the meeting of the Senate to ensure that in supporting the motion, the University as a registered Charity, would not be in breach of its charitable obligations.
- (c) That the wording of the motion be revised to ensure it was constructed in more factual terms.

179/15-16 Appointment of External Examiners and Consideration of Pass Lists

CONSIDERED:

A paper setting out proposals around the selection and appointment of external examiners, and means of optimising consideration of such recommendations, as well as processes in relation to the conferral of awards in the name of the University (SC.76/15-16).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Academic Registrar)

- (a) That following discussion at a recent Senior Management Team meeting, the recommendations were being brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning))

- (b) That the membership of the proposed sub-group of the Steering Committee (to consider recommendations for the appointment of external examiners) would usefully be expanded, as appropriate, to include the relevant Faculty Chair.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (c) That operationally, the proposed sub-group of the Steering Committee would most usefully sit within the Academic Registrar's Office, rather than within the Institutional Governance Team.

(by the Academic Member of the Senate)

- (d) That the recommendation that all modules contributing to degree classification be subject to external examiner scrutiny as part of the normal scrutiny by boards of examiners, warranted further consideration with regard to current practice within certain Science faculty departments.

(by the Group Finance Director)

- (e) That it would be important to ensure processes were documented clearly.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That paper SC.76/15-16 be approved in principle.
- (b) That, in terms of process, the Academic Quality and Standards Committee be invited to consider the implementation of the recommendations within paper SC.76/15-16.

180/15-16 Senate Business

CONSIDERED:

The items of business for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 8 March 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the items of business for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 8 March 2016 be approved, as set out in the papers circulated for consideration by Senate Steering.

181/15-16 *Strategy Goal Report

CONSIDERED:

A report providing an update on progress towards delivery of the University Strategy (SC.77/15-16 {Restricted}), together with a summary presentation of highlights from the Director of Strategic Programme Delivery and the Director of Research & Impact Services, for Goal 2.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the thanks of the Steering Committee be extended to the Director of Strategic Programme Delivery, his team and all other contributing colleagues for their work on the report.
- (b) That further consideration be given to the frequency of reporting and level of detail provided, to enable effective consideration of recommendations at future meetings of the Steering Committee.

CONSIDERED:

A paper outlining a proposal from the Students' Union for the Library to be open 24/7 for 50 weeks of the year (SC.78/15-16).

REPORTED: (by the President of the Students' Union)

- (a) That the report set out the rationale for the proposal, noting that the Students' Union had consulted widely prior to bringing the matter to the Steering Committee.
- (b) That although the Learning Grid in University House currently provided a 24/7 study space on campus, student feedback suggested that the resources available in the Library allowed for more effective study.
- (c) That issues around the security of students moving around campus late at night had been discussed with the University's Head of Security Services.

(by the Education Officer of the Students' Union)

- (d) That student welfare was one of the strongest drivers for the proposal, noting that it was preferable for students' bedrooms to be reserved for rest rather than intensive studying.
- (e) That positive conversations had been held with Stagecoach in relation to transport requirements should the proposal go ahead.

(by the Postgraduate Officer of the Students' Union)

- (f) That from a postgraduate perspective, access to resources while studying was an important factor.

(by the University Librarian)

- (g) That usage numbers during the small hours during Term 3, when the Library was currently open 24 hours, were not particularly high.
- (h) That operationally the proposal was feasible, with 24/7 50 weeks a year opening costing £275k (in addition to the cost of Term 3 opening) and 24/5 during term-time opening costing £87k.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning))

- (i) That in view of the significant costs, further consideration should be given to alternative use of the funds to benefit a larger number of students.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (j) That an Equality Impact Assessment to test scenarios would be beneficial in terms of assessing the impact on student services out of hours.

(by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (k) That a working group should be established to take forward the proposal.

(by the Group Finance Director)

- (l) That in terms of resource, the Students' Union should liaise with the Finance Office with a view to submitting a detailed bid through the five-year planning process.

RESOLVED:

That a working group be established, including the Librarian and representation from the Steering Committee, to look at potential next steps for the proposal, including carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment, with a view to submitting a detailed bid for resource through the upcoming five-year planning round.

183/15-16 *PULSE Survey

CONSIDERED:

An oral report from the Director of Human Resources on the preliminary headline results of the PULSE Survey.

184/15-16 *University Health and Safety Governance

CONSIDERED:

A paper informing the Steering Committee of changes to Health and Safety Governance (SC.79/15-16 {Restricted}).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the disestablishment of the University Health and Safety Executive Committee as a joint committee of the Senate and the Council be noted.
- (b) That the role of the Steering Committee in relation to the provision of Health and Safety assurance to the Council, via the University Audit Committee, be noted.
- (c) That the proposed revisions to the terms of reference, constitution and membership of the re-established University Health and Safety Executive Committee as an executive oversight committee reporting to the Steering Committee, as set out in Annex 1 to paper SC.79/15-16 {Restricted}, be approved with immediate effect.

185/15-16 *Proposed Disestablishment of the Information and Policy and Strategy Committee

CONSIDERED:

A paper presenting a proposal for the disestablishment of the Information Policy and Strategy Committee (IPSC) (SC.80/15-16 {Restricted}).

RESOLVED and RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the Information Policy and Strategy Committee be disestablished with immediate effect.

186/15-16 *Future Role of Registrar

RECEIVED:

A paper outlining proposals arising from the review of the role and responsibilities of the Registrar, as considered and approved by the University Council at its meeting on 10 February 2016 (SC.81/15-16 {Restricted}).