

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 28 September 2015

- Present: Professor Sir Nigel Thrift (Vice-Chancellor and President (Chair)), Ms R Drinkwater (Group Finance Director), Professor S Gilson (Chair of the Faculty of Arts), Professor Christina Hughes (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)), Professor Christopher Hughes (Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences), Professor T Jones (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Science, Engineering and Medicine)), Mr I Leigh (President of the Students' Union), Professor J Palmowski (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Postgraduate and Transnational Education)), Professor M Shipman (Chair of the Faculty of Science), Professor C Sparrow (Academic Member of the Senate), Professor P Thomas (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (People and Public Engagement)), Professor L Young (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Planning and Resources), Professor P Winstanley (Chair of the Faculty of Medicine).
- Apologies: Professor S Croft (Provost), Professor A Coats (Academic Vice-President (Monash-Warwick Alliance)), Mr K Sloan (Registrar and Chief Operating Officer), Professor S Swain (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Arts and Social Sciences)).
- In Attendance: Mr J Breckon (Director of Estates), Ms L Dodd Mayne (Director for Sport and Active Communities, for item 470/14-15), Dr M Glover (Academic Registrar), Ms J Horsburgh (Deputy Registrar (Secretary)), Dr E Hough (Assistant Registrar, Governance (Assistant Secretary)), Mr D Lewis (Senior Administrative Officer, Chemistry, for item 468/14-15), Ms G McGrattan (Director of Human Resources), Mr J Phillips (Interim Director of Health and Safety, for item 468/14-15), Professor A Rodger (Head of the Chemistry Department, for item 468/14-15), Mr I Rowley (Director of Development, Communication and External Affairs), Mr D Wallis (Director of Strategic Programme Delivery, for item 467/14-15).

461/14-15 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the open and restricted minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on the 21 September 2015 be approved.

462/14-15 In Memoriam: Mr James Murphy

REPORTED (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That it was with deep sadness that the University reported the death of undergraduate philosophy student James Murphy, in a kayaking accident while on holiday in New Zealand.
- (b) That Mr Murphy had been on an exchange to Monash University at the time of the accident,
- (c) That the accident had involved a number of students (from Monash, Warwick and other universities), who had taken the opportunity to take a holiday in New Zealand during the Australian half term break.
- (d) That University of Warwick staff were in close contact with colleagues at Monash, who had sent a senior member of staff to New Zealand to support the students.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the sincere condolences of the Committee be extended to the family and friends of Mr Murphy.
- (b) That the thanks of the University be extended to Monash University for their support to the Warwick students involved in the accident.

463/14-15 University Open Day

REPORTED (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That the first of the 2015/16 University Open Days had taken place on Saturday, 26 September, noting that in excess of 14,000 people had signed up to attend the event, equating to approximately 6,100 prospective students.
- (b) That the Campus and the new Piazza area had appeared vibrant, noting however, that the 20m.p.h campus speed limit appeared not to be being observed by some motorists.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (c) That reminders about the speed limit had been sent to all drivers of University vehicles.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the thanks of the Committee be extended to all those who had helped to make the University Open Day such a success.
- (b) That enforcement of the 20m.p.h speed limit be enacted, noting the importance of maintaining a safe environment in the shared plaza space.

464/14-15 Postgraduate Welcome Week

REPORTED (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That the Postgraduate Welcome Week had commenced on Saturday, 26 September 2015, featuring a full schedule of events including walking tours, wellbeing sessions, societies taster sessions and coach trips to local areas of interest.

465/14-15 Inspiring Women Presentation Series

REPORTED (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That Ms Viki Cooke, Pro-Chancellor and Vice-Chair of Council would be attending the University on 24 September 2015 to give the third in a series of presentations from inspiring women.

466/14-15 Cyber Security Global Research Priority Launch

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That the Cyber Space GRP would be launched on 29 September 2015 in the International Digital Laboratory, WMG.
- (b) That the event would provide an opportunity for staff across the University to meet researchers working in the field of cyber security, and to hear the views of an International Panel of Experts comprising Andrei Soldatov and Irina Borogan, two of Moscow's top investigative journalists, and Gordan Corera, BBC Security Correspondent.

467/14-15 *Report on the University Strategy

CONSIDERED:

A report updating the Committee on the implementation of the University strategy. (SC.214/14-15 {restricted}).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That further consideration be given to the identification of a structure to enable the articulation and holistic consideration of sustainability as a campus-wide issue and a proposal brought forward to a future meeting of the Steering Committee.
- (b) That a more detailed proposition defining an appropriate structure through which to pursue the regional objectives within Goal 5 be brought to a future meeting of the Steering Committee.

468/14-15 *Chemistry Incident Report

CONSIDERED:

A report on the incident involving fuming nitric acid in the Chemistry Department on 27 August 2015 (SC.215/14-15 {restricted}).

RESOLVED:

That the report on the incident in the Chemistry department on 27 August 2015 be noted.

469/14-15 *Update on OFFA Monitoring of Open Access Agreements

CONSIDERED:

A report on the University's access agreement commitments, 2016/17 to 2019/20 (SC.216/14-15 {restricted}).

RESOLVED:

That the report on the University's access agreement commitments be noted.

470/14-15 Consultation on the Government Sports Strategy

CONSIDERED:

A draft response to the consultation on the Sports Strategy (SC.217/14-15).

REPORTED (by the Director for Sports and Active Communities)

- (a) That the Department for Culture, Media and Sport was consulting on a new strategy for sport, noting that this covered ten thematic areas.
- (b) That the higher education sector had a key role to play in shaping the strategy, particularly in the areas of Participation and Physical Activity.

(by the Group Finance Director)

- (c) That the response on Theme 7 (Infrastructure) be revised to refer to the unduly burdensome contractual arrangements with Sport England, noting that some wording for this would be provided.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Postgraduate and Transnational Education))

- (d) That the response to Theme 3 (Children and Young People), be revised, removing reference to the potential resource capacity of institutions to offer opportunities and including instead, some examples of current initiatives.

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

- (e) That with regard to Theme 3, the University had many connections with schools through its outreach and engagement activities, noting that it would be worthwhile to consider potential opportunities to promote participation in sport, through these mechanisms.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Medicine)

- (f) That time permitting, it would be worthwhile to liaise with the Institute of Digital Healthcare and the Academic Health Science Network, to ascertain their views.

RESOLVED:

That the draft response to the DCMS's Sports Consultation Paper be approved for submission, subject to the amendments under Themes 3 and 7, as detailed above.

471/14-15

Students' Union: External Speaker Incident

REPORTED (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That the Students' Union had been the focus of much social media attention during the preceding weekend, following the announcement that an application by the Warwick Atheist, Secularist and Humanist Society to host speaker Ms Maryam Namazie had been denied by the Students' Union.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (b) That the University has robust procedures for the consideration of external speaker requests, noting that there was usually good dialogue between the institution and the Students' Union on such matters.

- (c) That work had been undertaken recently, including with the Students' Union, to further review and enhance procedures for speakers across the institution and this work would be forthcoming to the Steering Committee for approval in due course.

(by the President of the Students' Union)

- (d) That the process for approving external speakers appeared not to have been followed in this case, noting that neither he nor senior staff within the Students' Union had been aware of the request prior to this weekend.
- (e) That the Students' Union had now reviewed and approved the request to host Ms Namazie.
- (f) That a sincere apology had been extended to Ms Namazie, noting that this had been accepted.
- (g) That following this particular incident, the Students' Union would be ensuring that the correct processes for the consideration of external speakers were understood across the Union.