

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 20 February 2006

- Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor S Bassnett
Professor A Caesar
Professor Y Carter
Professor J Jones (from item 325/05-06)
Professor R Lindley (until item 326/05-06)
Professor M Luntley
Professor S B Palmer
Professor M Smith
Ms K Stark
Professor M Whitby
- Apologies: Professor L Bridges, Professor H Thomas, Director of Personnel.
- In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Acting Director of Finance, Director of Academic and Student Affairs, Director of Communication, Director of Estates, Registrar, University Secretary, Mrs H E Blunt, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 326/05-06 the University Librarian.

322/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2006 be approved subject to the inclusion of Professor M Smith in the list of members offering their apologies for the meeting.

323/05-06 CETL CAPITAL Centre: Memorandum of Understanding (minute 301/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Acting Director of Finance)

That discussions were currently ongoing with the University of Birmingham in regard to issues relating to the terms of the lease agreement for the use of workshop space in the Shakespeare Institute and that it was therefore likely that the competitiveness of the notional rent for these premises would need to be re-evaluated.

324/05-06 HEIF3 Institutional Allocations (minute 180/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the University's institutional plan for the use of its formula funding allocation under Round 3 of the Higher Education Innovation Fund would be brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to the HEFCE by the deadline of 15 March 2006.

325/05-06 Midlands Physics Consortium

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

That he, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the Head of the Department of Physics had recently met with the HEFCE for further discussions in regard to the proposed Midlands Physics Consortium noting that it was anticipated that up to £10m in funding for the proposed Consortium would potentially be available from the HEFCE and that alternative sources of funding, such as the Office of Science and Technology, would need to be considered in the event of a shortfall in required funding for the Consortium.

RESOLVED:

That a paper setting out the proposed governance model for the Midlands Physics Consortium and issues relating to the profiling of spend on the Consortium be brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to discussion with the HEFCE.

326/05-06

Library Update and Strategic Issues

CONSIDERED:

A report providing an update on local and national developments relating to Library issues, including the optimisation of storage and access in UK research libraries, issues relating to the relocation of print stock from the Library as part of the Library refurbishment programme and the final report from the reading list audit conducted by the Library (SC.213/05-06) together with an oral report from the University Librarian.

REPORTED: (by the University Librarian)

That the BioMed Grid at the Gibbet Hill campus had been officially opened at 10am that morning and had been well-received by both students and staff.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University Librarian approach colleagues at other University Libraries to establish their plans for addressing library storage and access issues within their institutions and their perspectives on the report commissioned by the British Library and the Consortium of University Research Libraries "Optimising storage and access in UK research libraries" with a view to informing Warwick's strategy in this regard.
- (b) That the Committee support and endorse the selection of print journal back runs as the first tranche of Library material to be relocated to the external store as part of the Library refurbishment project noting the significant cost and service benefits of this approach as compared to opting for the relocation of monographs.
- (c) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and the University Librarian take forward the issues raised in paper SC.213/05-06 and in discussion at the meeting relating to student reading lists and that an update on these issues be included in the next Library update to be brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee.

327/05-06

Capital Investment Framework: HEFCE Consultation

CONSIDERED:

HEFCE document 2006/04 on the HEFCE consultation on proposals for a new approach to capital investment in higher education (SC.219/05-06) together with oral reports from the Director of Estates and the Acting Director of Finance.

RESOLVED:

That the Registrar, the Acting Director of Finance and the Director of Estates prepare the draft University response to the HEFCE consultation document for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to the HEFCE by the deadline of 28 April 2006.

328/05-06

Collaboration with Birmingham University (minute 311/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft management and consultative model for the consideration and approval of research projects to be undertaken in collaboration with the University of Birmingham (SC.220/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the draft management and consultative model be approved as set out in paper SC.220/05-06 subject to amendment along the lines discussed at the meeting and forwarded to the Strategy Committee for consideration.

329/05-06 UCAS Applications Digest (minute 309/05-06 refers)

RECEIVED:

The UCAS applications digest for applications received as of 15 January 2006 and a copy of a news release from UUK on UUK's response to the figures from UCAS (SC.218/05-06) together with oral reports from the Vice-Chancellor and the Academic Registrar.

330/05-06 QAA Guidelines on Preparing Programme Specifications

CONSIDERED:

The draft University response to the QAA consultation on proposals for the further development and enhancement of programme specifications together with a copy of QAA Circular Letter CL15/05 (SC.216/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the draft University response to the QAA consultation on proposed guidelines for the preparation of programme specifications be approved as set out in paper SC.216/05-06 for submission to the QAA by the deadline of 28 February 2006.

331/05-06 SU Day of Action

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

That the Union of Students would be holding a Day of Action on 27 February 2006 to demonstrate against the introduction of 'top-up' fees from September 2006.

332/05-06 GroupWise Outage

REPORTED:

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That a fault on a key component of the hardware providing storage for the GroupWise email system had developed over the weekend, that this had resulted in the majority of staff being unable to access their GroupWise email and that ITS staff were continuing to work to restore service for all affected users.

(by the Dean of the Warwick Medical School)

(b) That informal staffing arrangements continued to be in operation within ITS outside of normal working hours and that there was a need for ITS to review these arrangements with a view to ensuring more rapid and timely responses to any future software or hardware failures.

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

(c) That the Director of ITS was currently examining the feasibility of accelerating the migration of staff from Novell GroupWise to Microsoft Outlook.

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) discuss with the Director of ITS the provision of more extensive and frequent updates on the ITS website in relation to any future IT outages.

333/05-06 Quality Assurance of Basic Medical Education (QABME): General Medical Council Visit

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Dean of the Warwick Medical School on the first visit of the GMC QABME team to the Warwick Medical School on 9 February 2006 noting that feedback from the GMC on the visit had been positive and that proposed amendments to University Regulations would shortly be drafted for consideration by the University in anticipation of approval by the GMC of independent degree-awarding powers for the Warwick Medical School.

334/05-06 National Student Survey

RESOLVED:

That the report from the Aldwych Group on progress made to date in the National Student Survey Campaign (NSS) together with the NSS statement from the Group be circulated for information to members of the Steering Committee.

335/05-06 Chief Executive of HEFCE

RECEIVED:

A news release from the HEFCE on the appointment of Professor David Eastwood, Vice-Chancellor of the University of East Anglia, as the new Chief Executive of the HEFCE with effect from 1 September 2006 (SC.217/05-06).

336/05-06 Foster Review of FE: UUK Response

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/06/11 on the UUK response to the key outcomes and recommendations of the final report from the Foster Review with particular relevance to further education and the delivery of higher level skills (SC.215/05-06).