

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 12 January 2004

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor Carter
Professor Dyson
Professor Easton
Professor Jones
Mr R Jones
Professor McCrae
Professor McFarlane
Professor Mullender
Professor Palmer
Professor Thomas
Professor Whitby

In Attendance: Acting Registrar, Academic Registrar, University Secretary, Finance Director, Director of Communication, Ms A Goodall, Miss E Clewlow, for item 170/03-04 the Senior International Liaison Officer, for item 173/03-04 the Librarian.

162/03-04 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2003 be approved.

163/03-04 Strategic Issues for Discussion at Steering Committee (minute 153/03-04 refers)

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the rationale for the introduction of items for strategic discussion at meetings of the Committee, it being intended that:

- (a) These items would offer an opportunity:
 - (i) To brief members of the Committee on a range of strategic and political issues and in so doing, inform discussion of the University's position in key areas;
 - (ii) To improve communication between committees;
 - (iii) To address issues prospectively as well as offer reports in retrospect.
- (b) Discussion would be informed by a brief paper circulated in advance of the meeting identifying the key strategic issues in the chosen area of the University's activity; it being noted that such papers were intended as an aid to discussion rather than an additional administrative burden.

164/03-04 National Health Service University

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the University bid to become the principal academic partner of the National Health Service University had been successful.

165/03-04 Higher Education Bill

CONSIDERED:

The Government's Higher Education Bill together with press releases from the Department for Education and Skills and Universities UK (SC.92/03-04).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That in response to external enquiries, the Vice-Chancellor indicate that the University gave qualified support to the Higher Education Bill and, should it be passed, would be likely to charge a fee, noting that it was the University's intention to provide additional support to promote its widening participation agenda.
- (b) That further consideration be given to the dissemination of information on this issue to the wider University community.
- (c) That further detailed planning on the likely impact and implementation of the measures contained in the Higher Education Bill would be required at a later stage in its parliamentary progression.

Note: Professor Mullender wished it to be noted that, without prejudice to the University's institutional position, she felt unable to offer her personal support to the Higher Education Bill.

166/03-04 Item for Strategic DiscussionResources/Estimates and Grants

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on the following issues currently under consideration by the Estimates and Grants Committee:

- (a) The imminent merger of the work of the Academic Enterprise Group with that of the Estimates and Grants Committee which, when taken together with the ongoing development of transparent accounting data, would enable a more rounded view of departmental academic and resource planning to be taken.
- (b) Current discussions being undertaken with science departments regarding funding of research support staff.

CONSIDERED:

Proposals from a sub-group of the Estimates and Grants Committee for the re-allocation of HEFCE student numbers arising from the closure of the BA(QTS) from the academic year 2004/2005 (SC.90/03-04).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That further consideration be given to ways in which the University might develop science disciplines and new undergraduate programmes more creatively, it being the view of the Committee that the development of a course in Pharmacy might not offer the best opportunity for doing so.
- (b) That the Vice-Dean of the Warwick Medical School undertake further consultation to identify areas in which new undergraduate activities supportive to the development of the Warwick Medical School might be developed.

167/03-04 Leadership, Governance and Management

CONSIDERED:

HEFCE consultation document 2003/55 on the development of a Leadership, Governance and Management Fund (SC.93/03-04).

RESOLVED:

That the University Secretary and the Director of Personnel Services draft a robust University response to HEFCE consultation on the development of a Leadership, Governance and Management Fund for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting.

168/03-04 Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Academic Registrar on the progress of the University's efforts to identify potential University bids to host a HEFCE Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (SC.91/03-04).

RESOLVED:

That a panel chaired by Professor Whitby be established to scrutinise and encourage the development of potential University bids for CETLs and make recommendations to the Steering Committee for consideration at a future meeting.

169/03-04 Undergraduate Research Opportunities

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Centre for Academic Practice to extend the University's research opportunities for undergraduates (SC.95/03-04).

RESOLVED:

That the Acting Registrar examine the opportunities for further integration of research opportunities for undergraduates into the student experience, taking into account the potential resource implications of supervising such activity, the opportunities for incorporating an academic dimension into the University's volunteer programme and the potential for developing links with industry.

170/03-04 AC21 International Forum 2006 (minute 150/03-04 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A revised proposal that the University host the third International Forum of AC21, an international consortium of universities, in 2006 (SC.87/03-04) together with an oral report from the Senior International Liaison Officer.

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the Chief Executive of Advantage West Midlands had indicated that AWM would be willing to be the University's partner should it decide to host the AC21 International Forum.

RESOLVED:

That the International Office work with the Chairs of the Faculty Boards to gauge the level of departmental interest in hosting satellite fora to inform the Committee's consideration of the proposal that the University host the AC21 International Forum, with a view to a response being made to AC21 by the end of January.

171/03-04 Decision-Making Structures

RESOLVED:

That, following consideration of proposals for reform of the University's decision-making structures at the meetings of the Senate and the Council held in December 2003, a Group with the following constitution, the precise membership of which would be determined by the Chair, be established to take forward consideration of the University's decision-making structures:

Professor Jones (Chair)
 Pro-Chancellor (for issues relating to the Council and the Court)
 Vice-Chancellor (for issues relating to the Council and the Court)
 Professor R Freedman
 Professor L Bridges
 Professor J Davis or Professor C Davis
 One or two members of University staff
 University Secretary.

172/03-04 Departmental Governance

RESOLVED:

- (a) That a Group with the following constitution be established to take forward consideration of issues relating to departmental governance as discussed at the Chairs of Department Awayday held in November 2003 and at the meetings of the Senate and the Council held in December 2003:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor
 Professor Swain
 Professor Easton
 A representative from the Faculty of Social Studies
 University Secretary
 Director of Personnel Services.

- (b) That the Director of Personnel Services bring forward an analysis of the current duties undertaken by chairs of department for consideration by the Group.

173/03-04 Naming of the Student Resources Centre in University House

CONSIDERED:

A paper proposing names for the new student facility in University House (SC.94/03-04) together with an oral report from the Librarian.

RESOLVED:

That the new student facility in University House be named the Learning Grid subject to the satisfactory outcome of further consultation with the student body to be undertaken by the Librarian together with the President of the Students' Union.

174/03-04 Clinical Sciences Building

RECEIVED:

An oral report from Professors Jones and Carter on a recent meeting with representatives from University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust at which it was proposed that the University assume management responsibility for the teaching and conference as well as the research facilities in the Clinical Sciences Building.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the negotiation of a satisfactory agreement, the University was, in principle, willing to consider taking management responsibility for the teaching and conference as well as the research facilities in the Clinical Sciences Building.

175/03-04

Quinquennial Departmental Reviews

REPORTED: (by Professor Whitby)

That Institutional Auditors might ask to see Quinquennial Departmental Review Reports to which reference had been made in certain departmental Self Evaluation Documents but which had been intended primarily as internal documents.

RESOLVED:

That Quinquennial Departmental Review Reports be made available to the Institutional Auditors should they be requested and with the agreement of the department in question on the clear understanding that Review Reports extended beyond teaching quality issues and extended into research and management issues.