

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 19 January 2004

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor Dyson (for item 188/03-04 onwards)
Professor Easton
Professor Jones
Mr R Jones
Professor Lauder
Professor McCrae
Professor McFarlane
Professor Mullender
Professor Palmer
Professor Thomas
Professor Whitby

Apologies: University Secretary.

In Attendance: Acting Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Estates Officer, Director of Personnel Services, Ms A Goodall, Miss E Clewlow, for item 187/03-04 Assistant Registrar (Accommodation and Timetabling).

181/03-04 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2004 be approved.

182/03-04 Departmental Governance (minute 172/03-04 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the Group established to take forward consideration of issues related to departmental governance had been so constituted to be representative of and sensitive to the interests of the full range of academic departments.

183/03-04 Naming of the Student Resources Centre in University House (minute 173/03-04 refers)

RESOLVED:

That, further consultation with the student body having taken place, the new student facility in University House be named the Learning Grid.

184/03-04 Higher Education Bill (minute 165/03-04 refers)

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the political debate surrounding provisions in the Higher Education Bill for the support of students from less affluent backgrounds.

185/03-04 Decision-Making Structures (minute 171/03-04 refers)

REPORTED: (by Professor Jones)

That the Group established to consider proposals for reform of the University's decision-making structures would consist of the following:

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
 Dr E Carter, subject to her availability
 Professor R Davies or Professor W Currie
 University Secretary.

186/03-04 NHS University (minute 164/03-04 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the University had received confirmation in writing of the success of its bid to become the principal academic partner of the National Health Service University, a public announcement of which would take place on 2 February.
- (b) That discussions were now being undertaken to define the nature of the partnership and, in particular, the NHSU had been asked to outline its strategic accommodation requirements in order to inform the University's own plans for the future use of Senate House and the longer term strategy for the development of the campus.

RESOLVED:

That the Vice-Chancellor undertake discussions with representatives of the Universities of Coventry and Leicester to suggest that, in the first instance, one of the University's academic partners chair the group governing the consortium for the regional academic partnership awarded to Coventry, Leicester and Warwick by the NHSU.

187/03-04 Item for Strategic Discussion

Space, Accommodation and Capital Developments

CONSIDERED:

- (a) An update on strategic developments on the following issues relating to accommodation and major capital projects (SC.97/03-04) together with an oral report from Professor Jones on:
 - (i) Progress being made on the revision of the University's Development Plan and Estates Strategy.
 - (ii) Consideration of the future use of Senate House in the light of the success of the University's bid to become the academic partner to the NHS University, plans for the accommodation of NAGTY and support being expressed by academic departments for the provision of multi-disciplinary research space on the campus; it being noted that the short-term availability of accommodation in Senate House was key to minimising disruption to academic departments arising from other capital projects.

- (iii) The refurbishment of the Social Studies Building, noting that it would be very difficult to accommodate all the work required into the two summer vacations available before the deadline for the expenditure of SRIF funding.
 - (iv) Accommodation issues for the Warwick Medical School and the Department of Biological Sciences arising from the completion of the Clinical Sciences building, the refurbishment of the old Mathematics and Statistics building and Biological Sciences laboratories and the acquisition of Warwick HRI.
 - (v) The development of a project brief for work on the Westwood site to be funded from the University's allocation of Project Capital.
 - (vi) The potential provision of accommodation for postgraduate research students.
 - (vii) New capital projects including consideration of the potential development of a new landmark building and the long-term accommodation needs of the University Library.
- (b) A proposal for the creation of an enhanced research environment in Senate House (SC.99/03-04, tabled at the meeting) together with oral reports from the Chairs of the Boards of the Faculties of Arts and Social Studies on the specific accommodation issues arising from their respective faculties.

RESOLVED:

That the Dean and Vice-Dean of the Medical School, in liaison with the Estates Officer, examine to the likely long-term accommodation needs of the Warwick Medical School on the understanding that the accommodation available on the Gibbet Hill site would be insufficient to support the long-term expansion of both the Warwick Medical School and the Department of Biological Sciences.

188/03-04 Overheads on Research Contracts

CONSIDERED:

Proposed decision-making processes prepared by the Finance Office for determining overheads on research projects within departments holding devolved budgets (SC.96/03-04).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University seek to move to a position where its standard overhead rates on research contracts were regarded as fixed and, as such, distinct from negotiations which might ensue on individual contracts regarding price, discounts and cost-sharing.
- (b) That negotiations about discounts and cost-sharing with regard to research overheads needed to be undertaken by all departments in a manner conducive to ensuring consistency of approach across the institution and devolved departments would therefore need to follow existing University procedures in agreeing overheads at below normal rates.

189/03-04 Charities Bill

RECEIVED:

A circular to the Russell Group on the likely implications for HEIs of the provisions on exempt charities contained within the forthcoming Charities Bill (SC.98/03-04)

190/03-04 Chairs' Forum: 23 January

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the items for discussion at the meeting of the Chairs' Forum to be held on 23 January.

RESOLVED:

That members of the Committee provide feedback to the Vice-Chancellor outside the meeting on the issue of recruitment of academic staff.

CEC/EC/steer-share/stg19-1-04
19/1/04