

## UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

## COUNCIL

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2011

## MINUTES

- Members present: Mr J E K Smith (Pro-Chancellor, in the Chair); Mr C N Banks CBE (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Professor D S Eastwood (Vice-Chancellor and Principal); Mr M G Gilbert (Treasurer); Mr R Halton; Professor M J Hilton; Dr R C Horton; Mr R Hunter, (Vice-President (Education and Access), Guild of Students); Mr R J Keys; Mr G R Mackenzie OBE; Professor J M Marshall; Ms D Meredith (President, Guild of Students); Dr N Price OBE; Professor C Ryan; Professor A J Schofield; Professor M C Sheppard (Provost and Vice-Principal); Ms C Snowball CBE; Dr R Sondhi CBE; Dr J S Taunque MBE
- Also present: Mrs G Ball (Director of Finance); Dr S J L Gower (Assistant Secretary); Dr E Harcourt (Director, International Relations) for item 11/09; Professor J K Heath (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Ms T Lancaster (Director of Corporate Relations), for item 11/05; Mrs H Paver (Director of HR); Professor E W Peck (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor M C Press (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor A J Randall (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Mr L Sanders (Registrar and Secretary); Ms V Stott (Director of Strategic Planning), for items 11/05 and 11/06; Professor A Tickell (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Professor N P Weatherill (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor M Whitby (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College)
- Apologies: Mrs M C Davies; Mr M Devenish; Hon Alderman D Roy OBE; Mr I Squires; Ms S Vickers; Professor L S Young (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College)
- Papers: The minute book contains copies of all written papers or reports to which reference is made below unless indicated otherwise.
- Welcome: Council welcomed Dr Ranjit Sondhi, Lay Member, and Professor Adam Tickell, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Transfer) who were attending their first meeting.
- 11/01      Council Presentation
- Received:** a presentation by Professor N P Weatherill on the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> February on the work of the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences.
- Noted:** that members of Council welcomed this presentation and looked forward to similar briefings from other Heads of College in the future.
- 11/02      Minutes of previous meeting
- Resolved:** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2010 (CO.11.02.01) be approved.

11/03 Matters arising not addressed elsewhere on the agenda

(i) Birmingham Archaeology (minute 10/72 refers)

**Reported:** that the consultation period on the implications of the Review of Birmingham Archaeology had recently closed and that it would be possible to achieve the revised staffing targets without the need for compulsory redundancies. It was hoped that Birmingham Archaeology would be in a position to flourish in the future.

(ii) Report of the Membership Committee (minute 10/77 refers)

**Resolved:** to approve the Membership Committee's recommendation that Mr Robert Halton be appointed to serve on the BPAS Trustee Body for the period to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014 (or until he ceased to be a member of Council, should that be sooner).

11/04 Pro-Chancellor's Items

**Received:** a report from the Pro-Chancellor (CO.11.02.02).

**Reported:** by the Pro-Chancellor that he would take the opportunity at future meetings to brief members on developments he was aware of at the Student Loans Company, BIS and at HEFCE.

11/05 Vice-Chancellor's items

**Received:** a report from the Vice-Chancellor containing a number of items for information (CO.11.02.03).

(i) Pay Matters

**Reported:** that

- (a) the UCU had still not accepted the national offer of a pay increase of 0.4%. UCEA had advised that the negotiating process was now concluded and the increase would be paid to the staff concerned at the end of the month;
- (b) the UCU had decided to ballot its members on industrial action in relation to three matters: the pay offer; in support of a national agreement of job security; and on proposed reforms to USS.

(ii) Birmingham / Nottingham Collaborative Framework

**Reported:** that

- (a) the Collaborative Framework would be formally announced later in the week. An article would appear in the *THE* containing interviews with both Vice-Chancellors;
- (b) the Framework aimed to recognise and to extend existing collaborations, to facilitate joint appointments and the award of joint degrees where appropriate, and to promote joint applications for research grants and equipment;
- (c) Nottingham had agreed to offer Birmingham the use of its infrastructure in China and both universities would work together to explore new international markets;
- (d) the agreement was not an exclusive relationship. Both universities had important collaborations with other universities and these would continue.

(iii) NIHR Centre for Surgical Reconstruction and Microbiology

**Reported:** that the Centre had been formally launched in January. It was a prestigious collaboration between the University, the Department of Health, the Ministry of Defence, University Hospital Birmingham and the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine. It would bring together military and trauma surgeons and scientists to share their medical research expertise to boost trauma care delivery at the earliest stages of injury.

(iv) HEA Subject Centres

**Reported:** that following a 30% cut in its grant funding the HEA had decided to refocus the work of its subject centres at York. Two such Centres were presently based in this University – Sociology, Anthropology and Politics (C-SAP) and Mathematics, Statistics and Operational Research (MSOR). The latter, in particular, was successful and discussions were taking place as to how its work, as well as work based on STEM, might best be taken forward.

(v) Other significant issues

**Reported:** that other matters of importance at present included major investments arising from the recent Employability Review and reviewing the University's research performance – the latter would be a subject of discussion at the April Council Strategy Day.

11/06 Progress Report from Vice-Chancellor's Browne Steering Group

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11/07 Shaping Our Future: Key Performance Targets

**Received:** a paper detailing the set of proposed KPTs in support of the University's Strategic Framework (CO.11.02.05).

**Noted:** that

- (a) ten high-level KPTs were proposed that would assist in measuring the University's performance against its Strategic Framework goals;
- (b) the data underlying some of the KPTs would continue to evolve;
- (c) much of the data was based on already audited external data, such as HESA returns, on which the Audit Committee had already received assurance. The Audit Committee would reflect further on whether assurance on these data was necessary;
- (d) SPRC would review progress on the KPTs twice a year and Council would receive reports on progress twice a year, commencing in June.

**Resolved:**

- (a) to approve the KPTs as set out in the paper;
- (b) to commend the quality of the work on the KPTs, which were felt to be best in class, and to thank all those involved in their production.

11/08

Report of the Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee

**Considered:** a report from the meeting of the Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2011 (CO.11.02.06).

IT Strategy

**Noted:** that

- (a) the new Strategy had been produced following lengthy consultations across the University undertaken by Professor John Heath and Dr Sean Duffy;
- (b) the Strategy aimed to deliver a number of immediate improvements to the student experience;
- (c) Research was taken to include Knowledge Transfer as part of the IT Strategy.

**Resolved:** to receive the Report and to endorse the IT Strategy.

11/09

BPAS Actuarial Valuation

**Considered:** a paper (CO.11.02.07).

**Resolved:** to approve the proposal of the Trustees that the University continue to make additional contributions of £4.3m per annum to the Scheme for twenty years and that the Scheme should remain open to accruals, as outlined in the paper.

11/010

Strategic Review of Global Engagement

**Considered:** a paper (CO.11.02.08)

**Noted:** that

- (a) the Working Group on Global Engagement had been established by SPRC on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor in the light of the Strategic Framework. It was time-limited and would make its final report in June;
- (b) the Group was considering ways in which the University could improve its performance in the increasingly important Indian market. It was also exploring other new and emerging markets, including Africa and South America;
- (c) it was important that these activities were matched by a renewed effort to enhance the experience of international students once at the University.

**Resolved:** to receive the Report.

11/011

2010/11 Projected Outturn at Quarter 1

**Received:** a paper (CO.11.02.09).

**Noted:** that the strategic investments undertaken as part of Sustainable Excellence were taking place through the Colleges and UEB had agreed to review these investments, with Professor Tickell, as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Transfer) being involved in the review.

11/012 Capital Projects Update

**Received:** a progress report on capital projects above £5M approved by Council (CO.11.02.10).

11/013 Items approved between Meetings of Council

**Received:** a list of items approved since the last meeting of Council (CO.11.02.11).

11/014 Affixing of the University Seal

**Received:** a report noting the transactions which had required use of the University Seal since the last meeting of Council (CO.11.02.12).

11/015 Any other business

There was none.

11/016 Date of next meeting

**Reported:** that the next meeting of the Council would take place on **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2011** at 10.00 a.m.