

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

COUNCIL

20th April 2016 at 4.00pm

MINUTES

Members present: Mr Ed Smith CBE (Pro-Chancellor, in the Chair); Mr Derrick Anderson; Professor Kathleen Armour; Ms Rose Bennett (Postgraduate Officer); Dame Christine Braddock; Mr David Davies OBE; Mr Martin Devenish; Professor Sir David Eastwood (Vice-Chancellor and Principal); Professor Peter Fryer; Mr Robert Halton; Mr Malcolm Harbour CBE; Ms Sukhvinder Kaur-Stubbs; Professor Hisham Mehanna; Mrs Caragh Merrick (Treasurer); Dr Ranjit Sondhi CBE; Mr David Stead; Professor Adam Tickell (Provost and Vice-Principal).

Also present: Professor David Adams (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor Jeff Bale (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Professor Saul Becker (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Mr Chris Granger (Director of Finance); Professor Robin Mason (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International)); Mrs Colette McDonough (Assistant Secretary); Professor Myra Nimmo (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Ms Heather Paver (Director of HR); Mr Lee Sanders (Registrar and Secretary); Professor Andy Schofield (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor Tim Softley (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Professor Michael Whitby (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Mr Peter Clack (Director of International Relations) (for Minute 16/22); Ms Erica Conway (Deputy Director of Finance) (for Minutes 16/22 and 16/24(1)); Dr Sean Duffy (Director of IT Services) (for Minute 16/24); Ms Cathy Gilbert (Director of External Relations) (for Minute 16/22); Professor Una Martin (Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equalities)) (for Minute 16/23) and Mr Trevor Payne (Director of Estates) for Minute 16/24).

Apologies: Mr Alan Davey CBE; Mr Richard Haywood (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Mr Jack Mably (President of the Guild).

Papers: The minute book contains copies of all written papers or reports to which reference is made below unless indicated otherwise.

16/18 Minutes of previous meeting

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2016 be approved (CO.16.04.01), subject to the substitution of 'O'Brien' for 'Martin' at Minute 16/02(a).

16/19 Matters Arising
Minute 16/02(a)

Noted: that Dame Una O'Brien and Dame Linda Homer had been appointed as members of Council with effect from 1st June 2016.

16/20 Pro-Chancellor's Items

Reported: that there were no Pro-Chancellor's Items.

16/21

Vice-Chancellor's Items

Considered: a report from the Vice-Chancellor (CO.16.04.02).

(1) EU Referendum

Reported: that the outcome of the EU referendum on 23rd June 2016 could have a significant bearing on the UK higher education sector. The University was seeking to play a role in shaping a well-informed and balanced public debate and Professor Saul Becker was leading a range of events and initiatives for students, staff and the wider public, and working with the Guild of Students to encourage student voter registration.

(2) HEFCE Grant Letter

Reported: that the University had received its HEFCE Grant Letter on 19th April 2016. This was tabled as Paper CO.16.04.02A.

(3) Provost and Vice-Principal

Reported: that Council congratulated Professor Adam Tickell on his appointment as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sussex and thanked him for his contribution to the University since joining Birmingham in 2011.

(4) Higher Education Review

Reported: that the final version of the Higher Education Review Report would be submitted to the next meeting of Council.

16/22

[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]

16/23

Equality Scheme 2016 - 2020

Considered: the University's draft Equality Scheme 2016-2020 (CO.16.04.04).

Reported that:

- (a) the draft Equality Scheme 2016-2020 had been developed following engagement with staff and students and was intended as a statement of the University's commitment to equality, its equality objectives and targets, together with the actions it had taken and would take to meet and promote those objectives and targets during 2016-2020;
- (b) the Scheme aligned itself with the University's Strategic Framework, and identifies four particular themes:
 - (i) Inclusion: we provide an environment that is accessible and welcoming;
 - (ii) Attainment: everyone can flourish and succeed to the best of their abilities;
 - (iii) Flexibility: we support different ways of working and learning;
 - (iv) Embedding: the active promotion of equality informs our culture and behaviour;
- (c) one of the key objectives was to reduce student attainment gaps and differences in degree completion rates. The University had already been taking action to address the degree attainment gap (i.e. the difference in percentage terms in those gaining a first or upper second class honours degree) between white and BME students; for example, by introduction of the BME Ambassador Scheme. This remained a priority for the University, especially given that the

University had a significantly higher proportion of BME entrants (25.6%) than the Russell Group average (18.6%) in 2014/15, representing the 7th highest proportion of BME entrants of all Russell Group institutions and the 2nd highest outside of London;

- (d) a brochure version of the Equality Scheme was being prepared to communicate the key aspects to staff and students;
- (e) there was scope to sharpen some of the metrics for monitoring equality performance;
- (f) the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equalities) was congratulated on the Equality Scheme and her leadership in this area.

Resolved: that the Equality Scheme be approved as set out in Paper CO.16.04.04, noting that Council would continue to receive an annual assurance report on equalities and diversity each October which would include a progress report on implementation of the Scheme.

16/24 Report of the Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee

Considered: the report of the meeting of the Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee held on 10th March 2016 (CO.16.04.05), noting that some of the recommendations from the Committee had been dealt with elsewhere in the meeting.

(1) Conference Park and Hotel Business Plan

Considered: a capital investment of £35.9m in a new hotel and conference building, creating bedrooms, meeting spaces and other hotel and conference related facilities, together with a refurbishment of some current facilities (Appendix 1 to Paper CO.16.04.05).

Reported that:

- (a) the hotel and conference facility would consist of 218 bedrooms and a range of meeting rooms attractive to both commercial and academic audiences, noting that it would not be purely a commercial facility and there was a need to strike a balance in its usage between University and academic needs and generating commercial income. The aim was to open by 1st August 2018;
- (b) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (c) the Conference Park had been agreed as a priority in the Capital Programme 2016-2020;
- (d) there was scope for further expansion in due course (Peter Scott House and Lucas House) if there was sufficient market demand;
- (e) the financing options were being reviewed, including that of a loan facility.

Resolved: that the proposed capital investment of £35.9m in a new hotel and conference building, creating bedrooms, meeting spaces and other hotel and conference related facilities, together with a refurbishment of some current facilities, be approved as set out in Appendix 1 to Paper CO.16.04.05.

(2) New Data Centre Strategy and Strategic Investment

Considered: the proposed Data Centre Strategy and allocation of £10m from the Capital Programme for the construction of two new data centre facilities and for a further phase to modernise the Elms Road Data Centre to act as a resilient partner for the two new data centres (Appendix 2 to Paper CO.16.04.05).

Reported: that the University's IT services provision relied on facilities/services at two ageing data centres on campus which were nearing capacity. Data centre technologies had advanced rapidly over recent years, enabling increased capacity, resilience, efficiency and significant operational cost savings. Equally the demands on IT had also increased, with new possibilities opening up, for example by big data collection and analytics. In the Life Sciences in particular, the need for data storage for research was at unprecedented levels, and would grow significantly further, noting that this type of data was not suitable for cloud storage. The Big Research Data investment (approved by UEB on 21st December 2015) meant that the Elms Road centre was effectively full, severely limiting future ability to support new initiatives (e.g. possibly New Core). It was therefore imperative to expand the existing data centre capacity in order to support expected research growth and be able to facilitate new University initiatives.

Resolved: that the proposed Data Centre Strategy and the allocation of £10m from the Capital Programme for the construction of two new data centre facilities and for a further phase to modernise the Elms Road Data Centre to act as a resilient partner for the two new data centres be approved as set out in Appendix 2 to Paper CO.16.04.05.

16/25 New Core Outline Business Case

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

Considered: the outline business case for New Core (CO.16.04.06).

Reported that:

- (a) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (b) **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**
- (c) the final budget would be confirmed in the Full Business Case to be submitted for approval to UEB on 6th June, to SPRC on 14th June and Council on 29th June 2016. If approved the New Core contract would be signed on 30th June 2016 allowing the key process design phase to start. It was intended that HR would be implemented in November 2017 and Finance in May 2018;
- (d) the efficiencies and savings, not just in Finance and HR, but across the University, which would be delivered by New Core (for example, in terms of new ways of working and new forms of delivery and savings in the Colleges) would be articulated as part of the next phase of work following selection of the Preferred Bidder. Intelligence gained on the experience of other higher education institutions who had installed an integrated finance, HR and payroll system would continue to inform this.

Resolved that:

- (i) authority be delegated to SPRC on 4th May 2016 to approve the detail of the Outline Business Case for New Core;
- (ii) authority be delegated to the Pro-Chancellor, Treasurer and Vice-Chancellor on behalf of Council to provisionally appoint the Preferred Bidder on 18th May following a recommendation by the New Core Programme Team and Executive Sponsor;
- (iii) final sign-off of the Programme would be given in June 2016 when Council would be invited to approve the Full Business Case.

16/26 **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

16/27 **[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]**

16/28 Audit Committee

Received: a report from the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 15th March 2016 (CO.16.04.09).

16/29 Senate

Considered: a report from the meeting of Senate held on 23rd March 2016 (CO.16.04.10).

(1) Amendment of Ordinances

Reported that:

- (a) Ordinance 2.9.1 provided for up to four members of Senate to be co-opted by Senate on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor;
- (b) the recent establishment of a number of additional Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor roles had identified the need to increase the number of co-opted members on Senate so that those with a remit relevant to the business of Senate could be represented and contribute to meetings of Senate as members. It was therefore proposed that the number of co-opted members of Senate be increased from four to six.

Resolved: that the amendment of Ordinances 2.9.1 and 2.13.1 be approved as set out in Appendix 1 to Paper CO.16.04.10, noting that this would increase the number of co-opted members of Senate from four to six.

16/30 Appointment of the Provost and Vice-Principal

Considered: the arrangements for the appointment of the next Provost and Vice-Principal (CO.16.04.11).

Resolved: that authority be delegated to the Pro-Chancellor to agree the membership of the selection committee and to agree a recommendation from the Vice-Chancellor on the interim arrangements to cover the role pending the appointment of the next Provost and Vice-Principal, should these be required.

16/31 HEFCE Annual Assessment of Institutional Risk

Noted: the HEFCE Annual Assessment of Institutional Risk (CO.16.04.12).

16/32 Capital Projects over £5m

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

Received: a report from the Director of Estates (CO.16.04.13).

16/33 Affixing of the University Seal

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

Received: a report noting the transactions which had required use of the University Seal since the last meeting of Council (CO.16.04.14).

16/34 Items Approved Between Meetings of Council

Received: a report noting items of business approved since the last meeting of Council (CO.16.04.15).

Endorsed:

- (i) the lease of the running track and space in the Dental Hospital;
- (ii) the sale of Allendale Cottage and Redhill Lodge, Redhill Road, Wast Hills.

16/35 Any Other Business

Reported: that Rose Bennett was congratulated on her recent election as Postgraduate Students' Officer.

16/36 Programme of Meetings 2015/16

Noted: the programme of meetings of Council for the remainder of 2015/16:

Tuesday 28th June 2016, 5.00pm, Council Presentation and Dinner
Wednesday 29th June 2016, 9.00am, Council Meeting