

UNIVERSITY BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 23 APRIL 2010

Present: Mr AJ Frost (Chair).
Mr J Andrews; Ms M Barron, Prof P Curran; Mr G Darnton; Mrs J Dawson; Mr C Elder; Mrs K Everett; Mr J Francis; Mr D Hines; Mrs F McMillan; Dr P Rawlinson; Mr J Ricci; Mr R Spragg; Mr G Sturdy; Prof J Vinney.

In Attendance: Mr N Richardson (Clerk to the University Board).
Mr G Rayment (Committee Clerk); Mr T Horner (SUBU President Elect);
Dr M Humphreys (Item 3.2).

Apologies: Mr C Appleton; Dr P Barnwell; Prof C Hallett; Mr T Lee; Prof N Petford;
Mrs S Sutherland; Mr D Willey.

ACTION

1. MINUTES

1.1 Board Meeting (29 January 2010)

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record.

1.2 Matters Arising

1.2.1 Board Lunch Seminars (Minute 1.2.1). The Board Lunch Seminar had taken place on 11 March and members had received a briefing from Paul Pharaoh of Martineau's solicitors on a number of legal developments relevant to the Board. The next Board Lunch Seminar would be arranged for mid-June (date to be confirmed) and would focus on the theme of student experience. Mr Ricci was asked to work with incoming SUBU President, Mr Horner, on a suitable presentation. Prof Vinney would also present on the UET perspective. It was noted that Prof Jim Roach (Dean of DEC) was currently undertaking a review of the outcomes from the National Student Survey which might be relevant to the discussion.

JR/TH/JV

1.2.2 Board Members' Letters of Appointment (Minute 1.2.4). The Chair asked that any outstanding Letters of Appointment be signed and returned to the Committee Clerk as soon as possible. The Clerk would send reminders to the relevant members with copies of the original letters.

2 BOARD MATTERS

2.1 Membership

2.1.1 The Chair reported that Hannah Scott (now Hannah McCarthy) had agreed to take up her appointment to the Board (as approved by the Board previously) with effect from September 2010. Her expertise in the field of accountancy would help to fill the skills gap left by the resignation of Mr Smith.

2.1.2 The Nominations Committee had considered a number of possible candidates to

replace Rev Dr Hart. Three of these candidates had been invited to interview with the Chair and the Vice-Chancellor (see the minutes of the Nominations Committee meeting of 24 March 2010). Two of these interviews took place on 21 April and the third will be on 30 April. The Chair would report on the outcome in due course, but was confident that a suitable replacement would be found.

2.2 Search for a new Vice-Chancellor

(Members of the University Executive Team left the meeting for the following two items, with the exception of Mr Andrews, who remained at the request of the Chair)

2.2.1 The Chair reported that the Nominations Committee had approved the selection of a search panel comprising himself, Mrs Sutherland and Mr Sturdy. This search committee had subsequently undertaken a competitive tendering exercise in order to source an appropriate firm of executive recruitment consultants. As a result, recruitment agents Saxton Bampfylde had been contracted to take forward work on the search for a new Vice Chancellor. The Board formally approved the process and the appointment of Saxton Bampfylde.

2.2.2 Following a number of wide-ranging internal consultation meetings, Saxton Bampfylde had reported their findings (a summary of which had been presented at the previous evening's Board dinner). The outline timetable for the recruitment exercise was tabled for the information of Members. The position of Vice-Chancellor would be advertised the following week with a view to appointing the successful candidate in mid-July, to take up the appointment in January 2011. Saxton Bampfylde would undertake the preliminary interviews with longlisted candidates in late May/early June. Following agreement on a shortlist, formal interviews would be undertaken by a selection Panel in early July. Members approved a selection panel comprising the Chair, Mrs Sutherland, Mr Sturdy, Mr Ricci, Prof Hallett, Ms Barron and Prof Adrian Newton. Mr Andrews would be present throughout the interviews and have oversight of the process, although he would not be part of the Panel. It was agreed that Board members would be kept informed of progress between meetings and that the 'rules of engagement' would be circulated when finalised.

Chair/Mr Andrews

2.3 Senior Management changes

2.3.1 The Chair introduced this paper setting out proposed interim senior management arrangements pending the appointment of the new Vice-Chancellor. The proposals were designed to ensure that a strong and motivated management team was maintained and to ensure a smooth handover of operations during the coming months. The need to appoint a new PVC(R&E) was noted, but it was agreed that this would be a matter for the new Vice-Chancellor.

2.3.2 Members discussed how the new arrangements will be communicated to stakeholders and the relative merits and methods of informing external parties. The Board agreed the proposed interim arrangements as set out in the paper, although point 3 (arrangements from summer onwards) was felt to be unhelpful and ambiguous and should be omitted from any communications. It was also agreed that any announcement on the interim arrangements should come from the Chair and members agreed that the Chair should discuss the nature and mechanism for the announcements further with the VC and DVC.

Chair/VC/DVC

3 STRATEGIC REPORTS

3.1 Higher Education Funding 2010-11

- 3.1.1 The DoF introduced this paper which sets out the latest position regarding HE funding for 2010-11, following receipt of the University's provisional recurrent grant letter for 2010-11. The five year financial plan assumed a reduction of 10% in the 2010-11 HEFCE grant which was more than sufficient to cover the changes set out in the paper. The DoF, however, emphasised the provisional nature of the information and the possibility that the figures might be revised downwards after the General Election. It was expected that HEFCE would aim to finalise the grant allocations before the funding agreements were issued in July, but this would be only weeks before the start of the new academic year. It was felt prudent, therefore, to retain the central contingency set out in the five year financial plan. The Board noted the paper.

3.1 Estates Strategy

- 3.2.1 The VC introduced this item and explained that approval was being sought for the Estates Strategy and an overall funding 'envelope' through to 2017-18, following on from the Board's discussion of emerging findings at the previous meeting. The Strategy had been scrutinised by the Strategy & Resources Committee who had recommended it for approval, subject to further consideration of the possibilities of procuring additional land [...commercial-in-confidence...] The Strategy & Resources Committee had also sought assurances regarding the flexibility of the strategy; for example, if the assumptions regarding the availability of funding were to change in coming years. It was confirmed that the flexibility existed to tailor the implementation of the strategy accordingly. Each major project would be subject to the usual business case and would be presented to the Board for approval where appropriate (i.e. if the cost exceeded £500,000).

- 3.2.2 Dr Humphreys was invited to present the strategy and he assured the Board that comprehensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders had taken place and this had helped to inform the document. He explained the main drivers for the Strategy, including the need for more space on Talbot Campus; better support for research; better sports and recreational facilities and to take account of new and changing methods of learning and interacting.

- 3.2.3 Members noted the assumption that 50% external funding would be required for developments to the Media School and for Research Laboratories. Dr Humphreys explained that these projects (which fell into the latter part of the strategy implementation) were too expensive to be funded by the University alone and that sponsorship would be required to implement them in full. Members also discussed whether the Strategy was sufficiently 'visionary' in its scope, although it was noted that it had to be realistically affordable and deliverable.

- 3.2.4 The Board approved the Estates Strategy.

3.3 Professional Service Review: Update

- 3.3.1 The PVC(E&PP) explained that Phase 2 of the Professional Services Review was now almost complete and the majority of managerial appointments had been made. Directors were now taking forward Phase 3 of the review. Student & Academic Services were on track to deliver £0.5 million savings year on year. Cross cutting activities were also progressing, including projects looking at the provision of management information and admissions.

3.4 Periodic Performance Review (KPIs)

- 3.4.1 The DoF introduced this report which showed current performance against the 25 KPIs as defined in the revised Strategic Plan. Overall, there were no unexpected results in the report, although it was noted that some of the KPIs were new and

data was not yet available to populate the report. The Board also noted the list showing which KPIs were delegated to which committee for ongoing monitoring purposes.

3.5 Strategic Reviews: Update

- 3.5.1 The VC introduced this paper which summarised progress on each of the 10 strategic reviews identified in the revised Strategic Plan. The review of the IT and Estates Strategies had been completed and the remaining 8 reviews would be considered in more detail at the Board's seminar on 21 May 2010. A structure for the Seminar had been discussed by the Strategy & Resources Committee who suggested that the review of employment costs should be a major theme (led by Mr Andrews) with other reviews grouped together for discussion purposes (for example, PG/UG balance, academic footprint and off-campus provision being linked into one discussion item). The DVC will lead on finalising the agenda for the Seminar, to be circulated to members in due course.

DVC

4 UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE GROUP REPORTS

4.1 Vice-Chancellor's Report

- 4.1.1 The VC presented a paper on changes to Executive and Leadership teams for the information of members. It was noted that the University Executive Group (UEG) had been renamed the University Executive Team (UET) and the Senior Management Team (SMT) was now the University Leadership Team (ULT).
- 4.1.2 The VC also updated the Board on election campaign statements relating to Higher Education, which were emerging from the three main parties prior to the General Election. All three parties had committed to ring-fencing funding for research and Labour had indicated they would maintain the Research Excellence Framework. They had also committed to a target of 75% of 18-30 year olds in higher education or an apprenticeship and to increase student places. Both Labour and Conservative had said they would continue to prioritise STEM subjects. Neither had commented in respect of student fees although the Conservatives had said they would pay fees for the children of servicemen and women killed in the line of duty since 1990. They had also promised an additional 10,000 student places which would be funded from the early repayment of student loans (driven by the offer of a 10% discount to those who repaid early). The Conservatives had also proposed the introduction of joint industry/research centres. The Liberal Democrats had committed to phasing out tuition fees over a period of 6 years; increasing funding for PG research; and introducing a national bursary scheme.

4.2 Post- 'Newton Working Group' outcomes

- 4.2.1 The VC referred the Board to the minutes of the special meeting of Senate, which took place on 22 February 2010 to discuss the recommendations arising from the 'Newton Report' and the Working Groups which had considered these proposals. The VC had subsequently accepted the recommendations of the three Working Groups. These included name changes for two of the Schools, with Conservation Sciences becoming 'Applied Sciences' and Services Management becoming the 'School of Tourism'. Other recommendations included the introduction of increased flexibility in the way Schools employed Deputy Deans and the goal to have each Academic Group led by a Professor within three years.

4.3 Ethical Investment Policy

- 4.3.1 The DoF introduced this item and sought the Board's endorsement of (and

agreement to publish) the Ethical Investment policy. The Policy had been approved by ULT and Strategy & Resources Committee. The Board endorsed the policy, which will be reviewed and published biennially in consultation with stakeholders.

4.4 Nominated Officer Reports on subsidiaries

- 4.4.1 The DoF introduced this paper which provided reports on each of the University's subsidiary companies. The new subsidiary 'Widget Co' would be the investment vehicle for the exploitation of future Intellectual Property. It was noted that some of the Director appointments to subsidiaries would need to be reviewed in light of the upcoming senior staff changes. With immediate effect, the Board approved the appointment of Jeni Graham (Director of Financial & Commercial Services), or her nominee, as the University's Nominated Officer for all subsidiary companies.

4.5 Barclays Overdraft Facility

- 4.5.1 The DoF presented this paper setting out the overdraft facility commercial terms between the University and Barclays bank. The Board approved these terms.

5 COMMITTEE REPORTS

5.1 Strategy & Resources Committee (25 March 2010)

The minutes were noted.

5.1.2 Management Accounts

Members noted the Management Accounts

5.2 Audit & Risk Committee (19 February 2010)

The minutes were noted. Members also noted that retendering of the University's internal audit service (KPMG) would take place this year, with retendering for the external audit service (BDO) scheduled for next year. The Committee also planned to hold an additional CPD session in June where the auditors would provide briefing on current and upcoming changes to financial and accounting regulations. A letter from HEFCE to the VC (dated 15 April 2010) was tabled, which confirmed their assessment of the University's institutional risk as being 'not at higher risk'. They noted that, as a result of an oversight, the Audit & Risk Committee's annual report had not given sufficient detail on the work undertaken to validate the University's various data returns. The DoF assured the Board that the Committee had undertaken these activities and that they would be explicitly included in future annual reports. Members formally noted the HEFCE letter.

5.2.1 Risk Register

The Risk Register was noted.

5.3 Human Resources Committee (26 March 2010)

The Report was noted. The Committee Chair informed the Board that the Employment Tribunal referred to at para 4.2 of the report had since found in the University's favour. Also, in respect of para 4.3 (School of Conservation Sciences) an unfair dismissal claim had now been submitted.

5.4 Student Experience Committee (24 February 2010)

The Minutes were noted.

5.5 Research & Enterprise Committee (26 February 2010)

The minutes were noted.

5.6 Remuneration Committee (25 February 2010)

The minutes were noted.

5.7 Nominations Committee (24 March 2010)

5.7.1 Approval of candidates for Honorary Awards

The Board approved the proposed honorary awards set out in the minutes. They also noted that Mr Francis was undertaking a review of the Committee's procedures and processes for considering nominations for honorary awards. The VC also gave his formal approval as Chair of Senate.

5.8 Senate (22 February and 10 March 2010)

The minutes were noted.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 The Chair highlighted a number of upcoming seminars for Governors being run by the Leadership Foundation. The Clerk will circulate the programme and will book places for any members interested in attending any of these events. Normal travel and subsistence expenses are payable, along with the cost of registration.

Clerk

6.2 The Chair thanked Mr Ricci for his contribution to the Board over the past year. He also thanked Mr Francis for the loan of the artworks on display in the Executive Business Centre.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Strategic Review seminar will take place in the Boardroom, Poole House on the morning of 21 May 2010 (details to follow). The next meeting of the Board will take place on 9 July 2010, with the dinner on the evening of 8 July 2010.

Noel DG Richardson
Clerk to the University Board
May 2010

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Approved as a true and accurate record, subject to any amendments agreed at the Board meeting of 9 July 2010:

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Mr Alan J Frost (Chair)

Date:.....9 July 2010.....