

UNIVERSITY BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY BOARD  
HELD ON FRIDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2007

- Present: Mr A Frost (in the Chair)  
Sir Leonard Appleyard; Dr P Barnwell; Prof P Curran; Mr K Derrick;  
Mr C Elder; Mrs K Everett; Mr J Harper; Mr D Hines; Mr A Hyland;  
Mr J Knowles; Mr T Lee; Mrs F McMillan; Dr E Mytton; Prof N Petford;  
Prof R Pope; Mr M Riordan; Ms S Sutherland; Mr G Sturdy;  
Ms C Symonds; Mr D Willey; Ms Z Zuvcenko
- In attendance: Mr N Richardson (Secretary & Registrar)  
Mrs V Wood (Committee Clerk)  
Mr S Avery
- Apologies: Lord Taylor; Lady Digby; Mr I Hauff; Prof T Husband;  
Dame Yvonne Moores; Mr G Smith; Mr S Smith

*Mrs Karen Everett, the new Finance Director, was welcomed to the meeting.*

**1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**1.1 Minutes of the University Board Seminar (6 July 2007)**

The Minutes of the Board Seminar were agreed as an accurate record with the exception of Item 6.5, where “the revenue accounts” should read “capital account”.

**1.1.1 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**1.2 Minutes of the Meeting of the University Board (6 July 2007)**

The Minutes of the meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

**1.2.1 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**1.3 Minutes of the Meeting of the University Board (16 March 2007)**

The Minutes of the meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

**1.3.1 Matters Arising**

Board Members' Induction

The Secretary & Registrar has arranged an induction day for new Board Members to ensure full understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

**S&R**

Update on Fundraising

A Development Office structure is now in place with Mr Iain MacMullan appointed as Director of Development & Alumni Relations.

A series of events were being arranged, as part of the University's new fund raising strategy, including a function at the home of Mr Sturdy and a series of "Chairman's lunches". Members were requested to put forward names of persons who could be potential supporters of the University.

Members agreed that Mr MacMullan should be invited to give a presentation to a future Board meeting.

**S&R**

## **2. BOARD MATTERS**

### **2.1 Membership of the University Board – Executive Members**

*Members of the University Executive Group left the meeting*

Members were reminded that the relationship between the Executive and the Board had been discussed by the Remuneration Committee and the Chairman's Group. The Nominations Committee had also considered the issues in some detail, with the Minutes of that meeting circulated for Members' information. Those discussions had concluded that it would be in the best interest of the University to have all members of the University Executive present at Board Meetings as Members of the Board in their own right and, therefore, able to make a full contribution to Board discussions.

The proposal was agreed, unanimously. Members also agreed that measures should be taken to ensure all new Members of the Board had sufficient training and development to enable them to carry out their duties effectively. Members noted that, as with other Board Members, the new Executive Members would be subject to annual appraisal of their performance.

*Members of the University Executive Group returned to the meeting.*

### **2.2 Remuneration Committee Report (5 September 2007)**

[Confidential]

## **3. STRATEGIC REPORTS**

### **3.1 Strategic Plan 2007-2012**

3.1.1 The Vice Chancellor gave an overview of the latest version of the Strategic Plan which reflected comments made at the Board Seminar. Members were informed that the Strategy & Resources Committee had discussed the revised Strategic Plan in some depth, had given it their full support and recommended its acceptance to the Board.

#### **3.1.2 Financial Strategy**

A summary of the principles underlying the financial strategy and the links to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had been included. The Financial Plan now contained a sensitivity analysis of the major risks and specifically identified the issues about FRS17 and the difficulties in forecasting its impact on the Balance Sheet.

Mr Avery also advised Members that the draft 2006-07 year end accounts had been substantially completed, with no significant changes to numbers expected. The results show a significant improvement from the Reforecast Budget's deficit

of c£600k. A £300k surplus is now anticipated, principally due to longer than expected recruitment periods for investment posts.

### 3.1.3 Human Resources Issues

[Confidential]

### 3.1.4 Research and Enterprise

The importance of the role and performance of research, and particularly enterprise, had been re-emphasised, with the key themes set out as creative technologies, business services, forensic & environmental science and tourism as well as health, well being & quality of life.

Members noted that a review of enterprise activities was being conducted, one of the objectives being to identify an enterprise structure fit for purpose. Proposals would include the appointment of a high level Head of Enterprise to be in place for Spring 2008. To improve management information and monitor activity, a new software programme, RAKE (Research and Knowledge Exchange) had been developed.

Previous comments that the Plan was relatively silent on the regional activities had also seen this strengthened. The University, particularly in the Enterprise area, would be seeking further opportunities with Regional Development Agencies, not only in the South West but also cross-boundary with the South East region. Members noted that employer engagement, now a Government priority, was already an area where the University had a good reputation.

Research & Enterprise Committee had recommended that the umbrella company should be called "BU Enterprise", to reflect its role as a central focus point for the University, as it was felt the title "BU Consulting" was too narrow. Members commented that, whilst the distinction between "BU Enterprise" and "BU Consulting" could be clarified in the Strategic Plan, any final decision must await the outcome of KPMG's report for the University on charitable status companies.

### 3.1.5 Organisational Development

Members learnt that Dr Brian Astin had been appointed Dean of Student Experience, reporting to the Pro Vice Chancellor (Education) on academic matters and working with the Secretary & Registrar in relation to other areas of the student experience.

With the new School academic management structure almost in place, planning had started on the leadership programme aimed at enhancing team relationships and the need to work together to deliver Strategic Plans.

To address concerns over project management and overload, a dedicated Project Office was being formed, headed by Dr Graham Daborn, Executive Officer in the Office of the Vice Chancellor, to monitor projects' interrelationships and progress critical to the achievement of the Plan. The Board and the Strategy & Resources Committee would be kept informed of progress.

3.1.6 Members were informed that finding the University an appropriate "critical friend", who could advise at a senior level, was still under development.

3.1.7 The confidence of the University to achieve the planned 20% growth in international students in a competitive and rapidly changing market was raised. However, the increase was from a low base and measures were already being taken to strengthen overseas partnership arrangements, improve marketing, and establish closer relationships with local language Schools.

- 3.1.8 The importance of environmental sustainability was discussed. Members agreed this should be incorporated into the Plan, both from corporate and social responsibility perspectives, with the role of BU as a “green” University seen as an area of opportunity. References to the extent buildings conformed to low energy usage featured throughout the Estates Strategy, but additional general references would be made in the Plan, including highlights in the Executive Summary.
- 3.1.9 Members were reminded that a “strap line” was still to be found for the Strategic Plan.

## **3.2 Budget 2007-08**

- 3.2.1 The Budget for 2007-08, the first year of the Strategic Plan, had been discussed by Strategy & Resources Committee. Mr Avery advised that the investment of £6.1M for staff restructuring during 2007-08 would result in a budget deficit of £5.9M. However, before these exceptional costs are considered, a modest Budget surplus of £0.2M was forecast.
- 3.2.2 Members were reminded that FRS17 costs were broadly indeterminable until after the year end and difficult to forecast with any certainty due to movements from one year to another. The Standard would only apply to the local government scheme pension fund (for professional and administrative staff), this being a defined benefit scheme in which the assets and liabilities of contributing employers could be fairly allocated, and not to the TPS or USS Schemes for academic staff. However, at sometime in the future, attempts may be made to broaden this Standard to other Schemes. The Chairman of the Board would be raising the implications of this sector wide issue at CUC.
- 3.2.3 Members discussed the costs of severance and recruitment plans for 2007-08. Severance costs, defined as running out costs within which an element would be payment in lieu of notice, recognised that some staff would remain in post during 2007/08 and a few be entitled to a year’s notice, for which there may have to be “buy out” costs. The cost of the new posts, to be phased in during the year, was estimated at c£1.7M during 2007-08.
- 3.2.4 Members agreed that, as it was important the Board could be assured there would be regular monitoring against Budget of both these costs and total staff numbers, these should be identified and reported to the Human Resources Committee. Members also suggested that other key variables such as student numbers and research and enterprise activities should be reported to Strategy & Resources Committee for onward presentation to the Board.
- 3.2.5 Members were informed that the terms being tendered for long term debt finance were unaffected by the current problems in the banking industry. Mr Avery reported that three out of the five bids were being progressed. A fuller report would be presented to Strategy & Resources Committee.
- 3.2.6 Members approved the University Budget for 2007-08 subject to the comments made.

## **4. UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE GROUP REPORTS**

### **4.1 Senate (13 June 2007)**

- 4.1.1 The Minutes of the meeting were noted.

## **5. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **5.1 Strategy & Resources Committee (5 September 2007)**

5.1.1 The Minutes of the meeting were noted.

#### **5.1.2 Hotel School**

Members were informed that agreements between the three parties were about to be signed, but last minute issues concerning transport and the academic service agreement had been raised. It was confirmed that a potential change of ownership of the hotel operator was not anticipated to affect any of the agreements.

### **5.2 Human Resources Committee (7 June 2007)**

The Minutes of the meeting were noted.

The Board endorsed the Committee's recommendation to approve the 3% pay increase from 1 August 2007 for Grades 1 to 12.

### **5.3 Audit & Risk Committee (8 June 2007)**

The Minutes were noted.

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal and external auditors (Mazars and KPMG) would be considered at the next Audit & Risk Committee.

### **5.4 Research & Enterprise Committee (11 June 2007 and 1 August 2007)**

The Minutes of the meetings were noted.

The Chairman of Research & Enterprise Committee reported on the meeting held on 20 September, where Members had been encouraged to learn that advertisements for the Head of Enterprise post would be published this autumn.

The KPMG report on charitable status had been discussed, and the scope of the Enterprise Review considered, although it had been felt there would be only limited possible progress before the arrival of the permanent Head of Enterprise. Data from the new software programme, RAKE, had shown total output was favourable, although Research activities remained a concern.

## **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **6.1 Corfe House Visit**

Members were invited, after the meeting, to visit Corfe House, the new students' residence in central Poole.

### **6.2 Retirement of Board Members**

Sir Leonard Appleyard, having reached the end of his term of office, was retiring from the Board, although remaining as a Pro Chancellor of the University. Sir Leonard was thanked for his advice and work in supporting the University.

Members learnt that Mr Ivar Hauff was continuing to suffer from ill health and would be retiring at the end of his current term of office. The Chairman would be writing a letter of thanks on behalf of the Board for his work for the University.

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next Board Meeting would take place on Friday, 2 November 2007.

Noel DG Richardson  
Secretary & Registrar  
16 October 2007

V Wood  
Committee Clerk  
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