



Buckinghamshire New University

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Council

Minutes

date: **9 July 2012**
time: **4.00 pm**
location: **Carrington Room, Missenden Abbey**

Present:

Roy Darby (Chair)	Co-opted Council member
Antony Bellekom	Independent Council member
Mitch Brown	Independent Council member
Antonia Byatt	Independent Council member
Ashley Coles	President Students' Union
Baljit Dhillon	Independent Council member
Ruth Farwell	Ex officio member and Vice Chancellor
Lori Flynn	Independent Council member
Ian Hillan	Independent Council member
Michael Hipkins	Independent Council member
Sukhie Mattu	Elected Staff member (PSE)
Jenny Newton	Independent Council member
Pauline Odulinski	Co-opted Council member
Simon Opie	Independent Council member
Keith Ryan	Independent Council member
Linsey Taylor	Elected Senate Member
Terri Teasdale	Independent Council member
Brian Tranter (Deputy Chair)	Independent Council member

Officers:

Ellie Smith	Clerk to the Council
Vanessa Pilon	Registrar (Governance)

In attendance:

John Cooper	Director of Finance
Derek Godfrey	Deputy Vice Chancellor

Apologies:

Stephen Fox	Elected Senate member
David Griffiths	Independent Council member
Crystal Oldman	Elected Staff member (Academic)

790 Declaration of potential conflicts of interest

790.1 None were reported that had not been previously noted.

791 Minutes of the Meetings held on 19 March 2012 and 29 May 2012

791.1 A change was agreed to the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2012 - Reserved Minute 768.2 "Proposal for the appointment of Pro Vice Chancellor Learning & Teaching" 4th line amend to read "it is suggested that the focus of the post on the Senior Management Team should be changed" etc.

The Minutes of the meetings held on 19 March 2012 and 29 May 2012 were signed as a correct record with the above amendment. The actions from the meetings were either on the agenda or had been completed.

792 Matters Arising

792.1 The Vice Chancellor updated Council on the process and progress for the appointment of a Pro Vice Chancellor Learning & Teaching. The short listing was complete and the formal interviews arranged for the following week would be undertaken by representatives of Council, the Senior Management Team and the Students' Union.

792.2 Acceptances were received from awardees detailed in (b) to (f) in Item 770.2 Honorary Awards in the Reserved Minutes for 19 March 2012.

792.3 No other matters arising were noted that were not already included on the agenda.

793 Chair's Action

793.1 None had been taken since the last meeting.

794 Vice Chancellor's Report and other Strategic Matters

794.1 Vice Chancellor's Report including Key Performance Indicators (C/12/29)

This included commentary on:

- National Policy Developments
 - Continuation of, and extension to, 'tariff' and 'core margin' policy
 - Access Agreements – minimum changes but they do now include part time students
 - HEFCE consultation on allocation of grants to institutions from 2013 onwards
 - Risk based approach to quality assurance
 - Government response to various consultations in 2011 including the government HE White Paper on "Students at the Heart of the System" and changes in the Finance Bill to exempt HE institutions from charging VAT on shared services
- Impact of National Policy Developments on Bucks
 - Student Number Control
 - Full time undergraduate fees and Access Agreement
- Student applications for 2012 entry
- 2012 NHS London Contract Performance Monitoring Results for Pre-Qualifying Nursing and for CPPD
 - Green status has been achieved in all except one area where an amber status was awarded – this relates to attrition and completion on time and an action plan has been put in place to try and address this
 - Full confidence continues to be afforded to Bucks by the NHS London and each of the NHS provider Trusts
 - The University has become the largest provider of pre-qualifying adult nursing for London
- Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
 - Student Experience – NSS and Progression and achievement were shown as green and improving with Employment (UG leavers in employment within 6 months) red and deteriorating – this was felt to be disappointing but there were currently no comparator figures from the rest of the sector
 - People – Equality & Diversity was shown as green and improving whilst Employee Satisfaction was shown as red and improving

- Financial – Sustainability and Investment were both shown as green and improving, Diversification was shown as red with no change
- Physical Environment – Affordability and Investment, Milestones and Facilities Performance were all shown as green and improving, Space Efficiency was shown as amber and improving whereas Current Condition and Functional Stability was shown as amber and deteriorating
- University Developments and recent successes
 - NSS target achieved with 67% of eligible students taking part in the survey – early results are due in August with full publication aligned with the national timetable for KIS in September
 - 2012 Complete University Guide – the University has moved up 14 places in this guide published in April 2012
 - Third Annual Student Union Awards
 - eXtra Awards for recognition of exceptional service for Professional Service Employees
 - HEA Teaching and Learning Summit ‘Learning for life and work: reconfiguring employability for the 21st Century’ - the University Project Manager, Doug Cole, was invited to be one of 25 participants, showing recognition of the excellent work undertaken here
 - Higher Education Academy Grant – awarded to Ruth Clemow, Departmental Manager in the Faculty of Society & Health for a collaborative learning and teaching project
 - A further NHS contract has been obtained from NHS South of England for Operating Department Practitioners for two years from 1 September 2012

794.2 Clarification was sought in a number of areas:

- University league tables were thought to be important but some were more reputable than others – their use by potential students and their parents was variable – it was thought that they might have more impact internationally
- Employment of graduates on leaving the University – there are currently no comparator figures with other universities but it was thought that the economic conditions might have contributed to the lower figures this year although it was noted that whilst self employed students are now included as ‘in employment’ in these figures, often art and design students regard themselves primarily as artists rather than as self employed and may exclude themselves
- The focus of priorities for next year will be employee and student engagement

795 Partnership Model with Aylesbury College: Progress Report (Verbal)

795.1 Pauline Odulinski, following a declaration of a conflict of interest in this item was invited to join the discussion.

- See: Reserved Business

796 Resources Committee

796.1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 June 2012

Minutes of the meetings held on 26 June 2012 were received.

796.2 Financial Position May 2012 (C/12/31)

The Financial position was noted. The cash and balance sheet showed an improved debtors position as well as year-end cash balances which related to the sale of Chalfont last year and net cash generation over the year. The strong financial position was welcomed.

796.3 Draft Budget 2012-2013 (C/12/32)

The report on the proposed draft budget showed the key areas of movement between the forecast for 2011-12 and budget for 2012-13 as well as the assumed cost of salary settlements and the allocation for capital investment. The level of allocation of the Investment Fund and contingency were noted as increased to reflect the increasing scale of the University’s activities.

However, because of the increased exposure to recruitment risk arising from the new fee regime, it was felt necessary to identify only partial commitment of the total budget at this time with some

amounts, clearly shown, held in reserve until the actual student recruitment for 2012-13 was known. It was noted that employee costs within the budget were higher than for 2011-12. This reflected the potential increase in student numbers for both traditional undergraduate and nursing students as well as changes to the product range and costs of the new subsidiary company.

The draft budget for 2012-13 was **APPROVED** by Council

796.4 National Pay Settlement 2012 (Verbal)

It was reported that the pay offer of 1% has not yet been agreed nationally. This offer was within budget and it was proposed that if the final settlement was 1% and it was approved nationally then it should be paid as advised by the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) without having to refer back to Council.

This proposal was **APPROVED** by Council.

(Action: Vice Chancellor, Director of Finance)

796.5 Student Residences (C/12/33)

A briefing paper included details of the current capacity for student accommodation, the demand and required capacity to meet student demand as well as potential for capacity in the private sector, potential build at the existing site at Hughenden and potential development at Brook Street.

The preferred option proposed was for building out at Hughenden through CSV and the existing planning consent. Council would be asked to consider final approval for this when the recruitment picture for September 2012 is known. However in the interim Council was being asked to give approval to preparatory work so that it would be possible for the accommodation to be completed for the student entry in 2013 assuming that final approval were given later in 2012.

The cost of undertaking the preparation work was detailed and this would include all the professional fees required to progress the project within the timescale of completion for the 2013-14 entry up to a maximum of £250,000. The proposal for a larger number of residences at the Windsor House site would not meet this timescale and the weekly cost of student rooms would be higher. The cost of student residences elsewhere in comparable universities was requested.

The recommendation proposed for undertaking the preparation work for building out at Hughenden was **APPROVED** by Council

(Action: Director of Finance, PVC Campus & Facilities and President, Students' Union)

797 Audit Committee

797.1 Minutes of the Meetings held on 8 May 2012

Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 May 2012 were received without comment.

797.2 Appointment of Internal Auditors (Verbal)

It was explained that all companies who were capable of undertaking internal audit work were invited to tender and four companies were interviewed. The criteria under which the panel considered the quotations provided were discussed and the panel decision of PricewaterhouseCoopers was recommended to Council for approval. It was noted that the final negotiations on cost had been agreed with the proposed internal auditors.

A scoring mechanism was used to evaluate the individual tenders and Council thought it might have been useful to have received this although it was noted that the decision of the panel was unanimous. Commentary was made on each of the submissions with the preferred tender having a better understanding of the University's mission, clearly showing how they could both undertake the assurance role and add value to the work of the University. In addition it was thought that the service would be improved and the contract cost was lower than at present.

Council **APPROVED** the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers as the Internal Auditors for three years commencing September 2012.

(Action: Director of Finance)

798 Governance Matters

798.1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 May 2012

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2012 were received without comment.

798.2 Single Equality Scheme: objectives for 2012-13 (C/12/34)

The objectives for 2012-13 as revised by the Governance Committee were noted. They had been aligned with those headings used for the Strategic Plan and had been prepared so that they could be achieved. The objectives meet and sometimes exceed the legal obligations under the Single Equality Act.

Council **APPROVED** the Single Equality Scheme: objectives for 2012-13

(Action: Clerk to the Council)

798.3 Recruitment of Chair (C/12/35)

- See Reserved Business

799 Report on Senate Matters

799.1 Report on Senate Matters (C/12/36)

The report on Senate Matters for 2012 to date was received. It included those matters which had been discussed, reported and approved as well as standing items, the receipt of reports from Committees and Faculties and approval of Honorary Awardees. Particular reference was made to the joint Senate/QEC meeting held in May.

799.2 Minutes of the Student Experience Committee held on 15 May 2012

The minutes of the meeting were noted as received. These included discussions on Building a Better Bucks: A Vision for Enhancing our Shared Learning Community, Strategic Student Experience issues, Postgraduate Student Experience as well as Academic Engagement and Communication.

800 Regulatory Matters

800.1 Handling of Drug Incidences in Halls of Residence (C/12/30)

This procedure had been prepared by the Accommodation Manager in consultation with the Senior Residents and local police to enhance the way in which incidences are managed, showing clear lines of responsibility and potential outcomes. Training for those responsible and support for those involved is shown.

Council were uneasy about the responsibility being asked of Senior Residents and how they identified whether there was a problem. It was stressed that any search would be undertaken by the police. Non attendance at a meeting as an assumption of guilt was not thought to be fair. The local police will undertake preventative work by sampling areas and making a forensic report. This could be used as a deterrent as they could undertake this at any time.

Council supported the approach being made to this matter but would like to see the process developed further, including more detail on training and how the police can be involved in preventative work, before this is brought back to Council for approval.

(Action: Deputy Vice Chancellor/Accommodation Manager)

801 Other Matters

801.1 Use of University Seal and Coat of Arms (C/12/37)

A report on the use of the University Seal and Coat of Arms was received.

802 Vote of thanks

802.1 The Vice Chancellor expressed both her and all members appreciation for all the hard work undertaken by both Roy Darby as a member and Chair of Council and Mitch Brown as a member and Chair of Resources Committee. They had provided her with unfailing support and advice in progressing the many changes undertaken during their time in office.

803 Date of next meeting

803.1 The next meetings of Council are scheduled to take place on:

- Tuesday 16 October 2012, commencing at 4.00pm at Missenden Abbey,
- Monday 19 November 2012, commencing at 4.00pm in the old Boardroom at High Wycombe (Joint Senate/Council followed by Council)

The meeting started at 4.00pm and finished at 5.40pm.

Signed: _____
(Chair of Council)

Date: _____

Prepared by Registrar (Governance) – 10 July 2012
Checked by Clerk to the Council – 11 July 2012
Checked by the Vice Chancellor – 22 July 2012
Confirmed by the Chair – 26 July 2012