



Buckinghamshire New University

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Missenden Council

Minutes

date: **10 February 2015**
time: **4.00 pm**
location: **Barn Hall, Missenden Abbey**

Present:

Christine Beasley (Chair)	Independent Council member
Antony Bellekom	Independent Council member
Rebecca Bunting	Ex officio member and Vice Chancellor
Baljit Dhillon	Independent Council member
Lori Flynn	Independent Council member
Matt Gilbert	President, Students' Union
Lauren Griffiths	Senate Nomination
Ian Hillan	Independent Council member
Michael Hipkins (Deputy Chair)	Independent Council member
Steve Hoole	Elected Professional Services Employee
Maggie James	Independent Council member
Tim Marshall	Co-opted Council member
Ken McCrea	Co-opted Council member
Hilary Mullen	Elected Academic Employee
Jenny Newton	Independent Council member
Simon Opie	Independent Council member
Keith Ryan	Independent Council member
Linsey Taylor	Senate Nomination

Officers:

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

In attendance:

Ian Plover	Deputy Vice Chancellor
Alison Chambers	Pro Vice Chancellor/Executive Dean, S&H
Vicky Vass	Pro Vice Chancellor/Executive Dean, DMM
David Bulbeck	Financial Controller
John Cooper	Consultant
Steve Dewhurst	Director of Strategic Development & Planning
Phil Wood	Interim Head of School Applied Management & Law (for agenda item 4)

Apologies:

Antonia Byatt	Independent Council member
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Welcome

15.01 The Chair welcomed Rebecca Bunting to the meeting.

Declaration of potential conflicts of interest

15.02 None were received.

Introduction to the new Vice Chancellor, Rebecca Bunting

15.03 Rebecca thanked members for appointing her and expressed how honoured she was to be given the opportunity to lead the University through the next stage of its development. She provided background to her progress through university and teaching and how this led into a career in higher education and her experience of different universities and levels of management.

15.04 Rebecca briefed members on the HEFCE annual conference where all the speakers were from private companies with messages for the sector around private investments, private partnerships and private universities. HEFCE also launched their five year plan to 2020 and the highlights were detailed as follows:

- Developing expert practice in teaching & learning
- Innovation in the whole area of knowledge exchange – leading on the cultural, education and business life of the community
- Universities as ‘anchors’ in their regions
- Outcomes of social mobility – including metrics and defined indicators
- Increased benchmarking
- Efficiency and sustainability
- New provision in technical recognised qualifications – potential for additional funding
- Funding of research excellence wherever it is found, though inevitable concentration in certain universities

15.05 Rebecca identified that the initial focus of the Senior Management Team in the short term would be around:

- The development of a flexible and innovative approach to postgraduate provision
- Increasing UCAS applications and acceptance levels
- University Campus Aylesbury Vale – completing on time and recruitment with long term sustainability
- Rationalisation of the development of provision in other ‘hard to reach places’
- Portfolio reviews in relation to quality indicators and viability
- IT infrastructure development including establishment of a student portal
- Leadership and staff development – value staff and offer opportunities
- Research and Business Engagement – building on the knowledge, skills and expertise already available
- Internationalisation of curriculum, students and staff

15.06 Initially the development of a new ten year strategy through an open conversation across the University about where we want to be, what we want to be known for and how we want to be viewed was required. High Wycombe is a University Town and the University should make a major contribution to the academic, cultural, business and economic life of the town.

15.07 Clarification was sought and provided in a number of areas and these included:

- League tables and how the University is responding

- Professional training and development built into the curriculum around the needs of employers which include skills in presentation, leadership, team working, as well as academic, literacy, numeracy and creativity across all provision
- Philanthropic giving not just around money but through time given to expanding students experience, work placements, visits and work related projects
- Research to suit the University mission
- Brand and marketing – not just to recruit undergraduate students but a wider vision requiring different skills to reach out and really make our brand known across the region, nationally and internationally as well as understanding markets better to identify and validate courses which will recruit successfully

Counter Terrorism & Security Bill

- 15.08 This bill is currently being fast tracked through Parliament and includes responsibilities for Governing Bodies of all Higher Education Institutions. Security is paramount and on a par with Health & Safety. It has implications for freedom of speech and universities need to understand the implications of this bill being enacted. It's about making the University safe and secure for everyone without restricting the academic freedom or freedom of speech or making the University a fortress. It was noted that a number of legal anomalies might be highlighted as a result of the implementation of this act in relation to the 1986 Education Act and the 1988 Education Reform Act. A report from the Joint Committee on Human Rights raised concerns about Higher education institutions being included at all as well as the implication for both academic freedom and freedom of speech.
- 15.09 The Interim Head of School for Applied Management * Law clearly explained the implications of and responsibilities for Higher Education Governing Bodies within the bill and highlighted the requirements under the "Prevent Section" as follows:
- Overarching Risk Oversight
 - Pastoral Care
 - Events and Venue Hire
 - Internet Safety
 - Reputation and Brand
 - Student Research
- 15.10 Physical environment and processes already changed were clearly detailed under the following headings:
- Assess the risk
 - Improve Main Campus and Halls Physical Security
 - Network access
 - PREVENT Panel and Advisor
 - Freedom of Speech Policy/Event Management
 - Pastoral and Collaborative Approach
- 15.11 Members were asked to discuss and debate for themselves the implications of the Bill through:
- Are you reassured that the University is moving in the right direction in relation to remedial action
 - Are these areas ones the University needs to be sensitive to
 - Is the University missing anything that is important
- 15.12 Feedback from the debate included:
- Raise awareness, undertake training and build into induction for everyone
 - Improve security – tailgating both vehicular and pedestrian is a problem
 - There is a fine line between vigilance and intrusiveness, alertness and fear
 - Seek internal and external advice from experts in the field
 - Welfare of students and staff as well as visitors is paramount

- Communications are key to managing challenging situations and must be clearly identified, understood by everyone and implemented as necessary
- Increase understanding of how extremism happens and how to recognise it
- Identify and budget for physical and academic requirements to fulfil duties
- Ensure that sufficient debate and discussion takes place to inform understanding and awareness
- Ensure that all students whatever their gender, race or creed, recognise the opportunities available to them and assist in ensuring that graduate employment is available to all

Date of next meeting

15.13 The next meeting of Council is scheduled to take place on:

Monday 23 March 2015 commencing at 4.00 in room 3.07 at the Uxbridge Campus.

The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 6.15pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chair of Council)

Prepared by: Registrar (Governance) – 11 February 2015
 Checked by: Director of Academic Quality & Clerk to the Council – 12 February 2015
 Confirmed by: Vice Chancellor – 16 February 2015
 Confirmed by: Chair – 23 February 2015