

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Minutes of a meeting of the Council
held on 4 February 2010

PRESENT: Mr B. M. Gray (in the Chair for items CA.1 to CA.8 and for item CA.10a), Mr G. Johnson (in the Chair for items CA.9 and for items CA.10b to CA16), Vice-Chancellor, Mr A. Baker, Dr L. J. Banton, Dr G. Brown, Professor P. J. Diggle, Ms G. Gardner, Mr J. Hadfield, Professor S. Henig, Professor G. Johnes, Mr L. King, Councillor G. Marsland, Mr G. Middlebrook, Mr G. Parker, Mr M. Payne, Mr R. Pickles, Professor H. Thomason, Ms L. Willis.

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss F. M. Aiken, Professor A. G. Chetwynd, Mr F. Fitzherbert-Brockholes, Professor R. D. McKinlay, Professor T. J. McMillan, Mr A. C. Neal, Mrs S. Randall-Paley, Mr L. Richardson, Mr C. Thrush, Ms V. Tyrrell, Mrs L. M. Wareing.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Ms H. Child, Dr K. Davidson, Mr R. Turner.

CO.10/01 New and departing members

The Chair welcomed Mr Francis Fitzherbert-Brockholes as a new member of Council and noted that Mr Gordon Johnson had reached the end of his term of office as Deputy Pro-Chancellor and as a member of Council.

Council resolved to thank Mr Johnson for his services to the University and for his contribution to the work of the Council.

CO.10/02 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

CO.10/03 Presentation: Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Document: SEC/2010/2/0083

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Bob McKinlay, gave a presentation on the international activities of the University which he described as having brought about a revolutionary change at Lancaster in the sense that the University has institutionalised internationalisation. This is manifest in the current strategic plan which is imbued throughout with references to international activities and aspirations. He cited the enormous qualitative and quantitative changes over the last decade in the scope and scale of international activity and listed seven major dimensions through which the University demonstrates its commitment to internationalisation, summarising the main activities in each area:

- research;
- open-market recruitment;
- teaching partnerships;
- research partnerships;
- portfolio development;
- recruitment of academic staff;
- student experience.

In response to questions from Council members, it was acknowledged that:

- (a) in trying to encourage more British students to study abroad, the University would need to consider the generally low level of foreign language ability amongst British students as well as the current, relatively inflexible structure of its undergraduate degree programmes;
- (b) a closer alignment with the Bologna process might be helpful;
- (c) the export of versions of Lancaster University overseas, in addition to attracting international students to Lancaster through open-market recruitment, was to be encouraged;
- (d) the University might benefit from bringing the culture and values of its international partners to Lancaster.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive the report and thanked the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for his presentation.

CO.10/04 Minutes: report of meeting on 20 November 2009

Document: SEC/2010/2/0068

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the minutes as set out.

CO.10/05 Current schedule of future business

Document: SEC/2010/2/0069

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the rolling schedule of business.

CO.10/06 Oral report of Court

The Deputy Pro Chancellor, Mr Gordon Johnson, made an oral report on the meeting of the University Court held on Saturday 30 January 2010 in which he noted that:

- (a) the meeting had been reasonably well attended;
- (b) the student demonstration against any increase in tuition fees had been well organised and well conducted, and that thanks were due to LUSU for this courtesy and consideration;
- (c) it had been agreed that the Nominations Committee should revisit the issue of co-options and lengths of terms of office of members of Court;
- (d) the annual reports received from the Pro-Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and the President of LUSU, had engaged the interest of Court members;
- (e) the report of the Director of Finance had been received;
- (f) a motion on the tuition fee debate had been passed and this would be reported formally to the next meeting of Council.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive the report.

CO.10/07 Vice-Chancellor's report

Document: VC/10/R001

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to his written report and to the following points.

- (a) the retirement of the Pro-Chancellor, Mr Gordon Johnson, and the valuable contribution he had made to the work of the University;
- (b) the newly established partnership with the Chinese Academy of Science which would involve up to six partners in the UK and in China;
- (c) his recent meeting with Professor Adrian Smith (BIS) in relation to the latter's review of postgraduate activities in UK universities and the work undertaken by the 94 Group to investigate the relationship between University types and postgraduate taught (PGT) and postgraduate research (PGR) activity, which had demonstrated Lancaster University and the rest of the 94 Group to be very strongly engaged with PGR students;

- (d) a summary of the financial climate including:
- the letter from Lord Mandelson to HEFCE, which contained information about the scale of funding cuts across the HE sector, which was copied to all universities in advance of the individual HEFCE grant letters due to be sent to each university in mid-March;
 - the continuing lack of clarity about the total size, timing and likely impact of the cuts which means that although Lancaster, along with the rest of the sector, has a good general idea about 2010/11, the size of further cuts to fall in 2011/12 to 2103/14 is still unknown;
 - that whatever happens it seems certain that the unit cost of teaching will be degraded;
 - the fact that the financial scenarios set out in the forward budgets agreed by Council in September 2009 now look likely to come to pass.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive the Vice-Chancellor's report.

CO.10/08 LUSU President's report

The LUSU President made an oral report to Council. He apologised for the lack of a written report and thanked the Vice-Chancellor for his financial summary. He drew attention to the following points:

- (a) the appointment of a new Financial Controller in LUSU;
- (b) the ongoing process to register LUSU with the Charity Commission;
- (c) recent visits to Lancaster by the NUS President and by the NUS Chief Executive;
- (d) the recent launch of the NUS General Election campaign;
- (e) his assurance that LUSU will do everything possible to protect Lancaster University in the current politicisation of the HE funding debate.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the LUSU President's report.

Documents: COO/10/03; GAP/2007/0636; FIN/10/04; FIN/09/70 (previously circulated); FIN/09/74 (previously circulated); FIN/10/03 (previously circulated)

(A) REVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING AND STUDENT FINANCES

The Chief Operating Officer introduced the paper and drew attention to the following points:

- (a) the need to treat different groups of students equitably;
- (b) the monitoring work undertaken by Lancaster, in order to measure performance against OFFA targets, since the introduction of tuition fees for UK/EU undergraduate students;
- (c) the extent to which the economic and political landscape has changed since that time and the fact that the current debate is being conducted against a backdrop of fiscal difficulties and the knowledge that the unit of resource for teaching has already been eroded and will be eroded further;
- (d) the need to take account of all the issues around student support mechanisms which are currently so expensive as to be unsustainable;
- (e) the need for Council to consider what actions the University ought to take in relation to:
 - how to communicate key issues through effective lobbying;
 - the continuing need to enhance the student experience at Lancaster;
 - the need to keep the changing composition of the student body under review;
- (f) that a motion on the review of tuition fees, debated by Court on 30 January 2010, would be brought to Council on 19 March and, in the meantime, Council might wish to consider reactivating the Council Working Party established, in 2007, to investigate the impact of tuition fees.

During discussion members of Council endorsed the principles set out in the paper and debated the process for reactivating the Working Party on the impact of tuition fees.

(B) REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

The Director of Finance drew attention to her report as set out.

(C) MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2009; 30 NOVEMBER 2009 AND 31 DECEMBER 2009

The latest Management Accounts had been circulated to Council members.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (i) note the principles and issues as set out;
- (ii) reactivate the Council Working Party on the impact of tuition fees and to invite Mr Rick Turner to continue as Chair;
- (iii) invite the Working Party to co-opt additional members and to consider its remit beyond tuition fees to include HE funding;
- (iv) invite the Working Party to consult widely;
- (v) request the Working Party to set a timetable for consultation and discussion and to report back to Council on this and process matters as soon as possible;
- (vi) note the report of the Director of Finance;
- (vii) note the Management Accounts as at 31 October 2009, 30 November 2009 and 31 December 2009.

CO.10/10 Human Resources

Document: SEC/2010/2/0097

The report on potential redundancies was before Council. The Director of Human Resources drew attention to his report as set out and to the following:

- (a) that as a result of extensions to funding or other actions taken, the actual number of redundancies would probably be less than the numbers estimated in the report;
- (b) that eight indefinite posts were included in the total number of expected redundancies.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED:

- (i) to note the report on potential redundancies as set out;
- (ii) to confirm that a continuing need for redundancies exists;
- (iii) to remit the detailed consideration of potential cases involving academic staff to the Redundancy Committee;
- (iv) to ask for contextual information about the numbers of all posts across the University in the next report.

CO.10/11 Strategy: Institutional Performance

Document: SEC/2010/2/0092

The Vice-Chancellor gave a presentation on Lancaster University's performance in a number of key areas relative to other HEIs: in the UK sector as a whole; in the Russell Group; in the 94 Group. The areas considered included:

- the composition of the student population;
- levels of entry qualifications;
- staff: student ratios;
- financial indicators.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

CO.10/12 Governance

Document: SEC/2010/2/0052; SEC/2010/2/0080

(A) **DRAFT REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The University Secretary drew attention to the proposal before Council and in particular to Clause (xi) of the terms of reference which needed to be amended from: “approve LUSU’s budgets and receive its annual accounts and external auditor’s management letter” to: “approve LUSU’s budgets and receive its annual accounts”. The Audit Committee would receive and consider the management letter.

During discussion Council requested that the definition of quoracy at the end of paragraph 4. should be amended from; “the quoracy for this committee is half the number of members plus one” to “the quoracy for this committee is half the number of members plus one including at least two lay members”.

(B) **AMENDMENTS TO STATUTE 20 AND ASSOCIATED ORDINANCES**

The University Secretary drew attention to the proposal as set out and to the following points:

- (a) the definitions of various terms used in the proposal;
- (b) the reasons why Statute 20 needs to be changed;
- (c) a summary of the consultation process undertaken to date;
- (d) the proposed next steps and the timetable for seeking approval of the proposed changes from Senate and Council.

In response to questions and comments from Council members it was confirmed by the University Secretary that the definition of academic staff, as it related to academic freedom, would be revisited.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (i) approve the revised terms of reference and membership of the Finance Committee subject to the above changes;
- (ii) receive the report and comments on the proposed amendments to Statute 20 and associated Statutes and Ordinances, to agree in principle to the proposed amendments and to send them to Senate for consideration.

CO.10/13 Risk Register

Document: SEC/2010/2/0102

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

CO.10/14 Key Performance Indicators

Documents: SEC/2010/2/0094; PSU/2010/0012; PSU/2010/0011

- (A) **UPDATED KPI BALANCED SCORECARD**
- (B) **THEMATIC REPORT ON TEACHING**

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive the balanced scorecard and thematic report on Teaching.

CO.10/15 Emeritus and Continuing membership

Document: SEC/2010/2/0086

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve new emeritus and continuing membership appointments as set out.

CO.10/16 Review of current meeting

Council members expressed themselves happy with the arrangements made.

CO.10/17 Standing Committees

*Documents: CRO/09/32; SEC/2010/2/0082; RES/09/40; CR/09/29;
SEC/2010/2/0072*

- (A) **COLLEGE AND RESIDENCE COMMITTEE: MEETING OF 5 NOVEMBER 2009**
- (B) **FINANCE COMMITTEE: MEETING OF 15 JANUARY 2010**
- (C) **KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE: MEETING OF 20 NOVEMBER 2009**
- (D) **LANCASTER UNIVERSITY AND STUDENTS' UNION JOINT COMMITTEE: MEETING OF 10 NOVEMBER 2009**
- (E) **SENATE: MEETING OF 18 NOVEMBER 2009**

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the committee reports and to confirm the actions taken.

CO.10/18 Chair's action

Document: SEC/2010/2/0093

The Council resolved to note the decisions taken by the Chair since the last meeting as set out.