

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Minutes of a meeting of the Council
held on 18 November 2011

PRESENT: Mr B. M Gray (in the Chair); Vice-Chancellor; Mr A. Baker; Dr R. Boumphrey; Dr G. Brown; Mr J. R. Carr; Dr K Davidson; Mr F. Fitzherbert-Brockholes; Mrs G. Gardner; Mr G. Gardiner; Ms J. Gaskell; Mr J. Hadfield; Professor G. Johnes; Mr L. King; Mr G. Parker; Professor E. Rose; Professor H. Thomason; Mr R. Turner; Ms L. Willis.

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss F. M. Aiken; Professor S. Bradley; Professor A. G. Chetwynd; Mr A. Clarke; Dr H. Hardie; Professor R. D. McKinlay; Professor T. J. McMillan; Mr A. C. Neal; Mrs S. Randall-Paley; Professor M. Smith; Mr M. Swindlehurst, Ms V. Tyrrell.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Professor C. Ram-Prasad.

CO.11/88 Welcome to new members

The Chair welcomed Professor Mark Smith, the Vice-Chancellor designate, to the meeting as an observer.

CO.11/89 Declaration of interest

Ref: CA.1

There were no declarations of interest.

CO.11/90 Presentation: International Teaching Partnerships

Ref: CA.2; document: SEC/2011/2/1117

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International), Dr Steve Bradley, gave a presentation to Council on the University's international teaching partnerships, and the rationale behind them. He drew attention to the following key points.

- Lancaster is a leading global institution, and is currently delivering undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes in a range of international locations, including Sunway University in Malaysia, GD Goenka in India and COMSATS in Pakistan.
- The number of students studying Lancaster programmes at overseas partner institutions now exceeds the number of overseas students at Lancaster, and was expected to exceed 6,000 by 2015.
- The current emphasis of the international strategy was on teaching partnerships, although research collaborations were likely to increase.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive the report and thanked the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) for his presentation.

CO.11/91 Minutes

Ref: CA.3; document: SEC/2011/2/1115

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 7 October 2011.

CO.11/92 Current schedule of future Council business

Ref: CA.4; document: SEC/2011/2/1116

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the schedule of future Council business.

CO.11/93 Vice-Chancellor's report

Ref: CA.5; document: VC/10/R012

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

- (a) The Memorandum of Agreement to establish a new university in Guangdong province, China, had been signed, and it was hoped that the next steps would be taken in early 2012, following due diligence processes.
- (b) The Vice-Chancellors of Lancaster, Liverpool and Manchester Universities would continue to meet on a regular basis to discuss collaborations, with the aim of bringing greater research power to the North West region.
- (c) 92% of HEFCE funding for research had been provided to South East and Oxbridge institutions in the latest round of funding.

- (d) The official opening of the Sports Centre had been very successful, with over 150 guests in attendance, including the Chancellor.
- (e) Student applications to Lancaster were down by 3% on the previous year, although the national average decrease was 11%. There was significant variance between departments, and this situation would be monitored closely.
- (f) The General Medical Council had confirmed that the medical collaboration between Lancaster and Liverpool Universities would be dissolved, and that the process for approval of the new Lancaster Medical School had been initiated.
- (g) The Vice-Chancellor had provided a copy of the recent publication *Shaping the Future: A History of the University of Lancaster* by Marion McClintock to every member of the Council, as a gift.

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

CO.11/94 LUSU President's report

Ref: CA.6; document: SEC/2011/2/1133

The LUSU President drew attention to his written report as set out, and informed the Council that since the time of writing his report, GreenLancaster had won the Green Gown Award for Student Initiatives and Campaigns for their Exodus project.

The Chair thanked the LUSU President for his report and for the comprehensive LUSU Annual Report.

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

CO.11/95 Audit

Ref: CA.7; documents: SEC/2011/2/1105; SEC/2011/2/1146; SEC/2011/2/1104

The Chair of the Audit Committee introduced the report of the Audit Committee and invited the Council to note the sections in bold print, in addition to the following points.

- (a) Considerable savings had been made, but further saving were possible.
- (b) The Council was responsible for making representation to the auditors.

- (c) The Committee was satisfied that the University management had taken appropriate actions to manage the situations regarding the Work Foundation and LUNS, but wished to receive reports on progress.
- (d) There was a University-wide issue concerning the buy-in to procurement procedures. It was agreed that management would be asked to consider this issue and to report back to the Audit Committee.

Action: ACN, SR-P, VC

The Council thanked the Chair and members of the Audit Committee for their valuable work during the year.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (i) approve the Audit Committee's Annual Report and, in particular, the extension of the appointment of the external auditors;
- (ii) note that the Annual Report will be submitted to HEFCE;
- (iii) note the Internal Audit Annual Report 2010/11;
- (iv) note the External Audit Letter of Representation;
- (v) note the report of meetings of the Audit Committee held on 23 September and 20 October 2011; and approve the Committee's recommendations as set out in 1, 2.1 and 2.2 of the attached document.

CO.11/96

Finance

Ref: CA.8; documents: FIN/11/67; FIN/11/68; FIN/11/66

(A) UNIVERSITY ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The University Annual Accounts for the financial year 2010/11, which had been previously considered by the Audit and Finance Committees, were presented to the Council. The Director of Finance drew attention to the recent dip in research grants which was the only issue of concern at present.

It was noted that the capital requirement and spend on maintenance was considerable, but within budget, and that alterations had been made within the Capital Programme to cover the cost of the underpass project.

(B) INCOME GROWTH HISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND CURRENT CONTEXT

The Director of Finance presented a report which briefly set out the prospects and challenges for income growth for the University in the current environment.

The Vice Chancellor noted that the graphs within the document demonstrated that the University was facing a difficult financial time, and should continue to look for new opportunities for income growth in the future.

(C) **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE: REPORT**

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

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (i) approve the Annual Accounts for the University for the financial year 2010/11;
- (ii) note the Income Growth Historical Analysis and Current Context report;
- (iii) note the Report of the Director of Finance.

CO.11/97 Strategy: Update on Lancaster-Liverpool Discussions

Ref: CA.9; document: SEC/2011/2/1134

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor gave a brief outline of the contents of feedback that had been received during the consultation process on Lancaster-Liverpool. He noted that the comments had predominantly fallen into three main categories: a generally negative reaction to the Green Paper; queries regarding the reasons for selecting Liverpool as a potential collaborative partner; and requests for details of the benefits of collaboration for Lancaster University.

The Vice-Chancellor informed the Council that further meetings had taken place between the Vice-Chancellors and Pro Chancellors of both Universities, including Lancaster's Vice-Chancellor designate, which had considered structural models and some governance implications. A joint paper was being developed on this. An additional paper was also being produced, which would address the points made by Council and Senate, take into account the feedback received, and consider the full range of options from Lancaster's perspective.

The Chair suggested that the Council meet for an additional meeting in January, to consider both papers and the options open to the University.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to postpone further discussion on Lancaster-Liverpool until the meeting on 11 January 2012.

Ref: CA.10; documents: SEC/2011/2/1140; SEC/2011/1131; SEC/2011/2/1148; SEC/2011/2/0874; SEC/2011/2/1102

(A) **CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT PROPOSAL**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor introduced a proposal to establish a Department of Chemistry with effect from 1 August 2012. The academic case had been considered in detail by the Senate on 12 October.

The Council discussed the proposal in detail and made the following points.

- (a) The proposal was to create a fully independent Department of Chemistry, with links to research groups within other departments.
- (b) The establishment of a Department of Chemistry would help to redress the balance of science and humanities within the University.
- (c) The current students were fully supportive of the establishment of a Department of Chemistry, and agreed that it would offer value for potential future students.
- (d) The number of student applications nationally was increasing for science subjects, but decreasing for humanities.
- (e) The Department of Chemistry would add to the research diversity at Lancaster and enable the University to apply for more research funding.
- (f) It would also strengthen links with Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China, as up to 80% of the world's chemical production is carried out in the Guangzhou region.
- (g) Potential risks and down-sides of the project had been fully considered by the Finance team in developing the proposal.
- (h) The expenditure on this project would be covered within the Capital Programme, and would be brought to the Finance Committee for approval.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED *nem. con.* to:

- (i) approve the establishment of a Department of Chemistry with effect from 1 August 2012;
- (ii) note the associated prioritisation of capital and staffing expenditure to support the development.

(B) AMENDMENT TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL

The University Secretary informed the Council that dialogue was ongoing with the City Council regarding their failure to provide a valid nomination for membership of Council. It was noted that the University values its relationship with the City Council, and that it was hoped a satisfactory resolution could be reached.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to defer the decision to amend the membership of Council until further discussions with the City Council had been concluded.

(C) LIFE MEMBERSHIP OF COURT

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the recommendation of the Nominations Committee to appoint Lord Judd as a life member of Court.

(D) STANDING ORDERS OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

The University Secretary introduced a paper which recommended revisions to the Standing Orders of Council. It was noted that these revisions were intended to modernise and future proof the Standing Orders, having taken into account best practice in other universities and public sector bodies.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the revised Standing Orders as set out in the document.

(E) UNIVERSITY SECRETARY'S REPORT

The University Secretary introduced her report as set out and in response to a query from members regarding the equivalence of academic standards between the Bailrigg campus and partners abroad, confirmed that the University had deliberately set out processes to ensure that all issues relating to overseas collaborative partnerships were managed through the standard University framework, normally delegated to the Faculty or departmental level.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the University Secretary's report.

CO.11/99 Chief Operating Officer's Report

Ref: CA.11; document: COO/11/47

The Chief Operating Officer drew attention to his written report and to the following key points.

- (a) Several major facilities projects had been completed this year, including the new sports centre and the HR building.
- (b) The wind turbine project would now progress as there had been no application for judicial review.
- (c) Lancaster City Council had signalled that the Science Park was still on the regional agenda, which was welcome news for the University.
- (d) The postgraduate registration figures had not yet reached the targets, which had been set deliberately high.
- (e) The purpose of the Business Process Review was to identify and remove areas of inefficiency within the University.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the Chief Operating Officer's report.

CO.11/100 Key Performance Indicators

*Ref: CA.12; documents: SEC/2011/2/1137; PSU/2011/0123;
SEC/2011/2/1137; PSU/2011/0121*

The Vice-Chancellor introduced the Key Performance Indicators balanced scorecard, and informed the Council that the UK entry grade ranking would be available in time for the meeting in February 2012.

The Director of Planning Support had produced a report on the domestic and international university league tables, on the request of the Vice-Chancellor, in order to provide an overview of Lancaster's latest rankings.

It was noted that only eight universities, including Lancaster, had ever been in the top ten of three major league tables in the same year.

The fact that Lancaster University was in the top 100 global universities for citation ranking demonstrated the productivity of its academic staff, given the relative size of the institution.

The National Student Survey scores had been analysed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Colleges and the Student Experience) and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, in order to ascertain where strategies or interventions may be required.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note:

- (i) the updated KPI balanced scorecard;
- (ii) the League Tables (International and Domestic).

CO.11/101 Review of current meeting

Ref: CA.13

Council members expressed themselves satisfied with the arrangements.

CO.11/102 Standing Committees

Ref: CA.14; document: SEC/2011/2/0914

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive the following reports:

- (a) Colleges and Student Experience Committee meeting of 22 June 2011 (*SEC/2011/2/1120*)
- (b) Equality and Diversity Committee meeting of 19 October 2011 (*SEC/2011/2/1124*)
- (c) Finance Committee meeting of 21 October 2011 (*SEC/2011/2/1118 Commercial-in-Confidence*)
- (d) Knowledge Exchange and Commercial Affairs Committee meeting of 15 September 2011 (*SEC/2011/2/1121*)
- (e) Nominations Committee meeting of 7 October 2011 (*SEC/2011/2/1152*)
- (f) Senate meeting of 12 October 2011 (*SEC/2011/2/1139*)
- (g) University and Students' Union Joint Committee meeting of 21 September 2011 (*SEC/2011/2/1119*)
- (h) Report on use of University seal (*SEC/2011/2/1005*)

CO.11/103 Any other business

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to express their thanks to the Vice-Chancellor for his leadership of the University, and for his dedication and contribution to the Council during his time in office.