

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Minutes of a meeting of the Council
held on 20 May 2011

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G. Gardiner; Mrs M. Leek; Ms A. McFarlane; Professor T. J. McMillan; Mrs S. Randall-Paley; Mr M. Swindlehurst; Mrs L. M. Wareing.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Mr G. Middlebrook.

CO.11/34 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

CO.11/35 Presentation: The Undergraduate Student Experience

Ref: CA.2; document: SEC/2011/2/0495

The Vice-Chancellor gave a presentation prepared by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Colleges and the Student Experience, and which focused on:

- what Lancaster currently offers its undergraduate students;
- what existing Lancaster students say they would want in 2012 were they to be starting university at that time;
- how Lancaster University performs against other universities in terms of student satisfaction and key performance indicators;

- the main elements included in Lancaster’s academic offering together with related extra-curricular opportunities and the overall community experience, including:
 - teaching and learning facilities;
 - academic contact time;
 - work experience opportunities;
 - sport and social facilities and opportunities;
 - volunteering opportunities;
 - international activities and opportunities;
- the priorities for further developments over the next two to three years.

During discussion it was noted that:

- all categories of students need to be included in University plans and developments;
- thought needs to be given as to how what the University offers its students is defined and communicated and that a future presentation to Council in this area would be welcomed;
- the University needs to build on its considerable achievements as it moves forward.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive the report and thanked the Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Colleges and the Student Experience.

CO.12/36 Minutes

Ref: CA.3; document: SEC/2011/2/0496

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting on 25 March 2011.

CO.11/37 Current schedule of future Council business

Ref: CA.4; document: SEC/2011/2/0497

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

CO.11/38 Vice-Chancellor’s report

Ref: CA.5; document: VC/10/R006

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

- (a) the “Outstanding” BREEAM rating achieved by the new LICA building;
- (b) the successful opening new Carter Building in LUMS;

- (c) recent Alumni fundraising events;
- (d) an update on regional activities including:
 - the demise of the NW Science Council;
 - the work undertaken by the N8 group of universities to foster collaborative research within the region;
- (e) the HE White Paper expected in June;
- (f) the various ideas emanating from central government around student funding and funded places;
- (g) Lancaster's position in the 2011 national league tables.

The Chair paid tribute to the Vice-Chancellor's endeavours in the national arena, and congratulated the University on its achievements. He emphasised the need for Lancaster to secure its place in the top flight of universities and to adhere to its agreed long-term strategy.

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

CO.11/39 LUSU President's report

Ref: CA.6; document: SEC/2011/2/0500

The LUSU President drew attention to his written report as set out and to the following:

- (a) the updated LUSU Strategic Plan;
- (b) LUSU space needs;
- (c) the recent annual Roses sports competition against York University;
- (d) the recent NUS election outcome;
- (e) LUSU participation in various activities involving the University's international teaching partners.

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

CO.11/38 Information and Communications Technology Strategy

Ref: CA.7; document: SEC/2011/2/0517

The chair of the IT Policy Committee, Professor McMillan, drew attention to the revised Information Strategy as set out and to the following:

- (a) the emphasis on delivery and realisation;
- (b) the importance of enhancing of the student experience;
- (c) the need to develop links to international teaching partners;
- (d) the need to achieve a strong web presence as quickly as possible;
- (e) the need for IT tools to support up-to-date and efficient administrative processes.
- (f) the significant changes and improvements, of great importance to the University, which the IT Strategy can help bring about.

During discussion the following points were made:

- the link between the IT Strategy and the two recent Council presentations on the Student Experience and on IT Enhanced Learning, Teaching and Assessment;
- the enormous importance of bringing about cultural and attitudinal changes amongst University staff and students in order to enable the technological tools now available to be deployed successfully in furtherance of the aims set out in the Strategy.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the ICT Strategy.

CO.11/39 Governance: update on process for appointing a new Vice-Chancellor

Ref: CA.8; document: SEC/2011/2/0520

The Pro Chancellor updated Council members on the process for appointing a new Vice-Chancellor and drew attention to the following:

- (a) that given the desirability of avoiding any interregnum if possible, the search and selection process has been deliberately designed to facilitate the early identification and appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor;
- (b) the rationale for deciding to use a search and selection company and the criteria for choosing the company selected;
- (c) the process for establishing and populating the Search Committee;
- (d) the proposed timescale for the selection and appointment process;
- (e) the likely need, if all goes to plan, for a special meeting of the Committee of Council in August to consider the recommendation of the Search Committee;
- (f) that the Search Committee would, in accordance with University practice for such appointments, propose a single name to the Committee of Council;
- (g) the process of consultation on the role and person specification, which he wanted to be as wide and comprehensive as possible;
- (h) his personal commitment to a process so important to the future success of the University and his determination to ensure a good outcome.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the update.

CO.11/40 Chief Operating Officer

Ref: CA.9; document: COO/11/15

The Chair drew attention to the Chief Operating Officer's report as set out.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

Ref: CA.10; documents: FIN/11/26; FIN/11/27; SEC/2011/2/0501; FIN/11/18 (previously circulated); FIN/11/24 (previously circulated)

(A) **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

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

(B) **HEFCE GRANT ANALYSIS**

The Director of Finance drew attention to the HEFCE Grant Analysis as set out and in particular to the Appendix which illustrates the implications for the University of the reduction in the HEFCE teaching grant and the resultant budget pressures.

(C) **REPORT ON THE ACCESS AGREEMENT PROPOSED TO OFFA IN APRIL 2011**

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the written report as set out, noting that:

- the University would likely offer more bursaries and merit scholarships than stated in section 5.2 of the Access Agreement;
- the widening participation indicators set in section 5.3 of the Access Agreement are measures for which benchmark data is readily available;
- further information about the Access Agreement would be made available at the Court Supper Club meeting on Monday 23rd May 2011.

The LUSU President reported to Council that LUSU had been heavily involved in drafting the University's Access Agreement and asked that his appreciation be recorded.

(D) **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Management Accounts had been circulated to members.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note:

- (i) the report of the Director of Finance;
- (ii) the HEFCE Grant analysis
- (iii) the update on the University Access Agreement
- (iv) the Management Accounts as at February 2011 and March 2011.

CO.11/42 Estates: Proposal to name a laboratory

Ref: CA.11; document: SEC/2011/2/0464

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve a recommendation to name a laboratory the “AEROFLEX Wireless Broadband Laboratory” as set out.

CO.11/43 Human Resources

Ref: CA.12; documents: SEC/2011/2/0502; SEC/2011/2/0503; SEC/2011/2/0504; SEC/2011/2/0519; SEC/2011/2/0515

(A) **NEW EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

The Chair reported that because the proposed new policies had not been agreed by all the campus trade unions this item had been withdrawn. The University would consider its position and a further progress report made to Council in due course.

(B) **PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE USS PENSION SCHEME**

The Acting Director of Human resources drew attention to the report as set out and reported that, since the report had been written, proposed changes to the USS pension scheme had been approved by the Joint Negotiating Committee and referred to USS Trustees for action.

(C) **REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE**

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to confirm a continuing need for redundancies and to remit the detailed consideration of potential cases involving academic staff to the Redundancy Committee.

CO.11/44 Risk Issues: Quarterly Update of Risk Register

Ref: CA.13; document: FIN/11/31

The Director of Finance drew attention to the report as set out and to the following:

- the departure of the Vice-Chancellor and the transition process when his successor is appointed;
- the increased financial risks arising from:
 - the possible failure to recover full economic costs on research projects following changes to research funding;
 - the implications of the new UK/EU fees and funding regime for the UK PGT market.
- the decreased risk relating to LUNS.

During discussion it was noted that the other implications relating to the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor would be regularly updated at successive Council meetings.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report as set out.

CO.11/45 Key Performance Indicators

Ref: CA.14; documents: SEC/2011/2/0507; PSU/2011/0054; PSU/2011/0055

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the documents as set out and to the following:

- Lancaster's excellent world citation rating;
- the adverse impact of the Points Based System for staff visas on the percentage of Lancaster academic staff from outside the UK;
- the upcoming opening of the Confucius Institute.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note:

- (i) the updated KPI balanced scorecard;
- (ii) the thematic report on international activities.

CO.11/46 Emeritus and Continuing membership

Ref: CA.15; document: SEC/2011/2/0510

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the appointments as set out.

CO.11/47 Review of current meeting

Ref: CA/16

Council members expressed themselves satisfied with the arrangements.

CO.11/48 Standing Committee

Ref: CA.17; document: SEC/2011/2/0511

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive the report from the report from the Human Resources Committee: meeting held on 18 February 2011.