

**LANCASTER UNIVERSITY**

Minutes of a meeting of the Council  
held on 23 March 2012

**PRESENT:** Mr B. M Gray (in the Chair); Vice-Chancellor; Mr P. Aitchison; Mr A. Baker; Dr R. Boumphrey; Dr G. Brown; Mr J. R. Carr; Mrs G. Gardner; Mr G. Gardiner; Mr J. Hadfield; Professor G. Johnes; Mr L. King; Mr D. McGuire; Mr G. Middlebrook, Mr G. Parker; Professor C. Ram-Prasad; 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; Mr M. Swindlehurst.

CO.12/20 Declaration of interest

*Ref: CA.1*

Mr P. Aitchison declared an interest in relation to item CA.8 (A).

CO.12/21 Presentation: Director of Facilities

*Ref: CA.2; document: SEC/2012/2/0358*

The Director of Facilities gave a presentation on the University's sustainability and carbon management, in which he drew attention to the following points.

- (i) The figures reported to HEFCE were based on carbon emissions per head. In this regard, the University appeared to be average in comparison with the rest of the HE sector, which meant that improvements could be made.
- (ii) Carbon emissions were currently categorised as scope 1 or 2; scope 3 emissions would be included from 2013 onward. It was felt that the University's campus status might negatively affect the scope 3 measurements, due to the larger commuting distances involved.

- (iii) The University's carbon emission forecasts had been revised to take into account the delays in the CHP project and the planned installation of one wind turbine rather than two.
- (iv) Lancaster was expected to meet the government's 2012 carbon reduction target, but additional work would be required in order to meet the 2017 and 2020 targets.
- (v) In excess of 200 energy efficiency projects were ongoing across the university, and the Director of Facilities gave credit to the student initiative GreenLancaster for their achievements and support.
- (vi) The Carbon Awareness Roadshow had helped to initiate behavioural change, but effort was still required to embed sustainability at all levels of the institution. It was noted that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), would lead on this work.

During the course of discussion it was noted that:

- (a) a new biomass boiler would be used to heat water during the summer months, which would use sustainable wood pellets as fuel;
- (b) all new buildings on campus were designed with sustainability in mind, with the intention that the initial expenditure would be redeemed over the lifetime of the building, due to lower running costs;
- (c) discussions were ongoing regarding carbon emissions due to staff travelling overseas. It was noted that this factor might be balanced by a reduction in the number of overseas students travelling to Lancaster, as they could receive Lancaster programmes in their home countries;
- (d) in comparison with other institutions, there were some aspects in which Lancaster was sector-leading, such as sustainability in building, and other aspects in which further work would be required in order to measure favourably against comparators;
- (e) consideration would be given to a comparison between the sustainability of the University and other similar campus environments outside the HE sector, such as Media City.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the presentation and thank the Director of Facilities.

CO.12/22 Minutes

*Ref: CA.3; document: SEC/2012/2/0329*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2012.

CO.12/23 Current Schedule of Future Council Business

*Ref: CA.4; document: SEC/2012/2/0330*

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

CO.12/24 Vice-Chancellor's Report

*Ref: CA.5; document: SEC/2012/2/0305*

The Vice-Chancellor presented his written document as set out, and gave a verbal update on several topics, including his recent visit to the Guangdong Province in China, which was worthwhile, and the ongoing discussions with Liverpool University regarding collaborations.

In response to questions from members, the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the new Student Charter would clarify the relationship between the University and its students, but that information such as staff contact time would not be included, as this data would form part of the University's Key Information Set.

It was also noted that the Vice-Chancellor felt that the University was as he had expected it to be, in that it was grounded in an ethos of academic quality in teaching and research, and that he had found the staff to be particularly proud of their institution.

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

CO.12/25 LUSU President's Report

*Ref: CA.6; document: SEC/2012/2/0331*

The LUSU President drew attention to his written update as set out, and reported that the turnout for the recent Students' Union elections had been excellent, which was thought to be due to a combination of the large number of candidates and the introduction of online voting. It was also noted that the Campus Festival had been a success and that Lancaster's University Challenge team were performing well.

In response to a query regarding the Week of Action, the LUSU President reported that joint discussions had been held during the previous week, and that the issue regarding the transparency of living costs for students had been taken on board by the management.

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

Ref: CA.7

(A) **LANCASTER-LIVERPOOL, JOINT VENTURE COMPANY**

*Document: COO/12/22*

The Chief Operating Officer introduced a proposal to agree in principle to establish a Joint Venture company, which would be jointly owned by Lancaster and Liverpool Universities. He established that the company would merely be a legal instrument for the commissioning and ownership of research, intellectual property and legal advice regarding any potential future collaboration.

The Council raised several questions and were reassured by the Chief Operating Officer that there were not expected to be significant costs involved, and that any information held by the Joint Venture company would be synthesised through the Joint Planning Group and Joint Strategy Group, within the agreed governance structure for the discussions.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (i) approve in principle the creation of a Joint Venture company (with Lancaster and Liverpool as 50% owners);
- (ii) delegate authority to an authorised signatories group to agree specific proposals for the creation of the company including company structure and documents.

(B) **RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK: AN UPDATE**

*Document: SEC/2012/2/0333*

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) gave an update on the University's preparations for the Research Excellence Framework (REF). He drew attention to the following points.

- (a) The University was working extremely hard to prepare for the REF through a mock exercise, which would produce a data set including over 100 case studies on research impact.
- (b) The balance between the reputational and financial benefits of research had been made easier, since HEFCE planned to fund only the most highly rated research.

- (c) It was expected that the University would submit a lower percentage of academic staff to the REF than to previous Research Assessment Exercises (RAE).
- (d) Lancaster was confident that its research output would be highly rated in the REF, but there was confusion among all universities surrounding the application of the impact assessment, since this would cover research performed since 1993.

The Council discussed the REF update and noted that the size of Lancaster could be an advantage since it could make changes in its processes more quickly than larger institutions.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the update report.

CO.12/27 Governance

*Ref: CA.8*

(A) **MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL: STATUTE CHANGE**

*Document: SEC/2012/2/0326*

The Council received a report from the University Secretary on the Senate's objections to amendments to Statute 9.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note:

- (i) the Senate's objections;
- (ii) that a further report will be made to a future meeting of Council.

(B) **FUTURE OF HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE/REMUNERATION COMMITTEE**

*Document: SEC/2012/2/0327*

The University Secretary introduced a proposal to disestablish the Human Resources Committee and establish a Remuneration Committee, in order to introduce a more effective governance structure.

It was noted that this would not affect the Redundancy committee or the new HR procedures currently under discussion with the trade unions.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (i) agree to disestablish the Human Resources Committee;
- (ii) agree to establish a Remuneration Committee with the remit as set out;
- (iii) agree the arrangements to embed HR considerations directly within the executive function and the reporting line to Council.

(C) **COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW**

*Document: SEC/2012/2/0052*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to establish a small working party to lead a review of the Council's effectiveness, with the inclusion of a student member.

CO.12/28 Chief Operating Officer

*Ref: CA.9*

(A) **CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER: REPORT**

*Document: COO/12/14*

The Chief Operating Officer drew attention to his written report and added that Central Services had been successful in gaining accreditation for its Customer Service Excellence.

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

(B) **BUSINESS PROCESS REVIEW (BPR): UPDATE**

*Document: COO/12/20*

This item was withdrawn by the Chair. It was noted that an update would be brought to the next meeting of Council.

CO.12/29 Finance

*Ref: CA.10*

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

*Document: FIN/12/24*

The Director of Finance reported that the HEFCE grant letter had been embargoed until 29 March, and would be discussed at the next meeting of the Finance Committee. It was noted that a financial report would be sent to all Council members following the release of the information.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report of the Director of Finance.

(B) **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

*Document: FIN/12/20 (previously circulated)*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the Management Accounts as at January 2012.

CO.12/30 Human Resources

*Ref: CA.11; document: COO/12/19*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve a recommendation to participate in 2012 National Pay negotiations.

CO.12/31 Key Performance Indicators

*Ref: CA.12; documents: SEC/2012/2/0336; PSU/12/0034*

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) presented a thematic report of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) relating to research. He reported that the figures indicated that Lancaster had increased its position in research council tables.

It was noted that further KPIs were being considered which would indicate Lancaster's performance compared with the rest of the Higher Education sector.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the thematic report on research.

CO.12/32 Continuing membership appointments

*Ref: CA.13; document: SEC/2012/2/0353*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the continuing membership appointments as set out.

CO.12/33 Review of Current Meeting

*Ref: CA.14*

Council members expressed themselves satisfied with the arrangements.

CO.12/34 Standing Committees and Reports

*Ref: CA.15*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive the reports from the following committees.

- (a) Audit Committee, meeting of 24 February 2012 (*SEC/2012/2/0318*);
- (b) Colleges and Student Experience Committee, meeting of 1 February 2012 (*SEC/2012/2/0339*);
- (c) Equality and Diversity Committee, meeting of 18 January 2012 (*SEC/2012/2/0341*);
- (d) Estates Committee, meeting of 3 February 2012 (*SEC/2012/2/0344*);
- (e) Finance Committee, meeting of 17 February 2012 (*SEC/2012/2/0349 **Restricted***);
- (f) Knowledge Exchange and Commercial Affairs Committee, meeting of 10 February 2012 (*SEC/2012/2/0351*).