

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Minutes of a meeting of the Council
held on 5 October 2012

PRESENT: Pro-Chancellor (in the chair); Vice-Chancellor; Mr A. Baker; Dr R. Boumphrey; Mr F. Fitzherbert-Brockholes; Ms G. Gardner; Professor J. Garside; Mr J. Hadfield; Professor G. Johnes; Mr L. King; Mr G. Parker; Mr J. Pullan; Professor C. Ram-Prasad; Mr S. Smith; Dr J. Taylor; Professor H. Thomason; Mr J. Thornberry; Ms L. Willis.

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

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor P. Aitchison; Mr J. R. Carr; Professor E. Rose.

CO.12/66 Welcome

The Chair welcomed the following members to their first meeting of Council: Mr J. Pullan, Professor J. Garside, Dr J. Taylor and Mr J. Thornberry.

CO.12/67 Declaration of interest

Ref: CA.1

There were no declarations of interest.

CO.12/68 Presentation: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)

Ref: CA.2; document: SEC/2012/2/0996

The Council received a presentation by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Trevor McMillan, on the University's preparations for the REF 2014.

The Council discussed the presentation and noted that some key strategic decisions would need to be made regarding the balance between the importance placed on income and reputation, and that these decisions would be brought back to the Council before the submission deadline of November 2013.

In response to questions, Professor McMillan noted that interdisciplinary research would be submitted to the most appropriate panels, with the possibility of cross-referencing to other panels where necessary. It was further noted that Lancaster's relatively small size might act as a disadvantage in certain league tables resulting from the REF outcome.

The Council thanked Professor McMillan for his presentation and for the extensive preparation work for the REF 2014 which was ongoing.

CO.12/69 Minutes

Ref: CA.3; document: SEC/2012/2/0994

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2012.

CO.12/70 Current Schedule of Future Council Business

Ref: CA.4; document: SEC/2012/2/0995

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

CO.12/71 Vice-Chancellor: Report

Ref: CA.5; document: SEC/2012/2/1007

The Vice-Chancellor presented his written report as set out and drew attention to the following points.

- (i) The situation regarding London Metropolitan University's Tier 4 license, and the ongoing judicial review, was concerning for all UK Higher Education institutions, as it was likely to damage the reputation of the UK as a host for international students. The Vice-Chancellor stated that he had initiated a review of Lancaster's procedures in this area, and the resulting report had indicated that we were compliant, within our current understanding of UKBA's requirements.

- (ii) Undergraduate recruitment figures had been much less predictable than usual, for all UK universities. It was noted that a detailed analysis of the figures and any possible trends would be brought to a future Council meeting.
- (iii) The Finch Report concerning research had been released in June. Subsequently, an initial response from the government was to release £10M, and it was disappointing that Lancaster had not been included in the list of universities which would receive some of this funding. It was acknowledged that this was due to Lancaster's size in the formula used.
- (iv) Lancaster's Key Information Set was now available on the government's "Unistats" website, and the Vice-Chancellor invited all members of Council to view the statistics and indicators.
- (v) Comments from the ongoing consultation via a website, meetings with senior members of staff in Faculties and an open staff forum would be collated shortly, and would inform a refreshed University Strategic Plan.

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

CO.12/72 LUSU President: Report

Ref: CA.6; document: SEC/2012/2/1015

The LUSU President introduced his written report as set out, and verbally reported that the events during Intro Week had been successful. It was noted that the LUSU Trustee Board had deferred a decision about moving into the new space, pending further information from the University.

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

CO.12/73 Strategy: Update on International Partnerships

Ref: CA.7; document: SEC/2012/2/1018 (Restricted)

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported on the progress of Lancaster's international partnership activity in China, Ghana and Brazil.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

Ref: CA.8

(A) UNIVERSITY SECRETARY: REPORT

Document: SEC/2012/2/1008

The University Secretary presented a report on matters of University governance, which included a proposal that the next meeting of Court should be held on Wednesday 20 March 2013.

It was noted that the mid-cycle review report had been received from the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), which stated that the University had made good progress in addressing the recommendations made in 2009. The QAA had indicated that the next audit would include an assessment of the University's international agenda development and teaching quality.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report and agree:

- (i) the date of the meeting of Court;
- (ii) to transfer its power of appointment of four of the five Trustees of the Peter Scott Gallery Charitable Trust to the Trustees themselves.

(B) COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW REPORT

Document: SEC/2012/2/0915

The Council received a report from the Council Effectiveness Working Party. The key recommendations made by the Working Party were as follows.

- (a) The current size and configuration of the Council was fit for purpose and should not be changed.
- (b) The Vice-Chancellor should have more joint meetings with Council and Senate, on an informal basis.
- (c) The subjects of presentations to Council should be responsive to Council requirements, rather than the current fixed schedule.
- (d) Council members might have individual links with members of the senior management team.

The Council discussed the report and made the following comments.

- (i) Members of Council were often busy and would not have a great deal of time to attend extra meetings or activities.
- (ii) It would be useful if key items of importance to the University, or the Higher Education sector as a whole, were disseminated to Council members promptly, as this would aid them in their roles as University ambassadors in the wider community.
- (iii) The notion of appointing Council members as champions of specific issues, such as outreach, was welcomed in general.
- (iv) The effectiveness of Council was an ongoing matter, and would be kept under regular review.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report and approve the recommendations of the Working Party.

(C) **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE: APPOINTMENT OF LAY MEMBER OF COUNCIL**

Document: SEC/2012/2/0987

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the recommendation that Professor John Garside be appointed as a member of Council for three years from 5 October 2012.

CO.12/75 Central Services: Report

Ref: CA.9; document: SEC/2012/2/0999

The Council received reports from the Acting Director of Information Systems Services and the Director of Student Based Services. The Director of Finance reported that discussions with UPP regarding the installation of WiFi in student residences were being accelerated, and the Council asked the Director of Facilities to ensure that this was communicated to all affected students.

Action: MSw

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the reports.

Ref: CA.10

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

Document: FIN/12/70

The Director of Finance reported that the final audit clearance had not raised any issues. It was noted that the full report would be brought to the next meeting of the Council.

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

(B) **RISK ISSUES**

Document: FIN/12/71

The Council received the updated Risk Policy, and were invited to comment on whether the current risk profile of the University was appropriate and in line with Council's risk appetite.

Council members acknowledged that the University was currently in a relatively calm period, but that future strategic risks should not be overlooked.

It was agreed that a future presentation to Council should focus on the UK Higher Education policy environment, its potential impact on the University, and how Lancaster could be proactively involved in future policy development.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (i) approve the updated Risk Policy;
- (ii) approve the current risk profile;
- (iii) note an extract from the latest University Risk Register.

(C) **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

Document: FIN/12/55 (previously circulated)

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

CO.12/77 Human Resources: Redundancy Committee

Ref: CA.11; document: SEC/2012/2/1003

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

CO.12/78 Review of Current Meeting

Ref: CA.12

Council members expressed themselves satisfied with the arrangements.

CO.12/79 Appointment of Pro-Chancellor

Ref: CA.13

The Pro-Chancellor announced that his term of office would come to an end on 31 July 2013, and that it was therefore appropriate to start a search process for his successor. He reported that it was generally the practice of the University to have a search committee (chaired by a Deputy Pro Chancellor, and comprising the Vice-Chancellor, lay members of Council, members of Senate and the LUSU President), which would consult widely before bringing forward a nomination to the Council and Court.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve in principle the proposed process for selecting a new Pro-Chancellor, and noted that a detailed paper on the process would be brought to the next meeting.

CO.12/80 Standing Committees and Reports

Ref: CA.14

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

- (i) Estates Committee, meeting of 11 May 2012 (*SEC/2012/2/1000*);
- (ii) Finance Committee, meeting of 14 September 2012 (*SEC/2012/2/1030*);
- (iii) Knowledge Exchange and Commercial Affairs Committee, meeting of 9 August 2012 (*SEC/2012/2/1006*).