

**LANCASTER UNIVERSITY**

Minutes of a meeting of the Council  
held on 21 March 2014

**PRESENT:** Pro-Chancellor (in the Chair); Vice-Chancellor; Mr A. Baker; Mr D. Barron; Dr R. Boumphrey; Mr J. R. Carr; Mr C. Edwards; Mr F. Fitzherbert-Brockholes; Ms G. Gardner; Professor J. Garside; Mr J. Hadfield; Mr L. King; Mr G. Parker; Mr J. Pullan; Professor C. Ram-Prasad; Professor E. Rose; Dr B. Szerszynski; Dr J. Taylor; Professor H. Thomason; Mr J. Thornberry; Ms L. Willis.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Miss F. M. Aiken; Professor A. Atherton; Ms C. Brereton; Professor A. G. Chetwynd; Professor S. Cox (*for item CO.14/17*); Dr H. Hardie; Professor G. Johnes (*for item CO.14/17*); Ms N. C. Owen; Mr M. Swindlehurst; Ms V. Tyrrell.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** None.

CO.14/16 Declaration of interest

*Ref: CA.1*

Dr Taylor expressed an interest in item CO.14/22(B) as a member of the Lancaster Environment Centre. Mr Barron and Mr Parker expressed an interest in item CO.14/17, as trustees of The Work Foundation.

CO.14/17 The Work Foundation Strategic Update

*Ref: CA.2; document: SEC/2014/2/0303*

The Director of The Work Foundation (TWF), Professor Johnes, and the Chair of the Board of TWF, Professor Cox, were in attendance to discuss the future strategic direction of The Work Foundation.

The following points were noted during the ensuing discussion.

- (i) TWF was currently undergoing significant change, with the spin-out of a part of its operations, the Big Innovation Centre (BIC).

- (ii) Professor Johnes had been appointed as the Director of TWF in January in order to improve Lancaster's connection with the think tank, and to create a clear business strategy.
- (iii) The management's main current priority was to manage the extraction of BIC with as little operational and reputational disruption as possible.
- (iv) Professor Johnes was optimistic regarding the creation of sustainable revenue streams for TWF, in addition to the softer benefits already being provided.
- (v) 7 years remained of the University's ten year lease of the building in which TWF was located.
- (vi) This building was in a prime location in central London, and contained meeting space which could be easily sub-let to external organisations
- (vii) The building may also provide valuable space for the delivery of postgraduate courses, student recruitment and fundraising events.
- (viii) The future of TWF and the building in London should be considered as two separate issues.
- (ix) The University Estates Committee should be involved in the discussions regarding the most strategically beneficial use of the building.
- (x) Both the logo of TWF and the building should have more prominent Lancaster University branding incorporated, to enhance the visibility of Lancaster in London.
- (xi) The Council appreciated the media coverage and political connections which had been generated by TWF, and agreed that these benefits ought to be measured against targets in a quantifiable way.
- (xii) Senior management at Lancaster should encourage all colleagues to devise possible connections between their department and TWF.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive an update on The Work Foundation's financial and strategic progress at the November meeting.

**Action: GJ/SJC: to bring an update report on TWF, including financial forecasts and soft benefits data, to November meeting of Council**

CO.14/18 Minutes

*Ref: CA.3; document: SEC/2014/2/0277*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2014

CO.14/19 Current Schedule of Future Council Business

*Ref: CA.4; document: SEC/2014/2/0278*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the schedule of future business.

CO.14/20 Vice-Chancellor: Report

*Ref: CA.5; document: SEC/2014/2/0254*

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

- (i) Discussions regarding the partnerships in China were ongoing, and a report would be brought to the next meeting of Council, for comment.
- (ii) The University's grant letter was expected to be received the following week, and the Council would be informed of its contents directly if there was anything of immediate significance to report.
- (iii) The Aspiring Businesses in Cumbria programme had been successfully established.
- (iv) Lancaster's standing in the latest Financial Times Global MBA rankings was somewhat disappointing, and the Vice-Chancellor had asked the Dean of LUMS to make its improvement a priority.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report of the Vice-Chancellor.

**Actions: (a) HH: to include China report in May meeting agenda;  
(c) NCO: to send programme details to Lord Liddle and Mr Carr**

CO.14/21 President of the Students' Union: Report

*Ref: CA.6; document: SEC/2014/2/0279*

The President of the Students' Union introduced his written report, and informed the Council that the elections for the new LUSU full-time officers had taken place, with a new team of officers starting at the beginning of July.

The Council discussed the issue raised within the document regarding counselling, and asked for a report on this matter to be brought to the next meeting.

**Action: NCO**

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report of the President of the Students' Union.

CO.14/22 Strategy

*Ref: CA.7*

(A) **UPDATE ON THINKING DIFFERENTLY: DEVELOPING INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES WITH TOP 100 UNIVERSITIES**

*Document: SEC/2014/2/0280*

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor presented a written report and gave a verbal update to the Council on the connections being developed with institutions in the top 100 Times Higher World Ranking list.

The Council agreed that the potential links were extremely positive, and thanked Professor Atherton for his report.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the update.

(B) **FUTURE EARTH**

*Document: SEC/2014/2/0281*

The University Secretary introduced a proposal to bid to host the global Secretariat for Future Earth, the premier international research programme on environmental sustainability.

The programme would involve a collaboration of institutions worldwide and, if successful, the bid would significantly benefit Lancaster's reputation as a global University.

It was noted that the estimated cost to Lancaster of hosting the Secretariat would be circa. £800k per year for 10 years, and therefore the Council's approval was required to underwrite the financial commitment.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to support the bid, subject to the approval of the business plan by the Pro-Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, and to receive an update report at the May meeting.

**Action: FMA**

CO.14/23 Governance

*Ref: CA.8*

(A) **UNIVERSITY SECRETARY: REPORT**

*Document: SEC/2014/2/0262*

Mr Hadfield reported that the Chancellor Search Committee had successfully reached agreement on the nomination for the next Chancellor, which would be announced following approval by Court. He thanked the members of the Committee for their contributions.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report of the University Secretary.

(B) **DRAFT STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER**

*Document: SEC/2014/2/0255*

The Council received and discussed the draft Strategic Risk Register for the University. It was agreed that the review of risk was a dynamic process, and the Risk Register should be updated regularly.

Following discussion, the Council agreed to receive and discuss a summary of the top ten high level risks at each Council meeting, along with detailed analysis for two risks per meeting. These risks would be linked with the key measures of success wherever possible.

**Action: FMA**

(c) **REAPPOINTMENT OF PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR (INTERNATIONAL)**

*Document: SEC/2014/2/0270*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the recommendation of the Senate that Professor Steve Bradley be reappointed as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) for four years with effect from 1 August 2014.

**Action: HR**

CO.14/24 Finance

*Ref: CA.9*

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

*Document: FIN/14/21*

The Vice-Chancellor introduced the Finance Director's report and noted that the under-spend in the budget was due to inertia in recruitment processes, and a gap between expected and actual capital expenditure.

The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee reported that the discussions regarding the revolving credit facility were progressing well.

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

(B) **COUNTER FRAUD STRATEGY**

*Document: FIN/14/24*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the Counter Fraud Strategy for the University as set out.

(C) **LIVING COSTS REPORT**

*Document: FIN/14/16*

The Council received and discussed a report on living costs for students at Lancaster in comparison with those for students at other UK institutions.

The LUSU President, while acknowledging the fact that the accommodation is of a high quality, felt that the University should provide a wider range of accommodation, including cheaper

options for students in financial difficulty, both on and off campus. He stated that around 20% of students have to work to fill the gap between their living costs and student loans, which may have a detrimental effect on their ability to achieve their academic potential.

The Director of Facilities confirmed that it was more difficult to let cheaper accommodation, due to lower demand.

It was noted that Facilities were currently developing a 10 year accommodation strategy, which would be brought to a future meeting of Council for approval.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

(D) **MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTING PACK**

*Documents: FIN/14/03 (previously circulated); FIN/14/13 (previously circulated)*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the Monthly Financial Reporting Packs as at December 2013 and January 2014.

CO.14/25 Estates

*Ref: CA.10*

(A) **REPORT ON THE NEW TEACHING LABORATORIES FOR BIOMEDICAL AND LIFE SCIENCES AND THE LANCASTER ENVIRONMENT CENTRE**

*Document: SEC/2014/2/0301*

The Council received a proposal regarding the new teaching laboratories for Biomedical and Life Sciences and the Environment Centre. It was noted that a full presentation on the capital project would be received and discussed by Estates Committee and Finance and General Purposes Committee at their next meetings.

The Chair suggested that the proposal should include details of how the project would fit within the Facilities Strategy and the relevant departmental academic strategy.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (i) note the contents of this paper;

- (ii) delegate authority to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to approve the New Teaching Laboratories for Biomedical and Life Sciences and the Lancaster Environment Centre project within a funding envelope of £4.400M.

**(B) UPDATE ON PURCHASE OF LAND**

The Director of Facilities, Mark Swindlehurst, gave an oral report on the purchase of land for the Innovation Campus, and confirmed that a further update would be brought to the May or July meeting of the Council.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

CO.14/26 Human Resources

*Ref: CA.11*

**(A) UPDATE ON REDUNDANCY AND REDEPLOYMENT POLICY NEGOTIATIONS**

*Document: SEC/2014/2/0302*

This item was postponed to the July meeting.

**Action: FMA**

**(B) 2014/15 PAY NEGOTIATIONS**

*Document: SEC/2014/2/0284*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve a recommendation to participate in national pay bargaining in 2014.

**Action: HR**

CO.14/27 Chief Administrative Officer: Report

*Ref: CA.12; document: SEC/2014/2/0300*

The Chief Administrative Officer introduced her report and drew attention to the following points.

- (i) Plans for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations were progressing well.
- (ii) The Anniversary Dinner with Princess Alexandra had been extremely successful

- (iii) The date for the charity abseil had been set for 22 June, and Council members were invited to take part.
- (iv) Human Resources' new mentor match initiative had started strongly, with promising interest from staff members.
- (v) The new Director of Marketing, Mr Stuart Franklin, had been in post for a month and was working on improving both external and internal communications and branding
- (vi) Plans were underway to deliver an impressive opening ceremony for the Roses events during the first May bank holiday weekend.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report of the Chief Administrative Officer, and to express its thanks to the organisers of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner.

CO.14/28 University Appointments

*Ref: CA.13; document: SEC/2014/2/0285*

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

CO.14/29 Review of Current Meeting

*Ref: CA.14*

Council members expressed themselves satisfied with the arrangements.

CO.14/30 Standing Committees and Reports

*Ref: CA.15*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive and note the reports, and confirm the actions taken on its behalf.

- (i) Audit Committee, meeting held on 21 February 2014 (SEC/2014/2/0253)
- (ii) Colleges and Student Experience Committee, meeting held on 6 November 2013 (SEC/2014/2/0287)
- (iii) Equality and Diversity Committee, meeting held on 23 October 2013 (SEC/2014/2/0286)
- (iv) Estates Committee, meeting held on 14 February 2014 (SEC/2014/2/0291)