

**LANCASTER UNIVERSITY**

Minutes of a meeting of the Council  
held on 20 November 2015

**PRESENT:** Pro-Chancellor (in the Chair); Vice-Chancellor; Professor A. M. Atherton; Mr D. Barron; Dr R. Boumphrey; Mr J. R. Carr; Mr M. J. Dormer; Mr F. Fitzherbert-Brockholes; Mrs R. Georghiou; Professor S. Guy; Mr W. Hedley; Professor N. Johnson; Professor K. C. Jones; Mr L. King; Mr E. McLaughlin; Professor J. F. O'Hanlon; Professor E. Ritchie; Dr J. Taylor; Mrs V. Young.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Miss F. M. Aiken; Mr P. Boustead; Professor S. Bradley; Mr T. Buckley (*for CO.15/64(B) and CO.15/64(C)*) Professor A. G. Chetwynd; Professor S. P. Decent; Dr H. Hardie; Professor S. R. A. Huttly; Ms N. C. Owen; Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley; Mr M. Swindlehurst.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Professor J. Garside; Baroness Neville-Jones, Mr A. Warriner.

CO.15/60 Welcome

The Chair welcomed Mrs Georghiou to her first meeting as a member of the Council.

CO.15/61 Declaration of interest

*Ref: CA.1*

Lord Liddle declared an interest as a member of Cumbria County Council and Mr Carr declared an interest as a member of the Eden Rivers Trust, both in relation to the Note on Related Party Transactions in the Annual Accounts (*minute CO.15/68(A)*).

CO.15/62 Minutes

*Ref: CA.2; documents: SEC/2015/2/1296; SEC/2015/2/1090*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2015.

*Ref: CA.3*

The Vice-Chancellor announced that the University had been awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize for its Centre for Corpus Approaches to Social Sciences (CASS). The Council expressed their congratulations to the University, in particular to Professor Tony McEnery and other researchers in CASS for their commendable achievement. The Vice-Chancellor then gave an oral update on several matters which had been reported in the recent monthly reports from the Executive, drawing particular attention to the following points.

- (a) The first phase of the newly refurbished Library was now open and feedback from students was extremely positive.
- (b) The Prevent Duty was now a legal requirement, and all senior management had received training on Prevent as part of the University's responsibilities (see item CO.15/66(B)).
- (c) Lancaster University's Higher Education Review (HER) had taken place in early November, and the preliminary results letter indicated that the institution had met all expectations. The Council recorded their thanks to all the people involved in the HER, particularly Professor Sharon Huttly, Professor Mike Wright and Mrs Lesley Wareing.
- (d) The results of the Research Council funding review had been released, and Lancaster had risen to 23<sup>rd</sup> place in the UK, with around 1 percent of total UK income, which was a good outcome.
- (e) A detailed analysis of the Green Paper on Higher Education had been circulated to Council members, from which there were four key themes to consider: the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), a reaffirmation of widening participation targets, redesigned regulatory framework and the marketization of the sector, for example through increased competition for student numbers. The Vice-Chancellor informed the Council that members would be invited to review the University's response to the Green Paper consultation, and provide their comments prior to the submission in January.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the update from the Vice-Chancellor.

CO.15/64 President of the Students' Union: Report

*Ref: CA.4; document: SEC/2015/2/1297*

The President of the Students' Union reported that the Unions "Don't Rent Yet" campaign had been highly successful, and the referendum on the question of whether LUSU should adopt a Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Policy had taken place. The Green Paper on Higher Education had been discussed at the LUSU Council and by its Trustee Board, and the Union would be responding to the consultation from the perspective of the students.

Members questioned the amount being released from the Union's reserves for Roses 2016; it was noted that this would normally be funded by the University, but as the Union had significantly exceeded its financial performance targets, it had been agreed that LUSU would make a contribution to supplement Roses rather than repay the block grant.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

CO.15/65 Strategy

*Ref: CA.5*

(A) **HEALTH INNOVATION CAMPUS (PHASE 1) OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/1308*

Professor Johnson presented the outline vision for the Faculty of Health and Medicine, and described the business case for the creation of the Health Innovation Campus (HIC) at Lancaster. It was noted that the HIC would have three primary aims: to establish Lancaster as a central hub for health innovation, to bring together many different stakeholders, supported through personal and organisational development, and to improve the community engagement and interdisciplinary research levels at Lancaster, thus contributing significantly to the implementation of the University Strategy.

The Council discussed the proposal in detail and the following points were raised.

- (a) Phase 1 would be viable as a standalone project, providing the external funding was received as expected.

- (b) The niche focus of the HIC was yet to be determined, following the consultation of key academics and stakeholders, but was expected to be related to healthy ageing and use of digital technology to support that.
- (c) The HIC would only be successful if there was a high level of cross-faculty and cross-departmental cooperation and collaboration.
- (d) The Estates Committee would monitor the progress of the project in terms of land and building development.
- (e) The Finance and General Purposes Committee had reviewed the business plan in detail, and were satisfied that the assumptions were based on achievable undergraduate growth rates.
- (f) Medical student numbers were capped by the Department of Health, and the Faculty would closely monitor political discussions regarding the possible increase in numbers.
- (g) There was evidence that a high proportion of Lancaster's medical students were recruited from the North West, and that these students were likely to stay in the area once qualified.
- (h) The Director of Facilities and his team had worked hard to secure the land for the HIC, and should be commended for doing so.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED, following detailed discussion, to approve Phase 1 as set out, and to ask for regular reports on the development of the academic matters relating to the HIC, including engagement with internal and external stakeholders as part of the project's measures of success.

(B) **UPDATE ON BEIJING JIAOTONG UNIVERSITY (BJTU)**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/1356 (Commercial in Confidence)*

**[COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE MINUTE]**

(C) **ANALYSIS OF ADMISSIONS OUTCOMES, 2015-16**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/1311*

This item was postponed until the next meeting.

CO.15/66 Governance

*Ref: CA.6*

(A) **STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/1299*

This item was postponed until the next meeting.

(B) **REVIEW OF PREVENT RISK ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/1300*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the risk assessment and action plan for Prevent, and agreed to have a discussion on this item at the next meeting.

(C) **REVIEW OF STATUTES AND ORDINANCES**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/1292*

The Council noted that the Senate had concurred with the proposed amendments to Statutes and Ordinances, subject to very minor variations, which had been taken into account.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED unanimously to approve the proposals; the Statute amendments would be submitted to the Privy Council; the Ordinance changes would take effect immediately.

**Action: University Secretary**

(D) **CURRENT SCHEDULE OF FUTURE COUNCIL BUSINESS**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/1309*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the schedule of future business.

CO.15/67 Audit

*Ref: CA.7; documents: SEC/2015/2/1304; SEC/2015/2/1305*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (i) approve the Audit Committee's Annual report to Council and the Vice-Chancellor 2015;
- (ii) note that the Annual Report would be submitted to HEFCE;
- (iii) note the Internal Audit Annual Report 2014/15;
- (iv) note the Letter of Representation for the External Auditors;
- (v) note the report of meetings of the Audit Committee held on 17 September 2015 and 23 October 2015, and approve the Committee's recommendations as set out.

CO.15/68 Finance

*Ref: CA.8*

(A) **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2014/15**

*Document: FIN/15/67*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the annual accounts for the University for the financial year 2014/15.

(B) **HEFCE ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN – FINANCIAL RESULTS 2014/15**

*Document: FIN/15/58*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report and to approve the submission of the commentary and tables as part of the required submission to HEFCE.

(C) **ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/1276*

The University Secretary reminded the Council that in previous years the submission format for the voluntary report to HEFCE on institutional sustainability had been prescriptive in its wording and format, and the University had declined to make a submission. The publication of the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance and the HEFCE Memorandum of Assurance and Accountability had

provided a more helpful structure to enable the Council to review the ways in which it obtained assurance on the University's sustainability. It was agreed that the Council currently had no levels of concern in that area.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to agree to make a voluntary return on this matter to HEFCE in 2015.

**Action: University Secretary**

CO.15/69 Estates: Acquisition of Property

*Ref: CA.9; document: SEC/2015/2/1307 (**Restricted and Commercial in Confidence**)*

**[RESTRICTED AND COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE MINUTE]**

CO.15/70 Human Resources

*Ref: CA.10*

**(A) EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/1306*

It was agreed that the Council would hold a detailed discussion on Equality and Diversity at a future meeting.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2014-15.

**(B) REMUNERATION COMMITTEE: REPORT**

*Document: HR/RC/2015/20 (**Restricted**)*

**[RESTRICTED MINUTE]**

CO.15/71 Presentation by Martin Donnelly

*Ref: CA.11*

The Council welcomed the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), who presented his views on the Higher Education sector and answered members' questions on the topic. The following points were noted during the course of the discussion.

- (i) The University was seen as a key contributor to the growth of the local economy.
- (ii) Links between Higher Education and Further education were likely to become more strongly developed over the next few years.
- (iii) The Nurse review had confirmed the Government's twin-track, streamlined approach to research funding.
- (iv) The University was committed to supporting start-up businesses and helping to keep talent in the local region.
- (v) The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) would be useful for increasing the transparency of teaching quality, and as justification for the UK Higher Education sector's reputation as a provider of high quality education in a global market.
- (vi) Universities were becoming increasingly privately funded, but continued to have public obligations in terms of providing education and skills, and improving social mobility.
- (vii) A key factor in the Northern Powerhouse (NPH) agenda was the development of a knowledge based economy, and the creation of local growth deals.
- (viii) There was concern regarding the future-proofing of the UK skills base, for example the lack of students choosing to study languages such as Arabic and Chinese, which would be required by the Ministry of Defence.
- (ix) The Research Excellence Framework (REF) would continue to be focussed on rewarding research excellence and interdisciplinary research, regardless of the location of the institution, or the career stage of the researcher.
- (x) The University had an excellent league table position, and could raise its visibility by sharing its Strategy more widely within national Government and in Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- (xi) School league tables should focus on value added to students, and the number of students attending universities with higher entry tariffs, rather than the number gaining entry to Russell group universities.
- (xii) Lancaster's expertise in data science could help to fill a gap which exists in the UK's skills base.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the presentation, and thanked Mr Donnelly for his visit.

CO.15/72 Standing Committees and Reports

*Ref: CA.12*

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

- (i) Colleges and Student Experience Committee, meeting of 20 May 2015 (*SEC/2015/2/1275*)
- (ii) University and Students' Union Joint Committee, meeting of 16 June 2015 (*SEC/2015/2/1117*)
- (iii) Finance and General Purposes Committee, meeting of 25 September 2015 (*SEC/2015/2/1318*)