

**UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD
COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
27 NOVEMBER 2009**

Present: Dr A Mawson (Chair)
Mr C Wells (Deputy Chair)
Mr T Britten (until item COU.09.83)
Prof M Bull
Mr R Chotai
Mr N Collins
Mr P Crompton
Ms L Doyle
Mr J Greenough
Prof M Hall
Mr N Renfrew
Mr M Webber

Observer: Dr H Takriri-Rizk

Apologies: Mr I Austin
Dr M Burrows
Mr J Corner
Ms F Goodey
Cllr B Pennington
Ms C Shaw
Ms B Spicer
Mr J Willis

In attendance: Dr A A Graves (Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Registrar and Secretary)
Prof G Aouad (Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation)
Mr S Attwell (Director of Finance)
Mr F Benton (Executive Director, Estates and Property Services)
Prof S Donnelly (Executive Director, Faculty of Science, Engineering and Environment)
Mr P Hopwood (Director of Planning and Performance)
Prof K Kobbacy (Executive Dean, Faculty of Business, Law and the Built Environment)
Prof B Longhurst (Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts, Media and Social Sciences)
Prof C Pine (Executive Dean, Faculty of Health and Social Care)
Mr K Watkinson (Executive Director, Human Resources)
Mr M Rollinson (Head of Governance Services and Deputy Secretary)

COU.09.73 **MINUTES (COU/09/55)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2009 were confirmed as a correct record.

COU.09.74 **CHAIR'S ACTION**

Council noted that the Chair, acting on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor, had agreed:

- i) that, for semester two of 2009-10 and semester one of 2010-11, Prof M Bull be authorised to step aside from his role as Deputy Chair of Senate and Chair of Academic Audit and Governance Committee (AAGC); Prof Bull has been awarded a prestigious externally funded fellowship at the University of Turin in semester two of 2009-10 and has applied for sabbatical leave in semester one of 2010-11;
- ii) that, as a consequence, Prof S Vadera, a current member of AAGC, act as Deputy Chair of Senate and Chair of AAGC for Semester two of 2009-10 and Semester one of 2010-11.

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S MANAGEMENT REPORT (COU/09/56)

Council received the report from the Vice-Chancellor and confirmed that it was content with the method of reporting in this and the previous report to Council. The Vice-Chancellor spoke in more detail to the matters raised in the report. Matters arising from questions raised by members were as follows:

- i) the next National Student Survey would begin on 1 February 2010 and staff would be acting to ensure that response rates were maximised at an early stage (this would decrease reliance on the subsequent telephone reminder system); a minimum 50% response rate from each subject area was required for responses to be included in the survey;
- ii) in relation to planned improvements to processes for foreign student offers, Council was advised that such letters were required by students to satisfy visa requirements. The apparent dissonance between the more stringent UKBA requirements for overseas student entry and the emphasis on the importance of international students to UK higher education and the economy (as set out in the recently published Department for Business, Innovation and Skills report on the future of UK higher education) was noted;
- iii) in relation to the Research Excellence Framework (REF), efforts were focused on maximising the publication of existing research. Under the leadership of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), research colleagues were taking a positive approach to the REF and submissions to a mock REF had been requested by 8 January 2010. The Vice-Chancellor advised that the University had become the 100th worldwide to sign up as an open institutional repository, allowing open access to research outputs and it was anticipated that this would increase citation rates;
- iv) in relation to Media City, priority was being given to projected student numbers as the basis for the next stage of business plan development; the University had committed to at least 700 students being on site in 2011 and current indications were that this would be exceeded (maximum capacity was 1,050). The Vice-Chancellor referred to University presence in the Media Enterprise Centre (MEC), adjacent to the main University development. Council also noted that the University, in conjunction with North West Vision and Media, would encourage occupancy by other Universities in the MEC. There were likely to be beneficial consequences from partnerships with selected Universities and the MEC development would not affect the University's dominant position at Media City;
- v) in response to the Vice-Chancellor's report on the visit to China, Malaysia, Brunei and Australia, the Vice-Chancellor advised that serious consideration would be given to the establishment of a University office in Beijing as this appeared to be a more cost effective method of recruitment;
- vi) there was recognition that the University's former approach to international partnerships had been somewhat unfocused and opportunistic; these partnerships would now be strategic in nature with the Strategic Plan providing the necessary framework to guide developments;
- vii) the attention devoted to international alumni would not detract from the focus on domestic alumni (the regular Monday gatherings for home alumni were cited as an example of the work in this area).

COU.09.76 **FINANCE REPORT (COU/09/57) INCLUDING IT TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (COU/09/57A)**

Council received the report from the Director of Finance who drew members' attention to the financial impact of the HEFCE non-completion issue and the shortfall in international student numbers as set out in the report. Council noted that the exceptional profit on the sale of Crescent Purchasing (£1 million) had helped to keep the historic cost surplus of £3.7 million (against the budgeted figure of £5.78 million).

Council also received a report from the Chief Information Officer on behalf of the IT Transformation Project Board seeking approval for expenditure on the next phase of the IT Transformation Project. Council noted that the total estimate to complete to Stage 3 was £1.4 million and **resolved** to approve expenditure at up to £1.5 million to cover contingency to the completion of Stage 3 as set out in the report.

COU.09.77 **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2009 (COU/09/58)**

Council considered the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2009, which were prefaced by an Operating and Financial Review as required by HEFCE. Council **resolved** that the financial statements presented be approved.

COU.09.78 **LETTER OF REPRESENTATION TO THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS (COU/09/59)**

Council received the letter of representation to the External Auditors regarding the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2009. The Director of Finance drew members' attention to paragraph xiii), which had been drafted after consultation with the external auditors, and stated that the provision of £4.8 million in relation to potential clawback of HEFCE funding was appropriate. Council **resolved** that the letter be approved and signed by the Chair of Council.

COU.09.79 **FINANCIAL FORECAST FOR SUBMISSION TO HEFCE (COU/09/60)**

Council considered the financial forecast for 2009-13 which included a financial commentary on past performance and future prospects; a single page summary indicating movements from the annual budget was also circulated to members present.

Council noted that a very prudent approach had been taken in the forecasts, which would enable the University to respond appropriately to any major adverse variance in basic assumptions. The Registrar and Secretary and Director of Finance advised that the HEFCE Regional Consultant had expressed confidence in the University's management of resources during the recent assurance visit.

Council noted that the resource allocation model and budgeting process would be refined to ensure further alignment with TRAC analysis (for both research and teaching); the Strategic Leadership Team would further consider the TRAC process in the New Year and Council would receive a further report on this in due course.

Council **resolved** to approve the financial forecast (including commentary) for the years 2009-13 for submission to HEFCE.

COU.09.80 **RISK REGISTER (COU/09/61)**

Council received and noted an update report on the Risk Register, setting out the main changes since the previous meeting (including changes to descriptions of risk and the identification of new risks). In response to questions, Council was assured that, as new corporate risks were identified and brought forward by relevant risk owners, these would be added to the Register – an example cited was the current level of Postgraduate taught programme completion, where SLT was due to receive a further report in February 2010. Council particularly welcomed the draft risk forecast for the remainder of 2009-10, which showed how planned mitigation measures would reduce the level of risk; this meant that, at the end of 2009-10, the only remaining highest level risk related to the national funding position, a situation which was outside the University's control.

COU.09.81 **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (COU/09/62 and 63)**

Council received a report from the Director of Planning and Performance which set out the proposed framework for performance management and proposed key performance indicators (KPIs), both of which had been endorsed at the meeting of the Strategic Leadership Team on 9 November 2009. Council noted that the Director of Planning and Performance had given a full presentation to members at the Retreat Session held the previous day (Secretary's note – copies of the presentation have been made available on the Council members' resources section of the Governance website).

Council **resolved** to approve:

- i) the ten high level KPIs and the monitoring of three institutional projects (the Estates Master Plan, Media City and the Change Programme) at this level;
- ii) the alignment of these KPIs to the University's strategic goals;
- iii) the balanced scorecard approach;
- iv) the 'traffic light' system of reporting;
- v) the pragmatic approach to implementation as set out in the report and earlier presentation;
- vi) the timetable for performance reporting;
- vii) in principle, the underlying Business Performance Indicator/Metric structure as a basis for incremental development and implementation.

Council also received and noted an update on University performance as measured through the institutional KPIs in the new framework, noting that, because of the timing of the meeting, not all quarterly management information was currently available. Council noted further that Appendix 1 set out the balanced scorecard approach and likely changes in the indicators in later quarters, whilst Appendix 2 illustrated the current state of development of Business Performance Indicators (BPIs) with assessment of performance shown where data was available.

Council was advised that further work would be carried out on refining and developing BPIs and deciding which KPIs required the heaviest weighting.

COU.09.82 **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND DELEGATED FINANCIAL AUTHORITY (COU/09/63)**

Council considered the Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegated Authority and **resolved** to approve the document (subject to clarification and possible minor revision of section 13.1).

COU.09.83 **STRATEGIC PLAN 2009/10 TO 2017/18 (COU/09/64) AND STRATEGIC THEME SUMMARIES (COU/09/64A)**

Council considered the Strategic Plan and accompanying theme summaries, noting that these had been the subject of detailed discussions at the Retreat session held the previous day; this had included detailed discussions within groups (led by Executive Deans) about the challenges and opportunities of the Strategic Plan for each Faculty. Council noted that the formal approval of the Strategic Plan had been delayed because of the recent leadership transition and expressed its approval of the work carried out to develop the Plan further since it had last been seen by Council. Council **resolved** to adopt the Strategic Plan, noting that the theme summaries would sit as an appendix to the Plan, allowing for changes to the themes to be made as work progressed. A strategy for communication and publication of the Strategic Plan would be brought to SLT shortly.

COU.09.84 **CONSULTATION DRAFT: EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS SCHEME AND STRATEGY**

Council noted that this item had been withdrawn to allow the completion of further work which will be considered initially by Strategic Leadership Team; a consultation draft would be made available to Council members as soon as possible.

COU.09.85 **PRESENTATION FROM STUDENTS' UNION**

Council received a presentation from Council members Matt Webber (Students' Union President) and Ricky Chotai (Vice-President, Faculty of Health and Social Care). The presentation covered:

- student involvement
- student representation and engagement
- student activities
- the 'rate your union' survey

(Secretary's note – a copy of the presentation from the Students' Union has been made available on the Council members' resource section of the Governance website).

The Vice-Chancellor reported that he met with the Students' Union sabbatical officers on a regular basis and Executive Deans commented on the positive impact of the new Faculty based structure; Council noted that NUS nationally had taken a great interest in development at Salford as a potential model for the sector. The Vice-Chancellor reported that he endorsed the Students' Union's campaign to make the future of student funding an issue to be debated in the course of the forthcoming General Election campaign.

Council noted that relations with the residential community in close proximity to the student residences (including the IQ development) were being managed effectively and paid tribute to the work of the Director of Student Life, Liz Bromley, in this regard. The need to work with the Students' Union to encourage and promote a responsible attitude to alcohol was noted. The Vice-Chancellor advised that, at his recent meeting with the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police, the Chief Constable had indicated that he had fewer concerns about student behaviour and security issues than at other local universities.

Members commented on the good work carried out by students in the community and the importance of ensuring this received effective publicity. The Students' Union officers commented on the work being carried out to establish groups for students in 'hard to reach' or potentially isolated constituencies; work was in hand (with the Director of Graduate Studies) to establish a Postgraduate Students' Group and an International Students Group had already been established. In addition, work to encourage greater engagement with commuting students (as highlighted in the presentation) was continuing.

The Students' Union officers (in response to members' questions) referred to the Students' Union's engagement with Student Retention Officers and Student Life Division colleagues in efforts to improve retention rates.

Council welcomed the presentation and paid compliment to the very effective work of the Students' Union over the past year.

COU.09.86 **COUNCIL ADVISORY GROUP (COU/09/66)**

Council noted the report of the meeting of the Council Advisory Group held on 12 November 2009, including the reports of Lead Members meetings appended to the main report, and endorsed the use of the covering template for Council reports which had been approved by the Group and used for several reports submitted to the meeting.

COU.09.87 **AUDIT COMMITTEE (COU/09/67)**

Council considered the report of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 29 October 2009 and **resolved**:

- i) to approve the Senior Staff Travel and Expenses Policy;
- ii) to approve the Annual Assurance Return for signature by the Vice-Chancellor and submission to HEFCE;

Council noted:

- iii) the Key Issues Memorandum issued by Grant Thornton;
- iv) the comments of the Committee on the Financial Statements (approved under item COU.09.77 above);
- v) the Audit Committee Annual Report;
- vi) the comments of the Committee on the Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegated Financial Authority (approved under item COU.09.82 above);
- vii) the Value for Money Annual Report (which had been attached to the Financial Forecasts approved under item COU.09.79 above);
- viii) the appointment of Grant Thornton as external auditors for the financial year ending 31 July 2010;
- ix) resignations from the Committee (see also item COU.09.88 report from Nominations and Governance Committee).

COU.09.88 **NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (COU/09/68)**

Council considered the report of the meeting of Nominations and Governance Committee held on 12 November 2009. Council noted the brief report of the meeting between the Chair of Council and Lead Members and expressed satisfaction with the effectiveness of the dual assurance/Lead Member governance arrangements to date. Council **resolved** that:

- i) to facilitate succession planning, 'Shadow' Lead Members may be identified and appointed at least six months before the retirement of current Lead Members;
- ii) a principle of rotation of Lead Members be established and the appointment of Lead Members reviewed by Nominations and Governance Committee on a regular basis;
- iii) notes of all Lead Member meetings continue to be made available to Council Advisory Group and Council meetings. Confidential and commercially sensitive matters would be covered in a 'Part B' section of the notes which would not be widely circulated (but made available to Advisory Group members);
- iv) notes of Lead Member meetings should indicate where further advice can be obtained;
- v) further to discussions during the retreat and at the meeting, the concept of Lead Members for Faculties be approved, subject to more detailed consideration at the next meeting of Nominations and Governance Committee.

In relation to Council membership and related issues, Council noted the resignations of John Willis and Barbara Spicer from the Council with effect from 27 November 2009 and thanked them for their services. In particular, Council noted the major contribution to the work of the Council by Mr Willis, latterly as Chair of Audit Committee and agreed that this be conveyed to Mr Willis. Council **resolved** that:

- vi) the University engage search agents to identify up to six further independent members of Council and a co-opted member of Audit Committee; terms and conditions of the search engagement were to be finalised by the Registrar and Secretary bearing in mind prevailing market conditions;
- vii) the next recruitment round should address the current membership profile; a significant proportion of new members should be either women and/or from an ethnic minority and satisfy one or more of the other criteria for membership listed in viii) below;
- viii) the next recruitment round should include candidates with experience in one or more of the following areas:
 - experience of the academic environment/HE public policy context;
 - estates/property matters;
 - knowledge of and/or expertise in financial management;
 - equality and diversity;
 - ability to advise/contribute to the development of strategic partnerships, particularly at local and regional levels;
 - senior private sector leadership experience;
 - Public Relations/Media;
- ix) Ian Austin be appointed to fill the independent member vacancy on Audit Committee (arising from John Willis' resignation from Council) and become Chair of the Committee (the appointment as Chair would be subject to review once the recruitment round for new Council members was completed);
- x) Ian Austin be invited to attend future meetings of the Council Advisory Group;
- xi) Dr Mike Burrows be appointed as Lead Member for Finance (and, as a consequence, attend future meetings of the Council Advisory Group);
- xii) the former Lead Member for Finance, John Greenough, continue as a member of the Council Advisory Group, as Lead Member for Performance and Governance, an integrative role which would involve liaising with other Lead Members, as well as members of SLT and other staff and students as appropriate; this would include scrutiny of the new and developing approach to risk management and performance indicators and the 'dual assurance' role of ensuring that these were fit for purpose for Council;
- xiii) as a consequence of his appointment to Audit Committee, Ian Austin step down from membership of Remuneration Committee with further consideration to be given to membership and constitution of Remuneration Committee at the next meeting of the Nominations and Governance Committee;
- xiv) the vacancy on Nominations and Governance Committee (arising from John Willis' resignation from Council) be considered further at the next meeting of Nominations and Governance Committee.

Council also **resolved** that, in light of the award to Prof Martin Bull of an externally funded fellowship at the University of Turin with effect from the start of Semester two (1 February 2010) and his application for sabbatical leave in Semester one of 2010/11, Prof Bull be exempted from attendance at Council meetings for a period of twelve months (i.e. all Council meetings in 2010).

Council noted the reference to the HEFCE Assurance Visit on 18 November 2009 and received a brief oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the oral feedback he had received at the conclusion of the visit. The HEFCE Assurance Consultant had expressed confidence in the University's financial and governance arrangements, including the dual assurance/Lead Member arrangements. In particular, the consultant expressed his appreciation of the organisation and completion of the staffing element of Project Headroom, which positioned the University ahead of the sector at a time of risk. The outcome would be confirmed by letter but the intention was to award the highest level of confidence with no qualification or recommendations.

COU.09.89 **NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (HONORARY DEGREES) (COU/09/69)**

Council considered the report of the Nominations and Governance Committee held for the purpose of consideration of candidates for Honorary Degrees held on 12 November 2009. Council **resolved** that:

i) the following candidates be awarded Honorary Degrees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Award</u>	<u>Date of Ceremony</u>
Dr Allan Chapman	DSc	July 2010
Sir Harold Evans	DLitt	July 2010
Deborah Haynes	DSc	July 2010
Keith Ludeman	DSc	July 2010
David McGovern	MA	July 2010
Graham Nash	DArt	July 2010
Susanna Arundhati Roy	DLitt	July 2011

ii) Baroness Hale be awarded a DLaws rather than the DLitt previously determined to be awarded;

iii) Certain conferments of awards already determined should be appropriately scheduled:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Award</u>	<u>Date of Ceremony</u>
Baroness Hale	DLaws	Friday 16 July 2010
Professor Michael Harloe	DLitt	July 2010
Paul Abbott	DLitt	Availability to be discussed with Mr Abbott directly by the Vice-Chancellor
Jenni Murray (BBC) Mark Thompson (BBC) Peter White (BBC)		At an event focussed on Media City

iv) the conferment of awards already determined to Prince Hassan bin Talal of Jordan and Sir Ian McKellen not be actively pursued.

COU.09.90 **REMUNERATION COMMITTEE (COU/09/70)**

Council considered the report of the Remuneration Committee on 17 November 2009 and **resolved** to approve the recommendations therein.

COU.09.91 **SENATE (COU/09/71)**

Council considered the reports of the Senate meetings held on 7 October 2009 and 11 November 2009 and **resolved** to approve the appointments of Prof Peter Brandon and Prof Richard Towell as Emeritus Professors.

COU.09.92 **CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Following her success in the recent election for a member of academic staff, Council confirmed the appointment of Dr Haifa Takruri-Rizk to the Council.

COU.09.93 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 3 March 2010; Council **resolved** that the next meeting should not take place in the Council Chamber but at an appropriate venue elsewhere on the campus.

