

COUNCIL

**21 July 2011 at 16:30
13/15BA01**

MINUTES

Members:

Mr M Taylor (Chair)	Professor G Nicholls
Mr D Eustace (Vice-Chair)*	Professor M Olssen
Professor C M Snowden (Vice-Chancellor)	Mr I Robertson*
Professor D Allen	Mr D Rogers*
Mr T Chambers*	Mr O Salih
drs J Derwig	Professor N Seaton*
Dr J Forrest	Professor A Sterr
Mr A Herman	Mr K Taylor
Professor M Kearney	Ms A Watts
Ms D Langston	Professor S Williamson
Mr D McNulty	Professor Lord R Winston

*denotes member unable to attend

In attendance:

- Mr H ap Rees – Director of Planning & Strategy
- Dr D Ashton - University Registrar
- Ms C Johnson - Acting Clerk to Council
- Mr G Melly – Director of Corporate Services
- Mr D Sharkey – Director of Finance
- Ms L Richards – Senior Committees Support Officer (minutes)

Observing: Ms S Litchfield - University Secretary & Legal Adviser from 1-8-11

A INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

11/23 Introductions

- .1 The Chair introduced Ms Sarah Litchfield who was attending as an observer. Ms Litchfield would be joining as the University Secretary and Legal Adviser from 1 August 2011.
- .2 The Chair also welcomed Mr Osama Salih. Mr Salih would be President of the Students' Union from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012.

11/24 Apologies for absence

Apologies were noted from Mr Chambers, Mr Eustace, Mr Robertson, Mr Rogers and Professor Seaton.

11/25 Declarations of interest

None.

11/26 Minutes of previous meetings.

The minutes from the meeting held 17 March and 8 April 2011 were **approved**.

11/27 Matters arising

It was noted that all actions had either been completed or were dealt with on the agenda. There were no additional matters arising.

11/28 Chair's Items

.1 Nominations Committee

i) The Chair confirmed that the Nominations Committee had met. The following recommendations were made and Council **approved**:

- The appointment of Mr Thomas Chambers as University Treasurer. This first term as Treasurer to be for three years from 1 February 2012 to 31 January 2015.
- The reappointment of Professor Lord Robert Winston as a member of Council for a second term of three years, from 1 September 2011 to 31 August 2014.
- The appointment of Ms Anne Watts, as a nominated member of Council on the Health & Safety Committee. This first term to commence on 1 August 2011 and to be concurrent with her term on Council.
- The appointment of Mr Dave Rogers, as a nominated member of Council on the Estates Committee. This first term to commence on 1 August 2011 and to be concurrent with his term on Council.
- The appointment of drs Mac Derwig as Chair of the Team Surrey, the new Joint Venture between the Surrey Sports Park and the Students' Union.

ii) It was noted that work to investigate a number of potential future candidates for Council and its committees was progressing. A further update would be provided at the next meeting of Council.

.2 Letter of Institutional Risk

Council **noted** the letter which confirmed the University's status as "not at higher risk". It was noted that this was typical of the sector and equated in other words to 'very low risk'.

.3 Achievements of members of the University community

Council **acknowledged** the achievements of members of the University community as outlined in the paper circulated.

B ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL

11/29 Government Policy Update

.1 The Vice-Chancellor gave a verbal summary of the potential implications, for Surrey and the sector as a whole, of the recently published Higher Education White Paper. The following points were noted:

The three key elements of the White Paper were:

- The shift in the way students are funded;
 - The increase in the expectations of students; and
 - The changes to student quota allocations.
- .2
- The change in the quota allocations would increase competition between Universities, particularly to recruit students with A level tariffs of AAB and above. Whilst applications to Surrey continued to increase, and its average entrance tariff last year was AAB, it would need to focus on its brand development in order to attract a sufficient proportion of the relatively small number of AAB+ students.
- .3
- Surrey's OFFA agreement had been signed off with relatively minor adjustments required. It was noted that failure to meet the targets set out in the agreement would mean the ability to charge £9k fees would be removed.
- .4
- A larger proportion of students achieve AAB in arts and humanities subjects than in STEM subjects. This might prove an additional pressure on Surrey in particular but given that such subjects were generally cheaper to teach, it might also drive a shift by some universities towards the provision of more arts and humanities subjects.
- .5
- Council **noted** the update on Government policy.

11/30 Budget 2011-12

.1 Mr Sharkey, Finance Director, gave a presentation. Council were reminded that the four year Quantum forecast had been approved at the extraordinary meetings of Finance Committee and Council in April 2011. Given the uncertainties of the funding environment beyond a year ahead, the focus for this item was the budget for 2011-12 only. A further presentation, including the latest (Rutherford) forecasts for future years, would be given in the Autumn.

.2 The following points arose in discussion.

REDACTED AS COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

.3 Council **approved**, on the recommendation of Finance Committee and Executive Board, the budget for 2011-12.

11/31 Corporate Planning Statement

.1 Mr ap Rees gave a presentation of the draft Corporate Planning Statement, including an update on the balanced scorecard. The following points were raised in discussion:

- With regard to reports of other UK Universities with similar student employability levels, Council were advised that these were much smaller and more specialist institutions. Surrey was the only sizeable University achieving these levels and was acknowledged as heading the league table for 1994, Russell Group and Chartered Universities. However, it was pointed out that several other comparable Universities were close behind and there was certainly no room for complacency.

- The KPI for research quality was newly added and referred to the target for the percentage of academic staff who had more than four, three or four-star publications at the time of submission for REF. It was noted that Professor Williamson had recently completed a series of presentations/meetings with all University departments to communicate the requirements of the forthcoming REF.
- With regard to student satisfaction, it was noted that work had been undertaken to better understand the issues. This had been largely via the I-Grad survey and regular meetings with Students' Union representatives. These had helped to pinpoint areas for improvement, some of which had been tackled immediately and some which would require longer term attention.

.2 Council were advised that the final Corporate Planning Statement would be presented for approval at the meeting in November.

.3 Council **noted** the draft Corporate Planning Statement and updated balanced scorecard.

11/32 Council Effectiveness Review 2011

.1 Council were reminded that it had previously agreed to consider having its 2011 effectiveness review undertaken by an independent, external reviewer. The Clerk to Council reported that provisional arrangements had been made with the Southern Universities Management Services (SUMS) to undertake this in line with the toolkit developed by the Leadership Foundation. The review would combine a survey with face-to-face interviews and would include a review of the effectiveness of Audit and Finance Committees. An interim report would be prepared for the November meeting of Council with a full report to be presented at the March 2012 meeting.

.2 Council **approved** the proposal for the 2011 effectiveness review.

11/33 Risk Management Update

.1 It was noted that the outcomes of the recent White Paper might have a significant impact on the risk register. This would be taken into account during the forthcoming Executive Board review of the risk register in September.

.2 It was further noted that Audit Committee had expressed concern that the register did not sufficiently show the level of movement in risks and that the mitigating actions for some risks may not be sufficient to alleviate the risk level.

.3 Council **noted** the update on risk management and the risk register.

11/34 GSA REDACTED AS COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

11/35 Student Charter

.1 The Clerk to Council explained the background to this national requirement to produce a student charter outlining the rights and responsibilities of students. A university-wide group

had been convened to discuss the underlying principles for such a document and after it had been drafted, it had been reviewed by staff and student representatives. It was noted that the Student Charter had been reviewed by the University Learning and Teaching Committee and the Research Degrees Committee before being considered by the Senate. The Student Charter would be included in course programme handbooks and academics would be asked to discuss it with new students at the start of the next academic session.

- .2 On the recommendation of the Senate, Council **approved** the Student Charter.

11/36 External Auditors

- .1 It was noted that Audit Committee had agreed the proposed fees from KPMG.
- .2 It was noted that KPMG had carried out non-audit work on the VLE over the last six months and that it was likely they would be asked to undertake further non-audit work in relation to this and possibly other related projects. Concern had been expressed by Audit Committee that whilst the two streams of work (audit and non-audit) were entirely separate, it might not be perceived this way externally. Audit Committee had therefore recommended that KPMG's contract for audit work be extended for one year only, until the extent of the non-audit work was clarified. (Council were reminded that they had previously agreed a three year contract subject to satisfactory negotiation of fees).
- .3 Council **approved** the audit contract extension for one year and the policy for non-audit work.

11/37 Bribery Act 2010 Update

- .1 Council was informed that clarity was being sought as to the scope of "corporate offence" and "persons associated". However, it was felt that it would be sensible to assume that all members of Council and its committees were included within that scope. Council agreed to this approach.
- .2 It was confirmed that actions to communicate the changes across the University would be put in place. The policy would be brought back to Council for approval once clarification of the scope had been received.
- .3 Council **noted** the update on the Bribery Act 2010.

C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

11/38 Report from the Finance Committee

Council **noted** the report from the Finance Committee.

11/39 Report from the Executive Board

Council **noted** the report from the Executive Board.

11/40 Report from the Audit Committee

.1 The Chair of Audit Committee confirmed that most items discussed at Audit Committee had been covered during the Council agenda with just one further point to note. This was that Audit Committee had requested that the Internal Audit plan be reviewed in conjunction with the risk register to ensure appropriate alignment.

11/41 Report from the Senate

Council **noted** the report from the Senate.

11/42 Health & Safety Report

Council **noted** the Health & Safety report.

11/43 Freedom of Speech Policy

Council **noted** the update on the Freedom of Speech policy.

11/44 Equality & Diversity Report

Council **noted** the report. It was agreed to invite the Equality & Diversity Manager to The September meeting, to update Council on relevant issues.

11/45 Council's Cycle of Business

Council **noted** the cycle of business.

D CLOSING ITEMS

AOB

11/46 Chair's Thanks

The Chair reminded members that this was the last meeting to be attended by Ms Caroline Johnson and Professor Michael Kearney. Ms Johnson had undertaken the role of Clerk to Council on an interim basis, a role which would be passed on to Ms Sarah Litchfield on her joining. Professor Kearney would be stepping down as Dean of FEPS from the end of July 2011. The Chair thanked both members for their valuable contributions.

11/47 Dates of Future Meetings

All meetings (except away days) are at 16:30 unless otherwise advised.

2011:

29 September (13:00, Farnham Castle)

21 November (Oak 1 & 2 / dinner in Ivy)

2012:

22 March (Oak 1&2 / dinner in Ivy)

Confidential

26 July (Oak 1&2 / dinner in Ivy)
4/5 October (away day - tbc)
22 November Oak 1&2 / dinner in Ivy)

Mr Max Taylor
Chair of Council
29 September 2011