

**Minutes of Council**

**Friday 23 November 2012**

Present: Ms Alessandra Berti, Mr Denis Burn (Chair), Mr Paul Charlton, Professor David Clarke, Councillor Simon Cook, Mr Roy Cowap, Dr Esther Crawley, Mr Tom Flynn, Professor Gary Foster, Dr Andrew Garrad, Mr Colin Green, Ms Pru Lawrence-Archer, Professor Nick Lieven, Mr Tony Macdonald, Dr John Manley, Professor Roger Middleton, Mrs Dinah Moore, Mr Bob Morton, Professor Guy Orpen, Mrs Cindy Peck, Mr Andrew Poolman, Mr Bill Ray, Mr Mohammed Saddiq, Ms Victoria Stace, Ms Anne Stephenson, Professor Eric Thomas, Dr Trevor Thompson, Mr James Wadsworth, Mr James Wetz

In attendance: Dr Alison Bernays, Mr Patrick Finch, Ms Robin Geller, Mr Guy Gregory, Dr Rachel Hooper, Mr Richard Hopkins, Mr Hugh Martin (Clerk), Mr Andy Nield, Ms Sue Paterson, Ms Alice Peck, Mr Tim Phillips, Ms Hannah Pollak, Ms Lynn Robinson, Sir James Tidmarsh, Ms Martha West

Apologies: Dr Moira Hamlin, Sir Ronald Kerr, Mr David Ord

**1. Welcome and Announcements**

1.1 The Chair welcomed the UBSU Sabbatical Team, the non-Council members of whom would observe the meeting on this occasion.

1.2 It was noted that, as agreed at the previous meeting of Council, some brief general filming of the meeting (for the internal use of the University) would take place after the presentations.

**2. Council Meeting Apologies**

2.1 NOTED: the apologies received in advance.

**3. Declaration of Interests**

3.1 Members were reminded that they had an obligation to disclose any pecuniary, family or other personal interest that they had in any matter under discussion at any meeting of Council as soon as practicable.

**4. Strategic Items**

4.1 The Finance Director gave a presentation (on file) about the University Financial Results for 2011/12 and the longer term financial strategy and issues that the University would need to address over the next few months. In particular he highlighted:

- medium term financial projections and sensitivities;
- potential scale of additional capital investment requirements;
- financing options and complexities;
- the significance of pension deficits to the formulation of future strategy.

Finance Committee would be considering these issues further and a major presentation at the March 2013 Council meeting was planned. The Chair confirmed that he had asked the Vice-Chancellor to present his wider strategic perspective at the same meeting to set the context.

4.2 The UBSU Sabbatical Team gave a presentation (on file) about Student Issues. In particular they highlighted these key messages:

- students see the University as one entity;
- 'Students as Partners' needs to be more than a phrase;
- students' diverse, meaningful and positive community engagement should be:
  - encouraged;
  - publicised;
- space is a critical issue for UBSU in:
  - accommodation;
  - sports and activities;
  - education facilities;
- UBSU benefits from the continuing help and support of Council individually and collectively.

## **5. Minutes of Meeting on 6 July 2012**

5.1 CONFIRMED: the minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2012.

## **6. Matters Arising and Actions**

6.1 There were no matters arising.

## **7. Chair's Report**

7.1 APPROVED: the appointment of several Visiting Professors (reference **CN/12/195**).

7.2 NOTED: the appointment by Chair's Powers of a Visiting Professor (reference **CN/12/195**).

## **8 Vice-Chancellor's Report**

8.1 RECEIVED: the Vice-Chancellor's report to Council (reference **CN/12/196**).

Kyoto visit

8.2 The University would be hosting a visit by Kyoto University in January 2013; Kyoto University was sending a large delegation (of at least 90 personnel) including the President. It was noted that Kyoto University is considered the second best after Tokyo in Asia, and this would be a significant visit for Bristol. A series of events were planned over two days and the Japanese Ambassador to the UK would attend the private dinner hosted by the Vice-Chancellor.

#### Collaboration with Bath, Cardiff and Exeter

8.3 A set of terms and conditions for collaborating with the universities of Bath, Cardiff and Exeter had been agreed; a public announcement would follow shortly. The name 'GW4' (Great Western 4) had been suggested for the group.

8.4 The collaboration would include combined strategic planning, a 'no poaching' agreement on staff, the potential for combined research infrastructure, joint doctoral training as already in hand in the Social and Biological Sciences, and the ability to attract the best academic and other visitors from around the world.

8.5 It was noted that the collaboration would never inhibit individual staff from moving institution or collaborating between themselves, that it would not blur the brand of any of the individual institutions involved, and that it would not impact on the student distinction at Bristol. The collaboration would not be limited to academic matters, and possibilities were already being explored in areas such as HR, leadership and career development, and international student recruitment.

8.6 The collaboration would result in a measure of research power which equated with the University of Oxford; there had been two years of meetings of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Director of RED with their opposite numbers to bring the collaboration to this point.

8.7 In relation to SETsquared, it was noted that discussions were in hand to enquire if Cardiff might join, but that the 'GW4' collaboration was a research partnership and SETsquared a technology transfer and enterprise undertaking. 'GW4' was not an exclusive collaboration and the University's other partnerships would continue.

8.8 The collaboration would be communicated to staff and to students via Senate.

#### Honorary Degrees Committee

8.9 Reserved business.

8.10 Reserved business.

#### REF 2014 preparation

8.11 The following points were noted:

- REF submission would take place in one year's time;
- Units of Assessment configuration had been agreed by the University Research Committee in consultation with Deans;
- REF was being used as a strategic driver;
- the Code of Practice had been published; under which the Individual Circumstances Group led by the HR Director would work;
- the financial consequences would be felt in 2014/15;
- good communications with staff were essential and those communications should not just come from the senior executive;
- under the Submission Policy, some staff would not be submitted in order to secure the maximum institutional benefit; the Policy would be determined by the

Vice-Chancellor on the advice of the University Research Committee and published in January as laid down in the Code of Practice;

- it was important to support staff who would not be submitted and to ensure the language used in communications was handled with care.

#### NSS

- 8.12 It was noted that the net effect of the recent NSS was not as significant as had been thought at first and that many other members of the Russell Group had seen their results drop. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) was visiting each School with the UBSU Sabbaticals and an update to Council would follow in due course.

#### Coonerty Report

- 8.13 Paula Coonerty, Arts Faculty Manager, had now completed and submitted her report on the faculty and school based administrative support structures post-SPR. The senior executive had reviewed the report and three categories had been identified:
- recommendations for immediate action;
  - recommendations with significant resource implications;
  - recommendations with wider ranging impact on structures which would be subject to further consultation.

A short consultation process would follow between the senior executive, Deans, Faculty Assemblies, Schools, Divisions, and UBSU with the intention to finalise actions by no later than March 2013.

#### Mayor of Bristol

- 8.14 The newly elected Mayor of Bristol was an alumnus of the University and had indicated he was keen to be involved with the upcoming Kyoto University visit and the graduation celebrations in China.

### **9. Financial Matters**

#### Annual report and financial statements

- 9.1 APPROVED: the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2011/12 (reference **CN/12/197**).
- 9.2 APPROVED: the letter of representation to the auditors PriceWaterhouseCoopers (reference **CN/12/197**).
- 9.3 AUTHORISED: the Chair and Vice-Chancellor to sign the report on behalf of Council (reference **CN/12/197**).

#### External Auditors Report

- 9.4 NOTED: the External Auditors Report for the year ended 31 July 2012 (reference **CN/12/198**).

#### Audit Committee Annual Report

- 9.5 NOTED: the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2011/12 (reference **CN/12/199**).

#### Monthly Financial Report

- 9.6 APPROVED: the Finance Update from the Finance Director (reference **CN/12/200**).

#### Financial forecasts for HEFCE

9.7 APPROVED: the Annual Accountability Return 2012 (reference **CN/12/201**).

Valuation of Investment Units

9.8 APPROVED: the investment unit values of the endowment and other funds of the University (reference **CN/12/202**).

AOB

9.9 It was noted that SPIs would return as an agenda item to Council in due course.

9.10 The Chair thanked the University Treasurer, whose term of office would come to an end on 31 December, for his service. The University Treasurer reflected on a number of improvements that had been made during this tenure, including the reporting of management accounts in a ten day turnaround, a culture of disclosure and openness, and an excellent financial team. He noted that the proposed new integrated Finance/Payroll/HR System development would be a major undertaking and would need effective management.

**10. Academic Redundancy Committee  
Redundancy Report – Fixed Term Contracts**

10.1 AGREED: that redundancy procedures be instituted in respect of cases arising from the application of the Fixed-term Contract Policy (Ordinance 26) (reference **CN/12/203**).

10.2 AGREED: that Professor Len Hall be appointed as a lay member of the redundancy panel under the terms of Ordinance 27 – Redundancy Procedure (reference **CN/12/203**).

**11. University Delegations Schedule**

11.1 APPROVED: the revisions to the University's Delegation Schedule (reference **CN/12/204**).

11.2 It was agreed that a discussion would continue outside Council regarding student representation on the Student Pricing Group.

**12. Estates Strategy**

12.1 APPROVED: the Estates Strategy (reference **CN/12/205**).

12.2 The Chair asked the Bursar to engage with UBSU in supporting their building developments and restructuring and their contingency plans for their societies and sports clubs while building work continued.

**13. Senate Report**

13.1 APPROVED: the appointment of Visiting Professors (reference **CN/12/206**).

13.2 NOTED: the business that was presented to Senate on 22 October for information/discussion.

- 13.3 It was noted that the proposals for the restructure of the Education Committee would be taken to Senate at its meeting on 3 December.

#### **14. Recommendations for University Court**

- 14.1 RECOMMENDED: the proposed nominations to Court at its meeting on 7 December (reference **CN/12/207**).

#### **15. Information Security Policy**

- 15.1 APPROVED: adoption of the new core set of Information Security Policies (reference **CN/12/208**).
- 15.2 It was agreed that overview documents would be required to provide a brief summary for relevant constituencies (academic staff, non-academic staff, and students).

#### **16. UBSU Financial Statements**

- 16.1 NOTED: the financial statements of UBSU for the year ended 31 July 2012 (reference **CN/12/209**).
- 16.2 It was agreed that Council's condition that a second University nominee be appointed to the UBSU Board of Trustees would be taken up by the President of UBSU.

#### **17. Committee Reports**

##### Estates Committee

- 17.1 RECEIVED: the summary of the Estates Committee meeting on 12 October (reference **CN/12/210**).

##### Finance Committee

- 17.2 RECEIVED: the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on 25 October (reference **CN/12/211**).

##### Student Affairs Committee

- 17.3 RECEIVED: the report of the Student Affairs Committee meeting on 19 November (reference **CN/12/212**).

##### Audit Committee

- 17.4 RECEIVED: the report of the Audit Committee meeting on 6 November (reference **CN/12/213**).

##### Ethics of Research Committee

- 17.5 RECEIVED: the report of the Ethics of Research Committee meeting on 14 November (reference **CN/12/214**).

##### Nominations Committee of Court

- 17.6 APPROVED: Cllr S Cook, Dr A Garrad and Ms V Stace as members of the Nominations Committee of Court.

- 17.7 Personnel and Health and Safety Committee  
RECEIVED: an oral report of the Personnel and Health and Safety Committee meeting on 22 November; the minutes would be circulated in due course.

**18. Reports for Information**

- 18.1 Annual Report, Faculty of Social Sciences and Law  
NOTED: the Annual Report 2012 (reference **CN/12/215**).

- 18.2 Chair Appointments  
RECEIVED: the summary of Chair appointments that had taken place since the previous report to Council in September 2012 (reference **CN/12/216**).

**19. Withdrawal of PhD award\***

- 19.1 NOTED: the update on the withdrawal of a PhD award (reference **CN/12/217**).

**20. Standing Items**

- 20.1 Equality and Diversity Implications  
Council did not feel that the business discussed at the meeting had raised any equality and diversity issues which had not been appropriately addressed by report authors and/or relevant sub-committees.

- 20.2 Communications and Consultation  
It was agreed that a process review of communications would be helpful in due course to ensure the right articulation of communication duties.

**21. Dates of Next Meeting**

- 21.1 NOTED: That the next meetings of Council had been scheduled as follows:  
Friday 8 February 2013  
Thursday 14 March 2013  
Friday 15 March 2013  
Friday 10 May 2013  
Friday 5 July 2013

\*Reserved business