

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

Minute of the 104th Annual Meeting of Court

Friday 6 December 2013

The Rt Hon The Baroness Hale of Richmond (Chancellor)

Dr A Bernays (Pro-Chancellor), Mr D Burn (Chair of Council), Professor D Clarke (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Ms R Geller (Registrar & Chief Operating Officer), Dr R Holmes (Pro-Chancellor), Prof G Orpen (Pro Vice-Chancellor), Mr A Poolman (Treasurer), Prof J Squires (Pro Vice-Chancellor), Prof Sir E Thomas (Vice-Chancellor)

Prof J Adams	Dr H Donoghue	Prof W Larnar	Mr R Schmidt
Mr D Alder	Ms S Drummond	Cllr T Leimdorfer	Mr A Scott
Mr G Ash	Dr F Duckworth	Prof M Liversidge	Cllr I Scott
Mr M Ashmead	Mrs K Dudley	Mr S Malik	Mr C Scowen
Dr I Ashwell	Dr M El-Bakry	Prof A Marsh	Ms M Skrzpanska
Prof G Banting	Prof G Ellison	Prof H Mason	Mr L Smith
Mr R Barlow	Lt Col C Elmhirst	Mr R Massie	J Smith
Mr J Barnbrook	Mr C Embrey	Lady Merrison	Dr B Smith
Prof Sir M Berry	Prof B Foster	Ms A Milln	Prof J Steeds
Ms E Billington	Dr J Foulds	Mr J Miotla	Ms MJ Steer
Dr E Bird	Mr A Franks	Prof A Morgan	Cllr R Stone
Mr S Biswas	Dr H Galbraith	Mr B Morton	Mr L Taylor
Cdr G Bond	Dr S Goldsmith	Prof M Mott	Prof R Thomas
Mr K Bonham	Mr M Grady	Mrs B Moul	Prof E Thomas
Ms J Brooks	Mr M Graham	Mr G Mullan	Revd Dr S Thorn
Mrs L Brown	Dr R Green	Cllr D Naysmith	Dr T Thorn
Prof J Bryce	Mrs R Greenwood	Prof J Noyes	Mr R Tucker
Mrs S Budd	Mr G Gregory	Mr B Omar	Dr I Tunbridge
Mr P Burling	Mr R Griffiths	Mr C Owen	Mr S Vause
Dr J Burn	Dr R Haines	Mr J Parsons	Prof B Vincent
Mr C Burns	Mr M Halani	Prof M Partington	Prof A Walsby
Mr S Chapman	Dr M Hamlin	Mrs S Paterson	Mr K Walton
Mr C Chapman	Dr R Hammond	Prof H-X Peng	Prof P Warren
Mr R Churcher	Mr P Hand	Dr H Phillips	Prof A Waterman-
Mr D Clarke	Mr R Harding	Mr J Phillips	Pearson
Dr S Clarke	Prof R Hodder-	Prof B Pickering	Mrs J Wathen
Mr S Cooper	Williams	Mrs N Press	Cllr A Watson
Prof T Cosgrove	Mr T Hood	Mr A Price	Dr B Weaver
Mr R Cowap	Mr M Howell	Dr A Pullen	Mr J Wetz
Mr R Cross	Prof R Hutton	Mrs TJ Rawlinson	Dr D Willingham
Dr M Crossley	Mr G Jeffrey	Mr W Ray	Mr R Willis
Evans	Cllr L Kew	Mr J Richards	Mrs H Wiloughby
Dr N Dahnoun	Mr A King	Prof J Rivers	Ms A Wilson
Mr W Davies	Prof U King	Ms L Robinson	Mrs L Wilson
Cllr C Davies	Mrs J Kirk	Mr R Rossington	Ald M Withers
Rev E Davis	Prof S Knox	Prof R Sampson	Dr V Zajko
Prof R Dixon	Prof H Land	Mr N Sapsworth	

1. Vice-Chancellor's/senior team's address

- 1.1 RECEIVED and NOTED: an oral address from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor.

1.2 The Chancellor and members of Court congratulated the Vice-Chancellor on his recent knighthood.

1.3 The Chancellor and members of Court thanked the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, who would be retiring at the end of July 2014, for his invaluable contributions to the University and wished him the best for the future.

2. Question-and-answer session with the Vice-Chancellor and senior team

2.1 The questions and answers that followed the Vice-Chancellor's and Deputy Vice-Chancellor's address highlighted these points:

- It was difficult to anticipate the demand for Masters degrees from 2015 onwards given increased student debt levels. Increases in the cost of living and concerns about the link to future employment were likely to be important factors.
- The University was committed to providing a positive residential experience for all students not only in university halls of residence but also for those living in the city.
- The University was working closely with Bristol City Council and local NHS organisations on health and wellbeing and was actively engaged in the planning and delivery of a number of local healthcare initiatives.
- The University's Support Process Review programme had been a difficult process but the University was currently in its third year post implementation, and the results were showing some significant improvements in many areas. This year the University was reviewing IT provision in order to deliver further improvements and the Registrar had recently launched a programme of professional service reviews.
- Pay in the public sector continued to be constrained by central government as part of the Coalition's approach to reducing the public deficit. A two-year pay freeze for all public sector employees, except for those earning under £21,000, came to an end last year (2012/13) but had been replaced with a 1% limit on pay for the next two years (2013/14 and 2014/15). This policy did not apply directly to local government (including the fire service and probation service) nor Higher or Further Education. However, the HE sector is expected by the government to demonstrate "pay restraint". The University recognised that pay increases had been running below inflation for the last four years and that this had had a material impact on staff. The University needed to balance the pressure to achieve a reasonable pay settlement against the need to maintain sufficient surplus and cash to invest in the University, both maintaining staff numbers and infrastructure. Given the current funding position and future financial uncertainty, 1% was considered to be an appropriate pay increase. The University's total pay bill was c£250m per year and so a combined pay movement of 2.5% (1% pay award plus c1.5% for incremental/promotional increases etc) added c£6.25m to the annual pay bill.
- Remuneration procedures for senior staff and the senior management team including the Vice-Chancellor had been considered by the Remuneration Committee. The Remuneration Committee is a formal sub-committee of the University Council, chaired by the Chair of Council, which acts on behalf of Council to set the pay of senior members of staff, including the Vice-Chancellor. The Chair of Council confirmed that the University's Remuneration Committee had looked at the procedures and processes in place to determine staff remuneration and had been satisfied that they were both fair and fit for purpose. The Chair also assured Court that the Remuneration Committee had looked at

equality issues both across and between staffing grades and had been satisfied that the University had adopted a fair and equitable approach.

3. Presentation (Education and the Student Experience)

3.1 RECEIVED and NOTED: a presentation from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) and three Bristol students: Elsa Hammond, Joshua Leslie and Matt Graham (on file and available on the website).

3.2 Highlights from the presentation were:

- The University's priorities for Education and the Student Experience were contained within the University Education Strategy 2010-2016.
- A key priority was to ensure that Bristol University students had a fulfilling, challenging and intellectually stimulating experience that prepared them for employment and worldwide opportunities when they graduated.
- Examples of how the University helped to prepare students for employment and worldwide opportunities included: the Engineering Industrial Liaison Office, which ensured that all engineering students received a relevant industrial mentor; the Enterprise Education team, which helped to deliver key skills for the job market; the University of Bristol Internship Scheme, which provided students with a chance to gain valuable quality work experience; and the Bristol PLuS Award, which rewarded students who had gained significant professional life skills through involvement in extra-curricular activities.

4. Minutes of the meeting of 7 December 2012

4.1 APPROVED (reference **Agenda item 4**).

5. Additions to Court membership

5.1 NOTED (reference **Agenda item 5**).

5.2 The Chancellor welcomed new members.

6. The Chair of Council's review of the year 2012/13

6.1 RECEIVED: an oral address from the Chair of Council.

6.2 The discussion which followed highlighted these points:

- The University had over the past year been positively and frequently named in the international and national media and was continuing to work hard to enhance its profile both at home and overseas.
- In terms of alumni engagement, the University was in contact with 80% of its alumni and had been positively engaging with them throughout the year. Other engagement initiatives included Convocation events which were held throughout the UK and overseas. Over 6% of the University's contactable alumni had donated to the University. The average in the USA was 12% and the University of Bristol is third within the UK on this measure.

- The Chancellor would establish a working group to initiate a review of the effectiveness of University Court, chaired by Professor Richard Hodder-Williams. The outcomes would be communicated to all members of Court in due course. As part of this review, consideration would be given to the mode of circulation of papers.
- The University was engaging with many countries across the globe particularly via academic collaborations and was specifically looking at countries with rapid economic and social development such as South East Asia and South Asia e.g. India as well as the Iberian diaspora e.g. Mexico. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) was currently developing a University International Strategy.
- The University was committed to spending 30% of its additional student fee income on widening participation initiatives (currently approx. £11M per year). This was expected to rise over the coming years. Consideration would be given to providing a more detailed account of this spending within the 2013/14 Review of the Year.
- The University was engaging fully with Bristol's plans to celebrate and capitalise on its status as European Green Capital for 2015. Many of the activities the University was engaging with were being led via its researchers, teaching staff and students.

7. Annual Report and Financial Statements 2012/13

7.1 RECEIVED (reference **Agenda item 7**).

7.2 The Finance Director gave a presentation (on file and available on the website).

7.3 Highlights from the presentation were:

- Operating surplus for the year was £12.5m. This was better than budget and an increase from 2011/12;
- Cashflow generation post financing costs was £32m;
- Capital investment for the year was £101m;
- Net debt at year end was £111.2m. As planned, net debt had increased rapidly as the capital programme progressed;
- Budget surplus for 2013/14 was currently forecast at £7m but it was still early in the year;
- In the longer term, a number of major uncertainties and challenges remained. These included HEFCE funding (teaching and research); the home undergraduate £9k fee cap which remained unchanged; student numbers; research funding; pensions; pay pressures and the inflation mismatch between income and costs;
- The University of Bristol Pension and Assurance Scheme (UPBAS) actuarial valuation as at July 2012 had been settled and a recovery plan agreed. Fundamental changes to the employee contributions/future benefit levels had been implemented with effect from November 2013;
- In March 2013, the University Superannuation Scheme (USS) deficit had increased to £11.5bn and the University's share represented circa 2% of the scheme. The next actuarial valuation would be in March 2014 and fundamental scheme changes would be required to deal with its share of the deficit and the increased cost of providing future service benefits;
- A growth in cashflow generation was required to support additional capital investment for the University.

7.4 The discussion which followed highlighted these points:

- The University's biggest pension liability was USS and there were two components that would drive the cost of USS going forward: the increasing cost of providing future pensions, and dealing with the deficit;
- Staff had been made aware of the financial challenges faced by USS and the University was being open and transparent about the issues associated with addressing the USS deficit.

8. Appointment of lay members of Council

8.1 APPROVED: the appointment of the following lay Council members for a period of three years until 31 December 2016 (reference **Agenda item 8**):

- (i) Dr Moira Hamlin (reappointment)
- (ii) Dr John Manley (reappointment)
- (iii) Mr Mohammed Saddiq (reappointment)
- (iv) Ms Vikki Stace (reappointment)
- (v) Mr Paul Hand
- (vi) Dame Denise Holt

8.2 The Chancellor thanked the retiring members of Council, Mr David Ord and Mrs Dinah Moore, for their many years of commitment and dedication both to Council and to the University.

8.2 The Chancellor thanked Mrs Alison Bernays, Chair of the Nominations Committee of Court for the Committee's hard work over the past year.

9. Appointment of University Treasurer

9.1 APPROVED: the appointment of Mr A Poolman for a period of one year from 1 January 2014 (reference **Agenda item 9**).

10. Appointment of External Auditors

10.1 APPROVED: the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC) for a further year (reference **Agenda item 10**).

10.2 Members noted that the University had undergone a re-tendering process for the University's External Auditors for 2011/12 onwards and PwC had demonstrated value for money.

11. Appointment of Pro-Chancellor

11.1 APPROVED: the appointment of Professor Richard Hodder-Williams to serve as a Pro-Chancellor for a period of three years to 31 December 2016 (reference **Agenda item 11**).

11.2 The Chancellor and members of Court thanked the outgoing Pro-Chancellors, Dr Moger Woolley and Sir Jay Tidmarsh whose terms of office were due to end on 31 December 2013. Both had made invaluable contributions to the University over many years.

12 Any Other Business

- 12.1 Members were advised that during the academic year 2012/13 there had been some minor amendments made to Ordinance 18. Due to an administrative oversight, these changes had not been reported to Court as part of the meeting papers. Details of these changes would therefore be circulated for information with the minutes (enclosed).

13. Date of next annual meeting

- 13.1 The next meeting of Court was provisionally scheduled for Friday 5 December 2014 (subsequently this date was changed to 12 December 2014).