

MINUTES BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18 MAY 2011 AT WARREN HOUSE, KINGSTON HILL

Present:

Roderic Lyne (Chair), George Alexandrou, Ann Allen, Chris Brooks, David Carter, Stephen Cooksey, Sara Drake, Bruce Fraser, Lesley Granger, Robert Green, Peter Kopelman, Neil MacIntosh, Nona McDuff, Phil Molyneux, Sue Rimmer, John Ripley, David Taylor, Julius Weinberg and Clarissa Wilks.

In attendance:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Corporate Affairs) & University Secretary, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Support & Student Services), Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise), Finance Director, KUSU Vice-President Elect Head of Secretariat and Minuting Clerk

Roderic Lyne welcomed Julius Weinberg to his first meeting of the Board of Governors and thanked David Mackintosh for his work as Acting Vice-Chancellor for the first few months of the year.

The Chair also welcomed Chris Dingle, the KUSU Vice-President Elect, who was attending in place of TJ Esubiyi

43.0 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Tony Beadle, TJ Esubiyi, Frank Kennedy and Derek Osbourne

44.0 Minutes of the Board of Governors Meeting held on 16 March 2011

44.1 The Minutes were approved.

45.0 Matters Arising

45.1 Minute 23.1 – Report on the Student Experience:

It was reported that work on the student experience had been carried out in conjunction with KUSU, including the development of a strategy and plan. Further work on setting objectives and KPIs would be carried out through the Student Experience Group. An initial draft report on the

Student Experience had been produced and a full report would be presented to the Board of Governors later in the year.

45.2 Minute 24.6 – Setting of fee levels:

It was reported that fee levels had been discussed and approved at the extended Finance Committee meeting in April and a submission made to OFFA accordingly.

45.3 Minute 28.4 – Board Effectiveness Review:

The Consultants' draft report on the Board Effectiveness Review had been circulated for today's meeting and a discussion would follow at the Away Day, after the Board of Governors' meeting.

45.4 Minute 29.1 - Progress report on CDP Phase 2 feasibility studies:

A progress report on CDP Phase 2 feasibility studies would be made to the Board later in the year

45.5 There were no other matters arising.

Actions: Report on the Student Experience to the Board later in 2011 [Pro Vice-Chancellor, Academic Support & Student Services]

Report on CDP Phase 2 feasibility studies to the Board later in 2011 [Pro Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Affairs and University Secretary]

46.0 Vice-Chancellor's Report
(Paper BG 51/11)

46.1 The Vice-Chancellor noted that since he started in post in April, he had met a wide range of people at the University, which he had found valuable and helpful. He thanked the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Senior Management Group for their help in his induction to the University to date.

46.2 A recent report in 'the Times' had suggested that approximately one third of universities' access agreements had not been accepted by OFFA. The setting of fees at a higher level than predicted presented a potential problem for the Government, in financial terms, and it was anticipated that the Government would take action using various means to reduce fee levels, including control of student numbers or taking action through OFFA.

University Strategy:

46.3 It was noted that the environment in which the University had achieved its successes over recent years had now changed and that a strategy based on growth would need to be reviewed. It was therefore an appropriate time to revise the University's strategy, with an aim to develop a new strategic plan, to be finalised and presented for Board

approval in March 2012. Regular newsletters were being published and open meetings had been held to improve communications and gather opinion from across the University.

- 46.4 It was also considered appropriate to re-assess the composition of the senior management team. Whilst the University retained a centralised approach to a number of areas, especially financial, it was felt that the Faculty Deans were not fully engaged in the decision-making process. It was therefore proposed, that the Senior Management Group should be expanded to include the Deans, which would also increase their accountability. The extended SMG would be the key decision-making group. The Executive Board was considered to be too large a group to be effective in decision making and this group would be used more for input. It was aimed to implement the re-configured SMG and Executive groups at the start of the next academic year.
- 46.5 There was some concern over the possible lack of professional and support staff involvement on the proposed expanded SMG group. However, the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the intention was to blur the distinction between different types of staff, and that all areas of the University community would be involved towards achieving common goals relating to the University strategy and future.
- 46.6 A Data Portrait of the University, attached as Appendix 4 to paper BG 51/11 provided a realistic depiction of the University, identifying a number of key areas of under-performance which would need to be addressed urgently, and provided a basis for the preparation of a new strategic plan. It was suggested that the University had been less effective at addressing some of its weaknesses, partially due to its ongoing financial strength. However, whilst it was acknowledged that there were serious issues which needed to be addressed, it was also important to be mindful of the University's past successes.
- 46.7 The Board of Governors would have the opportunity to be fully involved in discussions about the University's future, and would have a critical role in developing the new strategy. It would also address other significant issues through its Board Effectiveness Review.

Strategy Timetable:

- 46.8 Work on developing a new strategy was already underway including faculty review of course portfolios. It was proposed that an informal group be set up, based on the existing Board and SMG Strategy Group. Membership of this group would include the Chair, Vice-Chair, Committee Chairs, Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University Secretary/Pro Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Affairs and the Head of Planning. The group would be open-ended allowing all Board members to attend meetings, and papers would be circulated to all Board members to ensure full engagement.
- 46.9 The Board agreed with the proposed strategy timetable.

Investment in Research:

- 46.9 The proposal for investment in research was based on an investment of £3m over three years with the aim of improving the University's performance in the 2013/14 Research Excellence Framework (REF), which replaced the former RAE. This was of crucial importance to the University, as the REF score determined the level of research funding over the following five years. As well as providing financial benefits, it was also important to secure a good outcome in the REF from a reputational point of view.
- 46.10 The aim would be to make specific investments in areas where it was likely that significant outcomes could be achieved which would continue to generate funding and allow research to be further developed. A flexible range of activities had been developed, to enable the University to respond as required. The position would be reviewed at the end of the three year period at which time decisions would be made about which areas were successful and which areas were not and should be discontinued.
- 46.11 It was noted that £1m per annum investment in research over three years had been included in the Financial Forecast submitted to HEFCE. The extended Finance Committee meeting on 30th June would further consider options and proposals most likely to achieve targets.
- 46.12 It was reported that two-thirds of funding was attached to studentships. Whilst the possibility of academic transfer did have risks attached, the potential benefit of acquiring high quality staff and students was noted.
- 46.13 An investment of £3m over three years was considered to be the minimum viable amount. However, should any significant opportunities become available which might require additional funding, these would be referred to the Board for consideration.
- 46.14 The Board endorsed the proposal for investment in research.

Building for Transformation – Fund Raising Initiative:

- 46.14 It was noted that 2017 would be the University's 25th anniversary and presented an opportunity to mark the event in a significant way such as the development of a new building at the Penrhyn Road campus. The Board supported this proposal, and noted that the Town House building needed to be redeveloped in the near future, which could be carried out either through the proposed 25th anniversary initiative or as part of the Campus Development Plan Phase 2 programme.
- 46.15 It was proposed that a Fund Raising Committee be set up around developing an initiative to mark this anniversary, and also to develop a new fund raising strategy. The proposed Committee structure involved a member of the Board as Chair, and committee membership to include two further Board Members, two members of the Senior Management Group and a number of external members. Some Board members had

useful fund raising experience, which would assist the process. There would also be support from the University's alumni team.

46.16 The Board and Executive Away Day meeting to follow this meeting included a presentation on fund raising which was linked to the 25th anniversary initiative and would cover general fund raising issues.

46.17 The Board endorsed the proposal to set up a Fund Raising Committee and to develop a new fund raising strategy.

Action: Fund-raising Committee to be set up and Fund-raising Strategy to be developed, including an initiative to mark the University's 25th anniversary in 2017 [Vice-Chancellor]

47.0 Approval of External Audit Strategy for the year ending 31 July 2011 (Paper BG 52/11)

47.1 It was reported that the External Audit Strategy for the year ending 31 July 2011 had been discussed in detail by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 5 May. It was noted that the external audit fees were in accordance with the contract.

It was resolved that

The Board approve the External Audit Strategy for the year ending 31 July 2011, on the recommendation of the Audit Committee

48.0 Report on the Forecast Outturn 2010/2011 (Paper BG 53/11)

48.1 It was reported that the forecast outturn was generally as expected, although slightly improved since the last report to the Board.

It was resolved that

The Board note the Forecast Outturn 2010/2011.

49.0 Progress report on the Campus Development Plan (Paper BG 54/11)

49.1 The University Secretary & Pro Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Affairs gave a progress report on the Campus Development Plan, noting that CDP Phase 1 was on target and within budget. It was reported that there had been a slight delay with the feasibility studies relating to CDP Phase 2, which had necessitated a change in the timetable, and recommendations would now be proposed to the Board at its November 2011 meeting.

49.2 It was noted that the virtual sub-committee used for signing CDP contracts between Board meetings in order to avoid delays, would be

activated later in the month to approve the contract for work at the Penrhyn Road site.

50.0* Finance Report for March 2011

(Paper BG 55/11)

50.1 The Board noted the Finance Report for March 2011.

51.0* Health and Safety Update Report

(Paper BG 56/11)

51.1 The Board noted the Health and Safety Update Report.

52.0* Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 6 April 2011

(Minutes enclosed)

52.1 The Board noted the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting.

53.0* Minutes of the Academic Board meeting held on 13 April 2011

(Minutes enclosed)

53.1 The Board noted the Minutes of the Academic Board meeting.

54.0 Report following the Audit Committee meeting held on 5 May 2011

(Verbal report)

54.1 The Chair of the Audit Committee reported on the meeting held on 5 May 2011. The Committee had considered revised authorisation limits for signing contracts. The Financial Regulations would be amended accordingly and a report would be presented to the Board at its meeting in July. All other items discussed at the meeting would be included in the Audit Committee's Annual Report to the Board in November.

55.0 Any Other Business

55.1 There was no other business

56.0 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Governors was on Wednesday 13th July 2011 in room FL6138 at Kingston Hill.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.30am.