

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD  
ON WEDNESDAY 24 JANUARY 2007 AT THE TOWN HOUSE, PENRHYN ROAD CENTRE**

**1.0 Attendance**

Present

Jerry Cope                      Chair  
Eugene Akwasi-Ayisi  
Nick Badman  
Gren Collings  
Ann Corrigan  
Stephen Cox  
Sara Drake  
Deirdre Ferrier  
Steve King  
Andy Lomax  
Robert Lawson  
Phil Molyneux  
Tim Oliver  
Derek Osbourne  
Christine Swabey  
David Taylor  
Colin Watts  
Clarissa Wilks

Also present

Donald Beaton                  University Secretary  
Terry Butcher                  Finance Director  
Paul Lister                      Pro Vice-Chancellor, Science & Enterprise  
David Miles                      Pro Vice-Chancellor, External Affairs & Business Development  
Zosia Martin                      Minuting Secretary  
Andrew McEwan                Director, Property Management & Development (to Minute 7)  
Penny Sparke                    Pro Vice-Chancellor, Arts  
Mary Stuart                      Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Jerry Cope welcomed Steve King to his first meeting of the Board of Governors.

Jerry Cope noted that Peter Scott had been awarded a knighthood for his services to education, in the New Year's Honours List. On behalf of the Board, Jerry Cope congratulated Peter Scott on his achievement and noted that it also represented a mark of recognition for the University.

## **2.0 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from George Alexandrou, Michael Farthing, Mark Kierstan, Thalia Marriott, David Reardon and Peter Scott.

## **3.0 To receive the Minutes of the Board of Governors Meetings held on 15 November and 13 December 2006**

Received Minutes of the Meetings held on 15 November and 13 December 2006

### **3.1 Approval**

It was resolved

That the Minutes be approved.

### **3.2 Matters Arising**

#### **3.2.1 Minute 82.2.2 – Access to the University intranet**

It was reported that individual accounts had been created for all external Board members and that temporary passwords and instructions for access would be circulated later in the week.

#### **3.2.2 Minute 82.2.3 – Proportion of 1s and 2-1s**

It was noted that a review on this issue was underway and was due to be completed after the current academic year's exam results had been concluded.

#### **3.2.3 Minute 90.0 – Role of Chancellor**

It was noted that the University Secretary would report on the role of Chancellor to the May meeting of the Board of Governors, with a view to considering any recommendations for implementation by the start of the next academic year or as soon as possible thereafter.

## **4.0 To approve dates of meetings of the Board of Governors and its Standing Committees for 2007/08 and 2008/09**

Received Paper BG 1/07 – To approve dates of meetings of the Board and its Standing Committees for 2007/08 and 2008/09

4.1 The Board noted the proposed dates for Board and Committee meetings and agreed that any problems with the dates would be advised to the University Secretary's Department.

It was resolved

That the Board approve the dates of meetings of the Board and its Standing Committees for 2007/08 and 2008/09.

## **5.0 To receive a report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor**

Received Paper BG 2/07 – Report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor

### **5.1 Knighthood for the Vice-Chancellor**

Mary Stuart reported that the Vice-Chancellor's knighthood was a testimony to Peter Scott's personal contribution to the higher education sector and also added to the reputation of Kingston University as a whole.

### **5.2 Research Assessment Exercise**

5.2.1 The University was in the final stages of preparation for the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in 2008. It was noted that the RAE had been in operation since 1992 and that historically, research funding had been directed mainly towards the 'old' universities rather than the former polytechnics. The University had been progressively improving in its performance since that time and it was important to achieve a good performance in what would be the 'final' RAE in its present form. A good performance in this RAE would be important with regard to the University's reputation and also in terms of its strategic objective of being a comprehensive university. It was acknowledged that research was an important element of the University's strategy.

5.2.2 The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Arts gave a presentation and distributed an additional paper entitled 'Kingston University RAE 2008'. It was noted that the University had performed well in 2001 and that its results had included four grade 4 ratings and several 3A and 3B ratings, using the method of assessment in force at that time.

5.2.3 It was reported that since 2001, the grading system had been revised with the result that it was now more difficult to achieve the higher ratings.

5.2.4 The paper outlined HEFCE's timetable for RAE 2008 and the University's preparations. It was believed that the University had set realistic targets. The process was being refined and it was anticipated that a decision would be reached in March 2007 on almost all the units to be submitted. There would then be further assessment meetings and feedback sessions, resulting in a further refinement of the submission plans in June 2007. Decisions on almost all the staff would be made in July. The final submissions would be prepared between June and November 2007 for submission by HEFCE's deadline of the end of November.

5.2.5 It was confirmed that HEIs were graded mostly on the basis of their research outputs. It was important that the University's research output corresponded to its future research plans.

- 5.2.6 Success in the RAE would help the University expand its postgraduate student numbers and the research culture across faculties.
- 5.2.7 It was noted that some members of the University's staff were sitting on RAE panels, which was a sign of esteem for the University.
- 5.2.8 In conclusion, the Board noted the University's preparations for the RAE and the importance of a positive outcome for its efforts to be seen as an institution whose teaching was research-led.

### 5.3 Internationalisation

- 5.3.1 The University's success as an international institution was a significant part of its overall strategy. It was important for the University to be recognised at the international level. Likewise it was considered imperative for students to be properly prepared in terms of having global awareness.
- 5.3.2 The importance of assessing accurate international targets in line with the University's financial forecast was noted.
- 5.3.3 The Pro Vice-Chancellor for External Affairs and Business Development reported that to date, recruitment figures this year were comparing well against predictions and were likely to be 80 over the previous year's figures. There had been an increase of 4% in undergraduate applications and 7% in postgraduate applications, in addition to which significantly more offers were being made. Overall, the University was in a better position than last year.
- 5.3.4 It was reported that a number of actions had been taken in an attempt to refine and improve the international programme. Several International Officers had been recruited and were engaged in extensive work in target areas abroad. Improvements had been made to the University's website with a better-informed international section. Significant improvements had been made in respect of the University's visibility on the internet, with inclusion on the front page of relevant web search engines. Work was continuing on the planned introduction, later in January, of an online application process, which was anticipated to give a faster turnaround and improve efficiency. Scholarships and bursaries were being introduced within specific areas as incentivisation schemes. Work was underway in developing international partnerships, with evidence of encouraging progress in China and India.
- 5.3.5 It was noted that, whilst the University was still at the lower end of institutions in terms of international students, it had entered this area later than many other HEIs, and despite starting from a lower base, its trajectory had been fairly rapid. The current position indicated an increasing level of applications, in a nationally flat market overall. The importance of setting realistic and accurate targets was noted.

### 5.4 Employer Engagement

- 5.4.1 It was noted that employer engagement was likely to be one of the foremost policy ideas within higher education in the next few years, and was the latest in a series of initiatives aimed at encouraging employers to work more

closely with the HE sector and to ensure that graduates were appropriately prepared for their particular areas of work.

- 5.4.2 The government had commissioned a report focusing on skills for employment in the next twenty years (the Leitch Report), which was currently undergoing a process of consultation. The report suggested an increase in public funding for lower level skills and employer funding for higher level skills. However, a problem with this approach was the tendency for corporate training budgets to be reduced, in times of economic difficulty.
- 5.4.3 It was agreed that the issue of high level skills and employer engagement were crucial elements of the University's future development. The implications of demographic changes, mainly the downturn of 18-year olds being recruited to HE and a shift away from young adults after 2010, would need to be incorporated into the University's strategic planning, particularly in terms of work-based and life-long learning.
- 5.4.4 It was noted that HEFCE was in the course of considering the next round of bidding for ASNs (additional student numbers) and that an element of employer engagement would be part of the process. To this end, the SMG was developing a sub-strategy to ensure that the University was appropriately prepared and well placed to submit its bid accordingly.
- 5.4.5 The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Science and Enterprise gave a presentation on employer engagement, noting that the University was currently working on a pilot bid, one of six which had responded to HEFCE's call for submissions.
- 5.4.6 Areas of business and community interaction were outlined, one of the most important ones being graduate start-up which was seen as an area of significant potential and positive economic contribution. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Science and Enterprise reported on the University's current involvement, which included research, student placements, sponsorship of student projects and a range of collaboration across faculties. It was noted that the University was leading on lifelong learning initiatives, for which £3m funding over three years had been allocated by HEFCE.
- 5.4.7 An important activity in the future was work-based learning. It was reported that 127 students were enrolled on Masters by Learning contracts (around 300 in total had gone through), and that further work-based activities were underway in conjunction with the Enterprise Exchange.
- 5.4.8 It was reported that the University had been commissioned to undertake a programme of important professional development involving a work-based learning route to boost the numbers achieving Chartered Engineer status, supported by £500k funding from the Engineering Council.
- 5.4.9 It was reported that the Pro Vice-Chancellor of Arts was working on the development of a Centre for Design and Innovation, as a response to the Cox Report.
- 5.4.10 It was noted that the University already had a significant level of employer engagement. However, one of the main challenges was in the SME sector

(small and medium sized enterprises), which was becoming a dominant source of employment. In this context it was proposed that economies of scale could be secured by working with trade organisations.

5.4.11 The notion of a three-way learning contract was under development, focusing on the employer's level of financial contribution towards learning costs. Consideration would also be given to the use of ICT-based learning systems and using ICT to reduce costs as well as refining academic processes and acquiring a clear understanding of employer expectations.

5.4.12 In summary, it was noted that the University had much experience of working with employers, was involved in a wide range of innovative development and was well placed to explore the area of employer engagement and develop sensible and sustainable processes to ensure the viability of the initiative.

5.4.13 It was reported that a group was currently reviewing employer engagement across the University and would report to the Board of Governors in due course, possibly as a topic for the next Away Day.

5.4.14 It was noted that this initiative was an alternative way of considering blended learning, based on the use of technology and various learning and teaching tools.

5.4.15 It was agreed that the concept of employer engagement would need to be clearly embedded into the University's overall strategy.

## 5.5 SWAN (South West London Academic Network)

5.5.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor thanked members of the Board for their support of this initiative, previously referred to as the tripartite alliance, and for their attendance at its recent launch. It was reported that the feedback from HEFCE had been good and it was likely that the Funding Council would be seeking further bids from the Network. It was agreed that the Network was a significant development for the University.

## 5.6 Other matters to report

5.6.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor noted that there had recently been a number of serious incidents connected with the University which had been reported in the press, and which, unusually, had occurred coincidentally. The Board was reassured that all matters had now been dealt with.

5.6.2 It was noted that seven graduation ceremonies had been held since the start of 2007 and had all gone well. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor thanked all concerned for their support during the Vice-Chancellor's absence in recent weeks. The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for her work during the Vice-Chancellor's absence.

It was resolved

That the Board note the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's Report;

***Action: Report on Review of Employer Engagement across the University [Minute 5.4.13]***

## **6.0 To receive a progress report summary on the New University Project**

Received Paper BG 3/07 – New University Project Progress Report Summary

- 6.1 The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Arts, as Chair of the New University Project Board, introduced the progress report summary, noting that the three main building projects were progressing well, and that discussions were underway in respect of ‘Plan B’.
- 6.2 The Director of Property Management and Development reported in further detail on the main projects. The Quadrangle Building at Penrhyn Road was in hand and all matters had been satisfactorily dealt with. Progress had been affected to some extent by the recent windy weather. However, this was not expected to affect the anticipated completion date this summer. Work at the learning resource centre in Kingston Hill was progressing to plan. With regard to Roehampton Vale, it was reported that the issue of contaminated material at the site had now been dealt with. A further meeting with Roehampton Vale residents was scheduled for this evening.
- 6.3 It was reported that negotiations in respect of the fit-out of new buildings were continuing, with specific consideration relating to the terms and conditions of the agreements with the main contractors. It was noted that satisfactory progress was being made in terms of time and money.
- 6.4 It was noted that a number of minor works were being carried out across the University in order to improve the general feel and circulation of the sites.
- 6.5 It was reported that work was underway on five and ten-year plans relating to the residential accommodation strategy, including discussion with the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.
- 6.6 Tim Oliver, on behalf of Surrey County Council, reported that there was no further news with regard to County Hall, particularly whilst the implications of the recent White Paper on unitary authorities were under consideration.

It was resolved

That the Board note the New University Project Progress Report Summary

*Andrew McEwan left the meeting.*

## **7.0 To receive the Summary Finance Report for November 2006 \***

Received Paper BG 4/07 – Summary Finance Report for November 2006

It was resolved

That the Board note the Summary Finance Report for November 2006

**8.0 To receive the Minutes of the Academic Board meeting held on 6 December 2006 \***

Received Minutes of the Academic Board meeting

It was resolved

That the Minutes of the Academic Board meeting held on 6 December 2006 be noted.

**9.0 Any other business**

9.1 Derek Osbourne, on behalf of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, reported that work was continuing on the Kingston Theatre and that the Borough was receiving a monthly update on the project plan. The anticipated completion date was October 2007. It was noted that the Board of Governors would be updated on progress on a regular basis. It was suggested that, in due course, the Board receive a written report on progress which would be aligned to the University's academic work and use of the theatre on related courses. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for External Affairs and Business Development noted that there was a parallel progression of drama course development and that course production was anticipated to closely follow the physical completion of the theatre.

9.2 There was no other business.

**10.0 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Board of Governors was scheduled for Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007 in the Town House, Penrhyn Road centre.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 10.30am.

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