

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LINCOLN

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GOVERNING BODY

THURSDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 2012
2:00 PM IN HARDY TEACHING ROOM 1

Present:

Mrs Judith Babb
Mr Haydn Beeken (Chair)
Dr Kevin Brown
The Very Rev'd Philip Buckler
Mr David Clements
Mr Richard Corn
Dr Tony Hill
Bishop Christopher Lowson
Mr Graham Meeson
Ms Haf Merrifield
Professor Muriel Robinson
Mr John Rowland
Mrs Bridget Starling (from item ???)
Mrs Pamela Taylor
Professor Mark Thompson
Mr Rob Thorpe
Mr James Turner
Mrs Lucy Wood

In attendance:

Mr Nigel Appleton, Dean of School of Teacher Development (from item 13ii)
Mr Stephen Deville, Director of Resources
Mr Rob Jones, Director of BG Enterprise
Ms Vicky Mays, Clerk to Governors
Dr Jenny Rees, Dean of Students and Academic Engagement
Mrs Emma Smeaton, Minuting Secretary
Mr Aaron Smith, Students' Union Vice President 2012/13

Observers

Dr Jim Smith
Miss Katie White

1. Welcome from the Chair

The Chair welcomed and thanked governors for attending, in particular to those who attended the morning joint development session with members of Academic Board.

Students' Union President, Rob Thorpe, Students' Union Vice President, Aaron Smith and new student governor James Turner were all welcomed to their first Governing Body meeting and were encouraged to get involved in discussions. The Chair also welcomed Bishop Christopher Lowson to his first full governors meeting and Rev'd Alex Whitehead, the University College's locum Chaplain. Observers Dr Jim Smith, a former BG member of staff and Katie White, Executive Assistant to the Deputy Principal and Assistant Policy Officer were also noted by members.

2. The University College Prayer

The University College's locum Chaplain led governors in the University College prayer.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Julie McDonald, Mrs Jasmit Phull and Mrs Bridget Starling. The Chair noted that Professor Mark Thompson would have to leave the meeting at 3:00 pm. It was also noted that Dr Sally Bentley, the Dean of School of Culture, Education and Innovation would normally be in attendance but had forwarded her apologies for this meeting.

5. Election of Vice Chair

The Chair reported that he had received a note of interest for the position of Vice Chair from Mrs Pamela Taylor. Pamela Taylor was therefore proposed and accepted by members of the Governing Body to become the Vice Chair of Governors.

6. Minutes of the last meeting held on 28th June 2012

The minutes of the meeting of the 28th June 2012 were confirmed as a true record of the meeting and the Chair was authorised to sign them.

7. Matters arising

- (i) Annual returns of FRS8 forms

Governors were reminded to complete and return the annual FRS8 forms to the Deputy Principal's Office as soon as possible.

- (ii) Update of governor contact details

Members were asked to complete and return a contact details form as well as a skills base form which would aid in the recruitment of new governors, helping to get the balance of skills right to move forward in the future.

8. Chair's items

- (i) Governor recruitment

Members were welcomed back to the start of a new academic year where the University College were in a reasonable place which was a great credit to BG as an institution. It was reported that some excellent events had taken place including a very successful graduation and the recent Bollywood event organised by governor Jasmit Phull. The Chair recorded his thanks to Jasmit for putting the event together, raising over £2,000 for BG with over 100 people attending. The opening of The Venue was also noted which provided a great night of film. The impressive acoustics and sound system were reported by the Chair who recommended all to attend future screenings. Copies of BG & You would be issued to all governors.

The Chair noted a particularly busy time in picking up the role of Chair of Governors recently and expressed his thanks to governors, members of the Senior Leadership Team and the Clerk to Governors for all their support. The three governor vacancies were highlighted plus the additional three which would be coming up in the summer. Any ideas/thoughts for possible new governors were welcomed from members who were asked to forward these on to the Clerk to Governors.

- (ii) Resolution for the Privy Council for the Charity Commission Scheme

Amendments to Constitution

Instrument and Articles of Government

The Chair reported that the Privy Council had commented on the proposed amendments to the Instrument and Articles of Government, and suggested amendments. The Governing Body agreed that it was content for these and any further amendments recommended by the Privy Council to be made and resolved to accept the documents in their final form at the date upon which they came into effect. It was anticipated the Instrument and Articles of Government as amended would come into effect before the commencement of the new undergraduate term.

Charity Commission Scheme

The Chair reported on the progress of the application for the Charity Commission Scheme in respect of the trusts upon which the University College was held. The Chair reported that no representations had been made and that it was anticipated the Scheme would come into effect before the commencement of the new undergraduate term. The Chair reported that in order for the Scheme to be made the Charity Commission required a statutory declaration by the managing trustees (being the Governing Body) confirming that all required steps had been taken to fulfil their legal requirements. The Governors received the statutory declaration which had been duly made and had been signed by the Chair of Governors on its behalf.

9. Students' Union

(i) President's report

The Students' Union President introduced himself to members of the Governing Body, noting that he was looking forward to the year ahead. He reported that the Students' Union had already started to form professional working relationships with staff, individual hubs and organisations. It was reported that the training the Student's Union had been involved in the past few weeks had left the team feeling more prepared than ever, very happy and looking forward to the challenges ahead of them. The excellent building, including a refurbished bar was also noted.

The Students' Union President noted that it would be a tough year for students who would feel that they had much less money in their pockets. He noted that he had a good partner in Aaron Smith, Students' Union Vice President and that participation, engagement and activity from students was their aim. Members noted that Freshers Week had been shortened to eight days at the request of students and governors were invited to attend any of the planned events. The Chair thanked the Students' Union President for his report.

10. Chaplaincy update

The main headline noted was that the University College were delighted to have Rev'd Alex Whitehead's support as locum Chaplain at BG who along with Chaplaincy workers putting in as much work as usual was in the process of finalising a programme for the term. It was to be ensured that staff and students had access to Chaplaincy during the current term, including a lunchtime discussion group that Rev'd Whitehead had kindly agreed to lead. It was also noted that the advert for a Student Chaplaincy Worker had gone out and that a Chaplaincy room and office were located in the newly refurbished Students' Union building. The Chaplain's Office still remained next door to the Chapel and the area next to this, the current Reception area, would become an additional space for students to gather.

Rev'd Whitehead expressed his gratitude for the warm welcome he had received during his first fortnight at BG. The Chair expressed the governors thanks to the locum Chaplain and noted that they looked forward to working with him in the future.

11. Principal's business

(i) Oral report

I HAVE NOTHING FOR THIS AT ALL... DID IT HAPPEN???

(ii) Hub updates

Members had received updates from each hub with the agenda and each hub leader reported briefly on their hub.

School of Culture, Education and Innovation

The Principal reported on the School of Culture, Education and Innovation in the absence of the School's Dean at the meeting. The new staff appointments and the adjusted SCEI timetable to include learning and teaching activities were noted. It was also reported that the comparative NSS statistics had come in and BG had ranked first in the country for English and 4th for Drama. The success of income generation activities was also noted.

The Academic Engagement Hub

The Dean of Students and Academic Engagement reported that building work on the Cornerstone Building was now complete and accessible to students, the Cornerstone Building was also home to Student Advice and Learner Development. Professor Chris Atkin had taken up his role as Head of Educational Development and Research and the hub were preparing for the mid-cycle update of the QAA institutional audit. It was also reported that significant work was required on the Agresso student record system, work was underway and the Quality Team were making good progress.

The Strategy and Performance Hub

The Deputy Principal reported on the large degree of overlap with the corporate developments and echoed the report from the Students' Union President, congratulating the Students' Union team for getting off to a great start. New sector wide Key Information Set data for students had been uploaded on to a national system and submitted on time by the Quality Team in the Academic Engagement hub. The Key information System would go live the following week. It was noted that more Recruitment and Retention Group meetings and External Communications Group meetings had been scheduled and good plans were in place.

The Resources Hub

The Director of Resources reported on the small restructuring of the IT department and the IT help desk. Initial discussions internally and externally had taken place regarding the overhaul of the BG website. Significant estates work progress was reported; the Cornerstone Building had been handed over apart from some landscaping and the newly located Reception area was in progress. Governors noted that the three week project on the main entrance had uncovered more work which incurred expenses that were not in the budget but could be covered by the major capital budget, the cost was expected to be around £50K overall. Internal modifications to teaching spaces were ongoing and the Students' Union bar upgrade was complete. It was reported that the new student accommodation was in the initial phases of designing rooms that could almost be craned on to campus upon planning approval. The initial response to these rooms had been very positive. It was also noted that students had moved into Crosstrend House, with 75 out of the 78 rooms being let.

The Enterprise Hub

The Director of Enterprise reported that his hub had hit the new academic year running with all appointments proposed in the business plan being offered, being at full capacity by October 2012. It was reported that the Limited Company project was underway, HE specialist solicitors, Hewitons had been appointed and Ellis Chapman had been appointed as tax advisors. Governors noted that The Venue, which was the conversion of Bishop Greaves Theatre into a cinema, was now open, enhancing the student experience. Governors noted the BGfutures ERDF claws which meant that on a technicality BG were in breach and would not receive £250K of funding, although tax had been claimed back which amounts to around the same amount lost through funding this was still disappointing. A waiting list for units in BGfutures was reported and a new Careers Advice Centre had been located in the Hardy Building. It was also noted that the issue of signage both internally and externally was being looked into and it was hoped some would be in place in time for the October Open Day.

The School of Teacher Development

The Dean of School of Teacher Development reported that a complete revalidation of the ???? framework had taken place during the summer. A £150K contract had been secured to provide Subject Knowledge Enhancement to secondary school teachers. It was noted that the restructuring of the hub was now complete, launched in September with increased flexibility. The newly appointed Head of Development: Partnership was reported as very promising, moving BG forward in a new way and the BG Connect project was in place with scope in place and making strides forward. Governors noted that Mr Goud's school direct idea where schools would be given teacher training places, finding a provider to work with them provided challenges and BG needed to consider its position. It was also noted that the NQT teacher survey, surveying 2011 leavers provided excellent results, showing areas where BG were significantly above within the sector, there were no areas where BG were below but the survey did show some warning signs for consideration.

Governors reported that they were happy to remit the clearance by correspondence to adjust the fee (IS THIS RIGHT PLEASE???)

(iii) Update on university title

The Principal reported that HEFCE would be recommending to their Board and that it was hopeful than an announcement would be made by early November. The speed that HEFCE had been getting back to BG had been very notable and they were very happy that the name would not conflict with others. Positive responses had been received including a very positive letter from Karl McCartney MP to David Willetts who had agreed to a visit to BG in early January. Members also noted the royal visit due to take place between the end of March and the end of term, likely to be Princess Anne.

(iv) Update on student recruitment

Members received the recruitment figures for each school and noted the following:

School of Teacher Development

It was reported that the School were in the place it hoped to be with undergraduate training programmes full plus a few extra students. Post graduate programmes were nearly full and the April cohort was noted.

School of Culture, Education and Innovation

Governors noted that the 482 HEFCE figure was now 480. The pending number was now down to 3 and it was felt confident that these places would be filled, taking the number to 483. The significant shift in subject recruitment was noted, highlighting the smaller than usual cohort in Drama in the Community. Members noted that 475 would be the point where the University College would be penalised and as HEFCE numbers would be taken in December retention was key. The non-allocation of 76 places would not help with HEFCE numbers but would help with income.

The Director of Resources circulated the original forecast position as at June 2012 which had been submitted to the FE&GP Committee along with an updated version with the actual student recruitment. The forecast included funding council grants and it was noted that some funding was proportional with student numbers. It was agreed that the University College were in a reasonably healthy position, fairly strong compared to other institutions in the sector however there was a need to be careful regarding retention. The forecast was recommended to the Governing Body and it was agreed that the forecast was manageable but in brief needed to be watched, looking forward a few years and how BG manages this.

(v) Recruitment of staff

The Principal reported on the strong new appointments and noted the two vacancies for Dean's of Schools which the Selection Committee were looking at. It was reported that the Senior Leadership Team were very confident with both the very strong temporary Dean appointments and noted that that Ruth Sayers, the interim Dean of School of Culture Education and Innovation had just handed in her PhD and had lots of experience.

(vi) Progress on major works

These were reported on by the Director of Resources under his report on his business plan for the Resources Hub. The Principal noted thanks to the Estates Team, in particular to the portering and housekeeping staff for all their efforts during the major works.

12. Academic Board

(i) Minutes from the 19th June meeting

The Principal led this item noting receipt of the minutes of the June meeting of the Academic Board. It was noted that another meeting had taken place the previous week. Questions from governors were welcomed.

It was noted that the School of Teacher Development wanted to change the committee structure which would require approval from the Governing Body, governors agreed to allow the Chair to ratify this on their behalf. Academic Board had agreed to the changes.

(ii) To review membership and terms of reference

Members noted the substantive changes to ex-officio members. Governors ratified the proposal to remove Mark Hocknall, School of Theology as this was no longer happening and to add Head of Educational Research, Dr Chris Atkin as a member.

13. Key items from sub-committees

(i) Governance & Nominations Committee
(minutes of 19th September 2012)

(a) Instrument & Articles

Members noted that this had already been covered under Chair's items and it was hoped that the Instrument and Articles would be signed off very soon. This would be revisited once BG had received University status, taking out some of the detail.

Governors were asked to give some consideration for an alternative name for the Governing Body. The Chair requested that any thoughts were given to him prior to the next Governance & Nominations Committee meeting on 9th October.

(b) Sub-committee memberships for 2012/13

It was reported that membership was light for some sub-committees. Kevin Brown had agreed to move from the Audit Committee to FE&GP Committee and governors were asked to inform the Chair if they wished to move to an alternative sub-committee.

(ii) RESERVED BUSINESS

Remuneration Committee
(minutes of 12th July 2012)

(a) Consideration of senior pay awards

(b) Consideration of bonus pots

(iii) RESERVED BUSINESS

Selection Committee

(a) Minutes of 28th June 2012

(b) Minutes of 12th July 2012

14. Honorary graduates

(i) RESERVED BUSINESS

Honorary graduates 2013

15. Corporate Plan

The Deputy Principal presented this item referring to the circulated version distributed with the agenda. It was noted that this was characterised as a refresh of the Corporate Plan rather than a re-write, changing time spells and picking up the hub-by-hub plans. The two big headlines had been added in; University status and the change of head of institution. Members noted that the version circulated included all tracked changes and it was hoped that a final version would be agreed by governors at the next meeting of the Governing Body in November. It was agreed that the Corporate Plan would be presented in its final form at the November meeting and governors were asked to let the Deputy Principal have any comments by the 4th October. The Deputy Principal noted that as with previous versions the final addition would be produced with pictures etc.

Next GB

16. KPIs

The Deputy Principal reported on key areas since the June report; recruitment and student satisfaction, which was looking very positive with BG equal 12th nationally, rated with 89% and in the top quarter, for certain subjects receiving the highest satisfaction rate for England. It was also noted that the National Teachers Survey was very positive, however it was important not to be complacent.

It was reported that a good level of media profile had continued to be seen, particularly locally and it was becoming routine for BG to be included by the local media which was where the University College wanted to be. Student Success was reported as dropping down from excellent to nearly excellent, from 4th nationally to 15th in the Good University Guide. It was also noted that Which had ranked BG 1st re employability. A breakdown of the National Student Survey statistics were given for information.

17. Agenda suggestions for future meetings

- Progress on the Limited Company by the Director of Enterprise as a reserved item.

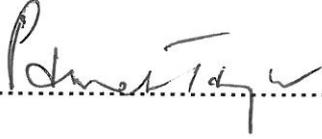
The Governance & Nominations Committee would consider the lunchtime talks for governors prior to the Governing Body meetings and the Chair requested that any thoughts on something anyone would like to hear about should be communicated via the Clerk to Governors.

18. Any other business

There was no other business to discuss.

17. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Governing Body would take place on Thursday
22nd November 2012 at 2:00 pm.

Signed  Date 22.11.12