

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2015
1:45 PM IN HARDY TEACHING ROOM 2

Council members present:

Mr Roger Mosey (Chair)
Mr David Babb
Dr Kevin Brown
Mr David Clements
Mr Richard Corn
Mrs Jackie Croft
Mrs Sandra Grattrick
Professor David Head
Dr Tony Hill
Mr Stephen Lawrence
Mr Graham Meeson
Professor Jayne Mitchell
Revd. Dr Sally Myers
Revd. Canon Professor Peter Neil
Mrs Jasmit Phull
Miss Becca Smith
Mr Luke South
Dr Jim Smith

In attendance:

Dr Anne Craven, Registrar and Secretary
Mr Stephen Deville, Director of Resources
Revd. Dr Peter Green, University Chaplain (for item 20)
Mr Gareth Hughes, Students' Union Vice President Voice Academic Affairs
Dr Grahame Killey, Planning and Performance Manager (for item 17 & 18)
Professor David Rae, Executive Dean, Research & Knowledge Exchange
Dr Ruth Sayers, Executive Dean, Learning, Teaching & International
Ms Michele Upcott, acting Clerk to the University Council
Mr Richard Young, UNIAC (for item 13)
Mr Joseph Johnson, UNIAC (for item 13)

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed Professor David Rae, newly appointed Executive Dean, Research & Knowledge Exchange to his first formal meeting of University Council.

2. The University Prayer

Revd. Canon Professor Peter Neil led the University Prayer.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from:

Bishop David Court
Mrs Angela Crowe
Reverend Christopher Lowson
AVM Gavin Mackay
Professor Mark Thompson

5. Minutes of the last meeting held on 29 September 2015

The minutes of the last meeting held on 29 September 2015 were APPROVED as a true record of the meeting. The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes.

6. Matters arising**(i) Action points**

The action table from the last meeting was RECEIVED and the progress against each item was NOTED.

(ii) Any other matters

There were no other matters raised.

7. Vice Chancellor's report

The Council RECEIVED the Vice Chancellor's report for information and the Vice Chancellor drew particular attention to the following items:

- The Green paper had been published on 6 November 2015 and as reported at the last meeting, the key areas were:

- Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).
- Proposed merger of HEFCE and OFFA into a new “Office for Students” which would provide a regulator for quality, access and ensuring transparency of information for students.
- Reforming the rules for entry/exit from the HE system by aligning regulations for HEFCE funded and Alternative Providers, creating faster and lower burden and more “risk-based” routes into HE provision and shortening the route to Degree Awarding Powers and University Title.

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that the most immediate consequence of the Green paper was the TEF, details of which were still being worked out. The TEF would consist of two stages; the first phase would be taken from the institution’s previous Higher Education Review (HER) up to and including February 2016. Therefore BGU would be judged on the result of the audit that took place in 2009.

The second stage would see a move towards differentiated levels of TEF where institutions would apply for assessment to be awarded a higher level of TEF for up to three years. The technical consultation for this stage would run in 2016 to identify the metrics, criteria, processes and evidence requirements in the following key areas:

- Student engagement and satisfaction
- Employability
- Retention rates

Higher Education Review (HER)

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that the Self Evaluation Document (SED) for January’s review had been submitted at the end of October. The Review Team have replied and requested additional evidence to the SED.

The University has held two HER briefing meetings on 18 & 19 November 2015, a mock review will take place from 9-11 December 2015 and the QAA HER team arrive on 15 January 2016.

The University is well prepared, ensuring processes and systems are robust, and staff are fully informed. The preparations are led by the Registrar & Secretary, who also chairs a QAA HER Steering Group. The draft outcome of the review will be received in April 2016. The Deputy Vice Chancellor is the Institutional facilitator and will act as the intermediary during the review.

Ofsted

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that the Ofsted judgement would be received by the University in November. Unfortunately the final stage of the Ofsted inspection has not yet taken place and the University is awaiting the call. The School of Teacher Development is well prepared following advice from an external consultant and mock review.

The Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) Survey results have been published and the University is still below average in the area of phonics but the team have a robust narrative to provide to the inspectors on how University is supporting NQT trainees during their first year of teaching.

National Student Survey (NSS)

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that the National Student Survey (NSS) for 2016 would include all Initial Teacher Training (ITT) students. A national consultation on the "NSS 2017 and Beyond" will take place and could feed in to the TEF, and it is believed that student engagement will be central to the survey.

Portfolio

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that the University's portfolio was continuing to develop, and the management of this will be overseen by the Portfolio Management Group chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor.

The University has successfully bid for 120 new Degree Apprenticeships and is currently engaged in talks with NHS and Social Care providers. This is a new government initiative and employer-focused.

Research

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that Professor David Rae had taken up the post of Executive Dean, Research & Knowledge Exchange on 1 October 2015. The University will have areas of research in the following clusters:

- Children and Young People
- Identity, Culture and Communication
- Public Policy and Professional Practice in Education
- Transitions in Higher Education
- Wellbeing and Resilience

International

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that the Internationalisation Strategy had been approved and was currently being implemented. The recruitment of international students is a priority and the International Manager has recently visited China to meet with potential International Agents and attended Recruitment Fairs.

The University has received confirmation from the UK Visas and Immigration Office (30 October 2015) that its Tier 4 Sponsor Status has been extended for 12 months (October 2016) and that 20 Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) have been granted in full (2 November 2015).

Matriculation

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that the first matriculation event took place on 8 October 2015. The event was well attended by both staff and students who embraced the new tradition. The event was considered to be a major success.

Staffing

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that altogether 92 posts had been advertised, of which 44 had been new posts. Of these, 18 were academic.

The Chair NOTED that the University wished to improve its staff/student ratio. The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that the University was looking at all the visiting tutor contracts to see how some of these could potentially be transferred in to permanent academic posts.

8. Chair's business

There was no business to report.

9. Students' Union

(i) President's report

The Council RECEIVED the SU President's report for information and the President drew particular attention to the following items:

- The first two Student Councils this academic year had been the most attended Student Councils on record.
- Student Council has introduced elections for Liberation Representative.
- The majority of time until the first Student Council has been spent electing Course Representatives.
- SU are currently looking into the possibility of on-line voting.
- SU wished to thank the University for letting them be involved in the first University Matriculation event.
- The Romania Challenge volunteering opportunity is open again and currently the SU have 10 signed up for this.
- SU are preparing for the Annual General Meeting, which is due to take place at the end of November.

(ii) The Council RECEIVED the SU Accounts for the Academic Year 2014-2015.

10 BG (Lincoln) Ltd

(i) Minutes of the Board of Directors

The Council RECEIVED the draft minutes of Board of Directors' meeting held on 20 October 2015, noting the following:

- BG (Lincoln) Ltd was undergoing a restructure. The Director of Resources and Head of HR are currently in a consultation phase with staff within the Limited Company.
- The interviews for the Managing Director's post scheduled to take place on 19 November had been postponed until full consideration of an alternative proposal had been reflected upon. The advertisement for this post would go out shortly and interviews would take place on 17 Dec 2015.

(ii) BG (Lincoln) Limited Accounts 2014-2015

The Council RECEIVED the BG (Lincoln) Limited Accounts for 2014-2015 noting that these had been approved by FE&GP and were a true record.

(iii) Letter to support for Limited Company

The Council RECEIVED the letter to Mazars LLP to confirm the continued financial support for BG (Lincoln) Limited for 12 months.

11. Accounts

The Council RECEIVED the Accounts of Bishop Grosseteste University for 2014-2015. Following discussions regarding the annual accounts the Council APPROVED them noting that these had also been scrutinised in detail and approved at the recent Joint Audit and FE&GP Committee meeting.

The Council asked the Director of Resources to confirm the date of resignation of the Very Reverend Philip Butler and amend accordingly as necessary.

SD

12. Audit Committee Annual Report

The Council RECEIVED the tabled Audit Committee Annual Report. Council members asked whether it was worth including a section on "Value for Money" as early as this year as this was an area the Funding Council would be expecting to see in future reports. The Council APPROVED the Audit Committee Annual Report, subject to the introduction of a text indicating where or how the University had pursued Value for Money.

SD/
R&S

13. Council Effectiveness

The Council RECEIVED a verbal presentation from Uniac regarding Council Effectiveness following a survey of Council members based upon the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) *Higher Education Code of Governance* (December 2014).

A discussion took place following the presentation. There were some concerns that certain Council members had had difficulty in understanding the questions that had been asked.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor reminded members that this was not the final report but feedback received from council members. Members of Council however suggested that the survey be re-run, to ensure understanding, or a different approach found. The Chair asked the Registrar & Secretary to find a helpful resolution.

R&S

14. Internal Audit Progress Report

The Council RECEIVED the Internal Audit Progress Report which had been received and approved by the Audit Committee. It was noted that Council members would like to see a list of planned audits for the next academic year when this became available.

R&S/
Uniac

15. HEFCE Returns

(i) Annual Monitoring Statement

The Registrar & Secretary gave Council members an overview of statement explaining that the response rates for questions related to protected characteristics could ideally be higher. Members were therefore encouraged to complete the relevant form before they left the meeting.

ALL

The Council NOTED the Annual Monitoring Statement which had been approved in principle by FE&GP, and AUTHORISED a more systematic collection of the protected characteristics for the return.

AKC

- (ii) Annual Assurance Return
The Council NOTED the draft Annual Assurance Return which had been approved by FE&GP.
- (iii) Financial Return
The Council APPROVED the Financial Return.

16. Student Recruitment

- (i) Recruitment and data update
The Council RECEIVED a verbal report from the Registrar & Secretary noting the following:
 - Enrolments in UG Degrees were about to exceed 770; the University was on track in meeting its overall enrolment target. By doing so, BGU had exceeded its minimum enrolment target in this area by over 130 students.
 - School of TD PGCE enrolments exceeded 270.
 - Total enrolments number, including Masters degrees, encompassed approximately 1050 students
 - Data submissions were going well. The HESA Student Record submission had successfully been submitted on time; the HESES submission for HEFCE was well on track.
- (ii) Projected Student Numbers
The Council RECEIVED and REVIEWED the key changes to the student number forecasts.

The numbers had been updated following enrolments and re-enrolments for 2015-2016. The key changes were reflected in the solid blue trajectory line which showed an increase based on the figures for 2015-2016. Total current student number for 2015-2016 was 2,300.

It was noted that the chart would reflect new course numbers as they were approved. The chart did not include 1/2/3 day short courses or partner college students.

Members noted that the changes to the academic portfolio had mainly been located in the School of Social Science and not within the other two schools.
- (iii) Budget Analysis following confirmation of enrolments
The Council NOTED the updated forecasts following enrolments for 2015-2016.

17. Key Performance Indicators

The Council RECEIVED the KPIs, presented by the Planning and Performance Manager who was in attendance for this item, noting the following:

- Financial Health – good year financially, historic cost surplus up from 11.7% in March to 14.4% in November.
- Liquidity days – up from 207 to 242 over the same period.
- Staff costs increased from 46.97% in March to 48.3% in November.
- BGU's retention rate for 2015-2016 was approximately 94%, which was the same as 2014-2015.

18. Risk Register

The Council RECEIVED the Risk Register, presented by the Planning and Performance Manager who was in attendance for this item. He reported that the report had been amended to reflect changes in control/ownership of risks, and the amendments were highlighted in red.

It was noted that an increased risk had been assigned to BG (Lincoln) Ltd.

19. Ofsted

The Deputy Vice Chancellor reported to Council the following:

- The University was still awaiting the call regarding the final phase of the inspection.
- The School of Teacher Development had implemented a new Leadership Management Team providing greater clarity.
- A mock event had been held on 20 October 2015 covering the area of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs). There were steps in place to track and support all NQTs, which had potentially been identified as leading practice.

The team have ensured the following is all in place in anticipation of the inspection:

- Evidence folders.
- Register of benchmark data from other providers.
- Areas of Best Practice.
- Early Years team asked to host Early Years Conference next year.
- Placement of students revised along with the accommodation and travel policy.

20. Chaplain's Report

The Council NOTED the Dean of Chapel's Report and noted the following:

- An increase in the level of engagement in Chaplaincy activities.
- Providing pastoral support to both academic and support staff.
- Significant drop in home sickness this academic year compared to previous years.
- Increase in the numbers of students reporting that chaplaincy played an important role in keeping them at University. Chaplain unable to provide quantifiable data in support of this statement.
- In June 2016 the Chaplaincy shall host a Conference on the Anglican response to Secularism following a successful bid to the Church Universities Fund for £3,000.

The Vice Chancellor REPORTED that the Chaplain had recently been installed as a Priest Vicar at Lincoln Cathedral, which was attended by around 30 students. The Council thanked the Chaplain for all his hard work within the parish and University.

21. Key Items from Sub-committees

(i) Governance and Nominations Committee

The Council RECEIVED the minutes from Governance and Nominations Committee meeting held on 14 October 2015, NOTING the following:

- Advertising for new Chair approved for 2016.
- Jackie Croft seconded from FE&GP to Audit Committee for one year.
- Confirmation on whether University Council are eligible to nominate Honorary Graduates.
- Confirmation that the Chair is the Pro-Chancellor.

(ii) FE&GP Committee

The Council RECEIVED the minutes from FE&GP Committee held on 3 November 2015, NOTING the following:

- Timetable for Workforce Planning and Reward & Recognition Package Project Working Group.

(iii) Joint FE&GP/Audit Committee

The Council RECEIVED the minutes from Joint FE&GP and Audit Committee held on 3 November 2015.

(iv) Audit Committee

The Council RECEIVED the minutes from Audit Committee held on 29 September and 3 November 2015, NOTING the following:

- Annual Reporting of governance disclosures
- Audit Committee membership
- Internal Audit Reports
- Safeguarding Policy Amendments

(v) Sponsor Board

The Council RECEIVED the minutes from Sponsor Board held on 4 November 2015, NOTING the following:

- Change management: progress made and the establishment of the Communications Oversight Group to enhance communication of positive developments
- Portfolio Management Group to replace the Portfolio Implementation Team
- Leadership & Management related programme for this year
- RDAP rules changed so that they will now allow for taught EdDs to be included in completions; something to take forward
- Student Engagement: recent appointment of the Student Engagement Coordinator
- Internationalisation, culture and recruitment: targets for International Manager
- Strategy Budget has now been incorporated into business plans.

(vi) Remuneration Committee

The Council RECEIVED a verbal report on Remuneration Committee held on 20 November from the Chair, NOTING the following:

- Living Wage issues
- Retention Hotspots
- Staff retention and remuneration
- Concerns regarding staff retention.

22. Senate

The Council RECEIVED and NOTED the minutes from SENATE held 7 October 2015.

23. Agenda suggestions for future meetings

The following items were suggested for discussion at the next meetings:

- Fund raising – disbursement
- The Government's new counter-extremism strategy
- Overview of Academic Governance in relation to Senate (possible presentation through lunch)
- Stakeholder discussions (June meeting)
- Clarification about nominations for Honorary Graduates.

Coming
meetings

24. Any other business

No matters raised.

25. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the University Council would take place on Tuesday 22 March 2015 at 1.45pm in Hardy Teaching Room 1 (to be preceded by lunch at 1pm in Hardy Seminar 1)

Signed  Date 22/3/16