

## **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 30 JANUARY 2008 at 1330 hrs at Newton Park**

Present:

Mr I Ahluwalia	Mr I Phillips
Mr J Amey	Ms S Pirie (Chair)
Mr J Anderson	Mr M Roy
Ms C Bull	Professor G Smith
Mr A Harris	Ms M Toman
Professor P Luna	Mr Van de Woestyne
Professor F Morgan (Vice Chancellor)	Cllr C Watt (from agenda item 7)
Mr P Parker	

In attendance:

Mr A E Dewberry (Clerk)	Mr K Wright
Dr A Thomas	Ms A Stone
Professor D Timms	Mr J Sebright
Professor N Sammells	Mrs J Conibere
Mr J Brady	Ms O Preston

Unable to attend: Professor J Brown, Ms S Talbot-Williams

#### **07/22 MINUTES : 31 OCTOBER 2007**

Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2007, which had been circulated, were received as a correct record.

#### **07/23 MATTERS ARISING**

None.

#### **07/24 CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

The Chair reported on a proposal of the Policy & Resources Committee that all Governors visit the University's leased premises at Corsham Court in the April cycle. The Board endorsed the proposal and instructed the Clerk to make appropriate arrangements.

#### **07/25 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

The Clerk referred to Paper G581 inviting the Board to consider a Schedule of Meetings of the Board and its Standing Committees.

Following consideration, the Board of Governors received and approved the Schedule of Meetings to June 2010.

**07/26.1 Students' Union**

The President of the Students' Union, Mr James Anderson, provided the Board of Governors with an overview of the varied work and services provided by the Students' Union.

The Board noted in particular its role in entertainment, supporting Societies, volunteering and student welfare as well as its commercial options.

The Board thanked Mr Anderson for his presentation.

**07/26.2 Information Services**

The University's Head of Information Services, Mr Jonathan Sebright, described the role, staffing and strategic direction of his group.

The Board noted the specific contribution of the Information Services group in relation to modernisation of the University's administration and in particular the Core Services: Finance, Computing, Registry and Human Resources.

The Board thanked Mr Sebright for his presentation.

**07/26.3 Research Degree Awarding Powers**

The Vice Chancellor referred to the QAA's draft report and its disappointing response to the University's application. This contained a persistent misrepresentation of BSU's research policy and imported requirements outwith the published criteria for the award of research degree awarding powers.

The Board was informed that further discussions would be held with QAA officers and that the Vice Chancellor had requested a copy of the QAA Committee's final report.

**07/26.4 DIUS : Secretary of State's Letter to HEFCE**

The Vice Chancellor referred to the Secretary of State's recent letter to the funding council for describing the government's priorities during a period of growth and 'controlled experimentation'.

These include:

- By 2020, 40% of working age population to have Level 4 qualifications
- A sector wide increase of 60000 students representing for BSU, perhaps, an additional 80 students a year for the next 3 years
- Retention of the current unit of funding for the next 3 years
- An increase in the number of Foundation Degrees which for BSU will most probably be delivered through FE partners

Overall, these objectives represent more of the same but are entirely congruent with BSU's strategy and initiatives in recent years particularly the links with regional FE institutions.

### **07/26.5 QAA Institutional Audit**

Professor D Timms reminded the Board that this Audit would be conducted by the same regulatory body responsible for the determination of BSU's application for Research Degree Awarding Powers.

The purpose of the Institutional Audit was to provide public confidence in the University's arrangements and control systems to ensure the quality of academic provision. The Auditors' report will include 'confidence statements' on academic quality and on awards particularly those made in collaboration with FE partners.

The Board noted that a 'Briefing Paper' was submitted in December 2007. This was followed by a 3 day visit in January to be followed by a week long visit in March 2008. The QAA Final Report is expected in June / July 2008.

### **07/26.6 Accommodation Strategy**

The Vice Chancellor reported on a recent meeting with the Leader and the Chief Executive of the local council and attended by the Chair.

The outcome was seen as a 'thawing' of the Council's longstanding objection to major development of the Newton Park campus. Such potential was now being explored in consultation with the Council's senior planning officer.

The Vice Chancellor also outlined development proposals at Sion Hill which would be subject to a public consultation exercise in the next week.

**07/27**

### **ENVIRONMENT POLICY**

Dr A Thomas referred to Paper G582 inviting the Board formally to adopt an Environmental Policy for the University and reporting progress in relation to the range of environmental activities including development of an Environmental Management System as a pre-requisite to achieving Eco Campus / ISO 14001 accreditation.

Mr A E Dewberry introduced Ms Olivia Preston, the recently appointed Environmental Support Officer, and tabled details of the HEFCE funded EcoCampus initiative for which BSU was a pilot institution.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G582;
- b) noted the progress made towards achieving Ecocampus / ISO 14001 accreditation;
- c) noted and endorsed the summary Environmental Action Plan (described in Appendix 1), and
- d) formally approved the Environmental Policy Statement (described in Appendix 2)

**07/28**

### **HEALTH & SAFETY WELLBEING POLICY**

The Head of Human Resources, Ms Arlene Stone, referred to Paper G583 seeking the Board's endorsement of a Wellbeing Policy as part of the University's Human Resources and Health & Safety Strategies to address work-related stress.

Mr A E Dewberry emphasised the current preoccupation of the Health & Safety Executive in auditing work-related stress in Universities and the action institutions are taking through risk assessment to identify causes and mitigate damage.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G583;
- b) approved the Wellbeing Policy set out in Appendix A, and
- c) endorsed Management's action to ensure compliance with statutory obligations in those matters.

**07/29**

#### **RACE EQUALITY POLICY**

Dr A Thomas referred to Paper G584 seeking approval to the University's Race Equality Policy in response to its statutory obligations under the terms of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Following consideration, the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G584, and
- b) approved the Race Equality Policy.

**07/30**

#### **AUDIT COMMITTEE : ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND THE VICE CHANCELLOR**

The Convener of the Audit Committee, Mr I Ahluwalia, referred to Paper G585 presenting the Annual Report of the Audit Committee to the Board of Governors and the Vice Chancellor.

Mr Ahluwalia emphasised that the internal audit process had been found to be working well with Management responding positively and effectively to the Auditor's reviews and recommendations.

Mr J Brady informed the Board that the report had in the past been forwarded to HEFCE after consideration by the Board during its January cycle of meetings but that in future HEFCE will require receipt of this formal receipt by 31 December each year. Future reports will therefore need to be sent to HEFCE before consideration by the Board of Governors.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G585, and
- b) endorsed the decision of the Director of Finance & Resources to submit the report to meet HEFCE's deadline.

**07/31**

#### **STUDENT APPLICATIONS AND RECRUITMENT 2008**

The Vice Chancellor referred to Paper G586 describing the current level of applications to the University for 2008 entry, comparing this with the position in 2007 and identifying additional marketing efforts to secure the University's strong recruitment profile. The Board, noted the significance of the University's high 'applications to place' ratio.

Cllr Chris Watt informed the Board that employment growth in the Bath / Bristol region is projected to be the third highest in the country.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G586;

- b) endorsed action to ensure successful completion of Foundation Degrees designed in partnership with FE partners:
- c) endorsed marketing investment to ensure full recruitment to BSU courses in 2008 / 09, and
- d) authorised targeting of marketing activities in specific subject areas.

**07/32 STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY**

The Vice Chancellor referred to Paper G587 describing strategy and action to improve the employability of undergraduates.

Professor N Sammells informed the Board of measures being taken to address these matters both strategically and in the short term. These included the collocation of the former 'Careers Service' alongside mainstream academic activities.

Professor G Smith urged a more top down, strategic approach to the University's academic portfolio in future years to underpin the institution's commitment to the employability of its students.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G587, and
- b) noted the University's strategy and associated actions for improving graduate employment (and salary levels) of its students.

**07/33 ITEMS FOR RECEIPT**

The Board of Governors formally received Minutes of the following meetings:

Policy & Resources Committee	:	27 June 2007
Audit Committee	:	27 June 2007
Academic Board	:	6 November 2007

**07/34 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

The meeting closed at 1530 hrs.

Anthony E Dewberry  
**Clerk to the Board of Governors**  
 31 January 2008