

## BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the meeting held on  
30 APRIL 2008  
at 1345 hrs at Newton Park

Present:

Ms C Bull	Ms S Pirie (Chair)
Mr A Harris	Mr M Roy
Professor F Morgan (Vice Chancellor)	Professor G Smith
Mr P Parker	Ms M Toman
Mr I Phillips	Mr Van de Woestyne

In attendance:

Mr A E Dewberry (Clerk)	Mr S McDonough
Mr J Brady	Mrs A Stone
Dr A Thomas	Mr K Wright
Professor D Timms	

Unable to attend: Mr J Anderson, Mr I Ahluwalia, Mr J Amey, Professor J Brown, Professor P Luna, Ms S Talbot - Williams, Cllr C Watt

**07/35 MINUTES : 30 JANUARY 2008**

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2008, which had been circulated, were received as a correct record.

**07/36 MATTERS ARISING**

None

**07/37 CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

None

**07/38 INDEPENDENT MEMBERS**

The Clerk referred to Paper G588 informing the Board that the periods of office of the following independent Members of the Board would expire on 21 November 2008:

Professor Judith Brown  
Ms Sarah Talbot – Williams  
Ms Mary Toman

Following consideration, the Board of Governors:

- a) received report G588, and
- b) noted that, in accordance with the established procedures of the Board, the Clerk would invite nominations from Governors and University students and staff for consideration by the Nominations Committee in due course.

**07/39**

**CO-OPTED MEMBER: PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENTS UNION 2008 / 09**

The Clerk referred to Paper G589 informing the Board that:

- the approved composition of the Board provided for the co-opted membership of the named President of the University Students' Union during the period of his/her presidency
- under procedures approved by the Board and monitored by the Clerk, the election of three Students' Union Officers was concluded on 11 March 2008. Mr Joey Cozens-Smith had been elected President of the Students' Union for the year commencing 1 July 2008.

The Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G589, and
- b) noted the election of Mr Joey Cozens-Smith as President of the Students' Union 2008 / 09 and as a member of the Corporation with effect from 1 July 2008.

**07/40**

**VICE CHANCELLORS REPORT**

**07/40.1**

**Research Degree Awarding Powers**

The Vice Chancellor reminded members that he had sought further discussions with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) regarding the disappointing draft response to the University's application for research degree awarding powers (Min 07/26.3 30 January 2008 refers).

Subsequently, the QAA had advised the Vice Chancellor of their decision to undertake a second visit and inspection in relation to the application. This would take place on 23 May 2008 when, as part of the established procedure, QAA inspectors would meet staff, students and representatives of the Governors (Professor J Brown, Ms C Bull and Mr M Roy).

The Board would be kept advised of developments in relation to the application.

**07/40.2**

**Student Event**

The Vice Chancellor referred to the Student Event taking place throughout the day on Main House Lawn. The Event celebrated student music and arts related skills but in addition drew attention to issues of concern to the Students' Union and invited individual students to record such issues.

The Vice Chancellor encouraged Board members to engage with the students. He had visited the Event and noted the five main issues which appeared to be emerging : Vocational development, space availability most notably at Sion Hill and Somerset Place, availability of and access to sports facilities, a desire for Wednesday afternoons to be free of all teaching (to facilitate greater participation in sport and other recreational activities) and a wish to increase the current level of student/lecturer contact time.

The Board noted that the Vice Chancellor was already aware of, and was addressing, each of these issues. There was clearly a need to communicate effectively with students on these matters. In this respect, the Vice Chancellor was concerned to ensure that concerns expressed by individual students were addressed in addition to issues raised by the Students' Union.

A report on issues raised through the Event, and the actions being taken to address those issues, would be submitted to the June meeting of the Board.

#### **07/41 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2008 / 09**

At the invitation of the Vice Chancellor, the Director of Finance and Resources, Mr J Brady, expanded on Paper G590 which set out draft budget proposals for 2008 / 09.

The Paper had been considered by the Policy and Resources Committee at their meeting held earlier that day. The draft revenue budget was currently being formulated. This would be presented to the June meeting of the Board.

Total income for 2007 / 08 was projected at £40 million, suggesting a budgetary surplus of £500,000. Major issues influencing the proposed budget were identified

as :

- HEFCE year on year funding increase
- HEFCE funding for additional students net of associated partnership transfers
- Training and Development Agency year on year funding increases (net of clawback)
- reduction in Postgraduate Masters Programme funding
- increased pay costs including continuing commitments in the current year under the third and final phase of the nationally negotiated three year pay award (2006 – 2008)
- increased estate costs
- a net increase in tuition fees
- additional student rents

Following discussion the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G590, and
- b) noted that the detailed annual revenue budget would be presented for approval in June 2008.

**07/42**

### **ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY**

At the invitation of the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Mr A E Dewberry, expanded on Paper G591, advising the Board of progress in the procurement of teaching and student residential accommodation to meet the University's needs in the short and medium term and seeking approval to associated actions and expenditure.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors:

- a) received paper G591;
- b) agreed that due to the commercially sensitive information contained therein Paper G591 be regarded as confidential and not for release into the public domain;
- c) noted the actions being taken by management to secure teaching and student residential accommodation;
- d) approved proposed expenditure totalling £4,500,000 (one off costs) and associated annual costs (excluding depreciation) of £348,000, as identified in Paper G591, for Core Accommodation Schemes subject to appropriate planning approvals;
- e) authorised the Vice Chancellor to acquire, in accordance with the detailed terms identified in paragraph 6 of Paper G591, the balance of the leasehold interest in a named property which will secure first year residential student accommodation with effect from 1 August 2008;
- f) endorsed the proposals explained in Paper G591 for the development of academic and residential accommodation on the Newton Park campus at minimum financial risk, and
- g) agreed that a full report on all the matters identified in Paper G591 be submitted to the meeting of the Board to be held in January 2009.

**07/43**

### **QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY: INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT**

The Vice Chancellor referred to Paper G592 advising the Board of an Institutional Audit conducted by the QAA in March 2008. Early indications, as set out in the QAA key findings letter dated 11 March 2008, suggested that the final outcome of the audit, (which would not be available until May 2008), would be very good.

The Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G592 and the attached key findings letter from the QAA dated 11 March 2008, and
- b) noted that a full report on the outcome of the audit would be submitted to the meeting of the Board to be held in June 2008.

07/44

### **HEFCE : ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL RISK**

The Vice Chancellor referred to Paper G593 advising the Board of Governors of the outcome of the recent HEFCE's review of institutional risk.

Following consideration, the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G593 and the attached letter from HEFCE dated 31 March 2008; and
- b) noted the view of the HEFCE Audit Service that the University was not regarded as being at higher risk and was meeting all its obligations over a wide area of activities including risk management, control and governance.

07/45

### **STUDENT RECRUITMENT 2007 / 08 AND APPLICATIONS 2008 / 09**

Dr A Thomas expanded on Paper G594 reporting final recruitment figures for 2007 / 08 against HEFCE and Training and Development Agency (TDA) contracts, and current application numbers for 2008.

The Board noted:

- continued strong recruitment to honours degrees but some under recruitment to foundation degrees and TDA targets (as forecast in January 2008 (Paper G586, minute 07/31))
- an improvement in the number of applications for 2008 / 09 and a positive increase in the conversion rate of applications to acceptances compared with 2007 / 08. Together, these two factors would help maintain strong recruitment in 2008 / 09.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors received Paper G594.

07/46

### **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: PROGRESS**

At the invitation of the Vice Chancellor Dr A Thomas, Deputy Vice Chancellor expanded on Paper G595 advising the Board of the success of the University in securing EcoCampus Silver stage accreditation and describing the actions now required to attain Platinum status and ultimately ISO 14001 accreditation for excellence in environmental performance.

The Paper highlighted the following issues:

- attainment of EcoCampus Silver stage accreditation was an important target for the current year and represented excellent progress towards the University's strategic objective of securing ISO 14001 (Paper G582, Minute 07/27 refers)
- progression to Platinum stage and ISO 14001 required a focus on operational activity, would be subject to internal and independent external audit and would require continued adjustment to management and operational structures, practice and culture. Additional resources would also be required provision for which would be included in the 2008 / 09 budget
- operational focus included continued progress in carbon/energy reduction measures, development of a corporate recycling scheme and a range of key environmental performance targets

- improved environmental performance within the higher education sector continued to assume increasing importance
- Management wished to work closely with students, through the Students' Union, to develop continuous improvement in environmental performance
- consequent upon the EcoCampus Silver award, the University had received very favourable publicity in local media, details of which would be made available to members

Following discussion the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G595;
- b) noted attainment of EcoCampus Silver stage accreditation, and
- c) noted the continued progress being made towards achievement of the key strategic objective of EcoCampus/ISO 14001 accreditation, the next steps being EcoCampus Platinum accreditation.

**07/47 ITEMS FOR RECEIPT**

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

Policy & Resources Committee	:	31 October 2007
Audit Committee	:	31 October 2007
Academic Board	:	8 January 2008
		11 March 2008

**07/48 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

The meeting closed at 15.15 hrs.

Anthony E Dewberry  
**Clerk to the Board of Governors**  
 30 April 2008