

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the meeting held on

5 NOVEMBER 2008

at 1345 hrs at Newton Park

Present:

Mr J Amey	Professor F Morgan (Vice Chancellor)
Mr J Cozens – Smith	Mr I Phillips
Professor J Brown	S Pirie (Chair)
Mrs A Bull	Mr M Roy
Mr A Harris	Professor G Smith
Mr P Luna	Ms M Toman

In attendance:

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

Unable to attend: Mr Mark van De Woestyne

Apologies: Mr I Ahluwalia, Mr P Parker (Deputy Chair), Councillor C Watt

08/01 MINUTES : 25 JUNE 2008

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2008, which had been circulated, were received as a correct record.

08/02 MATTERS ARISING

None.

**08/03 CHAIR'S BUSINESS :
Retirement from the Board of Mr Van De Woestyne and
Professor G Smith**

The Chair reminded the Board of Governors that the term of office of Mr van De Woestyne had now expired and that Professor G Smith had resigned from the Board (and from the University) consequent on his appointment as Deputy Rector at the University of Cornwall.

On behalf of the Board, the Chair expressed her appreciation for the support to the Board provided by Mr van De Woestyne and Professor Smith. The Clerk was requested to write formally to the two retiring Governors.

08/04 INDEPENDENT MEMBERS: NOMINATIONS

The Clerk referred to Paper G602 informing the Board of nominations received for appointment to three imminent vacancies within the Independent Members category of Board members.

The periods of office of the following members would expire on 21 November 2008:

Professor J Brown
Ms S Talbot-Williams
Ms M Toman

Professor Brown and Ms Toman had confirmed their willingness and ability to serve for a further period. Ms Talbot-Williams had stood down as a member of the Board. Two additional nominations had been received. The Committee of Independent Governors, as the Appointing Authority, would meet to consider the nominations immediately following conclusion of the Board meeting.

The Board of Governors received Paper G602.

08/05 CO-OPTED MEMBERS : ACADEMIC BOARD AND SUPPORT STAFF NOMINEES

The Clerk referred to Paper G603 advising the Board of Governors of election to the Board of :

- Professor Tim Middleton (Head of the School of English and Creative Studies) – elected by Academic Board and replacing Professor Geoff Smith
- Ms Lynn Ludwell (Senior Gardener) – elected by Support Staff and replacing Mr Mark van De Woestyne.

Both members would serve as Governors for a period of 3 years commencing 22 November 2008.

The Board of Governors received Paper G603.

08/06 REGISTER OF INTERESTS (GOVERNORS)

The Clerk referred to Paper G604 presenting a current Register of Interests of all members of the Corporation.

Following consideration, the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G604, and
- b) noted the HEFCE Audit Service's express commendation of the manner in which this Board both maintains and publishes its Register of Interests.

08/07 REMUNERATION COMMITTEE : BUSINESS CONDUCTED BY POST

The Clerk referred to Paper G605 reporting that, in accordance with agreed terms of reference, the Remuneration Committee had by business conducted by post approved implementation of the final stage of the national pay settlement for the Senior Postholders as it applied to all other staff of the University with effect from 1 October 2008.

Following consideration, the Board of Governors received Paper G605.

08/08.1 **Retirement of Professor Ron George Head of Bath School of Art and Design and of Professor Geoff Smith Head of School of Music and Performing Arts**

The Vice Chancellor reported the appointment, following external advertisement and competitive interviews, of Mr Joe Bennet, (Head of Department of Music) as replacement for Professor G Smith (Head of School of Music and Performing Arts) with effect from 6 November 2008.

Professor Ron George was due to retire later this year but would return in a part-time capacity to complete and manage the Postgraduate provision in the School of Art & Design being established at Corsham Court. The vacancy arising consequent upon the retirement of Professor George had been advertised nationally and the Vice Chancellor expressed his view that this would attract a good response.

08/08.2 **Membership of Universities UK**

The Vice Chancellor reported his decision to approve University membership of Universities UK (UUK), the main benefits of which included national representation and strong information flows and knowledge exchange on issues affecting the University specifically and higher education generally. UUK membership also provided opportunities for staff to engage in appropriate networking. All bar one of the English Universities were members of the organisation.

08/08.3 **Positive developments for Bath Spa University**

The Vice Chancellor reported a series of developments which reflected very positively on the University:

- grant of Research Degree Awarding Powers (minute 08/13 below)
- good progress in relation to the University accommodation strategy (minute 08/12 below)
- excellent external ratings - the University had been rated 54th in the annual Sunday Times University League Tables, an improvement of six places on previous ratings and representing 3rd place nationally for a Teaching-Led University
- continued positive recruitment patterns (minute 08/09 below)
- a further excellent inspection report from Ofsted (minute 08/14 below)
- continuing strong financial position and sound financial management.

The Board noted that the University was well placed to meet the challenges of the future and was continuing to develop its reputation as a leading Teaching-Led institution.

08/09

STUDENT APPLICATIONS AND RECRUITMENT 2008 / 09

The Vice Chancellor described continuing encouraging recruitment trends and invited Dr A Thomas to expand on Paper G606 detailing the numbers of students who had applied to BSU for entry in 2008 / 09 and reporting provisional recruitment figures for 2008 / 09 for full-time Degree, Foundation Degree and PGCE courses.

The Board noted continued good recruitment trends. Notwithstanding a reduction of 9.9% in total applications for entry in 2008 / 09, the proportion of applicants accepting a place at BSU had increased, so that the net recruitment position in 2008 / 09 was almost exactly the same as in 2007/ 08.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors received Paper G606.

08/10

ANNUAL REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS : RISK MANAGEMENT & VALUE FOR MONEY

Mr J Brady expanded on Paper G607 describing the institution's management of risk and invited the Board to consider the effectiveness of the University's internal controls, effectiveness in achieving value for money and the ability of BSU to achieve its objectives.

The Paper explained :

- the risk based nature of the University's internal control systems which were designed to identify the principal risks to the University's policy aims and objectives, to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The process followed HEFCE guidance and had been in place throughout the year ended 31 July 2008
- the responsibilities of the Board of Governors for reviewing the effectiveness of the systems of internal control and the processes by which those responsibilities were effectively discharged
- policies and practices in relation to the revision and updating of the University High Level Risk Register
- in relation to value for money, the responsibilities of the Audit Committee that satisfactory arrangements were in place to promote value for money and to ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In June 2008 that Committee had received a detailed annual report providing assurances on achievement of value for money exercises and setting out proposed value for money exercises for the coming twelve months

Mr Brady informed the Board of Governors that the internal auditor had recommended that the key policy documents governing Risk Management and Value for Money be formally submitted to the Board for re-endorsement. The Policy documents were attached to Paper G607 as Appendices A and B respectively.

Following consideration, the Board of Governors :

- a) received Paper G607 together with Appendices A and B, and
- b) reconfirmed the Risk Management Policy Statement determined in October 2005 (Appendix A), and
- c) reconfirmed the Value for Money Policy Statement determined in October 2005 (Appendix B).

08/11

REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2007 / 08

The Vice Chancellor referred to Paper G608 presenting the draft Report & Financial Statements 31 July 2008 and providing additional management accountancy information.

The Chair advised the Board of Governors that earlier that day, the Policy & Resources Committee had considered the report, together with the advice of the internal and external Auditors, in some detail. That Committee had approved and commented favourably on the accounts.

At the invitation of the Chair, the Acting Convener of the Audit Committee, Mr P Luna, confirmed that the Audit Committee was satisfied with the reports received from both the internal and external auditors both of whom had confirmed that the range of management controls in place provided satisfactory assurances in relation to the management of risk and value for money.

Mr Brady summarised discussion which had taken place at the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held earlier that day. That Committee had approved a range of measures to improve Treasury Management. These measures had been developed following discussions with representatives of BSU's bankers and financial advisors and would further reduce exposure to risk whilst at the same time providing a streamlined system to enable the Director of Finance & Resources, subject to appropriate approvals, to take rapid action to protect BSU investments should such action ever be required. This was an improvement on the previous arrangement which could involve a delay due to the requirement to seek formal approval for such actions from a meeting of the Board.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G608;
- b) noted the sound financial results for 2007 / 08;
- c) in accordance with FRS18, confirmed that the accounting policies on pages 15 - 16 of the draft report were appropriate, and
- d) approved the draft Report and Financial Statements to 31 July 2008 and delegated authority to the Vice Chancellor and the Chair to sign the final accounts and the Letter of Representation on behalf of the Board of Governors.

08/12

ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

The Deputy Vice Chancellor, Mr A E Dewberry and the Director of Estates, Mrs C Puddicombe, expanded on Paper G609, informing the Board of significant progress in the procurement of teaching, office and residential accommodation to meet the needs of the University in the short and medium term.

The Paper described in detail:

- the current position in relation to the redevelopment of the Sion Hill campus
- creation of studios and workshops at Dartmouth Avenue, Bath
- the handover of 17 - 20 Somerset Place on 30 September 2008
- establishment of offices with capacity for future expansion at Riverside Court, Lower Bristol Road, Bath
- relocation from Sion Hill to Corsham Court of facilities for Postgraduate courses in Art and Design
- continued development of collaboration with Culverhay School in the provision of initial teacher training and associated development of facilities at the Southdown Schools for Early Years and Professional Studies teaching
- successful negotiations for acquisition of additional student residential accommodation at Bankside House and new accommodation adjacent to Waterside Court, Bath, and
- investigations, negotiations and discussions with key stakeholders regarding major development at Newton Park

Following discussion, the Board of Governors received Paper G609.

08/13

RESEARCH DEGREE AWARDING POWERS

At its meeting on 25 June 2008, the Board was advised that the Privy Council was to consider the recommendations of the QAA, together with the advice of the Minister for Higher Education, on the application for Research Degree Awarding Powers to Bath Spa University (Minute 07/51.3 refers).

Professor D Timms expanded on Paper G610 reporting that the Privy Council had granted the application and that BSU now had powers to make the full range of awards, up to doctoral awards on the basis of research programmes. The success of the application represented the maturation of the institution as a leading Teaching-Led University with all the academic authority of a chartered institution.

Professor D Timms undertook to investigate the possibility of the University securing grant funding for Research Degree Awards.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors

- a) received Paper G610;
- b) congratulated Professor Timms and his colleagues on the success of the application, and
- c) noted that, with effect from 7 August 2008, the University had powers to make the full range of higher education awards, up to doctoral awards on the basis of research programmes.

08/14

OFSTED : INSPECTION OF FURTHER EDUCATION TEACHER TRAINING 2007 / 08

Professor D Timms expanded on Paper G611 informing the Board of the outcomes of the 2007 / 08 Ofsted inspection of the University's programme in Further Education Teacher Training. A copy of the inspection report was appended to the Paper.

The inspection awarded the Programme a Grade 1, the highest Ofsted level. This represented an outstanding achievement by the School of Development & Participation, especially in the context of University objectives for continuing partnership with local Further Education Colleges and forthcoming changes in the Ofsted inspection arrangements.

Following discussion, the Board of Governors :

- a) received Paper G547, and
- b) noted the report of the Ofsted inspection of Further Education Teacher Training 2007 / 08.

08/15 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE : ANNUAL REPORT

Dr A Thomas presented Paper G612 advising the Board of Governors of complaints received during the academic year 2007 / 08.

A total of 18 complaints had been received, a summary of which was presented to the Board. The complaints did not suggest a common theme or problem but represented a series of minor miscellaneous issues. No complaints had been referred to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

Following consideration, the Board received Paper G612.

08/16 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

At its meeting on 31 October 2007, the Board noted and commented on development of a set of performance indicators (PIs) for the University and requested that annual reports on progress be presented to the Board (Paper G579, Minute 07/18 refers). The PIs reflected the corporate strategy and characteristics of BSU as a Teaching-Led University.

Dr A Thomas expanded on Paper G613 presenting updated data for the chosen set of PIs and describing progress being made against the red and amber PIs (these being areas of performance requiring improvement).

Following discussion the Board of Governors:

- a) received Paper G613, and
- b) noted
 - i) the work being undertaken to address all indicators where the University performs at or below the level of comparator Institutions, and
 - ii) that a further update would be presented to the Board at the meeting to be held in October 2009.

08/17 HEFCE : FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM 2008 / 09

The Clerk referred to Paper G614 presenting to the Board the Financial Memorandum (Funding Agreement) between the University and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

Following consideration, the Board received Paper G614.

08/18 ITEMS FOR RECEIPT

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

Policy & Resource Committee	:	30 April 2008
Audit Committee	:	30 January 2008
Academic Board	:	20 May 2008
		1 July 2008

08/19 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

The meeting closed at 1525 hrs.

Anthony E Dewberry
Clerk to the Board of Governors
5 November 2008