

BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Minutes of the meeting held on
27 JANUARY 2010
At 1415 hrs at Newton Park

<u>Present:</u>	Revd Prof J Brown Ms C Bull Mr A Harris Ms L Ludwell Professor P Luna	Professor T Middleton Professor F Morgan (Vice-Chancellor) Ms S Pirie (Chair) Mr I Phillips Ms M Toman
<u>In attendance:</u>	Professor N Sammells (Acting Clerk) Dr A Thomas Mr J Brady Mr K Wright	Mr P Sharma Mrs C Puddicombe Mrs A Stone
<u>Apologies:</u>	Mr I Ahluwalia Mr J Amey	Revd E Mason Mr P Parker

The meeting began with a minute's silence in memory of the late Mr A E Dewberry, former Clerk to the Board. The Vice-Chancellor read a letter from his widow, thanking members for their appreciation of his work over many years.

The meeting followed a successful visit by members to the University's Son Hill campus. The Chair thanked staff and students who had acted as guides for the tour.

09/20 MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of 4 November 2009, which had been circulated, were received with one correction: the meeting had ended at 1530 hrs, not 1430 hrs.

09/21 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

09/22 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

There was no Chair's business.

09/23 ACTING CLERK'S REPORT

- a) The Acting Clerk referred to Paper G648, asking for the Board to approve a schedule of its meetings. He pointed out one error: the meeting in April 2011 would be on the 27th, not the 13th April.

The Vice-Chancellor asked the Clerk to give members early notification of key dates in the University Calendar, such as the carol service.

The Board approved the schedule of meetings.

b) The Clerk referred to Paper G649 which informed the Board of the recently approved paper (D340) at Academic Board which reviewed its effectiveness and concluded that it fulfils its purpose as stated in the University's Articles of Government.

The Board received Paper G649.

09/24 DESIGNATION OF SENIOR POSTS

The Vice-Chancellor referred to paper G650, which explained the background to the term 'senior posts' and the Board's powers to designate posts as senior in addition to those of the Vice-Chancellor and the Clerk to the Board of Governors.

After consideration, the Board accepted the recommendations of Paper G650, agreeing the nomination of Mr Brady's post (to become titled Deputy Vice-Chancellor) as 'senior' under the terms of the Articles of Government.

09/25 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Senior Management

The Vice-Chancellor referred to two matters which were being progressed: the determination of the Board's clerking function, which would come back to the full Board for approval, and arrangements currently being made for the senior management of the University, which would be reported to the Board in early course. He also noted that the University's senior management team had – through retirements and the deletion of the post of Dean of Academic Development – achieved at least the average level of saving expected of the whole University. He felt this was a powerful message for staff and the Trades Unions as the institution worked towards the necessary 10% savings.

Academic Developments

The Vice-Chancellor went on to outline current academic developments, noting the importance for the University to maintain a momentum of innovation and development in a climate of cost-reduction. He referred, in particular, to plans to review Masters provision (and the planned introduction of a Masters in Business Administration); to the University's monitoring of the national situation with respect to two-year degrees; to the potential for working with private providers attracted into the higher education marketplace by rising tuition fees; to ongoing curriculum developments aimed at improving the job prospects of the University's graduates; and to the ongoing work at Corsham Court aimed at ensuring that it became a real asset to the University as a centre for research and postgraduate work.

Presentation by Mr Pradeep Sharma, Head of the Bath School of Art and Design

Mr Sharma spoke of the School's continuing efforts to define its distinctiveness and to profile the excellence of its provision. This 'rebranding' exercise was, he believed, vital to the school's continuing success and its efforts to recruit international and postgraduate students. He spoke also of the importance to the school of a healthy relationship between teaching, research and professional practice, and reported the School's intention to set up an Industry Advisory Forum which would interface with the business community. Mr Sharma also described the beneficial change in working atmosphere brought about by the refurbishment and new building works on the Sion Hill Campus.

09/26 AUDIT COMMITTEE: ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Mr Brady referred to paper G651 and noted a successful year for the Audit Committee, which had met all the requirements of both internal and external auditors.

After consideration, the Board received the annual report of the Audit Committee (paper G651).

09/27 REVISED RESEARCH STRATEGY

The Vice-Chancellor referred to paper G652 which proposed a significant shift in the University's long-term goals: to increase its research mission, while maintaining a strong emphasis on teaching quality. Further, he proposed, in recognition of the Board's responsibilities, an emendation to the paper's recommendation so it should stand as: 'That the Board encourages the formulation of a new research strategy and accompanying consultation process'.

The Vice-Chancellor outlined the broad strategic reasons for this change in emphasis. These included the need for the University to differentiate itself clearly from Further Education Colleges which might provide higher education, and the desirability of marking the University's growing maturity. Professor Sammells noted the need for the University to create a sustainable research culture which would maximize the chances for success in the Research Excellence Framework exercise of 2013 and look beyond it. He emphasized in particular the desirability of creating a career path and structure for excellent researchers.

After discussion, the Board agreed the recommendation as formulated above.

09/28 STUDENT RECRUITMENT 2009/10 AND APPLICATIONS 2010/11

Dr Thomas referred to paper G653 which presented student recruitment figures for 2009/10 and described the current numbers of applications for 2010/11. He noted that in 2009/10 the University had met all its recruitment targets and that applications for 2010/11 were up by 25% (in comparison with the University's main competitors which were up by 23%). He pointed out that one challenge this year, was not to exceed targets and so incur financial penalty.

After consideration, the Board noted the report in paper G653.

09/29 ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

The Vice-Chancellor referred to paper G654 which reported on progress made on the Accommodation Strategy for the University at Newton Park. Progress was, he noted, being made, but it was not easy: the University needed to satisfy the differing demands of the local planning authority, English Heritage and the Duchy of Cornwall. He reported that the Board's Policy and Resources Committee had that morning devoted almost its entire business to the difficulties attendant upon the Duchy's concerns about the architecture of the development. Carolyn Puddicombe pointed out that English Heritage's approval was as important as the Duchy's, and that it was very supportive of the University because of its twenty years of investment into restoring the campus's historic landscape. She further noted the planning authority's need for a Masterplan for all the University's sites in order to provide a context for the development of Newton Park. She drew the Board's attention to the impending public consultation exercise for the proposed development and application for planning permission, to be held on 4, 5 and 6 February.

After consideration, the Board noted the report.

09/30 ITEMS FOR RECEIPT

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE :	24 June 2009
AUDIT COMMITTEE :	24 June 2009
ACADEMIC BOARD :	19 May 2009

09/31 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

The meeting closed at 1600 hrs

Professor N Sammells
Acting Clerk to the Board of Governors
2 February 2010