

COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2017

Present: Dr Mike Burrows, (Chair), Phil Cusack, Ben Gallop, Amina Helal, Zamzam Ibrahim (from minute 17.125), Professor Helen Marshall, John Merry, Ian Moston (from minute 17.126), Sean O'Hara, Professor Sheila Pankhurst, Sam Plant, Professor Susan Price, Joyce Redfearn, Margaret Rowe, Tom Russell and Emily Voss-Bevan.

Apologies: Geoff Bean and Garry Dowdle,

In attendance: Alison Blackburn (University Registrar), Lord Keith Bradley, Julie Charge (Executive Director of Finance), Dr Anthony Coombs, Andrea Dunstan, Louise Edwards Holland (Director of Human Resources), Dr Sam Grogan (PVC Student Experience), John McCarthy (Executive Director of Marketing and External Relations), Merlyn Lowther, Jackie Njoroge (Director of Strategy), Priscilla Nkwenti, Jo Purves (PVC International and Regional Partnerships from minute 17.123), Professor Richard Stephenson (Deputy Vice-Chancellor) and Jo Makin (Secretary).

COU.17.119 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Confirmed the minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 24 November 2017 (**COU/17/100**).

COU.17.120 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Noted: the update on the previous meetings actions appended to the minutes. There were no other matters arising which were not included elsewhere on the agenda.

COU.17.121 **MEMBERSHIP**

Received:

- i) a report outlining the outcome of the Chair of Council, Council Members and co-opted Council Members recruitment and selection process (**COU/17/101**);
- ii) a report detailing the allocation of the newly appointed members to Council Committees (**COU/17/101a**).

Resolved: that the appointments be **approved** with effect from the 1 January 2018.

COU.17.122 **STARRED ITEMS**

Confirmed: that agenda items 2 (Schedule of Attendance), 14 (Committee Chairs' Report) and 15 (Use of the University Seal) would be noted without discussion.

COU 17.123 **VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

Considered: a report from the Vice-Chancellor on key issues affecting the University (**COU/17/102**).

Reported:

- i) that the Government's Industrial Strategy provided an exciting opportunity for the University' the direction aligning perfectly with the ICZ strategy;
- ii) that the Research Excellence Framework academic content would be more stringently managed in the forthcoming REF. All academics that made a 'significant contribution' would be part of the assessment.
- iii) that the Bahrain franchise arrangement had moved at pace;
- iv) that the partnership provided British academic standards and 'know how' and would advance educational opportunity in Bahrain;
- v) that Dr. Keith Sharp had recently been appointed as the Vice President;

- vi) that a delegation from Salford, would visit Bahrain in January 2018 to undertake standard quality checks;
- vii) that the provision would commence in September 2018;
- viii) that the institution would be titled the British University of Bahrain, but students would obtain a University of Salford degree under the franchise agreement;

COU 17.124 **PROFESSORIAL APPOINTMENT**

Received: a report outlining the appointment of Professor Tony Warne as Emeritus Professor (**COU/17/103**).

Resolved: that the appointment be **approved** with immediate effect.

COU 17.125 **FREEDOM OF SPEECH POLICY**

Received: a report outlining the Freedom of Speech Policy (**COU/17/104**).

Noted:

- i) that the policy should give consideration to social media and 'virtual' speakers;
- ii) that clarification was required as to whether the policy applied to Salford Professional Development;
- iii) that consideration should be given to whether section 3.1.2 needed expansion in relation to harassment and what was meant by this;
- iv) that a further comment is required to explain how this policy will be implemented whilst supporting the fundamental principal of law and order;
- v) that small edits were required to A6, A8 and B9 in the Application Form

Resolved:

- i) that the policy be amended to reflect the notes above;
- ii) that the policy be brought to 8 March 2018 Governance, Nominations & Ethics Committee for consideration, prior to Council on the 23 March 2018.

COU 17.126 **RECRUITMENT APPROACH**

Received: a report outlining the University's recruitment plan as part of the overall planning round (**COU/17/105**)

Reported:

- i) that the recruitment strategy is always 18 months to 2 years ahead of the year of entry. Marketing and External Relations colleagues work on multiple years at any one time;
- ii) that there are 22 higher education providers within Greater Manchester, with private providers also looking to introduce alternative provision;
- iii) that the numbers of school leavers in the region have dropped considerably over the past 3 years;
- iv) that, with specific reference to the University of Salford, 40% of students are from Greater Manchester with a further 20% from the North West, creating increased urgency to recruit from outside the traditional regional market;
- v) that the recruitment focus had been on the M62 corridor, West Midlands and London;
- vi) that historically the University of Salford had been reliant on Clearing and an aim of the current recruitment approach had been to reduce this reliance;
- vii) that September 2017/18 intake had shown a 5% reduction on Clearing from 27% to 22%;
- viii) that the University of Salford's recruitment had increased between 8% and 12%, this against the backdrop of a sector reduction;
- ix) that the University of Salford's market sector share had grown in every region except the East of England;
- x) that widening participation remained an important principle and that foundation years would assist with this approach;

- xi) that the University actively targeted students using Facebook, Twitter and snap chat.

Noted:

- i) that the tariff points of 323 - 326 were the average not the minimum and excluded Foundation Year;
- ii) that recruitment in Nursing remained a challenge but that the University had exceeded its intake target in September 2017;
- iii) that the University had stolen market share out of region, demonstrating that the recruitment approach was working;
- iv) that the Foundation Year performance had given the University an additional 250/300 places but that even without this, the University would have increased student numbers;
- v) that the nature of Clearing was changing and that more and more students obtained their results and then 'shopped around';
- vi) that the report was extremely helpful in presenting the data and demonstrated positive improvements.

COU 17.127 **QUARTER ONE FINANCE REPORT**

Received: the financial report for Quarter 1 2017/18 (**COU/17/106**).

Reported:

- i) that the financial forecast was prudent;
- ii) that for the first time the University's income had exceeded £200 million;
- iii) that there had been an increase in revenue year on year for the past four years;
- iv) that the mix of students created differing fee totals;
- v) that the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) had reviewed its contribution charge, resulting in a reduction in the anticipated surplus to 5.2 million;
- vi) that there could be further changes regarding the USS pension scheme but the outcome and impact of this would be unknown until to July 2018;
- vii) that the pensions situation was creating volatility;
- viii) that the cash flow position was positive;
- ix) that the banking covenants were green.

Noted: that pensions in the public sector in general were a cause for concern and could create financial instability.

COU.17.128 **PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Received: the performance report for Quarter 1, with a focus on retention (**COU/17/107**).

Reported:

- i) that the creation and implementation of the retention framework had begun to deliver positive 'embryonic' outcomes;
- ii) that the targeted interventions across Welcome, Registration and Induction (WRI), personal tutoring support and proactive contact across the summer break had improved continuation;
- iii) that the sector performance was quite compressed and as such small moves could mean big changes in league table positioning;
- iv) that the data contained within the report had a significant lag and as such significant emphasis was placed on, tactical and operational in year activity, to minimise any adverse impact on students;
- v) that the methods and timing of assessment were kept under review;
- vi) that modules were aligned to the ICZs, with outputs and outcomes that deliver real world experiences;
- vii) that the approach to improving student retention was co-designed and co-delivered with the Students' Union;

- viii) that the data would be further supplemented with activities that add to social capital and employability, such as volunteering and involvement in societies;
- ix) that the Risk Register would show pay and pension costs as two individual risks, given the current environment.

Noted:

- i) that other factors impacted on retention, such as the physical environment;
- ii) that the Campus Masterplan would need to ensure that additional quality accommodation and the Newton Building rebuild, occurred in phase one of the programme.

COU.17.129 **UNIVERSITY STRATEGY AND DELIVERY PLANS**

Received: a completed mapping of University Strategy and Delivery Plans **(COU/17/108)**.

Reported:

- i) that the Corporate Strategy outlined the University's intent to take advantage of opportunities through the ICZs;
- ii) that the opportunities would be sought whilst simultaneously addressing areas of relative weakness in our performance in teaching, research and enterprise;
- iii) that the thematic delivery plans would implement this approach;
- iv) that the same approach had been adopted throughout professional services.

COU 17.130 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

INTERIM CHAIR OF COUNCIL

Sean O'Hara, Interim Deputy Chair of Council, led the thanks to Dr Mike Burrows, Interim Chair of Council, for undertaking the Chair of Council role for the past six months.

COU 17.131 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would take place on Friday 23 February 2018.