

**UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD  
COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON  
6 FEBRUARY 2014**

Present: Alan Mawson (Chair-except item COU 14.10)  
Mohammed Amin  
Derek Antrobus  
Tony Britten  
Martin Bull  
Mike Burrows  
Nick Collins  
Julia Fawcett  
Martin Hall (not present for item COU.14.17)  
Eric Healey  
Amina Helal  
Todd Hewitt  
Mark Johnson  
Jane Luca  
Claire Moreland  
Gai Murphy  
Joyce Redfearn  
Mishal Saeed  
Stephen Sorrell  
Warren Smith (in the Chair for item COU.14.10; present until item COU.14.12)

In attendance: Vikki Goddard (Registrar)  
Helen Marshall (Deputy Vice-Chancellor)  
David Reeve (Interim Executive Director of Finance)  
John Forshaw (Director of Planning and Performance)  
Julie Charge (Associate Director of Finance)  
Amanda Broderick (Pro-Vice-Chancellor, International Priorities and Dean of Salford Business School – until item COU.14.5 only)  
Keith Watkinson (Executive Director of Human Resources – item COU.14.12 only)  
Andrew Snowden (Chief of Staff)  
Mark Rollinson (University Secretary)  
Allan Schofield (Higher Education Consultancy Group)  
Jacqui Burke (Higher Education Consultancy Group)

**COU.14.1 MEMBERSHIP (COU/14/1)**

In accordance with the recommendation of Nominations and Governance Committee (see item COU.14.11 below), Council confirmed the appointment of Joyce Redfearn as an independent member. Members welcomed Ms Redfearn to her first meeting. Council also welcomed Julie Charge, newly appointed Associate Director of Finance and Allan Schofield and Jacqui Burke from the Higher Education Consultancy Group, who were carrying out the Council Effectiveness Review.

**COU.14.2 MINUTES (COU/14/2)**

Council confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2013.

**COU.14.3 CONFIRMATION OF STARRED ITEMS**

Council confirmed that the following items would be approved or noted without further discussion:

- University of Salford Enterprises and Subsidiary Companies
- Report from Council Advisory Group
- Report from Senate

- Use of University Seal

Council requested that the Freedom of Speech Policy be unstarred and issues arising from consideration of that item are set out in section COU.14.15 below.

#### COU.14.4 CHAIR'S ACTION (COU/14/3 – 4)

Council noted that the Chair had taken the following actions on behalf of Council since the previous meeting:

- i) on the basis of further guidance received after the previous Council meeting, approval of a revised version of the Annual Sustainability Assurance Report for submission to HEFCE;
- ii) on the recommendation of Senate, approval of the change of name of the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work to the School of Nursing, Midwifery, Social Work and Social Sciences;

**Confidential minute follows. This minute is exempt from publication under Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act.**

iii)



#### COU.14.5 INTERNATIONAL PRIORITIES STRATEGY (COU/14/5)

The Vice-Chancellor introduced Prof Amanda Broderick, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, International Priorities and Dean of Salford Business School. Before handing over to Professor Broderick to make her presentation, the Vice-Chancellor stressed the integral part that the International Strategy had to play in ensuring future institutional sustainability. The Vice-Chancellor also paid tribute to the work of Prof Broderick, not just in relation to the developing International Priorities Strategy, but also in transforming the performance of the Salford Business School.

Prof Broderick's presentation included the following (the full presentation has been made available on the members' resources' section of the Governance website):

- i) the four pillars of the International Priorities Strategy (inward FTE recruitment, Transnational Education (online, blended and in country), international research funding streams and third stream activity);
- ii) the ability of the University to develop a distinctive identity in servicing global higher skills and information needs;
- iii) over the past three years, international recruitment represented the biggest area of growth and the University could capitalise on this by providing a step change in its activities;
- iv) the International Hub concept enabled a flexible, in country presence with provision of a range of services, including a base for "flying faculty" and programme delivery and was a lower risk and lower cost alternative to the establishment of a local campus;
- v) the intention was to build on existing transnational education in four areas of strength (Creative and Media Industries, Digital Technologies and Communications Industry, Healthcare and Infrastructure and Sustainability) ensuring market penetration and development and product development and diversification;
- vi) the proposed framework for the Passport to Global Citizenship which could be available to all Salford students.

In response to members' questions about the University's ability to compete with more prestigious institutions, Prof Broderick confirmed that collaboration would not be confined to international higher education partners, but would include governments, government agencies and international partnerships.

In response to further questions, Prof Broderick confirmed that the International Hub concept was based on a detailed business case which included in depth analysis and risk review of each of the proposed markets (Abu Dhabi, Brazil, Ghana and Malaysia), noting that, for each of the hubs, there was the potential to recruit from the wider sub-region. The Interim Executive

Director of Finance confirmed that there had been detailed analysis and challenge of assumptions; the implementation of the hub concept would begin in Abu Dhabi, where there was a need to establish a physical presence to support a contract relating to health provision which was about to be concluded. The Vice-Chancellor reiterated that the approach being taken by the University was less risky than the establishment of a branch campus, noting the difficulties that some competitor institutions had experienced in the establishment of such ventures.

Executive members were asked about support available for students studying in the hub region. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, International Priorities, advised that delivery would be via a range of mechanisms and would include innovative pedagogical approaches; students would be able to avail themselves of support from personal and programme tutors (this would include intensive periods of block delivery), as well as through virtual learning communities of cognate learners. The issue of access to the services of the Students' Union was noted and would be clarified in detailed discussions.

Members were advised that a HEFCE catalyst bid would be submitted to support the infrastructure requirements of the initiative; members noted that IT (in terms of both platforms and the integration into course delivery and pedagogy) was crucial to the success of the International Priorities Strategy and this issue would form a key agenda item for the IT Strategy Group, which was about to be convened.

#### COU.14.6 **VICE-CHANCELLOR'S MANAGEMENT REPORT (COU/14/6)**

Council received the Vice-Chancellor's Management Report which, in its new format, comprised a leadership overview and sections setting out institutional and College/School level progress against agreed KPIs. The report covered Quarter 1 (August – October 2013). The Vice-Chancellor updated Council on developments since the report was produced:

- i) the Vice-Chancellor had hosted an event for international students at his house on 27 December 2013; brief video footage of the event was now available and the Vice-Chancellor would make this available to members;
- ii) undergraduate UK/EU applications were very healthy and above the sector average. As at 15 January, Salford applications showed a 14.6% increase on the previous year; applications across the sector had increased by 4.2%, whilst application from a comparator group, including the University's regional competitors, had increased by 6.7%. Council was advised that, typically, 80% of applications were received by the mid-January UCAS deadline date. Applications had increased across all subject areas and the increase was also mirrored in NHS programme applications (10% improvement from the previous year). The bulge in applications had presented some processing issues, but there had now been addressed, with offer rates improving significantly. The provenance of the increase was as yet unclear although detailed analysis was being carried out; anecdotally, there were indications that other local HEIs were not performing as well and Council noted that potential reasons for the increase included improved local regional economic performance and an increased propensity to incur debt. The Vice-Chancellor emphasised that there was no complacency and the Executive was focused on ensuring that applications were converted into registrations. The Vice-Chancellor also advised Council that there was room for improvement in postgraduate taught applications and attention was focused on effecting enhancement in this area;
- iii) industrial action continued in relation to the 2013-14 pay award; the three main campus unions, UCU, UNISON and UNITE were all on strike on the day of the meeting (6 February 2014) and the third in a series of three two-hour strikes called by UCU would take place on Monday 10 February. In common with a number of other universities, the University had followed UCEA advice and withheld a full day's pay for those employees who had taken part in the two-hour strikes (some other institutions had decided just to withhold two hours of pay per strike). The University's stance was on the basis of legal opinion offered through UCEA and was an explicit acknowledgement that the University would not accept partial performance (noting that the Union strategy (based on their own legal advice) was designed

to maximise impact on the operation of the University and the student experience whilst minimising detriment to Union members); the Vice-Chancellor emphasised that the University fully recognised the ability of staff to take part in legitimately called industrial action. Members endorsed the approach adopted as outlined by the Vice-Chancellor.

- iv) the Vice-Chancellor advised that the funding letter from HEFCE was still awaited and this was later than usual in arriving as a result of continued intra-government discussion about the overall funding settlement. It appeared certain that the overall funding for widening participation would be reduced, with the extent of the reduction to be determined. In the absence of the funding letter and in light of the overall increase in the student number cap (SNC) by 30,000, the University had estimated that its increase as between 300-400 above current SNC and was planning accordingly. Council noted that, if this estimate proved inaccurate, there was a risk of over recruitment (and potential fine) although this would be mitigated by appropriate scaling of clearing activity;
- v) both major building projects (Gateway and Residences) were proceeding as planned with the contractors managing the environment appropriately.

In response to a question, the student members confirmed that there had been minimal disruption from the current works to student activity on campus, although there had been some impact on footfall in the Students' Union. Council was advised that landscaping was an integral part of the redevelopment and, in this context, noted the joint City Council/University bid for improvements to Peel Park.

There was general agreement that the reformatted report was an improvement on previous versions. The potential for more rigorous editing of the report, to enable even clearer focus on key information, was noted (although the importance of retaining some narrative alongside the data was also emphasised). It was noted that, for some indicators where change was recorded annually, "year to date" indicators were not appropriate; however, in some instances, milestone data could be included to indicate direction of travel (and this would enable focus on certain aspects of the report at appropriate, critical times – e.g. retention data). Council was advised that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and Director of Finance would meet with Heads of School on a regular, quarterly basis, to review School data and Council noted the potential for the local reports to be considered and reviewed by College Lead Members at the regular scheduled meetings with Deans and the Vice-Chancellor. With these comments, Council welcomed the revised report, noting that there would be further iterative improvements in the light of experience.

#### **COU.14.7 FINANCE REPORT (COU/14/7 – 8)**

Council received:

- i) the report from the meeting of Budget Review Group on 20 January 2014 (including the narrative and income and expenditure summary submitted to that meeting);
- ii) the Quarter One Financial Statements, including detailed commentary.

The Lead Member for Finance confirmed that the report to Budget Review Group included a recommended declared outturn forecast surplus of £7.41 million which represented a positive trend (£4.6 million surplus in 2012-13) and was also an improvement on the forecast surplus of £6.5 million in the Quarter One Statements. The Interim Executive Director of Finance (IEDF) confirmed that most key variables and data had now been returned so there was confidence in the revised forecast surplus. Whilst this was a positive indicator, the IEDF referred to the potential challenge over the next two financial years as set out in the report from the Budget Review Group (e.g. increase in employer pension contributions, increase in employer National Insurance contributions, likely reduction in Widening Participation funding already referred to), emphasising that there was no room for complacency. Council confirmed that it was satisfied with the declared outturn surplus.

Members commented favourably on the quality and clarity of the Quarter One report. On a matter of detail, Council noted that, in relation to international students, despite an improvement

in recruitment, the overall “fee mix” meant that there would not be an increase in revenue. Council was advised that ensuring that there was positive net value from international recruitment was an integral element of future strategy.

**COU.14.8 CORPORATE RISK UPDATE (COU/14/9)**

Council considered the latest Corporate Risk update which set out the ten most significant risks currently facing the University and an indication of movement in the Register since the previous meeting. Council noted the suggestion that, in addition to student recruitment and retention, student progression be considered for inclusion in the Register.

In relation to the National Student Survey, Council noted the potential impact on institutional reputation; the Deputy Vice-Chancellor outlined the approach to the latest Survey which would begin later in the month. The University was working in partnership with the Students’ Union in order to maximise participation (the sector average of 80% participation was being targeted). Effort was being focused on the fifteen programmes identified as the worst performing; the Deputy Vice-Chancellor noted that, in the main, poor NSS outcomes in those programmes could be ascribed to a mixture of specific academic programme issues and historic, systemic institutional issues which were now being addressed. Council noted that improvements in these areas (and consideration and, if possible, further improvement to the five best performing programmes) had the potential to significantly improve the University’s average NSS score and bring it in line with the national average and this would improve league table standings (the potential “lag” until such improvement was reflected in the league tables was noted).

**COU.14.9 VARIATION OF AGENDA**

In order to enable the Deputy Chair to take the Chair for the report from the Nominations and Governance (Honorary Degrees) Committee, Council agreed to vary the agenda, noting that the Deputy Chair needed to leave the meeting before its conclusion.

**COU.14.10 REPORT FROM NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (HONORARY DEGREES) (COU/14/15B)**

The Chair of Council declared an interest and left the meeting for the duration of this item; the Deputy Chair, Warren Smith, took the Chair.

Council received the report of the meeting of Nominations and Governance Committee on 16 January 2014; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Council therefore resolved:

- i) that the following candidates be awarded honorary degrees:

[REDACTED]

- ii) that [REDACTED] be awarded an Alumni Achievement award.

Council noted that conferment of awards already made as outlined in the report should take place at the July 2014 ceremony. Noting that the optimal number of awards to be conferred at the July ceremonies was between 8 and 10, it was agreed that recognising various practical and logistical constraints, a prioritised list of awards to the July 2014 ceremonies be drawn up.

**The redactions above had been made to protect the identities of specific individuals in accordance with Section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act.**

#### COU.14.11 **REPORT FROM NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (COU/14/15A)**

Council received the report from the meeting of Nominations and Governance Committee held on 16 January 2014, noting that the recommendation regarding Joyce Redfean's membership had been dealt with under COU.14.1 above. Council noted the rest of the report and the Secretary updated members on progress towards the appointment of a new Chair and a new Chancellor.

#### COU.14.12 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REVIEW (COU/14/10)**

Council considered the 2013 Equality and Diversity Review. A number of detailed comments were made in relation to content and presentation and, in light of these comments, it was agreed that the report be represented to the next meeting. Council encouraged the use of national and regional comparative data where possible.

#### COU.14.13 **REPORT FROM STUDENTS' UNION (COU/14/11)**

Council received a report and presentation from the two student members in their capacity as President and Vice-President of the Students' Union. The presentation (available on the members' resources section of the Governance website) covered:

- achievements by the Union sabbatical team so far in 2013-14;
- sabbatical team campaign for Semester 2;
- Strategic Plan 2014-17; including mission and three year success targets under the following headings:
  - championing your views and opinions to shape your academic experience;
  - offer creative opportunities to involve you and unleash you potential;
  - ensure you enjoy being part of your University community.

Members were provided with a copy of the Students' Union checklist which the Union made available to all students; it was noted that this was essentially a tool to enable communication and dialogue with Colleges and Schools. Students who claimed that they were not receiving services as defined in the checklist were encouraged to contact the Union.

The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged the quality of student leadership noting that they were able to maintain the difficult balance between partnership on the one hand and advocacy and holding the University to account on the other. It was noted that a more formal report, setting out use of allocated funds and progress against strategic objectives would be considered by Council later in the calendar year. Council commented on the challenge of delivering a three year Strategic Plan in the context of annual sabbatical appointments but noted the continuity provided by Union management and the Trustee Board.

#### COU.14.14 **UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD ENTERPRISES LTD AND SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES (COU/14/12)**

Council noted the report from University of Salford Enterprises Ltd and confirmed the agreements set out in the report.

#### COU.14.15 **FREEDOM OF SPEECH POLICY (COU/14/13)**

Council considered the revised Freedom of Speech Policy. It was noted that awareness of all relevant events was crucial to the successful implementation of the Policy and the Secretary confirmed that he received regular reports on proposed events across the institution (e.g. from Students' Union and the Conference/Events team). Council **resolved** to approve the policy subject to the deletion of the word "intentionally" in Section 3.3.2 (the clause now read "There is no right of appeal in situations where the Organiser has breached the Policy").

**COU.14.16 REPORT FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE (COU/14/14)**

Council received the report from the Audit Committee meeting held on 15 January 2014 and **resolved** to approve the interim (six monthly) report to Council and the revised Health and Safety Policy.

**COU.14.17 REPORT FROM REMUNERATION COMMITTEE (COU/14/15)**

Council noted the report from the meeting of Remuneration Committee held on 19 December 2013 and agreed that the Chair of the Committee be involved in the development of any response to potential press and media inquiries.

**COU.14.18 REPORT FROM COUNCIL ADVISORY GROUP (COU/14/17)**

Council noted the report from the meeting of Council Advisory Group held on 16 January 2014, including the appended reports of Lead Member meetings.

**COU.14.19 REPORT FROM SENATE (COU/14/18)**

Council noted the report from the meeting of Senate on 11 December 2013, noting that approval of the name change of the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work had been dealt with under item COU.14.4 above. Council **resolved** to approve the award of Professor Emeritus to Prof Roger Bisby, Prof Rose Baker and Prof David Forrest.

**COU.14.20 USE OF UNIVERSITY SEAL (COU/14/19)**

Council noted the report outlining the use of the University Seal since the previous meeting.

**COU.14.21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 1 May 2014 at 2.00pm.