

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting held on
Monday 19 May 2014**

Present: Dr B Towle (Chair)

The Vice-Chancellor	Mr P Lawson
Mr P Ash	Dr D Lockett
Mr G Dixon	Mr D Moore
Mr D Flatt (Unreserved Business only)	Mr A Morgan
Mr M Hindle	Mr P Mulvihill
Dr N Reed	Professor M Peel
Mr I Johnson	Ms V Sharma
Professor J Ketley	Professor M Thompson

Professor D Wynford-Thomas

In attendance: the Director of Finance, the Director of Estates, Mr B Athwal (for the business recorded in 14/M25), Ms C Grobler (for the reserved business recorded in 14/M35-36), and Mr N Cox (Assistant Secretary).

Apologies for absence were received from Professor M Barstow, Professor E Raven, Judge A Hampton, Dr M Rawlinson and Ms C Thorogood. Apologies were also received from the Registrar and Secretary, as an officer normally in attendance.

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

14/M24 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Vice-Chancellor and Mr Moore declared an interest as Directors of College Court Conference Centre Limited. Mr Flatt and Dr Reed declared an interest as Trustees of the Students' Union.

14/M25 **THE WORK OF THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICE**

Council received a short presentation from Mr Bob Athwal, Director of Student Experience, on the work of the Career Development Service.

Council was pleased to note the extensive strategies that were now being deployed by the Career Development Service to encourage and support students in taking responsibility for their own career planning work. This work needed to commence as soon as students arrived at the University and to be sustained for the duration of their studies. Intensive support was available to prepare students for their first contact and subsequent engagement with potential employers. Major employers were now visiting the campus in large numbers, with recent careers-related events amongst the biggest in the country. With regard to Leicester graduates' employment prospects, it was acknowledged that these were not yet commensurate with the University's position in the league tables, and further work was required to address this.

Council welcomed a planned programme of work to utilize the career stories of Leicester alumni to help boost the confidence and ambitions of current students.

14/M26 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Council considered the minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2014.

Council approved them as a correct record.

Arising from minute 14/M17 (Amendments to the Charter and Statutes), Council noted that the University had been advised that the proposed amendments were expected to be approved at a meeting of the Privy Council to be held on 27 May 2014.

14/M27 **VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BUSINESS**

The Vice-Chancellor informed Council of a number of issues and developments involving the University since the last meeting, including:

- the University had maintained its top 20 position (19th) in the 2015 *Complete University Guide*, published on 13 May 2014
- the national settlement of the 2014 pay award for universities at 2%, effective from 1 August 2014. Threatened industrial action had been called off. The affordability of this award would be a significant issue within the sector as institutions prepared their financial forecasts and annual budgets for 2014-15
- the award of three further awards to College Court Conference Centre at the RIBA East Midlands Awards Ceremony, held on 15 May 2014.

14/M28 **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Council considered the report of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on 9 April 2014. The Treasurer drew Council's attention to the following matters:

- Student recruitment: in the increasingly competitive global marketplace for student recruitment, the University's strategic response to the lifting of student number controls would be a critical success factor for the planning period beyond 2015
- The University's financial position: the current forecast was for a surplus of 1.8% of income in 2013-14, against a budget surplus of 2.5%. This would have a significant impact on the strategic assumptions underlying the preparation of the *2014 Financial Forecasts* (minute 14/M35 refers).
- Pensions: initial results from the July 2013 actuarial valuation of the University's Pension and Assurance Scheme were better than expected and it was hoped that any financial implications arising from the valuation could be contained within existing budget provisions. However, the USS 2014 valuation was less positive, and a national consultation was being undertaken on how employers should respond.

14/M29 **HEFCE ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL RISK**

Council received the outcome letter of HEFCE's annual assessment of institutional risk. Council **noted** that based on the accountability returns submitted for 2012-

2013 the University of Leicester was deemed to be 'not at higher risk', and was meeting its accountability obligations set out in the Financial Memorandum and other HEFCE guidance.

Arising from the HEFCE assessment **Council also noted** the comparative position of the University against a benchmark group of former 1994 Group and Russell Group Institutions. With regard to the sector's overall historical cost surplus as % of total income, the HEFCE documentation showed that this was expected to fall from 5% in 2012-13 to 2.8% in 2013-14. **Council noted** that the University's own performance on this measure would be in line with the general downward movement, although it was some way below the sector average.

14/M30 **ESTATES AND INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

Council considered the report of a meeting of the Estates and Infrastructure Strategy Committee held on 9 April 2014. **Council noted** that a report on the future development of the campus would be presented to the Committee at its meeting in June 2014.

14/M31 **STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Council received a report of a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Alumni Association held on 13 March 2014.

Council noted that the term of office of the current Chair of the Standing Committee, Mr Mulvihill, was coming to an end and the appointment of his successor was due to be confirmed at the Association's Annual General Meeting on 28 June 2014.

14/M32 **UNIVERSITY SEAL**

Council noted the affixing of the University seal to the documents listed in Appendix 14/M32 attached to the signed copy of these minutes.

14/M33 **DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Council noted that forthcoming meetings of Council were scheduled as follows, all to commence at 4.00pm:

Monday 7 July 2014
Monday 24 November 2014
Thursday 19 March 2015
Monday 18 May 2015
Wednesday 8 July 2015

14/M34 **COURTESIES**

Council recorded its appreciation for the support and contribution to its work of Mr D Flatt, President of the Students' Union, who was attending his last meeting of Council.

CHAIR