

# Minutes Unrestricted

**Meeting title:** Council

**Date:** Wednesday 23 January 2013

**Time:** 4.00pm

**Location:** The Hartley Suite, Staff Social Centre

**Present:** Gill Rider (*Chair*), Mr J Boyer, Mr M Burrow, Professor J Falkingham, Mr M Killingley, Mr S Ling\*, Professor D McGhee, Professor D Nutbeam, Mr T O'Brien, Dr D Price, Dr M Read, Mrs H Smith, Professor P Smith, Dr G Spittle, Mr J Trewby, Professor J Vickers and Professor A Wheeler.

**In attendance:** The Chief Operating Officer, the Director of Estates and Facilities (for Minute 67) the Director of Finance, the Director of Marketing and Communications, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education), the Registrar and the Head of Governance Services.

\* not present for restricted business.

The Chair welcomed members to the first Council meeting in 2013.

**Declarations of Interest:** there were no conflicts of interest declared.

## 50. Council Agenda Structure and Venues for Meetings

The Chair highlighted to Council the changes made to the structure of the agenda for Council Meetings which were intended to reduce the number of key items for discussion so that proper focus could be given to them and to make clearer the purpose of each item. The Vice-Chancellor's report had been brought to the beginning of the agenda in order to provide a context for the items which followed.

She also advised that it was her intention to hold Council meetings in University venues other than the Council Room, including arranging some meetings away from the Highfield Campus. Prior to meetings there would be opportunities for those members who wished to visit these different parts of the University to familiarise themselves with more aspects of its work.

Feedback from members on the changes would be welcome.

## 51. Presentation on Outreach and Access from Richard Kennett, Director of Recruitment, Outreach and Admissions

Council received a presentation from Richard Kennett, Director of Recruitment, Outreach and Admissions on Outreach and Access.

Members noted the vision for the University's 'Learn with US' outreach and transition to higher education programmes. In relation to 'Learn with US' details of how schools and students were targeted were highlighted together with how the Programme had been developed and was structured. Activities included the Science and Engineering Festival, the Southampton Junior University, Post 16 – residentials and TEAtime lecture series and Ask the Expert (where academics and students visited the schools themselves).

In terms of widening participation by under-represented groups the importance of partnership working and community engagement were highlighted. Initiatives such as Generating Genius and Access to Southampton (A2S) were showing some success in this area.

The Chair thanked Mr Kennett for an interesting and informative presentation.

## 52. Obituary (Agenda Item 1)

The Chair reported with regret the deaths of Hannah Groves, Year 2 BA French student, Rosie Van Raalte, Year 1 BN Children's student and James Atherton, MPhil/PhD Human Development & Health student who had died recently, and invited members to stand as a mark of respect.

53. **Minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2012** (Agenda Item 2.1)

**Resolved** That the minutes (unrestricted) of the meeting held on 21 November 2012 be approved and signed, subject to the addition of Dr Price's name to the list of members present, and that the minutes may now be published on the open access SUSSED group site.

54. **Matters arising from the meeting of Council on 21 November 2012 (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)** (Agenda Item 2.2)

There were no matters arising from this meeting.

55. **Publication of unrestricted papers** (Agenda Item 3)

The Chair advised that the paper for agenda item 7 was circulated as confidential to Council and should not be published on the open access site.

**Resolved** that, with the exception set out above, the papers circulated for the meeting on 23 January 2013 should now be published on the open access SUSSED site.

56. **Vice-Chancellor's report** (Agenda Item 4)

**Received** the Vice-Chancellor's report, dated 23 January 2013.

The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the following issues in particular:

**UEG Away-day 9-10 January 2013** – the Vice-Chancellor reported that the senior leadership group used the opportunity to review the continuing relevance of the current strategy, and to take a longer term view of the shape and operation of the University. It concluded that the key elements of the current strategy remain valid, but that continuing refinement would be required in response to changes in the external environment. External input to the Away-day from Mark Spelman of Accenture and Martin Bean of the Open University had been extremely valuable especially in highlighting the importance of internationalisation, developing strategic partnerships, and fully utilising alternative modes of study. The leadership group will use the coming months to consult and engage with staff and stakeholders before reporting back to the Council at its May 2013 meeting on any significant changes to the strategy and the implications.

Council Members emphasised the importance of the development of enterprise at the University and of establishing a very clear brand.

**Establishment of a UK MOOC (a Massive, Online, Open access, Course)** – the University was working with the Open University and other partners to create *Futurelearn* - a platform to enable it to place coursework online with open access. This initiative was seen as offering great potential to open up worldwide access to the University, raise our profile and engaging with large numbers of potential future students. To this end the university was taking great care in selecting programmes that were suitable for inclusion in the initial offering. There had been a great deal of interest in this initiative, including an extremely well attended open meeting earlier in the year.

**Knighthood for Professor David Payne** – this was of particular pleasure to the University.

**Results of Staff Survey** – the results of a recent Staff Survey were now available and would be reported to the March Council Meeting.

**Prime Minister's Visit to India** - the Vice-Chancellor had been invited to take part in the Prime Minister's forthcoming visit to India.

**Resolved** to note the Vice-Chancellor's report.

57. **Update on Student Recruitment 2013** (Agenda Item 5)

**Received** a paper from the Registrar updating Council on the latest recruitment figures for 2013.

The Registrar updated members on the latest recruitment figures received since the report had been circulated to Council. These included:

Under-graduate applications (excluding Medicine) were up 9% from their 2011/2012 level. This compared to the national figure of a 3.5% fall in applications. The University had made significant improvements in its offer making, but from benchmarking with other institutions it was clear that further improvements were required and there was no room for complacency.

UCAS had been delayed in processing figures so the full national picture would not be available until the end of January. At that time it would be possible to analyse figures by JACS code.

In terms of post-graduate taught students, the University was showing an approximately 20% decrease in home/EU applications, but a 10% increase in international ones. For post-graduate research it was too early to make any comparison.

The focus was now on converting applications to firm acceptances. The new CRM (Customer Relationship Management) System was helping hugely with targeting individual students. Process improvement workshops would be taking place shortly around recruitment and admissions. Council Members from the Faculties confirmed that parallel work was taking place to maximise conversion rates.

**Resolved** to note the report and the updated figures given at the meeting.

58. **Student Support 2014 and Beyond** (Agenda Item 6)

**Received** a joint paper from the Pro-Vice Chancellor Education and the Registrar updating Council on the latest thinking regarding student support from 2014.

Professor Neill highlighted that this paper set out the direction of thought for the Access Agreement which would come to Council in draft form in March.

The President of the Students' Union emphasised that they were supportive of the process and were keen to have a principled and evidence based approach to the financial gap experience of students.

Dr Price requested that the core principles include consideration of how students exit the University into employment.

**Resolved** that Council gives in principle support to the latest thinking regarding student support from 2014 and looks forward to receiving detailed proposals at its meeting in March.

59. **Strategic Capital Developments** (Agenda Item 7)

[This item is commercial in confidence and a separate confidential minute is circulated to members of Council only.]

60. **QAA Institutional Review** (Agenda Item 8)

**Received** an oral report from the Vice-Chancellor regarding the Institutional Review by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

**Noted** that the University was continuing with its engagement in the QAA Review process. In response to a point from Professor Vickers regarding the briefing of University staff in the absence of the publication of a final report, the Vice-Chancellor reminded Professor Vickers that Senate received a full briefing on the review process at its last meeting and would be briefed further at its next meeting in February. He undertook to ensure that staff continued to be informed of the process...

**Resolved** to note the oral report from the Vice-Chancellor.

61. **Transfer of Lifecourse Epidemiology Unit from Medical Research Council to University** (Agenda Item 11)

**Received** a paper from the Chief Operating Officer briefing Council on the specific risks of the transfer of the Lifecourse Epidemiology Unit from Medical Research Council to University and seeking authority for the Vice-Chancellor to enter into the transfer contract consistent with these terms.

**Resolved** to give the Vice-Chancellor authority to enter into the transfer agreements with a transfer date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

62. **Report from the Nominations Committee 23 January 2013** (Agenda Item 15)

[Ms Smith left the room during the consideration of and vote on the item below].

**Received** a report from the Nominations Committee on 23 January 2013 (tabled) proposing the re-appointment of Ms Smith as a Class 4 member of Council.

**Resolved** that Ms Hilary Smith be reappointed as a Class 4 member for a second term of three years, commencing on 1 April 2013.

63. **Report from the President of the Students' Union** (Agenda Item 16)

**Received** a report from the President of the Students' Union on the developments in SUSU since the last University Council Meeting.

The President highlighted in particular the exceptionally high turnout at the recent referendum on whether SUSU should affiliate with the National Union of Students and plans to increase the engagement of students with the Union in general.

Dr Spittle congratulated SUSU on the setting up of the partnership with a local recovery college pioneering a new approach to supporting individuals with mental health issues.

**Resolved** to note the report.

64. **HEFCE grant letter from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills** (Agenda Item 17)

**Received** the HEFCE grant letter from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) together with a covering report from the Director of Finance setting out the policy and strategy development from BIS and HEFCE that impact on the University's business and funding for the coming year.

**Noted** the key financial messages and the request to HEFCE to further liberalise the student numbers system from 2014/15 to give those institutions that have shown strong recruitment patterns in 2013/14 greater flexibility.

**Resolved** to note the report.

65. **Financial Monitoring 2012/13: November 2012 Management Accounts** (Agenda Item 17)

**Received** a paper from the Director of Finance updating Council on the Management Accounts of the University.

**Resolved** to note the report.

66. **Sealing of Documents** (Agenda Item 21)

**Received** a report detailing the documents sealed since the last report to Council.

**Noted** the list of sealed documents, dated January 2013.