

Minutes (unrestricted)

Meeting title: Senate (special meeting)

Date: Wednesday 25 September 2014

Time: 3.30 pm

Location: The Senate Room, George Thomas Building, Highfield campus

Present: Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Wheeler (*in the Chair*), Pro Vice-Chancellor Neill, Pro Vice-Chancellor Petts, Dr M Abdollahi, Professor B M Al-Hashimi, Dr J W Anderson, Professor G Attard, Professor A Barney, Professor G Brambilla, Professor P Charles, Dr S Colley, Professor Dame Jessica Corner, Professor S Cox, Dr A Da Ronch, Dr K Deinhardt, Dr A R Drummond, Professor R W Eason, Dr H Eres, Professor J Falkingham, Professor K Fox, Dr J Glenn, Dr A M Gravell, Dr A Hickman, Mr A L Hill, Professor J W Holloway, Dr C Holmes, Mr M Johnston, Professor S Keay, Professor T G Leighton, Mr M Luczak-Roesch, Dr B Lwaleed, Professor M Lowe, Professor R Mills, Dr N Maguire, Professor G Niblo, Dr D Nicole, Dr I O'Kelly, Dr C Petley, Dr F Poletti, Dr R Polfreman, Professor C Pope, Dr A Roghanian, Professor V Sassone, Ms J Savidge, Dr N Tzavidis, Professor J A Vickers, Dr L Walters, Professor J S Wilkinson and Dr K Zwolski

By invitation Ms S Hollowbread, Deputy Director, Human Resources

In attendance Ms C J Gamble

Welcome

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the new members of Senate. He explained that, in the absence of the Vice-Chancellor from this special meeting of Senate, he would chair the meeting. This was in accordance with Senate's Standing Orders.

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor reminded Senators of the item that had been added to the agenda after that document had been circulated: the Standing Orders for 2014/15. The inclusion of the Standing Orders had inadvertently been overlooked. It was normally presented at the first ordinary meeting of Senate in the academic session but in view of the timing of this special meeting to discuss the appointment of the next Vice-Chancellor it was appropriate to include the Standing Orders on the agenda.

1 Standing Orders

Received A copy of the Standing Orders for the academic session 2014/15 which set out the procedures for the conduct of meetings and the quoracy requirements, amongst other matters.

The Academic Registrar reported that no revisions were proposed and that the set of Standing Orders before Senate was unchanged from 2013/14.

Resolved That the Standing Orders for 2014/15 be approved.

2 Proposal to Senate from Council on the process for the appointment of the next Vice-Chancellor

Received A copy of a report, prepared on behalf of the Chair of Council, Dr Rider, whose recommendations had been endorsed by Council on 1 September 2014 and were presented to Senate for consideration, together with a request that Senate nominate three of its members to form a Joint Selection Committee.

A presentation given by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor which outlined the timetable set out for the appointment process, the number of responses to the online consultation, the role of the Joint Selection Committee (JSC), nominations to the JSC and nominations to the Senate Nominating Committee (SNC), together with a proposal for the membership of the SNC.

[Prior to the start of the discussion, the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor declared that he did not intend to put himself forward for consideration for the post of Vice-Chancellor. His involvement in the appointment process was to ensure that it was carried out as smoothly as possible.]

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor commenced his presentation with a number of introductory points about the timetable for the appointment process. The aim was to appoint a new Vice-Chancellor in readiness for the start of the 2015/16 academic session. The background to this was the importance of making headway in respect of the University's Vision 2020 Strategy, the external environment, in particular the General Election in May 2015, and the expected changes in the higher education sector, specifically the removal of the cap on student numbers from 2015/2016. He pointed out that there was a break point in the timetable when the Joint Selection Committee considered the longlist of candidates in December 2014 which would provide, if required, an opportunity for the Committee to review the next steps in the process.

He reminded Senators of the University Ordinances which governed the process: Ordinance 1.5 stated that the Vice-Chancellor should be appointed after consideration of a report from a Joint Committee of the Council and the Senate; and Ordinance 2.12.2 stipulated that the membership of such a Joint Committee should be mutually agreed between Council and Senate.

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor highlighted the consultation process with the University community, part of which had been conducted online and had been open to staff and students. He had also separately invited the views of the Heads of academic units and the Deans of Faculties, on behalf of their groups, on the qualities and experience the University should seek in the next Vice-Chancellor. All of the information received would be presented to the Joint Selection Committee.

The composition of the Joint Selection Committee (JSC), set out in the report from Council, should represent the diversity of the University, including a balance of genders, interests and perspectives. The academic members should be drawn in equal numbers from the arts and science disciplines – described in the Council report as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and non-STEM disciplines. Senate would establish a Nominating Committee first; the task of the group would be to select the Senators who would serve on the JSC.

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor stated that Council had selected from among its members the following individuals to join the JSC: Mr Mike Killingley, the Treasurer and long-standing member of Council; Ms Ros Rivaz, a lay member of Council and alumna, and Rear Admiral Philip Greenish, a lay member, and Chief Executive of the Royal Academy of Engineering. The Chair of Council, Dr Gill Rider, would chair the Committee.

The Provost concluded his presentation and invited questions from the floor:

- How many Senators would be invited to join the Nominating Committee? The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor explained that he had looked at the size of the Senate Nominating Committees which were set up every year to consider the appointment of Senate members to Council. Those committees typically comprised four members. This was a task of a different order and one which he believed required a larger group of individuals to be involved. He would recommend six Senators, including a representative of the Professional Services, and an appointed Chair.
- A general comment was made about level of experience and knowledge of the higher education sector on institutions' governing bodies. For the JSC, would it be feasible to bring in an external adviser with a strong background in academia to support the process? It was suggested that a similar approach to the one adopted for professorial appointments could be adopted whereby two external advisers were engaged to assess and comment on the candidates. The shortlisting stage might be the appropriate juncture at which to seek external advice. There were a number of academic staff of the University who had moved to take up Vice-Chancellorships or senior appointments at other Russell Group institutions who might be invited to take on this role.

Senators endorsed this proposal. The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor would relay it to the Chair of Council. The adviser(s) would support the JSC whose membership would comprise:

- Chair of Council (Chair);
- Three nominated Senate members;
- Three nominated Council members;
- One senior academic leader nominated by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor; and
- One member of the Students' Union (The President of the Students' Union).

- In response to a question about the Senate members on the last Joint Selection Committee, set up in 2008, the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor stated that the group had included a representative of the group of Deans and Deputy Vice-Chancellors. (The information would be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.)

- Resolved**
- (i) That the proposal to appoint either one or two external academic adviser(s), with experience of leading a University as a Vice-Chancellor, preferably at a Russell Group institution, to support the Joint Selection Committee be endorsed and that the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor relay this recommendation to the Chair of Council as soon as possible.
 - (ii) That the proposal in the report from the Chair of Council for the composition of the Joint Selection Committee be endorsed, subject to the amendment contained in the recommendation under (i) above, and that the content of the report be noted.

[Post-meeting note: The Senators selected to serve on the Joint Selection Committee set up in 2008 were: Professor Nick Foksett (Dean of the Faculty of Law, Arts and Social Sciences); Professor Debra Humphris (Health Care Innovation Unit); and Professor Andrew Roberts (Head of School, Ocean and Earth Science). The Registrar and Chief Operating Officer sat on the JSC as a representative of the Professional Services.

The dates of appointment to Council of the lay members selected to serve on the JSC are:

Dr Gill Rider, Chair of Council, appointed as Chair in August 2012;
Mr Mike Killingley: appointed as a lay member in 2005, and appointed as Treasurer in 2009;
Ms Ros Rivaz: appointed as a lay member in 2006; and
Rear Admiral Philip Greenish: appointed as a lay member in 2011.]

3 **Members of the Senate Nominating Committee**

Received The names of the Senators who had put themselves forward to join the Senate Nominating Committee (SNC) and the Joint Selection Committee (JSC) in response to the invitation that had been circulated on 8 September 2014.

[Dr Colley drew attention to the list for the Joint Selection Committee. Although she had put herself forward, her name had not been included. The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor apologized for the error and said that the list would be revised before it was presented to the Senate Nominating Committee.]

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor stated that he had personally invited a number of Senators to consider putting themselves forward to be involved in the appointment process because he wished to ensure that Senators from as wide a range as possible of academic disciplines would be included in the selection. He reiterated the points in the paper from the Chair of Council, and made in discussion, that there should be a diversity of backgrounds and a balance of genders represented on the Joint Selection Committee; this applied too to the composition of the Senate Nominating Committee. From the list of those who had volunteered for the Nominating Committee, he proposed that the following individuals be invited to form the Committee:

Professor Anna Barney, Mr Mark Johnston, Professor Simon Keay, Dr Bashir Llaweed, Professor Michelle Lowe, and Professor James Vickers.

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor further proposed that Professor Vickers, with his knowledge of the University and roles of Director of Graduate Studies and Senate member on Council, be asked to chair the group.

Senators offered a number of observations and comments about the list drawn up for the Nominating Committee, and in response to the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor's proposal:

- The majority of individuals whose names appeared on the lists were senior members of staff.
- The proposal did not achieve a balance of genders. The equal representation of genders in all areas of University life was crucial and was an important, long-standing issue which should not be overlooked in this particular case. Responding to the observation, the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor acknowledged the importance of achieving such a balance and explained the limits of choice that he had had to take into account when considering all the criteria for the composition of the group. A number of Senators had volunteered to serve on the Nominating Committee and the Joint Selection Committee. Individuals could not sit on both groups. In order to address the imbalance of genders on the Nominating Committee, an individual on the list for the Joint Selection Committee would have to be selected and this would result in fewer women being available to serve on the Joint Selection Committee. In his view, achieving a balance of genders on the JSC should take priority because this group was directly involved in the process of selecting the institution's next Vice-Chancellor.

It was pointed out that, in terms of the total pool of women nominees, the number of women who would be asked to stand down from selection to the JSC because of their membership of the SNC might be disproportionate to the number of men being asked to withdraw from possible membership of the JSC.

- To address the matter of gender imbalance, it was suggested that further nominations be invited from those Senators present. The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor proposed that at least two female Senators be selected. Senators endorsed the proposal. The following individuals were proposed by colleagues:

Dr Lindsay Armstrong, Faculty of Engineering and the Environment;
Dr Anna Hickman, Faculty of Natural and Environmental Sciences; and
Dr Ita O'Kelly, Faculty of Medicine.

- It was observed that all the nominees were based in the science disciplines. The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor stated that, given that the proposal was to seek nominees from those present at the meeting, only those being proposed could be considered, irrespective of their disciplinary background. He reminded Senators that the invitation had been extended to all Senators in early September.
- The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor invited Senators to consider whether there should be a vote to select two of the three nominees or whether all three candidates should join the Nominating Committee. Senators agreed that all three should be members of the Committee. Although the range of disciplines represented on the group was not as wide as what ideally had been sought, the gender balance had been addressed and it had been possible to achieve a broader spread of career backgrounds in education and research terms.
- In response to a question about way the Committee would go about its task, Professor Vickers stated that he would seek to achieve a consensus of opinion regarding the selection of the individuals on the JSC. In the event that this was not possible, voting would take place. Professor Dame Jessica Corner suggested that the Committee should consider appointing a number of a reserve candidates in case it transpired that those selected were not able to attend all the meetings of the Joint Selection Committee. Professor Vickers thanked Dame Jessica for the suggestions and invited Senators to let him know as soon as possible if they had any further comments or views they wished the Nominating Committee to take into account in their discussions on 26 September 2014.

Bringing the discussion to a conclusion, the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor thanked everyone for attending the special meeting of Senate.

Resolved (i) That the membership of the Senate Nominating Committee should comprise:

Professor Vickers (in the Chair)
Dr Armstrong
Professor Barney
Dr Hickman
Mr Johnston

Professor Keay
Dr Llaweed
Professor Lowe
Dr O'Kelly

- (ii) That Senators forward any comments they wished the Senate Nominating Committee to consider to Professor Vickers as soon as possible.

Noted The undertaking of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor to inform Senators of the outcome of the Nominating Committee's deliberations on 26 September 2014.

4 **Date of next meeting**

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor confirmed the date of the next special meeting of Senate to discuss the Self-Evaluation Document for the University's Higher Education Review: 15 October 2014.

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The meeting finished at approximately 4.35 pm.

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