

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

TUESDAY 28 JUNE 2016  
1:45 PM IN ROOM 13, SKINNER BUILDING

**Council members present:**

Mr Roger Mosey (Chair)  
Mr David Babb  
Dr Kevin Brown  
Mr David Clements  
Mrs Jackie Croft  
Mrs Angela Crowe  
Mrs Sandra Grattrick  
Professor David Head  
Dr Tony Hill  
Mr Stephen Lawrence  
AVM Gavin Mackay  
Mr Graham Meeson  
Professor Jayne Mitchell  
Rev Canon Professor Peter Neil  
Miss Becca Smith  
Dr Jim Smith  
Mr Alan Stacey  
Professor Mark Thompson

**In attendance:**

Dr Anne Craven, Registrar and Secretary  
Mrs Alison Coton (for item 14 only)  
Mr Stephen Deville, Director of Resources  
Mr Gareth Hughes, Students' Union Vice President Voice Academic Affairs  
Ms Alice Hynes, Consultant  
Dr Grahame Killey, Planning and Performance Manager (for item 12 only)  
Dr Ruth Sayers, Executive Dean, Learning, Teaching & International  
Mrs Natalie Pickles (Minutes)

**1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and once again welcomed Alice Hynes, who was present to give a verbal report on the Council Effectiveness work she had been doing.

**2. The University Prayer**

Rev Canon Professor Peter Neil led the Prayer.

### **3. Apologies**

Council member apologies for absence were received from :

Bishop David Court

Rev'd. Dr Sally Myers

Mrs Jasmit Phull

Mr Luke South

Apologies were also received from:

Mr Matthew Pitts, Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager

Professor David Rae, Executive Dean, Research & Knowledge Exchange

Not in attendance:

The Rt Rev'd Christopher Lowson (Council Member)

### **4. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **5. Minutes of the last meeting held on 22 March 2016**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 March 2016 were APPROVED as a true record of the meeting. The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes.

### **6. Matters Arising**

#### **(i) Action Points**

The action table from the previous meeting was RECEIVED and the progress against each item was NOTED.

#### **(ii) Any other matters**

There were no other matters raised.

### **7. Vice Chancellor's Report**

Council RECEIVED the Vice Chancellor's report for information. The Vice Chancellor gave a brief verbal report on the key points.

Council asked about the LORIC (Lincolnshire Open Research & Innovation Centre) programme in relation to ESIF (European Structural Investment Fund) funding, in light of the Brexit result of the EU Referendum. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC) confirmed that the County Council was seeking clarification with central government; it was NOTED that there could potentially be some difficulties in decisions about monies that had been committed but that had not yet been allocated, as was the case with the LORIC programme. However, the current

message was to continue with the bid; the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase was due by the end of July 2016.

#### **8. To receive an update from the Chair**

- (i) Chair's Action regarding progressing with recruitment to Council vacancies.

Council AGREED to G&N's recommendation that the Governance Office should start the process of recruitment to vacant Council positions as soon as possible after today's meeting. The new Chair would be consulted.

**Matthew Pitts**

#### **9. Students' Union (S.U.)**

- (i) To note the S.U. Strategic Plan to 2020

The S.U. President presented the S.U. Draft Strategic Plan, which ran to 2020. It was due to go to their Trustee Board on 13 July for approval. It was agreed that once approval was received, the S.U. President would circulate the final copy to Council members.

**S.U. President**

There was a brief discussion about the sector wide increase in mental health issues, which was being seen at BGU also. It was confirmed that any student needing advice could seek help from any of three areas: the Students' Union, Student Advice, and the Chaplaincy.

- (ii) S.U. Update

The S.U. President gave a verbal update to members, with the key points as follows:

- The S.U. Awards had taken place and had been very successful.
- A sports coaching fund was being introduced for the next Academic Year so that all sports societies would have at least one qualified coach.
- The Rugby Football Union had committed a significant sum of money over a period of four years to support rugby, and in particular for a female rugby team.
- Overseas opportunities had been expanded, including sports.
- Work was ongoing on an online platform to cover representation of S.U. services and elections, and for students to engage with their clubs and societies.
- New sabbaticals would start on 1 July 2016.

The Chair of Council thanked the S.U. President and Vice President for all their hard work over the last year and for their input to Council.

Additionally, Graham Meeson gave thanks from all the academic staff.

#### **10. Sponsor Board Meeting**

The Chair of Sponsor Board gave a brief overview of the paper he had written, updating Council Members on the discussions that had taken place at the Sponsor Board Committee meeting.

One of the key items was the suggestion of having a longer lunch before Council meetings or starting meetings earlier to enable those giving presentations more time. The Chair agreed and suggested that this seemed to be the wish of the Council.

#### **11. To receive and discuss a report on Student Recruitment**

The Registrar & Secretary presented the paper on Student Recruitment to Council members.

Council AGREED that the numbers presented to them needed to include targets. This would be looked into in more depth in the course of the next academic year.

It was confirmed that internally, recruitment numbers were monitored very closely.

Anne Craven

#### **12. To receive and discuss issues of Strategic Planning**

##### **(i) To note Key Performance Indicators**

Grahame Killey, Planning & Performance Manager (PPM), presented an update on the Key Performance Indicator dashboard, highlighting the key points.

##### **(ii) To note the Risk Register**

The PPM presented the key changes and updates to controls and mitigation for individual risks in the BGU Risk Register. It was confirmed that the updated text was highlighted in red, with significant changes in the arrows for Net Risk Score highlighted in purple.

#### **13. To receive and discuss a report on Council Effectiveness**

The Chair of Council reported that Alice Hynes (AH) had completed her draft written report on Council Effectiveness. It was NOTED that the correct process would be for this to go to the Governance & Nominations Committee before being submitted to Council.

AH thanked all Council members for their time in providing feedback and views, and for others in providing various pieces of documentation. The resulting initial confidential draft report had been circulated to the Chair, Vice Chancellor and Registrar & Secretary. AH reported that the document had eleven annexes and that analysis had been made in the context of the Chairs of Universities/CUC code; moreover, the report also took into account BGU's compliance with its obligations as a Charity. AH noted that the institution had been through an enormous year in terms of reviews and inspections; the institution needed to praise itself and recognise those achievements.

AH gave a very brief overview of what was contained in the draft report:

- There were forty-eight items within the CUC code, and BGU was successfully practising thirty-nine of those and partly applying at least seven; there was just one item which AH now needed to look into further.
- The review was very positive in terms of Council openness and also in its dynamic. AH confirmed she was impressed by the open way in which Council members relayed their views to her in her discussions with them.
- It was highlighted that there were some issues around deciding how the university was developing, particularly in terms of size or scale.
- It was highlighted that there was only so much time an individual as a Council Member could give to the institution, and this needed to be taken into account in Council planning.
- The way students had been involved in succession planning was positive and highlighted good practice.
- The report's recommendation would include a number of suggestions for enhancing Council effectiveness.

In general, conclusions from the report were positive.

The Chair thanked AH for her overview.

#### **14. To receive a report on the Staff Survey**

Alison Coton, Head of Human Resources, gave a presentation of the highlights from the recent Staff Survey. The survey outcome was very positive; in particular, 88% of staff had indicated that BGU was a good place to work (informed by many factors).

AC reported that the outcome had been communicated to staff and that action plans were being developed within each area to address any issues identified. SLT would then select two or three key priority issues for action within the next two years, and there would be an action plan and a communication plan to accompany this.

It was AGREED that the presentation slides should be uploaded to the University Council SharePoint area so that Council Members could examine them.

It was also AGREED that the Staff Survey should be on a future agenda.

Matthew Pitts/  
Natalie Pickles/  
Alison Smith

#### **15. To receive and discuss the draft Ofsted report for Further Education Initial Teacher Education (ITE)**

The DVC reported that the re-inspection of ITE provision (following the inspection in December 2015 that judged it to require improvement) had concluded that "the overall effectiveness of BGU Partnership in securing consistently high quality outcomes for trainees is good" (grade 2).

The School of Teacher Development was maintaining 'live' improvement plans (as opposed to a static Action Plan) and would continue to make sure that the relevant teams were up to date and knew what the expectations were.

**16. To approve QAA HER Final Report and BGU Action Plan**

The Registrar & Secretary presented this item. It was confirmed that the public part of the Action Plan had now been published on the BGU website and that the latter part of the plan was for internal use and recommendations. The plan would be managed by the Committee system and the QAA HER Steering Group. The Registrar & Secretary was thanked for all her and the QAA Steering Group's hard work in finalising review tasks as per the usual QAA HER requirements.

**17. To receive and discuss changes to HE regulation and policy**

**(i) HE White Paper: Success as a Knowledge Economy & HE and Research Bill**

The DVC reported that the volume and complexity of changes proposed by the White Paper would affect the higher education environment and individual institutions fundamentally. The fact that the response to the BGU staff survey had been positive gave grounds for confidence regarding BGU's capability and capacity to respond to the amount of change that was likely to occur.

The DVC reported that SLT, CLT, Senate and Academic Engagement Committee, and their sub-committees, had begun to debate BGU's position on the White Paper's proposals. The outcome would be a series of 'think pieces' and a mid-term strategy stocktake. Proposals would then be taken through the Committee Structure and back to Council. Council AGREED that the initial thinking on strategy development should be shared with them, so that Council's feedback could be obtained.

It was AGREED that the forthcoming strategy review would consider how it could build in Council's input both formally and informally.

**(ii) Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) technical consultation**

The DVC reported to Council the key deadlines in respect of TEF:

- The closing date for applications for TEF Panel members and TEF Assessors was 1 July 2016 and there were currently several members of staff who had expressed an interest.
- The deadline for responses to the TEF technical consultation was 12<sup>th</sup> July 2016.
- In respect of participating in TEF Year Two methodological trial, the DVC reported that an Expression of Interest was required by July, which would not be binding at that stage. Formal applications were invited from October through to December 2016.

With regard to TEF Year Two, the DVC reported that SLT were recommending to Council that BGU submit an Expression of Interest. The Chair of Council suggested that ultimately Council should own this decision.

R&S/Planning &  
Performance  
Manager

After further discussion Council AGREED that BGU should submit an Expression of Interest to take part in TEF Year two.

At this stage, Professor Mark Thompson informed members that he needed to leave the meeting. As this was Professor Thompsons last Council meeting, the Chair of Council thanked him on behalf of the institution for his extremely valuable input as a member of Council.

**18. To receive & discuss the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy**

A paper on this item had been issued to Council Members prior to the meeting, with the Agenda, however, this item was not discussed.

**19. To receive and discuss a list of BGU's Policies, reporting lines and Committee Structure**

A paper on this item had been issued to Council Members prior to the meeting, with the Agenda, however, this item was not discussed.

**20. To discuss and consider Key Items from Sub-Committees**

Council AGREED to APPROVE all recommendations from Sub-Committees including:

- Approval of Criteria for awarding of Honorary Degrees
- Approval of the appointment of Richard Hallsworth as Council Member and Member of Audit Committee
- Approval of the updated financial forecasts and 2016/17 budget
- Approval of Internal and External Audit Plans

Council NOTED HEFCE's annual assessment of Institutional Risk.

**(v) Remuneration Committee**

The Chair gave a verbal report from the Remuneration Committee that had taken place that morning.

Suggestions had been made at that meeting about documentation for future years. Remuneration Committee would form part of Alice Hynes' report.

**21 To receive and discuss the Chaplain's Report**

The Chaplain's report had been issued to Council Members prior to the meeting, with the Agenda, however, this item was not discussed.

**22 To note the Draft Minutes of the Senate Meeting held on 1 June 2016**

The minutes were not available and the item was not discussed.

23. To note the Draft Minutes of the BG (Lincoln) Ltd Board meeting held on Tuesday 24 May

Restricted Business.

24. To receive and consider agenda suggestions for the next meeting

No suggestions received.

25. Any Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

26. Date of Next Meeting

The next Council meeting will take place on Tuesday 27 September 2016 at 13:45, with lunch prior to the meeting (time to be confirmed), venue TBC.

Signed

  
Vice Chair

Date

25/11/16